The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Medieval Mediterranean

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Arabic Transliterations and Conventions

Cities	Transliteration	English
الديماس	al-Dīmās	al-Dimas
المهدية	al-Mahdiya	Mahdia
القيروان	al-Qayrawan	Kairouan
بجاية	Bijaya	Béjaïa
بزرت	Bizert	Bizerte
بونة	Būna	Annaba
اقليبية	Iqlībīya	Iqlibiya
جيجل	Jījel	Jijel
قابس	Qābis	Gabès
قفصة	Qafsa	Gafsa
قليبية	Qelībiya	Kelibia
سطيف	Seṭīf	Setif
صفاقس	Ṣfāqus	Sfax
سوسة	Sūsa	Sousse
طرابلس (الغرب)	Ṭirābulus (al-Gharb)	Tripoli
تونس	Tūnis	Tunis

Regions	Transliteration	English
المغرب	al-Maghreb	Maghreb
المشرق	al-Mashriq	Mashriq
إفريقية	Ifrīqiya	Ifriqiya
جربة	Jerba	Djerba
قرقنة	Qarqena	Kerkennah
قوصرة	Qawṣara	Pantelleria
صقلية	Ṣiqiliya	Sicily

Zirid Emirs	Transliteration	English
تميم ابن المعز	Tamīm ibn al-Muʿizz	Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz
يحيى يبن تميم	Yaḥya ibn Tamīm	Yahya ibn Tamim
علي ابن يحيى	ʿAlī ibn Yaḥya	ʿAli ibn Yahya
الحسن ابن علي	al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī	al-Hasan ibn ʿAli

A Note on Translations

The translations I have produced for this dissertation seek to preserve the intent of medieval authors by translating the original Arabic text in accordance with the linguistic trends of the time in which the authors were writing. To do this, I have used several dictionaries. The first of these is *Lisan al-ʿArab*, "The Tongue of the Arabs," which was written by 13th-century lexicographer Ibn Manzur.[1] This Arabic-Arabic dictionary is ideal for this examination of medieval linguistic choices, for it aligns chronologically with most of the Arabic-language chronicles that I will be discussing. The second of these dictionaries is Edward Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon*, an eight-volume set that contains extensive definitions taken from many medieval Arabic dictionaries.[2] This dictionary will help complement the definitions provided in *Lisan al-ʿArab* and clarify appropriate Arabic-English translations.

The careful use of Arabic-Arabic and Arabic-English dictionaries will still not eliminate certain connotations and emphases in Arabic texts that are difficult to express in English. To understand these linguistic features, it is necessary to consider briefly the building blocks of Arabic grammar. The Arabic language is centered on a tripartite root system in which a sequence of three letters can be amended to influence the meaning of a word. The derivatives of these three sequential letters are related but carry with them certain connotations because of their attachment to other words found in that root. For example, in its primary acceptation (form one of a verb), the root *ḥakama* means "to

[1] Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-ʿArab*, 3rd ed., 20 vols. (Dar Sader, 2000). Citations for this dictionary will henceforth read, *Lisan al-ʿArab*, "[Arabic Root.]"
[2] Edward Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 8 vols. (London: Williams & Norgate, 1863). Citations for this dictionary will henceforth read, *Lane's Lexicon*, "[Arabic Root.]"

prevent, restrain, or withhold (often from something evil)."[3] From this, many related words are derived, including *ḥakkama* ("to order someone to give judgment"), *ḥākama* ("to summon someone to judge"), and *istiḥakama* ("to refrain from what would injure him in his religion and his worldly concerns"). Other words from this root include *ḥukm* ("restraint"), *ḥakīm* ("one possessing knowledge/one who executes affairs judiciously"), and *ḥākim* ("one who judges/one who exercises jurisdiction/a ruler or governor").

When chroniclers utilize the word *ḥākim*, they are thus evoking a variety of connotations that a simple one-word translation cannot convey. The word "ruler," which I have used for this word in my translations, does not express the evocation of restraint from evil and passage of just rule that the word implies. The translations of Arabic texts that I have supplied throughout this dissertation are meant to convey what I perceive to be the intent of the medieval authors. These choices are examined in depth in Chapter Five, where I analyze the linguistic trends that medieval authors writing in Arabic exhibit in their treatment of the Normans' African conquests.

In my translations and transliterations, I follow the guidelines provided by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, which was revised and updated in 2013. One of its rules holds particular importance for my translations and attempts to convey the intent of the original Arabic text. This rule states that "place names with accepted English spellings should be spelled in accordance with English norms."[4] Following this rule accords a certain privilege to Anglicized spellings of Arabic cities – for example, al-Iskandariya (الإسكندرية) becomes Alexandria. To a degree, this rule sacrifices the

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[3] *Lisan al-'Arab*, "حكم." *Lane's Lexicon*, "حكم."
[4] IJMES rule are here - https://ijmes.chass.ncsu.edu/IJMES_Translation_and_Transliteration_Guide.htm

geographic intent of medieval authors in favor of accessibility for the modern reader. In citations and direct quotations, I have maintained the spelling of the original author even if their conventions differ from those in the IJMES. For example, I cite the title of D.S. Richards' book as "The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from *al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*" even though the transliteration guidelines of the IJMES calls for the transliteration of the author as "Ibn al-Athir" and his chronicle to be "*al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*."[5] Similarly, I refer to the *Rihla* of al-Tijani but insert diacritics when discussing the genre of *riḥla*.

Elsewhere in this dissertation, I have sought to analyze medieval people and places in a way that is both accessible to a modern audience but also reflective of the medieval source materials. This is a difficult task. For example, the word "Norman" was used in medieval sources but scholars today recognize the variability of the people that these sources call Norman.[6] The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and its accompanying government and army comprised peoples who were ethnically and religiously diverse. I use the term "Norman" as a political marker to mean someone identified with the Norman Kingdom of Sicily, embracing that this could refer to a plurality of peoples. The same goes for the term "Zirid" and any other polity to which I refer. I likewise use the term "Africa" when referring to Latin-language sources or considering a narrative from the perspective of the Normans. Conversely, I use the term "Ifriqiya" when the looking at Arabic sources or the perspective of people in the Islamicate world. Outside of these

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[5] Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, trans. D.S. Richards, 3 vols. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008).
[6] Alex Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 24–25.

narrative contexts, I tend to default to the more geographically specific “Ifriqiya.” Such a strategy, I hope, gives readers an idea of the terminologies used in the medieval sources without being completely incoherent.

When discussing tribal or ethnic affiliation of people, I default to the language used in the primary sources. In the Arabic chronicles, the division is most often between the “Arab” divisions of the Banu Hilal like the “Banu Riyah” or the various “Berber” tribal confederations like “Sanhaja.” In instances where the chronicles do not specify anything beyond the “Arabs” or the “Berbers,” I have retained this language. Specific dynasties, like the “Zirids,” are anachronisms taken from the Arabic *Banū Zīrī* (“Tribe of Ziri”). I have retained this modern usage because it is still reflective of the Arabic but in terms that are more conventional by modern standards. The Arabic sources never refer to the Normans, instead defaulting to “Franks” or “Christians.” In my narrative, I nonetheless refer to them as Normans for the sake of clarity. Chapter Five examines the linguistic choices of the Arabic chronicles in detail.

Abbreviated Citations

For the following documents, I have chosen to use a non-Chicago Style citation method for the sake of clarity and convenience. These sources are the ones that I either use frequently or are part of large collected volumes of medieval texts that are cumbersome to cite.

Chicago-Style Citation	Abbreviated Citation
Al-Idrisi, Muhammad. *Opus Geographicorum*. 2nd ed. 2 vols. Naples: Brill, 1982.	Al-Idrisi, 1:100.
Al-Qalqashandi. *Subh al-a'sha fi sina'at al-insha*. 14 vols. Cairo, 1913.	Al-Qalqashandi, 3:100.
Tijani, Muhammad al-. *al-Rihla*. Tunis, 1981.	Al-Tijani, 100.
Brühl, Carlrichard, ed. *Rogerii II. regis diplomata Latina*. Vol. ii. Codex Diplomaticus Regni siciliae, I. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1987.	Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document(s) #.
Carabellese, Francesco. *Le carte di Molfetta (1076-1309)*. Codice diplomatico Barese. Bari: Commissione provinciale di archeologia e storia patria, 1912.	Carabellese, *Le carte di Molfetta*, documents #.
P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs, eds. *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. Consulted online.	*EI2*, "[Word]."
Enzensberger, Horst, ed. *Guillelmi I. regis diplomata.* Vol. iii. Codex Diplomaticus Regni siciliae, I. Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1996.	Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document(s) #.
Falcando, Ugo. *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*. Edited by G.B. Siragusa. Fonti per la Storia d'Italia. Rome: Tipografi del Senato, 1897.	Hugo Falcandus, 100.
Ibn ʿIdhari al-Marakushi. *al-Bayan al-Maghrib*. 4 vols. Beirut, 1967.	Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:100.
Ibn Abi Dinar al-Qayrawani. *al-Munis fi akhbar Afriqiyah wa-Tunis*. Tunis: Matba'at al-Dawlah al-Tunsiyah, 1869.	Ibn Abi Dinar, 100.

Ibn al-Athir. *al-Kamil fi al-tarikh*. 13 vols. Beirut, 1966.	Ibn al-Athir, 10:100.
Ibn Khaldun. *Kitab al-'ibar*. 8 vols. Beirut, 2001.	Ibn Khaldun, 7:100.
Lane, Edward. *Arabic-English Lexicon and Supplement*. 8 vols. London: Williams & Norgate, 1863.	*Lane's Lexicon*, "[Arabic Root]."
Ibn Manzur. *Lisan al-ʿArab*. 3rd ed. 20 vols. Dar Sader, 2000.	*Lisan al-ʿArab*, "[Arabic Root]."
Monumenta Germaniae Historica	*MGH, SS,* 6:453.
"Old World Drought Atlas," November 2015. http://kage.ldeo.columbia.edu/TRL/OWDA/	OWDA, [DATE RANGE].
Patrologia Latina	*PL*, 173:50.
"The Noble Qur'an," 2016. https://quran.com/	*Qur'an,* 20:114.

Introduction

"Mahdia, it is a place for the fishes."

These were the words my cab driver told me when, driving down a bumpy coastal road in east-central Tunisia, I asked him about the city that was once the most prosperous port in Ifriqiya.[1] He had a point. Mahdia today is a town of 80,000 people with an economy built on fishing and its associated industries. A millennium ago, though, it was a bustling center of commerce that facilitated trade across the Mediterranean, Europe, and sub-Saharan Africa. While walking through the streets of Mahdia in the twenty-first century, one can find few remnants of its past grandeur. Built on a peninsula on Tunisia's eastern coast, most of the city comprises small restaurants, shops, and residential neighborhoods that, moving westward, slowly give way to agricultural land. Two modest ports on the eastern edge of the city are packed with small fishing vessels but are dwarfed by the nearby industrial docks of Tunis, Sousse, Sfax, and Gabès. The northern coast of the city is dotted with tourist resorts that struggle to remain financially solvent since the 2015 terrorist attacks in Sousse and Tunis that decimated Tunisia's tourism industry.

In Mahdia's old city, some remnants of the city's rich history remain: a renovated Fatimid mosque, an expansive cemetery, a sixteenth-century gatehouse guarding the only land entrance to the city, the imposing *Burj al-Kabir* ("Big Fort") from the Ottoman era,

[1] Ifriqiya roughly comprises the area of the Roman province of *Africa Proconsularis*, which stretched across modern-day Tunisia, eastern Algeria, and western Libya. In the middle ages, though, authors changed the boundaries of the territory to best suite their own agendas. The location of the city of Béjaïa, for example, alternated between being in Ifriqiya and the Maghreb (Morocco and western Algeria) depending on the author. Ramzi Rouighi, *The Making of a Mediterranean Emirate: Ifriqiya and Its Andalusis, 1200-1400* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 4–6.

and the ruins of the medieval fortifications that once enclosed the city. Most of the structures that dominated the peninsula during the Middle Ages, though, are gone and replaced with homes and infrastructure to support local industries. The remnants of fortifications once used to protect the city from Kharijites, Hammadids, Normans, Almohads, Hafsids, Spaniards, and Ottomans are now used to provide shade for fisherman. The majestic past of this port city, the heart of the region that one scholar dubbed the "Hub of the Mediterranean," is barely noticeable.[2]

This dissertation considers events that happened in and around Mahdia when it still had widespread political and economic importance as the capital of the Zirid dynasty and, later, as the crown jewel of the Norman Kingdom of Africa (1148-60). Mahdia's strategic position on a defensible peninsula in the central Mediterranean made it a highly desirable port. The Zirids, whose royal court was at Mahdia from 1057 to 1148, used the city as their base of operations from which to trade, conduct diplomacy, pillage, and conquer.[3] For much of this time, the Zirids were in frequent contact with the nascent Norman dynasty of Sicily, located some 220 miles across the Mediterranean at the equally profitable port city of Palermo. Under the rule of Duke Roger I and his son King Roger II, the Normans of Palermo established a formidable state and sought widespread commercial, military, and political power in the Mediterranean. At times, the Zirids and Normans cooperated to facilitate their political and commercial interests, primarily the exchange of Sicilian grain for gold that the Zirids procured through trade networks that

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[2] S.D. Goitein, "Medieval Tunisia: The Hub of the Mediterranean," in *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Boston: Leiden, 1966), 308–28.

[3] Dates that are not qualified are in the Common Era. All dates that are in the Hijra calendar are indicated with an "H" after the date and the corresponding CE dates in adjacent parentheses.

stretched to sub-Saharan Africa. At other times, they fought for control of their territories in conflicts that brought in polities from all sides of the Mediterranean.

In the 1110s and 1120s, the Zirid emirs of Ifriqiya exerted pressure on Roger II by winning military victories over Norman forces and by establishing strategic alliances with other Muslim powers in the southern Mediterranean. During the 1130s, though, Norman power in the Mediterranean increased due to the aggressive policies of Roger II and his admiral George of Antioch. The relationship between the Normans and Zirids soured in the 1140s when an unprecedented, nearly decade-long drought struck Ifriqiya. Local governors in Ifriqiya including the Zirids were forced to rely on Norman grain to feed their people despite being unable to afford these purchases. Emigration, starvation, and death spread throughout the region. As a result, Roger II and George of Antioch opportunistically conquered the Ifriqiyan coast from the Zirids and other local governors in the mid-late 1140s. Following the conquests of Mahdia, Sousse, Sfax, Gabès, and Tripoli in the summer of 1148, Roger II established the Norman Kingdom of Africa. The last Zirid emir, al-Hasan ibn ʿAli, fled his ancestral home. Roger II, meanwhile, continued to expand his imperial ambitions through attacks in the central and eastern Mediterranean until his death in 1154.[4]

[4] My decision to use the word "imperial" to describe Norman aspirations is tied to the Normans' desire to conquer Byzantium and present their regnal image in the style of a Byzantine Emperor. Britt, for example, argues that the "imperial traditions and customs of the Byzantine Empire were well-suited to [Roger II's] needs and the image he desired for his kingship." Likewise, Abulafia writes that the Sicilian kings were interested in silk production as "another of their many attempts to mimic Byzantine imperial practice." Karen Britt, "Roger II of Sicily: Rex, Basileus, and Khalif? Identity, Politics, and Propaganda in the Cappella Palatina," *Mediterranean Studies* 16 (2007): 26. David Abulafia, "The Crown and the Economy under Roger II and His Successors," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 37 (1983): 8. The Norman kings' use of the title "king" (Latin "*rex*" and Arabic "*malik*") was the result of the investiture that the Pope bestowed upon Roger II in 1130 and 1139. I discuss the use of the *rex* and *malik* at length in Chapter Four and Chapter Five (respectively).

The foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa led to meaningful changes in the region. The Normans forced local Arab or Berber governors to swear loyalty to them and, in some cases, Norman officials directly controlled affairs in Ifriqiyan cities. The Norman monarchs imposed new taxes on Muslims, installed garrisons to maintain order, minted coins in their name, encouraged the immigration of Christian traders, and financed improvements for churches. These actions caused a fundamental shift in the religious hierarchy of Ifriqiya in which Christians were demonstrably superior to Muslims. Such a change was not sustainable for the majority-Muslim population of the region. Spurred by the political, economic, and religious changes that the Normans had brought, most cities in Ifriqiya under the Normans' control revolted against their rule in 1156. Roger II's successor, William I, did little to bring these possessions back under Norman control. Four years later, in 1160, the last Norman stronghold in Ifriqiya, Mahdia, fell to the army of the Almohad Caliphate with the support of the deposed Zirid emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli.

Christian and Muslim authors held radically different perspectives about Norman rule in Ifriqiya. Individuals that supported or had close ties to the monarchy reckoned Roger II and William I to be *rex Africe* ("king of Africa"), a title that highlights the imperial ambitions of the Norman kings. The title was translated into the Arabic *malik Ifriqiya*, which reinforces the idea that the Normans sought to present their Ifriqiyan possessions as part of their larger kingdom. For most writers operating within or outside of the Kingdom of Sicily, though, Africa did not make its way into the monarchical title. Muslim writers in particular refused to acknowledge the Norman kings as the rightful

rulers of Ifriqiya. Chroniclers made deliberate rhetorical, linguistic, and grammatical choices to minimize the presence and impact of Norman rule. They furthermore framed their narratives as ones in which the Almohads "reconquered" Ifriqiya on behalf of Islam. Through these narratives, medieval Arabic chroniclers consciously undermined the complexity of the relationship between the Normans and Zirids by presenting it as a monolithic clash between Christianity and Islam.

Unlike previous scholarship to examine the Norman Kingdom of Africa, my dissertation will holistically examine the causes, course, and consequences of interfaith conflict and coexistence in Ifriqiya from the ascent of Roger II as Count of Sicily in 1112 up to fall of the Norman Kingdom of Africa in 1160. The relationship between the Normans, Zirids, and local Ifriqiyan lords is central to this narrative. But of great importance as well is the diverse array of historical actors and polities that were drawn into Ifriqiya: the Almohads of Morocco, the Fatimids of Egypt, the Byzantines of Constantinople, the Hammadids of Béjaïa (located in modern-day Algeria), Ibadi communities on the island of Djerba, Jewish and Christian merchants, crusaders, nobles, and monks to name a few. The examination of these diverse communities requires the analysis of an equally diverse pool of source materials. The written sources that I examine include chronicles, letters, poems, charters, and legal rulings written in a combination of Arabic, Latin, Judeo-Arabic, and Greek. Non-textual sources include archaeological studies, coinage, and environmental data. The synthesis of this diverse array of sources will permit a more thorough and nuanced examination of the Norman Kingdom of Africa than scholars have previously conducted.

This dissertation will challenge long-held narratives about medieval Ifriqiya and interfaith relationships in the medieval Mediterranean. The most detailed and widely-cited study of the Zirid dynasty, H.R. Idris' *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes*, draws on flawed French colonial scholarship and paints the Zirid dynasty in the twelfth century as one in its death-throes.[5] The reign of the final three Zirid emirs is one in which years of infighting between Berbers and Arabs culminates in the destruction of the Zirids at the hands of the Normans. I argue, though, that the Zirid dynasty was not as weak during the twelfth century as previous historians have written. Through the strategic formation of alliances with other Muslim powers in the Mediterranean, the Zirids dictated their relationship with Norman Sicily for much of the twelfth century. It was only in the 1140s, when an unprecedented drought struck Ifriqiya, that the Zirid dynasty began to crumble.

My research also questions the idea that the Norman Kingdom of Africa did not bring about significant change to Ifriqiya. Many historians have seen Norman rule in the region as either benevolent or hands-off, a perspective that does not adequately explain why revolts against Norman rule happened across their territories in Ifriqiya during the mid-1150s. The careful analysis of Arabic chronicles alongside sources produced in Sicily and the islands of Gozo, Malta, and Djerba reveals a different situation. While the Normans delegated much of the quotidian operations of governing their Ifriqiyan territories to local Muslim governors, Norman policies nonetheless produced noticeable and unfavorable changes for the governed. New taxes, the installation of Norman

[5] H.R. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 2 vols. (Limoges: A. Bontemps, 1962). Idris was the advisee of Robert Brunschvig and used his advisor's narrative history of the Hafsids as a template for his own history of the Zirids. Robert Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafsides, des origines à la fin du XVe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1940).

garrisons, and the increased presence of Christian merchants spurred economic recovery but also reversed the established hierarchy in Ifriqiya to favor Christians and disadvantage Muslims. When this reality was combined with pre-existing Islamic legal traditions and a history of local lords in Ifriqiya utilizing rhetoric of jihad against Christians, widespread revolts ensued.

Finally, the careful analysis of Arabic chronicles, particularly the *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* ("The Complete History") of Ibn al-Athir, reveals a disconnect between the individual events that these chroniclers narrate and the overarching narrative that they espouse. When describing instances of conflict between the Normans and Zirids, chroniclers often provide a rationale for why rulers acted in a certain way. In these entries, they acknowledge the plurality of factors that motivated Norman and Zirid lords, including economic distress, political ambitions, and religious tension. Simultaneously, though, these chroniclers always homogenize the Normans simply as "Franks" or "Christians," the same terms that are used to describe all other Christian powers. This rhetorical strategy thus paints the Norman assaults in Ifriqiya as one part of a monolithic Christian assault upon the lands of Islam. As a result, conflict between the Normans and Zirids, which these chroniclers acknowledge to be multifaceted and complex, is reduced to a clash between Christians and Muslims. Historians have yet to fully explore the competing philosophies that are at the heart of these indispensable sources. Reading and utilizing these chronicles as historical sources thus requires an acknowledgment of the potentially inharmonious authorial voices that inform our reading of them.

Translations and Colonial Constructions of Knowledge

At the heart of this dissertation is the examination of Latin and Arabic sources in dialogue with each other. This act requires the translation of these texts into English, a process that necessarily transforms the original text. Various theorists have argued that it is impossible to reproduce a text into another language while retaining its original message and nuance; translation inherently domesticates texts.[6] The writing that emerges from a translation is itself "the product of a historical moment" and the unique perspectives of the translator.[7] Of particular relevance to this study are French translations (both complete and partial) of Arabic texts made during the time of the French colonization of North Africa. Pierre Amédée Jaubert translated al-Idrisi's geography in 1836, Alphonse Rousseau translated al-Tijani's travels in 1852-1853, Edmond Fagnan translated Ibn ʿIdhari's chronicle in 1901, and William McGuckin de Slane translated Ibn Khaldun's chronicle in 1852-1856.[8] While we should recognize the

[6] Venuti, for example, argues that translations are an "interpretation of the foreign text" and that the act of translating is "basically ethnocentric… no matter how linguistically correct." Lawrence Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethic of Difference* (New Haven: Routledge, 1998), 81–82. See also Paul Ricoeur, "Imagination in Discourse and Action," in *Rethinking Imagination*, ed. Gillian Robinson and John Rundell (New York: Routledge, 1994). A. Berman, *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995).

[7] Abdelmajid Hannoum, "Translation and the Colonial Imaginary: Ibn Khaldūn Orientalist," *History and Theory* 42, no. 1 (February 2003): 65.

[8] William McGuckin de Slane, although born and educated in Ireland, worked for the French government cataloguing manuscripts in North Africa. In addition to his translation of Ibn Khaldun, he also translated al-Bakri's geography into French in 1858 and Ibn Khallikan's biographical dictionary into English in 1843-1871. Muhammad al-Idrisi, *Géographie d'Édrisi*, trans. Amédée Jaubert, 2 vols., Recueil de Voyages et de Mémoires 5 (Paris: Libraire de la Societé, 1836). al-Tijani, *Voyage du scheikh et-Tidjani dans la régence de Tunis pendant les années 706, 707 et 708 de l'hégire (1306-1309)*, trans. Alphonse Rousseau, Islamic Geography 186 (Frankfurt am Main: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, 1994). Ibn ʿIdhari al-Marrakushi, *Histoire de l'Afrique et de l'Espagne intitulée al-Bayano'l-Mogrib*, trans. E. Fagnan, 2 vols. (Algiers: Imprimerie Orientale Pierre Fontana, 1901). Ibn Khaldun, *Histoire des Berberes et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique Septentrionale*, trans. William McGuckin de Slane, 4 vols. (Alger: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1852). William McGuckin de Slane also translated the medieval writings of Ibn Khallikan and al-Bakri. Ibn Khallikan, *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary*, trans. William McGuckin de Slane,

incredible effort the above scholars accomplished in compiling and translating thousands of pages of Arabic manuscripts, we also need to be cognizant of the ways in which their worldviews informed the translations that they produced.

The translation of Ibn Khaldun's *Kitab al-ʿIbar* ("Book of Lessons") is particularly important. Although previous historians have recognized the importance of Ibn Khaldun's writing, it was not until the French Ministry of War published McGuckin de Slane's four-volume translation of Ibn Khaldun's *Histoire des Berbers* ("History of the Berbers") that it became popular among French colonial powers in North Africa and "formed the foundation of French historical knowledge" there.[9] De Slane's translation, however, is quite different from the Arabic text written by Ibn Khaldun. De Slane states that his translation includes the rectification of errors, the omission of repetitions, and the clarification of certain passages, thus forcing readers to subscribe to his amended version of the text whether they know it or not.[10] At the core of this amended narrative that De Slane manufactured was the idea of constant conflict between "the Arab nation and the Berber race" as well as the presentation of the French as heirs to the Roman Empire.[11]

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4 vols. (Paris: Bernard Quaritch, 1868). al-Bakri, *Description de l'Afrique septentrionale par el-Bekri*, trans. William McGuckin de Slane (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1859).

[9] Hannoum outlines the entire colonial discourse surrounding Ibn Khaldun, which comprises more than de Slane's translation, including book reviews, bibliographic entries, and summaries of his work. Hannoum, "Translation and the Colonial Imaginary: Ibn Khaldūn Orientalist," 62, 65–68.

[10] Ibn Khaldun, *Histoire des Berberes et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique Septentrionale*, trans. William McGuckin de Slane, vol. 1 (Alger: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1852), i–iii.

[11] Hannoum, "Translation and the Colonial Imaginary: Ibn Khaldūn Orientalist," 71. The English translation of the *Muqaddima* of Ibn Khaldun by Franz Rosenthal is similarly problematic. Aziz al-Azmeh argues that it is a "systematic misreading" of which the only saving grace is a comprehensive index. Aziz al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldūn: An Essay in Reinterpretation* (New York: Frank Cass, 1982), 167. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, ed. Franz Rosenthal, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

French government officials who read this translation thus found historical precedent for the conflicts in which they were engaging.[12]

The specific ways in which McGuckin de Slane amended Ibn Khaldun's Arabic text is explored at length in Abdelmajid Hannoum's "Translation and the Colonial Imaginary: Ibn Khaldûn Orientalist." Hannoum argues that the translation of Arabic words like *jīl* ("generation") and *umma* ("community") obfuscates the medieval Arabic connotations. Unlike the French translation of McGuckin de Slane, the original Arabic text of Ibn Khaldun is characterized "neither by racialism nor by a colonial ideology" but instead is a complex narrative of the generations of tribes in the Maghreb.[13] McGuckin de Slane's translation of Ibn Khaldun's *Book of Lessons* warped the original work into a form of colonial knowledge that reinforced modern French perspectives. Later scholars that used his translation to inform their perception of the worlds that these texts describe were likewise subscribing, willingly or not, to this colonial paradigm.

Hannoum's critical analysis of McGuckin de Slane's translation of Ibn Khaldun applies to other French colonial translations of medieval Arabic texts. A section from the introduction to Muhammad al-Idrisi's geography of the world illustrates the differences between the Arabic text, French colonial translations, and my own English translations.

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[12] French colonial scholars were particularly interested in the Roman conquest of North Africa. Although the specific evocations of Roman Africa varied depending on the colonial context in which the scholarship was written, there was a shared interest in placing ancient Roman history in dialogue with modern French history. Patricia Lorcin argues that rhetoric of "justification, admiration, and emulation" is found in "nearly all French accounts of Roman Africa" during the colonial period. She shows that this rhetoric evolved from one of referencing Roman activities to actively incorporating the legacy of Roman Africa into the "collective memory" of French Algeria. Patricia Lorcin, "Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria's Latin Past," *French Historical Studies* 25, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 295–329.

[13] Hannoum, "Translation and the Colonial Imaginary: Ibn Khaldūn Orientalist," 81.

Arabic Text from al-Idrisi's *Kitab nuzhat al-mushtaq fi'khtiraq al-'afaq*

فيمر مشرقا في جهة بلاد البربر وبشمال المغرب الأقصى إلى أن يمر بالمغرب الأوسط ويصل إلى أرض إفريقيا إلى وادي الرمل إلى أرض برقة وأرض لوبية ومراقية إلى أرض الاسكندرية إلى شمال أرض التيه إلى أرض فلسطين وسائر بلاد الشام إلى أن ينتهي طرفه إلى السويدية وهو نهايته.[14]

English translation of the Arabic text by the author

[The second large sea] runs eastward into the region of the lands of the Berbers and to the north of the most remote Maghreb until it runs to the middle Maghreb and arrives at the land of Ifriqiya to the Wadi al-Ramel, to the land of Barqa and the land of Lubiya and Maraqiyya, to the land of Alexandria in the northern part of the desert to the land of Palestine and the other lands of al-Sham until it finishes its border at al-Suwadiya, which is its end.

French translation of the Arabic text by Jaubert

[La seconde grande mer] a au levant les côtes du pays des Berbers au nord de l'extrême Afrique. Elle longe l'Afrique moyenne, l'Afrikia proprement dite jusqu'à la rivière des Sables, le pays de Barca, de Lounia, de Marakebe, et d'Alexandrie, la partie septentrionale du désert (entre l'Égypt et la Syrie), la Palestine et le reste de la Syrie, jusqu'à Souaidiè qui est à l'extrémité de cette mer. [15]

English translation of Jaubert's French translation by the author

[The second grand sea] goes to the east coast of the land of the Berbers to the north of extreme Africa. It runs along middle Africa, properly called Afrikia, up to the river of Sables, the country of Barca, of Lounia, of Marakebe, and of Alexandria, the northern part of the desert (between Egypt and Syria), Palestine and the rest of Syria, up to Souaidiè, which is at the end of this sea.

The difference between the medieval Arabic and colonial French texts is apparent here. Jaubert's French translation changes the place name of Wadi al-Ramel (literally the "Valley of Sands") to the river of Sables. Jaubert further provides an explanation of the extent of the desert by evoking the modern lands of Egypt and Syria, the former of which al-Idrisi does not use. Even if Jaubert intended for such insertions to be useful to the

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[14] Al-Idrisi, 1:10-11.

[15] Muhammad al-Idrisi, *Géographie d'Édrisi*, trans. Amédée Jaubert, vol. 1, Recueil de Voyages et de Mémoires 5 (Paris: Libraire de la Societé, 1836), 5–6.

reader, these elaborations not only distort the description provided by al-Idrisi but also reinforce colonial knowledge similar to McGuckin de Slane's distortion of Ibn Khaldun.

French colonial translations also take extreme liberties with the grammar of the original Arabic texts. Ibn Abi Dinar wrote a history of Tunis and Ifriqiya called *al-Muʿnis fi Akhbar Ifriqiya wa Tunis* during the late seventeenth century. French scholars Pellissier and Rémusat later composed a translation of the text in the middle of the nineteenth century, a time when, per the translators, "North Africa, which is the most beautiful area to become French, attracts the eyes of all of Europe."[16] This translation, though, is more of an artful interpretation of Ibn Abi Dinar's original text than a concerted attempt at maintaining the linguistic integrity of the Arabic text. Similar to the forms of colonial knowledge that Hannoum discussed, Pellissier and Rémusat imposed their own categories and narratives on the words of Ibn Abi Dinar. See the example below, in which Ibn Abi Dinar describes mounting tension between the Zirids and Normans during the early twelfth century:

> Arabic text from Ibn Abi Dinar's *al-Mu'nis fi Akhbar Ifriqiya wa Tunis*
> كبرت بينه وبين صاحب صقلية الوحشة فبعث اليه يهدده بغزوه المهدية فهيأ الامير علي مراكب في البحر واستخدم الاجناد وكثر من الرجال وعمر المدينة واخذ أهبة الحرب ومشت بينهما مراسلات بالتهديد من الجانبين واراد علي ان يستنصر بامير المسلمين يوسف بن تاشفين لان الامير عليا علم انه ليس له طاقة بصاحب صقلية فاخذ بالحذر منه بقية حياته الا انه وقع بينهما الصلح في الظاهر دون الباطن[17]
>
> English translation of Ibn Abi Dinar by the author
> Coldness between him [ʿAli] and the lord of Sicily increased. [Roger] sent to him destruction with his raid of Mahdia, so emir ʿAli prepared boats in the sea. He hired soldiers and a multitude of men. He restored the city and took preparation for war. There became between the two a correspondence with threats from both sides. ʿAli prepared by asking for help from the emir of Muslims, Yusuf ibn Tashfin, because the emir ʿAli knew that he was not under the power of the lord

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[16] Ibn Abi Dinar, *Histoire de l'Afrique de Moh'ammed-ben-Abi-el-Raïni-el-K'aïrouàni*, trans. E. Pellissier and Rémusat, Exploration scientifique de l'Algérie (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1845), iii.
[17] Ibn Abi Dinar, 91.

of Sicily. So he was on his guard against him for the remainder of his life. However, reconciliation between the two occurred ostensibly without deceit.

French translation of Ibn Abi Dinar by Pellissier and Rémusat
Il lui répondit sur le même ton, et travailla à se mettre en état de défense. Comme il ne se sentait pas le plus fort, il rechercha l'alliance de l'êmir Iouçef-ben-Tachfin. Cependant la guerre contre les chrétiens n'éclata pas sous son règne.[18]

English translation of Pellissier and Rémusat's French translation by the author
The king of Sicily was making great threats to ʿAli. He responded to him in the same tone and worked to defend his state. As he did not feel the strongest, he sought the alliance of the emir Yusuf ibn Tashfin. However, the war against the Christians did not explode under his reign.

The differences between the original Arabic text and the colonial French translation are clearly pronounced. They fundamentally alter the ways in which the reader perceives the relationship between the Zirid emir ʿAli and Roger II. The text of Ibn Abi Dinar describes ʿAli taking precautions against the looming threat of Roger II by building up an army, fortifying Mahdia, and making an alliance with Yusuf ibn Tashfin. Although the two later reconciled, ʿAli remained on guard for the rest of his reign. The French translation, however, presents ʿAli as a ruler who, because he did "not feel the strongest," sought out an alliance with the Almoravids. It further foreshadows the war between Roger II and the Zirids beyond what Ibn Abi Dinar wrote in the original Arabic. As such, the French translation alters the original Arabic to devalue the agency of the Zirids and make their defeat at the hands of Roger II seem inevitable.

Because so many historians up to this point have used French translations of Arabic texts when considering the interactions between Norman and Zirids, they have consequently based their notion of this history on flawed interpretations of the original

[18] Ibn Abi Dinar, *Histoire de l'Afrique de Moh'ammed-ben-Abi-el-Raïni-el-K'aïrouàni*, 152.

narratives. While we should acknowledge the contributions that these French scholars made by making Arabic-language sources more accessible to historians, we also need to recognize that these translations are often more reflective of the preoccupations of these colonial scholars than the original medieval authors. The need to evaluate the history of Norman Ifriqiya based on a careful analysis of the Arabic sources in their original language is thus paramount.

The Legacy of the *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula* of Michele Amari

French colonial historians were not the only group to translate medieval Arabic texts that pertain to Ifriqiya. The scholarship and translations of Italian historian Michele Amari remain foundational to both the study of the Norman Kingdom of Africa and medieval Sicily writ large. In 1854, Amari published *Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia*, a lengthy account of Sicilian history from the Muslim conquest of the island through the thirteenth century. Amari provides a narrative of the Norman invasion of North Africa through the synthesis of Arabic source materials, the first of its kind and one that remains a standard reference for scholars. A second edition of *Storia dei Muslmani di Sicilia* was released in the 1930s and an Arabic translation of the text was published in 2004.[19] Amari's continued significance is seen in the 2007 launch of the "Michele Amari Project," a collaboration between the *Fondazione Banco di Sicilia* and the Italian

[19] The 1854 original print of this book was revised and edited in a three-volume work in the 1930s. Michele Amari, *Storia dei musulmani di Sicilia*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Catania: Romeo Prampolini, 1939).

Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Cultural Heritage that aims to translate Italian literature into Arabic for distribution in Egypt and other Arabic-speaking countries.[20]

In addition to his foundational *Storia dei Muslmani di Sicilia*, Amari published a compilation of Arabic sources pertaining to Sicily in 1857 titled *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula* (henceforth *BAS*).[21] These sources were later translated into Italian in 1880, providing scholars without knowledge of Arabic a way to utilize these less-accessible sources.[22] The breadth of materials presented in both the Arabic and Italian-language *BAS* is impressive. Amari included Arabic-language chronicles, geographies, poems, and biographies in his collection. The comprehensiveness of these sources has meant that the *BAS* remains the standard collection of medieval Arabic sources for scholars writing about Norman involvement in Ifriqiya. Historians both with and without reading knowledge of Arabic – Abulafia, Brett, Cobb, and Wieruszowski to name a few – rely on Amari's work for the majority, if not all, of their primary Arabic sources pertaining to the Norman Kingdom of Africa.[23] Fortunately, Amari's translations of the medieval texts are much closer to the structure and meaning of the original Arabic than the colonial French scholars discussed above.

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[20] "La Fondazione del Bds promuove libri nei paesi arabi e intesta una biblioteca ad Amari," *La Repubblica*, October 9, 2007.
[21] Michele Amari, *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1857).
[22] Michele Amari, *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula, Versione Italiana*, 3 vols. (Torino: Ermanno Loescher, 1880).
[23] David Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 7 (1985): 26–49; Michael Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 43 (1995): 325–68; Paul Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Helene Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," in *History of the Crusades: The Later Crusades, 1189-1311*, ed. Harry Hazard, Robert Wolff, and Kenneth Setton, vol. 2, 6 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), 3–44.

While the *BAS* is an incredibly useful compilation, it is inadequate for the detailed examination of the Norman Kingdom of Africa for three main reasons. First, most entries in the *BAS* are excerpts from larger medieval works that consider topics much more expansive than medieval Sicily. As such, the perspectives, methodologies, and biases of the medieval authors are lost. Writers like Ibn Khaldun, Ibn al-Athir, and Muhammad al-Tijani laid out in explicit terms their philosophy for studying history in their respective writings, none of which are included in the *BAS*. Without understanding why, for whom, and the world in which these authors wrote, we are left with a rudimentary understanding of how these complex texts situated Norman Sicily in their larger narratives.

Second, the *BAS* only contains excerpts of chronicles that explicitly relate to Sicily, meaning that relevant information about the internal history of Ifriqiya is neglected. The excerpts in the *BAS* of Ibn al-Athir's *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*, for example, do not include entries about a 482H (1089-90) conflict between the Zirid emir Tamim and local Arab tribes around the city of Sousse or a 488H (1095-96) rebellion against Tamim's son, Yahya in Sfax.[24] The same is true of Ibn Khaldun's *Kitab al-ʿIbar*. While the original text includes a detailed dynastic history of the Zirid emirs of Ifriqiya, the *BAS* bastardizes the medieval narrative and only includes the parts relevant to the history of Sicily.[25] The reliance of scholars on entries from the *BAS* has thus reduced medieval Ifriqiyan history to one that is reliant upon the presence of Sicily. This perspective deprives the local lords of Ifriqiya, particularly the Zirids, of the agency they exercised independent of the Normans through the fall of Mahdia in 1160.

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[24] Ibn al-Athir, 10:179, 241-243.
[25] Amari, *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula*, 460–508.

Third, the *BAS* does not contain all the available Arabic sources pertaining to Norman involvement in Ifriqiya during the twelfth century. While it does contain an impressive array of medieval sources, the *BAS* does not include Fatimid sources from Egypt, Almohad ones from the Maghreb, or Ibadi ones from the island of Djerba. These sources provide valuable information about the relationship between Ifriqiya, Sicily, and other Mediterranean powers during the twelfth century. By focusing only on those sources found in the *BAS*, scholars have limited their examinations of Sicily and Ifriqiya to the immediate relationship between the Normans and Zirids at the expense of the broader Mediterranean context in which these powers were operating. My research will rectify the above problems by utilizing sources both within and outside of Amari's *BAS* and by appropriately contextualizing their content.

Competing Historiographies and their Implications

For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, French colonial scholars were the primary producers of scholarship about medieval Ifriqiya. The narrative to emerge from this tradition was one in which Ifriqiya was an anarchic, impoverished backwater following the invasions of the Banu Hilal in the 1050s and in which the Zirid dynasty fought in vain to re-establish its past glory. Known as the "École d'Alger" because of their work at the University of Algiers, scholars like E.F. Gautier, Roger Le Tourneau, and George Marçais were prominent figures in this historiographical school.[26] In the 1960s, though, a new crop of scholars began to contest this narrative. Through the

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[26] An overview of the French colonial tradition and its implications is found in David Prochaska, *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1–6.

pioneering work of historians like Michael Brett, a counter-narrative emerged in which authority in medieval Ifriqiya after the Hilalian invasions was less centralized but certainly not anarchic. This transition has meaningful implications for the study of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, for it forces historians to reassess the relative strength of the Zirid dynasty in the years leading up to the Norman conquests in Ifriqiya.

According to the French colonial narrative, the Zirid dynasty was at its peak at the beginning of the reign of al-Muʿizz ibn Badis (r. 1016-1062), who reigned over Ifriqiya during a time of ostentatious prosperity. Trouble for the Zirids began, though, when al-Muʿizz renounced his allegiance to the Fatimid Caliphate around 1049 and pledged loyalty to the Abbasid Caliphate. As punishment for this act of insubordination, the Fatimids unleashed the tribes of the Banu Hilal from Egypt to Ifriqiya. Upon arriving in Ifriqiya, the Banu Hilal wrought utter devastation and the region was "turned over to anarchy."[27] Ifriqiya dissolved into a patchwork of relatively autonomous city-states that fought due to ethnic and tribal divisions.[28] To these historians, divisions between ethnic

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[27] Julien elaborates that "lands made for the cultivation of cereals or fruit-growing were wrested from their proper use, villages and secondary towns were choked into ruin and agriculture was permitted to exist only in a narrow strip along the coast." Charles-André Julien, *History of North Africa*, trans. John Petrie (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 73. This idea was also mentioned in the earlier work of Amari. See Michele Amari, *Storia dei musulmani di Sicilia*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (Catania: Romeo Prampolini, 1939), 420. Roger le Tourneau, "North Africa to the Sixteenth Century," in *The Cambridge History of Islam: The Indian Sub-Continent, South-East Asia, Africa and the Muslim West*, ed. P.M. Holt, Ann Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, vol. 2a, 2b vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 211–37.

[28] Idris argues that "anarchy and insecurity spread further and further" following the Hilālian invasions. *EI2*, "Banu Ḵẖurāsān." Georges Marcais calls the whole situation "Ifrikiya in anarchy." *EI2*, "Riyāḥ." Georges Marçais, *La Berbérie musulmane et l'Orient au Moyen Age* (Aubier: Éditions Montaigne, 1946). Gautier similarly argues that the arrival of the Bedouins was an "immense catastrophe, the end of the world." E.F. Gautier, *Le passé de l'Afrique du nord: les siècles obscurs* (Paris: Payot, 1942), 412. E.F. Gautier, *Sahara: The Great Desert*, trans. Dorothy Mayhew (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935). Some authors outside of this French tradition also adhered to this perspective, see E.W. Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 59–60. S.D. Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 138. H.W. Hazard, "Moslem North Africa: 1049-1394," in *A History of the Crusades: The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, vol. 3, 6 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), 457–85.

groups like the Arabs (Banu Hilal) and Berbers (indigenous North Africans like the Zirids) as well as divisions within ethnic groups like the Zanata Berbers, Masmuda Berbers, and the Sanhajan Berbers precipitated a state of nearly constant conflict.[29]

This historiographical perspective, largely informed by the chronicle of fourteenth-century historian Ibn Khaldun, sees Ifriqiya as fractured and anarchic when the Normans began launching attacks against it during the first half of the twelfth century. H.R. Idris, whose two-volume work on the Zirid dynasty remains the standard reference work for the subject, similarly sees the twelfth century as one in which unprecedented political fragmentation and outside interference dooms the Zirids of Ifriqiya.[30] To Idris, the Zirid dynasty under its last three emirs (1108-1148) was but a shell of its former self and unable to combat the superior Normans, who used their considerable grain production as leverage against the starving Zirids.[31]

This narrative was popular among other groups of scholars during the middle of the twentieth century. S.D. Goitein, the preeminent historian of the Cairo Geniza, argued on the basis of merchant letters that Ifriqiya declined in importance over the course of the Middle Ages. Before the eleventh century, it was a hub of traffic for merchants trading

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[29] The Zirids and their Hammadid cousins were Sanhajan Berbers. For a general overview of Berber history, see Michael Brett and Elizabeth Fentress, *The Berbers* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 1997).
[30] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 303–406.
[31] The narrative of Hilalian devastation remains influential in the Tunisian public sphere. Two quotations from the Bardo National Museum illustrate this. The first reads, “The Zirids were faithful to the Fatimids upholding Shiʿism and maintaining the country in relative prosperity until 1049. At that time, the Ifriqiyan emir, al Muizz decided to return to Sunnism unleashing a terrible reaction from the caliph in Cairo who sent the Banu Hilal, tribes from southern Egypt, to overrun the country. With the Hilalian invasion the territorial unity of the country was broken. The Zirids controlled nothing but Mahdia.” The second reads, “The decision of the emir of Mahdia, Al-Muizz ibn Badis to break with Shiʿism and proclaim the return of Sunnism provoked reprisals from the caliph in Cairo: the Banu Hilal and the Banu Soulaym, Arab tribes from southern Egypt, were unleashed on Ifriqiya, devastating and looting the whole country. The economy was in ruins, agriculture was devastated and insecurity ensued.”

goods from Egypt to Spain and from sub-Saharan Africa to the rest of the Mediterranean. This prosperity did not last. The period from 1000 to 1160 was "one of economic decline, followed by catastrophes of unusual magnitude."[32] The arrival of the Banu Hilal was one such catastrophe that caused merchants to seek markets outside of Ifriqiya. Goitein mentions how "Tunisia succumbed to the devastations" of the Banu Hilal and "was laid waste" by the invading Hilalian hordes, which caused economic devastation in the region.[33] The relative scarcity or abundance of these Geniza documents largely informed Goitein's perspective about the decline of medieval Ifriqiya. Many commercial letters exist pertaining to trade with Sicily and Ifriqiya during the tenth and early half of the eleventh century. This number falls off dramatically in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries until, by 1150, these letters "decrease to a small trickle."[34] To Goitein, this decrease was an indicator of economic decline in Ifriqiya.

Other economic historians writing in the mid-twentieth century echo the narrative of Goitein and French colonial historians. Lombard used numismatic evidence to argue that Ifriqiya's wealth was dependent upon vast quantities of sub-Saharan gold that were traded across the Sahara desert.[35] This argument is furthered by Hazard, who uses a lack of Zirid coinage in the period after the arrival of the Banu Hilal to show that the region

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[32] Goitein, "Medieval Tunisia: The Hub of the Mediterranean," 311.
[33] S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 32, 235.
[34] Jessica Goldberg, "The Use and Abuse of Commercial Letters from the Cairo Geniza," *Journal of Medieval History* 38, no. 2 (June 2012): 128. See also Annliese Nef, "La Sicile dans la documentation de la Geniza Cairote (fin xe-xiiie): les réseaux attestés et leur nature," in *Espaces et réseaux en Méditerrannée (VIe-XVIe siècle): La configuration des réseaux*, ed. D Coulon, D Picard, and D Valérian, vol. 1, 2007, 273–92.
[35] Maurice Lombard, "Les bases monétaires d'une suprématie économique: l'or Musulman du VIII au XI siècle:," *Annales* 2, no. 2 (1947): 143–60.

was cut off from its much-needed gold supplies from the Sahara.[36] As such, the region declined and the markets for sub-Saharan gold were redirected to other places, primarily to the Maghreb. The implication of these arguments is that Ifriqiya was sustained on "commerce rather than agriculture."[37] When the supplies of gold in the region dried up in the wake of the Hilalian invasions, the entire region suffered and descended into anarchy.

Historians of the 1960s onward have tended to push back against this narrative. Jean Poncet and Abdullah Laroui were among the first to seriously question it. Poncet argues that problematic preconceptions about nomadism, sedentary life, and geographical determinism colored the work of previous historians, particularly H.R. Idris.[38] To Poncet, the fall of the Zirids is better explained by the threats that loomed on all sides of the Zirid dynasty beginning in the early-eleventh century: the Banu Hilal to the east, the Hammadids to the south, the Normans to the North, and various Berber/Arab tribes to the south. The Hilalian invasions from the east were one of a serious of threats that had long worked to destabilize the Zirid dynasty.[39] Laroui's work complements that of Poncet and broadly critiques French colonial scholarship as self-reinforcing and derisive of North

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[36] Harry Hazard, *The Numismatic History of Late Medieval North Africa* (New York: The American Numismatic Society, 1952), 9–10, 54–56. This theory is used in the work of Devisse with regard to the economic livelihood of the Almoravids and the Almohads. Jean Devisse, "Routes de Commerce et Échanges En Afrique Occidentale En Relation Avec La Mediterranée," *Revue D'histoire Économique et Sociale* 50, no. 1 (1972): 42–73.

[37] Michael Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD," *The Journal of African History* 10, no. 3 (1969): 349.

[38] Poncet encourages future historians to consider the Hilālian invasions in the context of the Hammadid, Almoravid, and Norman incursions into Ifriqiya instead of seeing the nomads as harbingers of destruction. Jean Poncet, "Encore à propos des hilaliens: la 'mise au point' de R. Idris," *Annales, Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 23, no. 3 (1968): 660–62.

[39] Rather than blaming the Banu Hilal for destroying Ifriqiya, this perspective (articulated succinctly in the quotation below by Laroui) argues that there were "grave political, financial and religious" problems there before the Hilalian invasion. Abdallah Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 152.

Africa as "a pure object… seen only through the eyes of its foreign conquerors."[40] In the context of medieval Ifriqiya, he argues that scholars had overstated the importance of ethnic and tribal conflict.[41] The internal conflicts in Ifriqiya attributed to tribal feuds should instead be seen as the result of the desire to control key trade routes.

Michael Brett's work in this revisionist school builds on and modifies the claims of Poncet. He argues that Poncet's work, while commendable for casting doubt on the catastrophic theory of the arrival of the Banu Hilal, still relies on the "gold theory" of Ifriqiyan prosperity that Lombard and Hazard had advocated.[42] Instead, Brett proposes a theory of economic activity that sees gold as one of many items involved in the trans-Saharan trade.[43] When this perspective is used, there is demonstrable evidence that demand for trade goods in Ifriqiya continued through the eleventh and twelfth centuries. As such, the idea of political collapse ought to instead be seen as a "process of economic development" whereby the most effective means of governance was through coastal city-states that traded with inland nomadic tribes.[44] Although some merchants moved their caravans to Maghrebi routes, merchants still frequented cities in Ifriqiya. Brett summarizes his argument on the development of the Ifriqiyan economy as follows:

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[40] Laroui seeks to avoid the pitfalls of juxtaposing "epochs in accordance with geographical, dynastic, or racial criterion" or advocating certain ideological models. Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay*, 10.
[41] Laroui goes so far as to say that the idea of these conflicts being based on tribe or race is based upon a "racist philosophy of history." The evidence from medieval scholars like al-Bakrī and al-Yaʿqubī indicates that the "population was becoming more homogenous" and not divided based on an Arab/Berber divide. Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay*, 152.
[42] Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD," 350.
[43] Brett's primary sources of evidence are the geographies of Ibn Hawqal, al-Bakri, and al-Idrisi, which provide conveniently spaced snapshots of the Ifriqiyan landscape during the tenth, elevent, and twelfth centuries (respectively).
[44] To Brett, "as far as international trade was concerned, the main effect [of the Hilalian invasion] would be the elimination of Qayrawān and its wealthy court." Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD," 353.

> The twelfth-century picture, therefore, would not seem to provide evidence of direct interference with trade in the desert. Instead it would seem possible to maintain the concept of variations in demand as the operative factor determining the direction of trade, and to affirm a diversification of markets as the predominant feature. Certain conclusions may then perhaps be drawn with regard to the evident changes in the pattern of supply. The reduction in the importance of Ifriqiya as a market seems to have been accompanied by a loss of commercial pre-eminence by the Djerid. Although economic activity in the region does not seem to have been unduly hampered, by the twelfth century merchants from other centres appear more predominant. In the west, the creation of a Moroccan market served by Moroccan merchants is perhaps sufficient explanation. On the other routes, centres deeper in the desert may have found themselves more strategically placed to handle a trade more diverse in outlets and direction.[45]

Alongside Brett's reinterpretation of the medieval Ifriqiyan economy, scholars have re-assessed the notion that the Hilalian invasions brought about catastrophe to the region. This has required the careful analysis of the writings of Ibn Khaldun, whose work was foundational for French colonial historians. Historians since the 1960s have sought to put the *Muqaddimah* ("Introduction") of Ibn Khaldun's *Kitab al-ʿIbar* ("Book of Lessons") into the context of his life and times.[46] They have also used sources outside of the *Kitab al-ʿIbar* to study the veracity of its contents and to better understand how Ibn Khaldun used earlier sources to achieve his narrative goals. These analyses have also shown that Ibn Khaldun's cyclical theory of *tārīkh* ("history"),[47] in which nomadic populations with

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[45] Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD," 363.

[46] Fischel, for example, considers Ibn Khaldun's work in Egypt with an eye to his treatment of non-Muslims through the analysis of sources that he utilized when writing the *Kitab al-ʿIbar*. Shatzmiller, meanwhile, locates Ibn Khaldun's writings in the dynastic tradition of the Marinids based out of Fes. Walter Joseph Fischel, *Ibn Khaldūn in Egypt: His Public Functions and His Historical Research, 1382-1406; a Study in Islamic Historiography* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967). Maya Shatzmiller, *L'historiographie Merinide: Ibn Khaldiin et Ses Contemporains* (Leiden: Brill, 1982).

[47] *Tārīkh* as a genre is difficult to define. On the surface, it appears like modern Western notions of "history." Scholars have convincingly argued, though, that there are nuances to *tārīkh* that make it distinct from history. Issues of geography, genealogy (much of which historians today would call fictitious), divine intervention, and events that happened to people and *dawlat* ("nations") all coalesce in this genre. A more involved discussion of the genre is found in Chapter Five. *EI2*, "Ta'rīkẖ." Michael Brett, "The Way of the

aṣabiyya ("group feeling") displace more lethargic sedentary ones, helped to inform his narrative history.[48] The arrival of the nomadic Banu Hilal into Ifriqiya, home of the sedentary Zirids, is an example of this tendency.

Michael Brett in particular has pushed back against the Khaldunian narrative of Hilalian destruction by showing that the defeat of the Zirids at the hands of the Banu Hilal was the subject of a concerted Fatimid propaganda movement. This critique involved the analysis of a letter sent by the Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir to the emir al-Sulayhi in Yemen, the contents of which prove that the Fatimids were not responsible for the defeat of the Zirids but rather that they sought to capitalize on the independent victory of the Arab tribes. Brett's argument also hinges on the mention of a branch of the Banu Hilal (the Banu Zughba) being present in the city of Tripoli in 429H (1037-38) as reported by the fourteenth-century writer al-Tijani.[49] Brett finds that the Fatimids had little role in the movement of the Banu Hilal into Ifriqiya beyond sending an envoy to their people in the middle of the eleventh century. Through a major propaganda effort on the part of the Fatimids, this envoy was turned "into a conqueror and his return into a triumph... passed into the annals of the Fatimids as a story of condign punishment visited upon the erring sultan through the agency of the Arabs."[50] This story became popular with later chroniclers like Ibn Khaldun, who fit the narrative into his idea of a "fourth age" of Arabs that swept into the North Africa with both "divine agency" and an

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Nomad," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 58, no. 2 (1995): 254–57.

[48] Historiographical overviews of work done on Ibn Khaldun are found in Brett, "The Way of the Nomad," 250–54. al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldūn: An Essay in Reinterpretation*.

[49] Michael Brett, "The Zughba at Tripoli, 429H (1037-8 A.D.)," *Libyan Studies; Annual Report of the Society for Libyan Studies* 6 (January 1974): 41.

[50] Brett, "The Way of the Nomad," 258.

established Arabian lineage.[51] This demonstrably mythologized narrative was at the heart of the French colonial school of scholarship.

Scholars specializing in the study of medieval Sicily and North Africa remain divided about the validity of the revisionist historiographical school. Leonard Chiarelli, Jeremy Johns, and Alex Metcalfe among others have presupposed the validity of the revisionist school in their recent works and used Brett's scholarship as the foundation for their own.[52] Nonetheless, some scholars still adhere to the older school of Hilalian anarchy. In his seminal article on the Norman Kingdom of Africa, for example, David Abulafia argues that "the coast of Tunisia and Tripolitania was devastated by an invading horde of Arabs."[53] Amar Baadj similarly laments the "pitiful state" of Ifriqiya in the twelfth century, which was a mere "patchwork of weak city-states and ephemeral tribal entities" that were no match for the invading Normans.[54] Charles Stanton, too, writes sweepingly that the years after the invasion of the Banu Hilal were ones in which "only famine ruled the region."[55] Although many specialists support the revisionist narrative of Ifriqiyan history, there remains enough dissent among prominent historians that more research is needed to validate or refute its claims.

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[51] Brett, "The Way of the Nomad," 261.
[52] See, for example, Leonard Chiarelli, *A History of Muslim Sicily* (Malta: Midsea Books, 2011). Jeremy Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*. David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[53] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 27.
[54] This perspective is explained largely by Baadj's admission that his narrative "followed the approach of Ibn Khaldūn" and drew heavily on the contents of his *Kitab al-'Ibar*. Amar Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)* (Boston: Brill, 2015), 47.
[55] Charles Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 103.

Scholars of the Cairo Geniza have similarly amended the economic narrative espoused by Goitein. Although the letters of the Cairo Geniza are a bountiful source of information, they also ought to be treated with caution. As advocated by Jessica Goldberg, the Geniza merchants were one of many groups operating in the Mediterranean and they did not necessarily dominate long-distance trade.[56] Their individual successes or failures do not have to indicate broad trends in commercial or economic history. Goldberg also argues that we must be aware of the nature of the "anti-archive" that comprises the Geniza documents, the letters of which were "written according to norms that differed from other kinds of correspondence."[57] The relative abundance of these letters does not necessarily indicate larger trends in the Mediterranean economy but rather trends for a group of intimately connected traders. Shlomo Simonsohn similarly writes that it is difficult to know whether the decline in Geniza documents from the twelfth century is due to a reduction in Jewish traders or reflects larger, systematic changes in trade.[58] Furthermore, there is still evidence of trade happening between Sicily, Egypt, and North Africa in the few Geniza letters that survive from this period.

For the study of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, these historiographical debates have substantial but unexamined consequences. Instead of considering the Zirid dynasty as a shell of its former self during the twelfth century, we are instead forced to confront a more dynamic situation in which the Zirids vied for power with other strong city-states in Ifriqiya. With this context, there is room to consider the Norman conquest as something

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[56] Jessica Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and Their Business World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 25–26.
[57] Goldberg, "The Use and Abuse of Commercial Letters from the Cairo Geniza," 127–29.
[58] Shlomo Simonsohn, *Between Scylla and Charybdis: The Jews in Sicily* (Boston: Brill, 2011), xxxvi–xli.

more than the seizure of lands from a crippled Zirid state. We can further see the Norman invasion as one of many foreign incursions that happened in Ifriqiya over the course of one hundred years – Hilalian, Hammadid, Norman, and Almohad – that all contributed to a changing Ifriqiyan landscape. Finally, we must consider the possibility that the Zirids were not wholly dependent on Sicilian grain during the early twelfth century, a perspective which permits greater room for the Zirids to act independently of their Norman neighbors.

As it stands, though, no scholar has studied in any detail the Norman Kingdom of Africa in light of these recent historiographical developments. The years leading to the formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa remain an understudied historical episode against which these meaningful yet unresolved historiographical debates can be judged. Previous scholarship on the topic has been extremely limited. Scholars of the late-nineteenth through mid-twentieth century touched on the topic on occasion, most often repeating the content of Michele Amari's foundational *Storia dei musulmani di Sicilia*, which summarized the evidence found in the main Arabic chronicles without critical analysis of their narratives.[59] Amari's work remained the standard reference for historians considering Norman-Zirid relations until the publication of H.R. Idris' monograph, *La Berbérie Orientale sous les Zīrīdes*.[60] Within this book, Idris painstakingly sifts through primarily Arabic source materials to reconstruct the history of the Zirid dynasty. His goal

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[59] Erich Caspar, *Roger II (1101-1154): und die Gründung der Normannisch-Sicilischen Monarchie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963). Ferdinand Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1907). K. Belkhodja, "Roger II en Ifriqiya," in *Africa* (Tunis: Secrétariat d'état aux affaires culturelles, 1966), 111–17.
[60] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962.

in this book is to create a cohesive historical narrative by considering how the various primary sources mesh or do not mesh with one another. This book is thus invaluable for its descriptions of the content of the Arabic chronicles. At the same time, though, it provides inadequate contextualization of these chronicles, suffers from adhering to the French colonial perspective on Ifriqiyan history, does not consider the documents of the Cairo Geniza, and shows little interest in Mediterranean affairs that do not relate specifically to the Zirid dynasty. While we should acknowledge the incredible work that Idris did in compiling and narrating these Arabic sources, we should also move beyond his methodologies to consider more holistically the perspectives of authors writing about the Norman conquests and how their words shaped the actions of historical actors.

Most other work on the Norman Kingdom of Africa comes in the form of articles. David Abulafia, Michael Brett, Henri Bresc, Jeremy Johns, and Brian Catlos have all written about some aspect of Norman involvement in Ifriqiya, although none have done so in a holistic manner.[61] For example, Brett's article "Muslim Justice under Infidel

[61] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean." [61] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD." See also Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD." Michael Brett, "Fitnat Al Qayrawan: A Study of Traditional Arabic Historiography" (London University, 1970). Brett, "The Zughba at Tripoli, 429H (1037-8 A.D.)." Michael Brett, "Arabs, Berbers and Holy Men in Southern Ifriqiya 650-750H/1250-1350AD," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 29 (1981): 533–59. Michael Brett, "The Way of the Peasant," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 47, no. 1 (1984): 44–56. Michael Brett, "The City-State in Medieval Ifriqiya: The Case of Tripoli," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 34 (1986): 69–94. Michael Brett, "The Armies of Ifriqiya, 1052-1160," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 48 (1997): 107–25. Henri Bresc, "Le royaume normand d'Afrique et l'archevêché de Mahdiyya," *Le partage du monde: échanges et colonisation dans la Méditerranée médiévale*, 1999, 347–66. Charles Dalli, "Bridging Europe and Africa: Norman Sicily's Other Kingdom," in *Bridging the Gaps: Sources, Methodology and Approaches to Religion in History*, ed. Joaquim Carvalho (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2008), 77–93. Brian Catlos, "Who Was Philip of Mahdia and Why Did He Have to Die? Confessional Identity and Political Power in the Twelfth-Century Mediterranean," *Mediterranean Chronicle* 1 (2011): 73–103. Giles Constable, "The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries," *Traditio* 9 (1953): 213–79. Jeremy Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," *Libyan Studies; Annual Report of the Society for Libyan Studies* XVIII (1987): 89–101.

Rule," analyzes medieval Islamic jurisprudence to justify why the cities of Ifriqiya revolted against Norman rule. Bresc's article, "Le royaume normand d'Afrique et l'archevêché de Mahdiyya," meanwhile focuses on the church in Norman Africa through an inventory of the Church of Mahdia. These articles, while all contributing to our collective knowledge of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, suffer from their scope and length. Each finds one perspective from which to approach the topic and uses a similarly limited pool of sources from which to analyze it. In particular, historians have largely confined themselves to the use of Michele Amari's *BAS*, which neglects important Arabic documents about the relationship between the Zirids, Normans, and other Mediterranean powers. A holistic analysis of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, which requires a book-length study, is yet to be written.

Finally, some scholars have considered the establishment of the Norman Kingdom of Africa in parts of their larger monographs. David Abulafia, Amar Baadj, Brian Catlos, Paul Cobb, Hubert Houben, Georges Jehel, Jeremy Johns, Donald Matthew, Alex Metcalfe, and Shlomo Simonsohn all analyze the conquests in their books.[62] For historians of Norman Sicily like Metcalfe, Norman Africa provides a case study against

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[62] David Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 59–89. Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 30–47. Brian Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, C. 1050-1614* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 90–117. Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*, 156–60. Hubert Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, trans. Graham Loud and Diane Milburn (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 76–84. Georges Jehel, *L'Italie et le Maghreb au moyen âge: conflits et échanges du VIIe au XVe siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2001). Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 290–92. Donald Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 58–59. Alex Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 160–80. Shlomo Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily: 383-1300* (Boston: Brill, 1997), xxxv–xxxviii.

which to judge the experiences of Sicilian Muslims. For historians of the Cairo Geniza like Simonsohn, it is one of the reasons that Geniza traders set their gaze eastward to Yemen and Indian Ocean during the twelfth century. For historians of the Mediterranean like Catlos, it is one of many dynamic Christian/Muslim relationships that formed during the era of the Crusades. Like the articles considered above, these pieces of scholarship are valuable for how they incorporate the Norman Kingdom of Africa into their narratives of Mediterranean history. At the same time, though, descriptions of this episode are short and tangential to the larger arguments of each author. This dissertation will complement the above scholarship by situating the causes, course, and consequences of Norman involvement in Ifriqiya at the center of its narrative.

This study of the Norman Kingdom of Africa will also contribute to the burgeoning field of medieval Mediterranean Studies. A new crop of scholars trained in the diverse languages of the Mediterranean such as Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, and Syriac are re-writing the history of the region to include perspectives underrepresented in previous scholars.[63] I am among this group of scholars that seeks to use these understudied languages to better understand the varied experiences of people who lived in the Middle Ages. My contribution is unique, though, because of its emphasis on the neflected region of Ifriqiya.

Scholarship in Mediterranean Studies thus far has skewed toward the study of al-

[63] There are too many academics contributing to the history of medieval Mediterranean Studies to name here. The work of the following scholars, though, is representative of this branch of scholarship: Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*.Brian Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, C. 1050-1614* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and Their Business World*. Christopher MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

Andalus while the neighboring region of Ifriqiya remains understudied.[64] Amar Baadj's *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya* (2015) and Ramzi Rouighi's *The Making of a Mediterranean Emirate* (2011) are the two most recent book-length studies devoted to the study of medieval Ifriqiya. Beyond this, the region is relegated to occasional asides and tangents in narratives that emphasize other geographies.[65] This is troubling, for although scholars acknowledge the centrality of Ifriqiya for the exchange of goods, people, and ideas (both on east-west and north-south axes) the region itself has not received sufficient attention to address these interactions. This study of the Norman Kingdom of Africa will thus complement existing work in the field of Mediterranean Studies that consider interfaith conflict and coexistence while simultaneously drawing attention to this understudied region. In doing so, this dissertation will demonstrate the meaningful connections that Ifriqiya had to other, better studied areas of the Mediterranean and will provide points of comparison for recent scholarship.

The Written and Material Sources

This dissertation will draw upon an array of written sources to complement existing scholarship about the Norman Kingdom of Africa.[66] Those in the Arabic language are the most plentiful and informative, particularly the works of Ibn al-Athir (d.

[64] See, for example, Brian Catlos, *The Victors and the Vanquished: Christians and Muslims of Catalonia and Aragon, 1050-1300* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). Maria Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (New York: Little Brown, 2003).
[65] This is seen particularly in Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, C. 1050-1614*. Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*.
[66] Idris' bibliography of sources that pertain to the Zirid dynasty is invaluable, though dated. H.R. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, vol. 1 (Limoges: A. Bontemps, 1962), xxix–lii.

1239), al-Tijani (d. ~1311), Ibn ʿIdhari (d. early 14th century), and Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406).[67] All of these authors, though, based their narratives about the formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa on the account of the Zirid prince Ibn Shaddad, whose chronicle is not extent and survives only in fragments embedded in later writings.[68] When reading later Arabic chronicles, we are therefore forced to bear in mind two layers of perspectives: Ibn Shaddad's and those of the later chroniclers.[69] This textual tradition makes it difficult to create one cohesive narrative about the Zirid dynasty during the first half of the twelfth century. Although the overarching narratives between chronicles are similar, there still exist conflicting names and dates that are impossible to verify through other sources. When Latin, Greek, Judeo-Arabic, and other Arabic sources are added to this picture, further discrepancies arise. In the following two chapters, I attempt to stitch together a history of Zirid Ifriqiya and Norman Sicily during the early twelfth century from all of this available evidence.

The embedded bias of Ibn Shaddad in many of the Arabic sources makes it imperative to seek out authors who did not utilize his now-lost chronicle as the primary source for their history of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. In the Arabic language,

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[67] Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi al-tarikh*, 13 vols. (Beirut, 1966). Muhammad al-Tijani, *al-Rihla* (Tunis, 1981). Ibn ʿIdhari al-Marrakushi, *al-Bayan al-Maghreb*, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Thaqāfa, 1967). Ibn Khaldun, *Kitab al-ʿibar*, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Fakir, 2001). Other Arabic works to use Ibn Shaddad include the chronicle of the encyclopedia of Mamluk scholar al-Nuwayri and the biographical dictionary of Ibn Khallikan. al-Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Arab fi funun al-adab*, 22 vols. (Cairo, 1924). Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-a'yan wa-anba' abna' al-zaman* (Tehran: ʿAli Akbar Publishing House, 1867).

[68] For information prior to 517H (1123-24), these chroniclers also used the writings of Zirid administrator Abu al-Salt, whose writings Ibn Shaddad also utilized in his work. For more information on Abu al-Salt, see Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 86–90.

[69] The careful consideration of these texts will help to explain how authors writing years after the end of the Norman Kingdom of Africa fit this episode into their larger historical narratives. This is discussed at length in Chapter Five.

Almohad letters and chronicles document the conquests of ʿAbd al-Muʿmin in Ifriqiya that brought an end to Norman dominion there.[70] The geographical compendium of Muhammad al-Idrisi considers the landscape of North Africa (and the known world) at the time that the Normans were conquering it.[71] Coinage minted with Arabic inscriptions in Norman-controlled Mahdia indicates how Roger II and William I sought to present their reign in Ifriqiya.[72] Legal rulings from North African scholars of Islamic jurisprudence indicate the legal framework in which these societies operated and give some justification for the reasons behind opposition to Norman rule there.[73] Finally, chronicles written by members of the Ibadi community (a school of Islam that many Muslims in the Middle Ages considered to be heretical) on the island of Djerba give some indication of the chaos caused by the incursions of the Normans into Ifriqiya.[74]

In this list of Arabic sources, one source is intentionally absent: the seventeenth-century *al-Muʿnis fi Akhbar Ifriqiya wa Tunis* ("The Emergence of the Events of Ifriqiya and Tunis") by Ibn Abi Dinar.[75] Historians who have previously considered the writings

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[70] Évariste Lévi-Provençal, *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade: fragments manuscrits du "legajo" 1919 du fonds arabe de l'escurial* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1928). Évariste Lévi-Provençal, *Un recueil de lettres officielles Almohades* (Paris: Librarie Larose, 1942). Ibn Abi Zar, *al-Anis al-mutrib bi rawd al-qirtas* (Dar al-mansur, 1972).

[71] Muhammad al-Idrisi, *Nuzhat al-mushtaq fi ikhtiraq al-afaq*, 2 vols. (Cairo: al-Thaqafa al-Denia, 1989).

[72] H.H. Abdul-Wahab, "Deux dinars normands de Mahdia," *Revue tunisienne* 1 (1930): 215–18.

[73] Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Wansharisi, *al-Miʿyar al-muʿrib wa al-jʿamiʿ al-mughrib ʿan fatawi ʿulamaʿ ifriqiya we al-andalus wa al-maghreb*, 13 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Maghrib al-Islami, 1981).

[74] Abu Zakariya, *Kitab siyar al-a'imma wa akhbarihim*, ed. Isma 'il al-'Arabi (Algiers: Diwan al-Matbu'at al-Jami'iyah, 1979).

[75] What little is known about Ibn Abi Dinar's life is limited to what appears in his chronicle. He was born in Qayrawan, educated in Sousse, and served as a judge in several Ifriqiyan cities during the mid-seventeenth century. *Al-Mu'nis fi Akhbar Ifriqiya wa Tunis* was written sometime later that century and provides a history of Ifriqiya from the Muslim conquests in the seventh century CE through the rule of the Ottomans. It is divided into eight chapters that describe in sequence the geography of Tunis, Ifriqiya, and then the chronological history of the region. The fifth chapter, "Concerning the Sanhajan Emirs," details the rise and fall of the Zirid dynasty and includes a description of the Norman conquests of Ifriqiya. Nabil Matar, *Europe Through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 216–17.

of Ibn Abi Dinar have done so uncritically and treated him as if he were an eyewitness to the events of the Norman conquests rather than an author writing centuries later.[76] Even Michael Brett, who acknowledges that Ibn Abi Dinar might have written with an eye toward the events of the seventeenth century, uses his chronicle extensively to narrate his history of Norman involvement in Ifriqiya.[77] The evidence suggests that Ibn Abi Dinar used the works of Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani, and Ibn Khaldun in his own work but merely intensified their anti-Norman vitriol.[78] His utility as a primary source for the formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa is thus limited at best. *Al-Muʿnis fi Akhbar Ifriqiya wa Tunis* is a historical document of the seventeenth century that brings with it a certain axe to grind against the Normans that deserves to be critically interrogated. For the narrative of Norman Africa, though, it does not bring anything new to the table.

Sources outside of the Arabic tradition provide valuable vantage points from which to consider the Norman Kingdom of Africa. The Latin chronicles of Geoffrey Malaterra, Robert of Torigny, Falco of Benevento (and the continuation of his work in the *Ferraria Chronicle*), Romuald of Salerno, William of Tyre, and (the so-called) Hugo Falcandus all mention Norman involvement in Ifriqiya in the context of the lives of Roger II and his successor William I.[79] The chronicle of William of Tyre in particular

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[76] See, for example, Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 33–35.

[77] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 335–39, 362–63.

[78] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:273.

[79] Geoffrey Malaterra, *De Rebus Gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae Comitis et Roberti Guiscardi Ducis Fratris Eius*, ed. Ernesto Pontieri, Rerum Italicarum Scriptores V (Bologna, 1927). English translation, Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger of Calabria and Sicily and of His Brother Duke Robert Guiscard*, trans. Kenneth Wolf (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005). Robert of Torigny, *Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I: The Chronicle of Robert of Torigny, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Michael-in-Peril-of-the-Sea*, ed. Richard Howlett, vol. 4, 4 vols., Rerum

provides information about Norman raids in Ifriqiya not found in other chronicles.[80] A Latin-Arabic legal document issued by Roger II's daughter, Empress Constance, indicates the varied treatment of Christian and Muslim populations in Norman-controlled Gozo and Malta.[81] A Greek poem written by an exiled Norman nobleman during the middle of the twelfth century laments being surrounded by Muslims on the islands of Malta and Gozo.[82] The Judeo-Arabic documents of the Cairo Geniza contain merchant letters from the middle of the twelfth century that detail how Norman rule adversely affected this community.[83] The inventory of the cathedral of Mahdia by Bishop Cosmas, who fled the city upon the Almohad conquest, shows the holdings of the short-lived Archbishopric of Mahdia.[84] Finally, treaties, chronicles, and charters from cities on the

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Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, or Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1889). Falcone di Benevento, *Chronicle Beneventanum: città e feudi nell'Italia dei Normanni*, ed. Edoardo D'Angelo (Florence: Sismel, 1998). Augustus Gaudenzi, *Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis S. Mariae de Ferraria Chronica et Ryccardi de Sancto Germano* (Napoli: Presso la Società, 1888). Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, ed. Carlo Garufi, vol. 7.1, Instito storico italia per il Medio Evo (Castello: S. Lapi, 1935). Partial English translation, Graham Loud, *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2012). William of Tyre's chronicle is found in *PL*, 201:209-1068. Ugo Falcando, *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*, ed. G.B. Siragusa, Fonti per la Storia d'Italia (Rome: Tipografi del Senato, 1897). Ugo Falcando, *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by "Hugo Falcandus," 1154-69*, trans. Graham Loud and Thomas Wiedemann (New York: Manchester University Press, 1998).

[80] William of Tyre's source for the happenings in Sicily is unknown. His chronicle is curious, though, both for what is included and what is excluded. As will be discussed, he mentions Norman raids in Ifriqiya and the meddling of Roger II in the politics of the Crusader states. He does not, though, discuss the Norman conquest of the Ifriqiyan littoral during the 1140s. This could be due to the unknown sources from which William wrote his chronicle. It could also be due to William's poor perception of the Normans as schemers and raiders. Whatever his motivations, Wieruszowski argued that William of Tyre was "usually well informed about events in southern Italy." Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 21.

[81] Nadia Jamil and Jeremy Johns, "A New Latin-Arabic Document from Norman Sicily (November 595 H/1198 CE)," in *The Heritage of Arabo-Islamic Learning: Studies Presented to Wadad Kadi*, ed. Maurice Pomerantz and Aram Shahin (Boston: Brill, 2015), 111–66.

[82] Joseph Busuttil, Stanley Fiorini, and Horatio C.R. Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo* (Malta: Best Print Co. Ltd, 2010).

[83] S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 6 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978). Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*. Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily: 383-1300*.

[84] Bresc, "Le royaume normand d'Afrique et l'archevêché de Mahdiyya." Original text found in Garofalo, *Tabularium regiae et imperialis Cappellae collegiatae divi Petri in regio panormitano Palatio*, n. XV.

Italian peninsula (prominently Pisa and Genoa) testify to the commercial partnerships that formed between Italy and North Africa in the twelfth century.[85]

Archaeological studies unfortunately offer little for the study of Norman Africa.[86] Excavations are chronically lacking in the region and the few that have taken place do not consider issues of urban growth/decline, settlement patterns, or changes in nomadic/sedentary lifestyles during the twelfth century.[87] Fortunately, though, environmental data from the Old World Drought Atlas (OWD) helps to fill the gaps left by the textual and archaeological record.[88] The OWDA is a collaborative project developed to put current global warming trends in historical context by providing an annual record of summer wetness and dryness throughout Europe and the Mediterranean over the last 2000 years.[89] The data in the OWDA used to reconstruct the climate of

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[85] De Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix et de commerce et documents divers concernant les relations des chrétiens avec les arabes de l'Afrique Septentrionale au moyen age*. Louis de Mas Latrie, "Documents sur l'histoire de l'Algérie et de l'Afrique septentrionale pendant le moyen âge: relations avec Pise," *Bibliothèque de l'école des Chartes* 5 (1849 1848): 134–54. Caffarus, *Annali Genovesi de Caffaro e de' suoi continuatori*, 73 vols. Annali Genovesi de Caffaro e de' suoi continuatori. Fonti per La Storia d'Italia Pubblicate dall'Istituto Storico Italiano (1859-1933, n.d.). A partial English translation is found in Martin Hall and Jonathan Phillips, eds., *Caffaro, Genoa and the Twelfth-Century Crusades*, Crusade Texts in Translation (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013).

[86] Lotfi Abdeljaoua's study of the epigraphy of Monastir, Qayrawan, Sfax, Sousse, and Tunis unfortunately did not unearth any relevant inscriptions for this study. Lotfi Abdeljaouad, "Inscriptions arabes des monuments islamiques des grandes villes de Tunisie: Monastir, Kairouan, Sfax, Sousse et Tunis" (Doctoral Dissertation, Université de Provence aix-Marseille, 2001).

[87] Jeremy Johns, "Islamic Archaeology at a Difficult Age," *Antiquity* 84 (2010): 1187–91. Lézine's study of Mahdia considers the remains of the city but scarcely considers the Normans. Alexandre Lézine, *Mahdiya: Recherches d'archaéologie islamique* (Librarie C. Klincksieck, 1965). Alexander Lézine, "Notes d'archéologie ifriqiyenne," *Revue des études islamiques*, no. 35 (1967): 69–70.

[88] OWDA maps are found in Appendix One. Edward Cook, "Old World Megadroughts and Pluvials during the Common Era," *Science Advances* 1, no. 10 (November 2015): 1–2.

[89] Before the publication of the OWDA, studies on the climate of medieval North Africa through dendrochronology were limited to the research of a few scholars. Prominent among them is Ramzi Touchan, a climate scientist based in the Laboratory for Tree-Ring Research at the University of Arizona. Ramzi Touchan et al., "Long Term Context for Recent Drought in Northwestern Africa," *Geophysical Research Letters* 35 (2008). Ramzi Touchan, D.M. Meko, and A Aloui, "Precipitation Reconstruction for Northwestern Tunisia from Tree Rings," *Journal of Arid Environments*, no. 72 (2008): 1887–96. Ramzi Touchan et al., "Spatiotemportal Drought Variability in Northwestern Africa over the Last Eight Centuries," *Journal of Climate Dynamics*, no. April (2010): 1–16. The work of Gourlay, February, Stock,

medieval North Africa is dendrochronological, meaning that it is taken from tree-rings.[90]

The metric that the OWDA uses to express relative wetness or dryness in a given region is the Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI). First developed in the 1960s to provide historical context for the droughts in the Midwestern United States during the 1930s, this calculation of relative rainfall has since been picked up by the US government's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and is the preferred metric for measuring long-term drought in historical perspective.[91] The PDSI measures drought along a spectrum that varies. The OWDA spans -4 to 4 but other maps, including

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and Stahle has helped to establish tree-ring chronologies for other regions of Africa. I.D. Gourlay, "Growth Ring Characteristics of Some African Acacia Species," *Journal of Tropical Ecology* 11, no. 1 (1995): 121–40. E.C. February and W.D. Stock, "An Assessment of the Dendrochronological Potential of Two Podocarpus Species," *Holocene* 8, no. 6 (1998): 747–50. D.W. Stahle et al., "Management Implications of Annual Growth Rings in Pterocarpus Angolensis from Zimbabwe," *Forest Ecology and Management* 124 (1999): 217–29.

[90] Information in this section has been taken and abridged from Matt King, "The Sword and the Sun: The Old World Drought Atlas as a Source for Medieval History," *Al-Masāq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 29, no. 3 (2017): 221–34.. Every year, living trees increase in size and leave behind a marker of their growth in the form of a tree ring. In years when trees are exposed to a large amount of water, they grow more and in years when exposed to less water, they grow less. This growth is reflected in the relative size of tree rings or the vast majority of trees. The distance between the rings is greater in years of feast and less in years of famine. Tree rings are divided into two sections: earlywood and latewood. Earlywood, which is typically wide and light in color, indicates growth during the spring and summer when the tree is growing quickly. Latewood, which is narrow and dark in color, indicates growth during the autumn and winter when the tree is growing slowly. There is variation in patterns of earlywood and latewood depending on the species of tree and climate of its location. Using trees of the same species and living in the same area, scholars can overlap or "cross-date" patterns in tree rings in order to reconstruct the relative growth of trees in an area of the world. Scholars utilize this technique to create a mastery chronology of tree growth in a given area into which previously undated sections of wood can be inserted. These master chronologies necessarily differ between tree species and geography. The data of the OWDA comprises hundreds of master chronologies that have been assembled together for the first time, providing an unprecedented glimpse of relative wetness and dryness in Europe and the Mediterranean over the last two thousand years. Overviews of techniques in dendrochronology can be found in M.G.L. Baillie, *A Slice through Time: Dendrochronology and Precision Dating* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1995). Fritz Hans Schweingruber, *Tree Rings: Basics and Applications of Dendrochronology* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989). James Speer, *Fundamentals of Tree-Ring Research* (Tuscan: University of Arizona Press, 2010). The "Principles of Dendrochronology" article on Dr. Henri D. Grissino-Mayer's website is useful and accessible at http://web.utk.edu/~grissino/principles.htm

[91] See "Drought Monitoring," last modified January 13th, 2015, http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/monitoring_and_data/drought.shtml and "Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI)," last modified 2016, https://climatedataguide.ucar.edu/climate-data/palmer-drought-severity-index-pdsi

ones of the United States, can span from -10 to 10. In all of these ranges, the number "0" represents a normal amount of rainfall for a given region during the summer, defined as June/July/August. In years with more rainfall, the shade of green darkens up to the "3," which indicates much higher rainfall than usual. Conversely, browner shades indicate progressively worse drought: "-2" indicates moderate drought, "-3" severe drought, and "-4" extreme drought.[92] The PDSI values in the OWDA are self-calibrating, meaning that they are adjusted according to the climate of a given region.[93] This is the same system used in other collaborative projects that study drought in historical perspective such as the North American Drought Atlas and the Monsoon Asia Drought Atlas.[94]

The OWDA provides compelling evidence about the relative dryness and wetness of parts of North Africa during the Middle Ages and beyond. However, it has limitations.[95] The PDSI assumes that all moisture received by a tree comes from rainfall, meaning that frost, snow, and manmade watering (including irrigation) are not considered when determining a given region's PDSI value. In addition, this metric does not provide

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[92] Cook briefly examines six episodes of well-documented historical drought from 1315 to 1921, comparing the data from the OWDA to the written sources. He finds a strong correlation between years of recorded drought in the documentary sources and unusually wet or dry years in the tree-ring data. For example, the OWDA shows extreme dryness over the area of the modern-day Czech Republic in the years 1540 and 1616, which corroborates the evidence given in written sources about terrible drought. The catastrophic European famine of 1315-1317 is also expressed in the OWDA, though this time by a "multiyear period of excessive wetness that made food production nearly impossible." Cook, "Old World Megadroughts and Pluvials during the Common Era," 2–6. R. Brázdīl, "Droughts in the Czech Lands, 1090-2012 AD," *Climate of the Past* 9, no. 4 (2013): 1985–2002. William Jordan, *The Great Famine: Northern Europe in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).
[93] Nathan Wells, Steve Goddard, and Michael Hayes, "A Self-Calibrating Palmer Drought Severity Index," *Journal of Climate*, June 2004.
[94] The NADA is accessible at http://iridl.ldeo.columbia.edu/SOURCES/.LDEO/.TRL/.NADA2004/.pdsi-atlas.html and the MADA at https://iridl.ldeo.columbia.edu/SOURCES/.LDEO/.TRL/.MADA/figviewer.html?plottype=colors
[95] William Alley, "The Palmer Drought Severity Index: Limitations and Assumptions," *Journal of Climate and Applied Meteorology* 23 (July 1984): 1100–1109. T.R. Heddinghaus and P. Sabol, "A Review of the Palmer Drought Severity Index and Where Do We Go from Here?," *Proceedings, 7th Conference on Applied Climatology*, September 1991, 242–46.

evidence for how other crops responded to changes in precipitation or, just as importantly, how people who relied on these crops adapted to changing environments. PDSI alone also does not inform us of the kind of agricultural or pastoral work that was occurring at a given place in time - only what the relative precipitation was. Other factors that influence agricultural and pastoral production like pestilence, trade, and warfare have no place in the PDSI and must be considered through the consideration of other evidence like the written record.[96] For the study of medieval Ifriqiya, though, where environmental data is limited to occasional mention of weather patterns in chronicle, the OWDA is invaluable. The annual data that it provides for the region permits the evaluation of how larger climatic patterns influenced the relationship between the Normans and Zirids.

There is thus a sizeable body of evidence through which scholars can analyze the Norman Kingdom of Africa. While these combined sources provide sufficient information to create an overarching narrative about the relationship between the Normans, Zirids, and other local lords in Ifriqiya, at times there are sizeable gaps in it. This is particularly true of the islands that the Normans conquered in the central Mediterranean and of cities on the Ifriqiyan littoral that were under the control of dynasties other than the Zirids. In the following chapters, I have been forthcoming about these narrative gaps and have assessed what might have happened during the times not covered in the chronicles. I have done this largely by analyzing later entries in the sources

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[96] Scholars have used various other methods including satellite imagery and land degredation to consider climate change in North Africa. See, for example, Benjamin Kedar, "The Arab Conquests and Agriculture: A Seventh-Century Apocalypse, Satellite Imagery, and Palynology," *Asian and African Studies* 19 (1985): 1–15. Jean-Louis Ballais, "Conquests and Land Degredation in the Eastern Maghreb during Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages," in *The Archaeology of Drylands: Living at the Margin* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 125–36.

and drawing comparisons with locations for which there is more surviving evidence. I have also tended to see gaps in the written sources as indicative of times of relative peace. Since most of the entries from these texts revolve around instances of conflict, it stands to reason that years for which there are no entries were years in which no conflicts worth describing occurred.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation includes five chapters that analyze the Norman-Zirid relationship in the context of the medieval Mediterranean during the twelfth century. Chapter One examines the Normans and Zirids during the time preceding the Norman conquest of Djerba in 529H (1134-35). Although some scholars have considered this period to be one that saw the decline of the Zirid dynasty and the ascent of the Normans, this chapter shows that this was not the case. The Zirid emirs dictated the terms of their political relationship with the Normans during the early twelfth century through the establishment of alliances with other Muslim powers like the Almoravids. The few surviving Arabic works from the Zirid court during this time portray them as a regional powerhouse infused with the power to unite other Muslim polities to them under the banner of jihad. The Normans under Roger II, meanwhile, did not exhibit a cohesive policy toward Ifriqiya. Instead, the region was one of many fronts on the Mediterranean in which Roger opportunistically sought to expand his influence.

Chapter Two explores the collapse of the Zirid dynasty in 543H (1148-49), the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, and the subsequent fall of Norman

possessions in Ifriqiya in 554H (1159-60). In the years after their conquest of Djerba, Roger II and his admiral George of Antioch used Ifriqiya's exploitable dependence on Sicilian grain to their advantage. The deterioration of the Zirids' alliance with the Almoravids, a devastating decade-long drought in Ifriqiya, and dissent among local governors weakened Zirid power and permitted the Normans to conquer the littoral of Ifriqiya from Tripoli up to Tunis. The Normans' hold on these cities, though, did not last. With the death of Roger II and George of Antioch in the early 1150s, power in Sicily passed to William I and his admiral Maio of Bari. Soon after, popular unrest in Ifriqiya manifested itself in widespread rebellion in the mid-1150s, which William was unable to suppress. The last Norman possession in Ifriqiya, the city of Mahdia, fell in 554H (1159-60) to the Almohads. Upon capturing the city, the Almohad caliph ʿAbd al-Muʿmin restored the deposed Zirid emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli to his ancestral home as an Almohad regional governor.

Chapter Three considers how the Normans governed their African territories and how these conquests impacted the lives of those living in Ifriqiya. King Roger II and William I ruled their African territories through local Arab/Berber governors, who were appointed to their positions through traditional Islamic practices like the bestowal of robes of honor. In almost all the territories that they governed, the Normans played little role in the day-to-day management of cities. It was only in the capital of Mahdia and the islands of the central Mediterranean that the Normans played an active role in governance. Nonetheless, there were significant structural changes that happened because of Norman involvement in the region. Jewish merchants, deterred by years of violence

between the Normans and Zirids, forsook the ports of Ifriqiya, which allowed Christian merchants more room to trade there. The Norman kings minted their own coinage in Mahdia, installed garrisons in Ifriqiyan cities, and changed the tax structure to benefit Christians. These larger societal changes, when combined with prevailing Islamic legal opinions about Christian overlordship over Muslims and previous instances of Muslim leaders in Ifriqiya uniting against Christian aggressors, led to the uprisings in the middle of the 1150s that brought an end to Norman rule in every city but Mahdia.

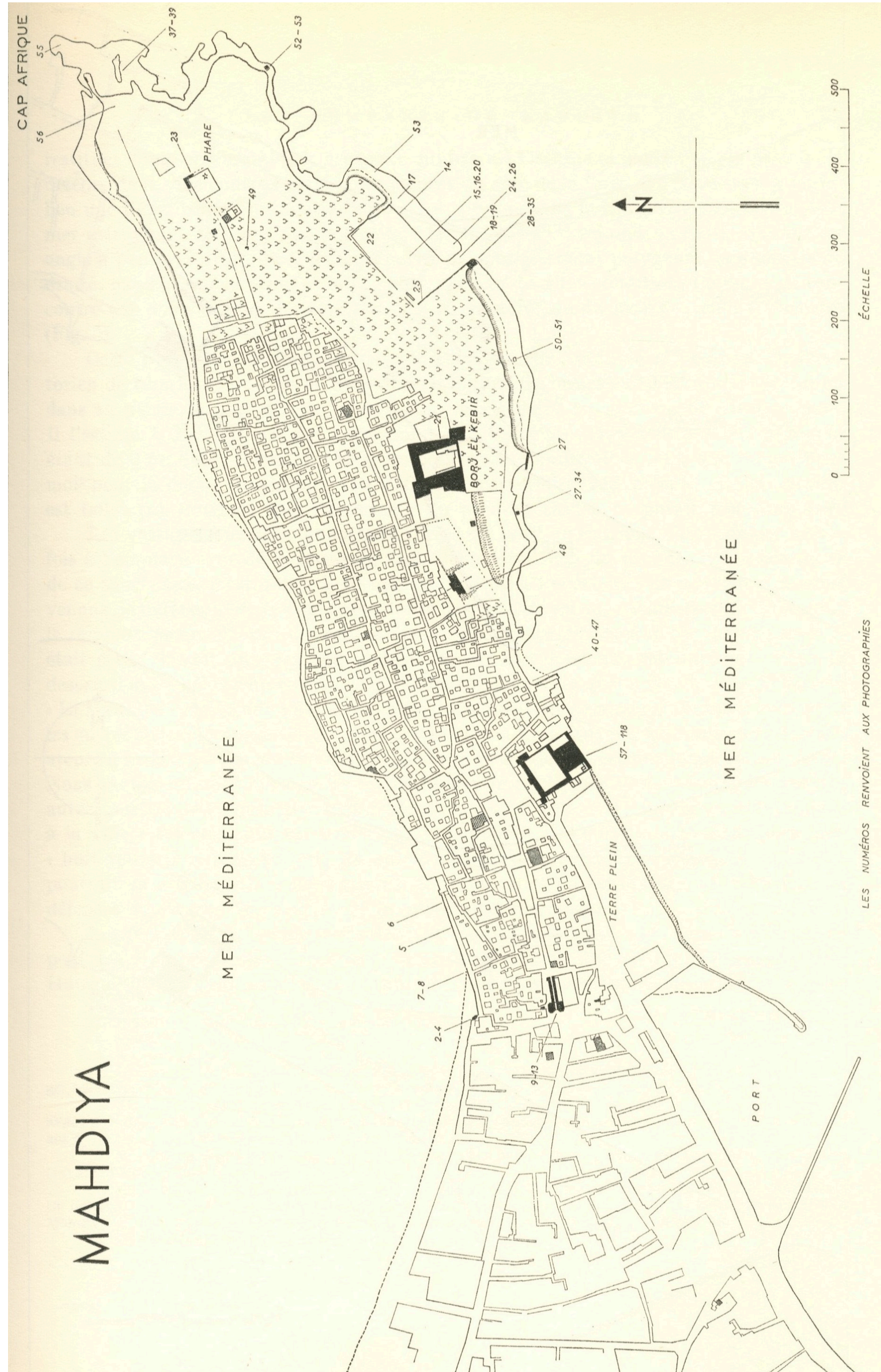
Chapter Four evaluates how the Norman monarchs interpreted their conquests in Ifriqiya through the examination of the title *rex Africe* ("King of Africa"), which is found in multiple texts in Norman lands. The analysis of this title allows us to better evaluate whether there was such a thing as the Norman Kingdom of Africa, the very existence of which implies a king. Although most writers within the Kingdom of Sicily acknowledged their kings as only ruling over lands in Sicily and Italy, a conspicuous minority refers to them also as the kings of Africa. Members of this small group all had demonstrable connections to the Norman monarchy and used the title to show the regnal power of Roger II and William I. Anecdotal evidence from later chroniclers further indicates that the Normans boasted of suppressing Africa through inscriptions on swords and seals. This study shows that there was a Norman Kingdom of Africa among certain individuals and circles within Norman lands.

Chapter Five turns to Arabic-language evidence to consider how individuals outside of the Kingdom of Sicily perceived the Normans' conquests in Ifriqiya. There is limited evidence to suggest that the title *rex Africe* was translated and used in the Arabic

as *malik Ifriqiya* during the lifetimes of Roger II and William I. Later Muslim writers like Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani, and Ibn Khaldun, though, were unwilling to bestow the title of *malik* ("king") upon the Normans. Instead, these authors saw the Normans as usurpers and occupiers of a territory that rightfully belonged to the larger Muslim community, a perspective informed by the earlier chronicle of Ibn Shaddad. Although each of these authors had their own individual agendas that informed their histories, they nonetheless presented the Normans as part of a monolithic "Frankish" assault upon the lands of Islam the spanned from Iberia to the Middle East. For some chroniclers, this notion of a Frankish assault led them to see the Almohad conquest of Ifriqiya as a "reconquest" on behalf of Islam. This study reveals the multilayered lenses through which our primary narratives about the Norman Kingdom of Africa were constructed and the need to examine Arabic chroniclers holistically and with an eye toward authorial agenda.

Map One – Cities and Islands of the Central Mediterranean

Map Two – Mahdia Under the Zirids



Lézine, Alexandre. *Mahdiya: Recherches d'archaéologie islamique*. Librarie C. Klincksieck, 1965. Page 19.

Chapter One

Sicily, Ifriqiya, and the Mediterranean: 1112-1135

In his book *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe - XIIe siècles*, H.R. Idris titled his chapter on the reign of the last three Zirid emirs, "The Agony."[1] In this chapter, Idris cataloged the slow death of the Zirid dynasty due to infighting between the petty tyrants of Ifriqiya and external threats like the Normans. Conversely, in his book *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, Charles Stanton titled his chapter on the reign of Roger II of Sicily "The Apogee."[2] Stanton's work traced the ascendency of the Norman navy in the twelfth century under the direction of Roger II and his advisers, whose campaigns ushered in a time of western naval supremacy in the Mediterranean.

The historical trajectories of H.R. Idris and Charles Stanton are common narratives for the Zirid and Norman dynasties in the twelfth century. The fall of the last Zirid emirs of Ifriqiya contrasts with the rise of King Roger II of Sicily and the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. When considering these narratives, though, we must bear in mind that nearly all the primary and secondary sources that detail the events of Ifriqiya and Sicily during the first half of the twelfth century were written well after this time. As such, both medieval and modern authors have had the benefit of hindsight. The Arabic chroniclers wrote with the knowledge that the Zirid dynasty fell, that the Normans seized power on the littoral of Ifriqiya, and that the Almohads conquered Norman possessions soon after. The Latin chroniclers knew that

[1] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:303.
[2] Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 67.

Roger's involvement in Africa would lead to his eventual conquests and that his reign would see the ascendency of Sicily as a dominant force in the Mediterranean. Historians like Idris and Stanton, among others, tend to follow this trajectory uncritically.

I argue that this narrative of Zirid and Norman history anachronistically imposes trajectories of decline and fall that are not reflective of how historical actors saw these events transpiring. Medieval Arabic chroniclers like Ibn al-Athir, Ibn Khaldun, Ibn ʿIdhari, and Muhammad al-Tijani describe how the Zirids utilized strategic alliances with other Muslim powers on the Mediterranean like the Almoravid dynasty to exert political and military pressure on the Normans of Sicily. These chroniclers also report multiple Zirid victories over the Normans and lords in Ifriqiya during the 1110s and 1120s. Through the careful analysis of medieval Arabic texts, particularly an 1123 letter from the Zirid court preserved in the travelogue of Muhammad al-Tijani, I will give nuance to our understanding of the decline of the Zirid dynasty by highlighting its strength in the central Mediterranean in the years leading up to the Norman conquest of the island of Djerba in 529H (1134-35).

At the heart of this argument is the detailed examination of the relationship between Roger II of Sicily and the last three Zirid emirs of Ifriqiya – Yahya ibn Tamim (1108-16), ʿAli ibn Yahya (1116-21), and al-Hasan ibn ʿAli (1121-48). During the early twelfth century, Roger and the Zirid emirs were engaged in a dynamic relationship, sometimes peaceful and sometimes hostile, that involved historical actors from every side of the Mediterranean. Prior to the Norman conquest of Djerba in 529H (1134-35), Roger II did not exhibit a cohesive plan of action with regard to Ifriqiya. Instead, the Zirid

emirs, particularly al-Hasan ibn ʿAli, exerted diplomatic and military pressure on him that resulted in multiple Zirid victories. It was only in the years after the ascent of George of Antioch as the grand admiral of Roger II in 1126 that the balance of power began to shift in favor of the Normans. Four events in the early twelfth century help to illustrate this transition: an encounter between the Norman and Zirid navies in 511H (1117-18) outside of Gabès, a decisive Zirid victory at the fortress of al-Dimas in 517H (1123-24), an Almoravid raid against Sicily in 521H (1127-28), and Norman intervention on behalf of the Zirids at Mahdia in 529H (1134-35).

Historical Background: The Normans in Sicily and Southern Italy

The group that would come to be known as the "Normans" first arrived in Italy at the beginning of the eleventh century when a party of pilgrims, having traveled from Normandy in France to the Holy Land on pilgrimage, landed in southern Italy on their way home.[3] At the time of the arrival of this first group of Normans, southern Italy and Sicily were politically, religiously, and culturally divided.[4] Byzantine lords controlled

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[3] The information that follows in this section is readily accessible in a number of works on Norman rule in Sicily and southern Italy. For recent overviews of the period, see Michael Brett, "The Central Lands of North Africa and Sicily, until the Beginning of the Almohad Period," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, ed. Maribel Fierro (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 48–65. Chiarelli, *A History of Muslim Sicily*. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 8–29. Hugh Kennedy, "Sicily and Al-Andalus under Muslim Rule," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 3, 7 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 646–69. Graham Loud, "Southern Italy in the Eleventh Century," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 4.2, 7 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 94–119. Graham Loud, "Norman Sicily in the Twelfth Century," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. David Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith, vol. 4.2, 7 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 442–74. Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, 9–32.

[4] The most detailed chronicles of the Norman conquests of the eleventh century were all written near the end of the century and present the Normans as divinely ordained conquerors. Antonio Pagano, ed., *Il poema Gesta Roberti Wiscardi di Guglielmo Pugliese* (Naples: Stab. tipostereotipo S. Morano, 1909). Jacques Joseph Champollion-Figeac, ed., *L'Ystoire de li Normant et la chronique de Robert Viscart* (Paris:

lands in Apulia and Calabria, Muslim lords governed primarily in Sicily, and Lombard rulers reigned in small principalities scattered throughout the rest of the region. The peoples over whom these lords ruled were an equally diverse mix of Lombards, Greeks, Arabs, and Berbers who practiced various forms of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.[5]

It was into this milieu of peoples that the Normans entered when a local Lombard lord recruited Norman knights to fight against his local Muslim rivals on the Italian peninsula. Successive waves of Normans sailed to Italy to fight on behalf of the Lombards and, eventually, to fight for their own territories in mainland Italy. By the middle of the eleventh century, the Normans had become potent political and military forces on the peninsula.[6] The brothers William "Iron Arm" and Drogo, both of whom were sons of a petty lord from Normandy named Tancred de Hauteville, were particularly successful at carving out territories for themselves.[7] The brothers were the first Norman Counts of Apulia and their successors would continue to expand their landholdings. However, these prizes came at a cost. Rapid Norman expansion in southern Italy marginalized native Lombard lords, Byzantine lords, a wary Papacy, and the Holy

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L'imprimerie de Crapelet, 1835). Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae comitis et Roberti Guiscardi ducis fratris eius*.

[5] Loud, "Southern Italy in the Eleventh Century," 94–97. Dividing populations in Sicily and southern Italy on the basis of religious and/or ethnic identity is fraught with problems. See Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 67–70. Ramzi Rouighi, "The Berbers of the Arabs," *Studia Islamica* 1 (2011): 67–101.

[6] During the ninth through eleventh centuries, trade routes existed between southern Italy, particularly Amalfi, that circulated across the eastern Mediterranean. Barbara Kreutz speculates that grain and slaves (the former of which was bought from nearby Salerno) were two of the major exports in Amalfi in this time. Upon the Norman conquest of Sicily, the island replaced Amalfi as the major exporter of grain on the Italian Peninsula. Barbara Kreutz, "Ghost Ships and Phantom Cargoes: Reconstructing Early Amalfitan Trade," *Journal of Medieval History* 20 (1994): 352–56.

[7] William and Drogo made a brief foray into Sicily at the request of the Lombard Prince Guaimar IV to help the Byzantines conquer the island from the Muslims there. However, following a dispute concerning the distribution of the spoils of war, the brothers departed Sicily.

Roman Empire.[8] The relationship between Norman lords and the Papacy was particularly tense. Pope Nicholas II, for example, only agreed to recognize Norman lordship in Apulia after the Normans defeated him decisively at the Battle of Civitate in 1053.

Among the Norman lords that Pope Nicholas II recognized after Civitate was another of Tancred of Hauteville's sons, Robert Guiscard ("The Fox"). Robert and his brother Roger consolidated their reign in the region of Calabria in the mid-eleventh century, culminating in Nicholas II granting Guiscard the title of "duke of Apulia, Calabria and Sicily" in 1059. Roger served (in theory) as the Count of Sicily and vassal of Robert. This was an optimistic title granted by the Pope, for Sicily had yet to be conquered by Robert and would not even be conquered during his lifetime. The brothers spent the next several years campaigning in southern Italy before launching an attack on the eastern coast of Sicily in 1061.

On the eve of Robert and Roger's arrival in Sicily, the island was divided among a number of petty Muslim lords, none of whom had authority over the entire island. Since the ninth century, a series of Muslim dynasties – the Aghlabids, Fatimids, and Kalbids – with varying degrees of centralized authority had controlled Sicily.[9] These dynasties had introduced new agricultural techniques to Sicily and facilitated trade with other powers in the Mediterranean, leading to growing prosperity and dramatic population increases

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[8] These various communities and their responses to Norman aggression are considered in Barbara Kreutz, *Before the Normans: Southern Italy in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 150–58.

[9] See Mohamed Talbi, *Emirat Aghlabide* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1967). Michael Brett, *The Rise of the Fatimids: The World of the Mediterranean and the Middle East in the Fourth Century to the Hijra, Tenth Century CE* (Boston: Brill, 2001). The Arabic chronicles of Ibn Khaldun, Ibn al-Athir, Ibn ʿIdhari, and al-Nuwayri provide the most detailed histories of Muslim Sicily.

during the tenth and eleventh centuries.[10] Under the Romans and Byzantines, Sicily had primarily been a grain-producing province. However, under Muslim rule, it began to produce a variety of trade goods including grain, rice, sugar cane, dates, citrus fruits, papyrus, silk, and cotton.[11] With this increase in trade goods came commerce with various groups in the Mediterranean. Diverse peoples and goods flowed through Sicily from North Africa, Spain, the Italian Peninsula, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Levant. The exchange of Sicilian agricultural goods for Ifriqiyan gold and slaves was of particular importance. By the time of the Normans' arrival on the island in 1061, it is likely that Ifriqiya was already reliant to some degree on Sicilian grain.[12]

With these population increases came increased Islamization in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Historians estimate that by the time of the Normans' arrival in Sicily in the middle of the eleventh century, the island was comprised predominately of Muslims, although Christian and Jewish populations survived on the eastern edge of the island in urban environments.[13] In certain areas, there was a degree of syncretism between these faiths. For example, the tenth-century Muslim traveler Ibn Hawqal was

[10] In Southern Italy, meanwhile, Amalfi was the most prosperous port during the ninth and tenth centuries. Citarella argues that the port was "unique and had no parallel in the economy of the High Middle Ages" because of its role in facilitating trade between Italy, the Byzantine Empire, and North Africa. At the same time, though, the city's reliance on this trade ultimately led to its eclipse by ports in Sicily and elsewhere in Italy. Armando Citarella, "Merchants, Markets and Merchandise in Southern Italy in the High Middle Ages," in *Mercati e mercanti nell'alto medioevo: l'area Euroasiatica e l'area Mediterranea* (Spoleto: La Sede del Centro, 1993), 281.

[11] Kennedy, "Sicily and Al-Andalus under Muslim Rule," 668. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 12. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 1978.

[12] Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD," 348.

[13] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 12. Metcalfe argues that, "it is likely that, by the mid-eleventh century, Sicily was mainly Muslim and almost everyone understood Arabic." Alex Metcalfe, "The Muslims of Sicily under Christian Rule," in *The Society of Norman Italy*, ed. Graham Loud and Alex Metcalfe (Boston: Brill, 2002), 290.

disdainful of the fusion of elements of Christianity with Islam in rural Sicily.[14] Among the Muslim population, it is difficult to determine the distribution of different ethnic groups like Arabs, Berbers, and native Sicilians.[15] The Muslim nobility was also divided as families vied for control of fragmented Kalbid cities, a process intensified by the death of Kalbid ruler al-Akhal at the hands of the Zirid emir al-Muʿizz ibn Badis in 1036.

Robert Guiscard and his brother Roger thus set foot onto an island in 1061 that was economically productive but politically fragmented. They exploited this political disunity to their advantage from the very beginning of their conquests. They utilized an alliance with Ibn al-Thumna to take the strategic city of Messina in 1061, which secured their foothold on the island. The brothers continued to craft political alliances to further their interests in Sicily until Robert Guiscard was forced to leave the island in 1072 to secure his possessions in southern Italy. Guiscard spent the rest of his life campaigning against rebellious lords and the Byzantines in Italy until his death in 1085. Roger, though, remained in Sicily, where his strategy of striking at opportune moments, offering generous treaties for the surrender of cities, and constructing castles allowed him to slowly expand his influence.

During the course of these campaigns, Count Roger fought against armies sent by the Zirid emir Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz on several occasions, winning battles against his armies in 1063, 1068, and 1075.[16] These sporadic episodes of violence ended sometime after 1075 when Roger and Tamim made a peace treaty. The exact date of this treaty is

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[14] Metcalfe, "The Muslims of Sicily under Christian Rule," 289–93.
[15] Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 60–67.
[16] Zirid forces also raided the city of Nicotera in Calabria in 1074. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 17.

unknown but must have taken place before 1087, when Roger refused to take part in a Pisan-Genose attack on Mahdia because of his pre-existing treaties with Tamim.[17] Roger likewise repudiated attempts by the First Crusaders to attack Ifriqiya because of the lucrative partnership between him and the Zirid emir. According to Ibn al-Athir, Roger unleashed a massive fart at his advisors and envoys from the crusader Baldwin of Boulogne, saying that this flatulence was a better course of action than invading Ifriqiya and alienating Zirid merchants.[18]

The heart of the economic relationship between the Normans and Zirids was the exchange of Sicilian grain for African gold. Sicily's climate was ideal for the production of hard grain that could be transported overseas, a rarity in other parts of Europe and North Africa.[19] Merchants from Sicily sold this grain to northern Italian city-states and to North Africa, where rulers like Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz needed grain to support their port cities. The exportation of grain and some other materials including silk, cotton, and sugar cane, provided an influx of wealth to the Norman rulers of Sicily.[20] Trade with North Africa, through which grain was exchanged for gold and slaves, permitted Sicily by the mid-twelfth century to be the only kingdom in Western Europe to mint gold coinage.[21]

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[17] H.E.J. Cowdrey, "The Mahdia Campaign of 1087," *The English Historical Review* 92, no. 362 (January 1977): 1–29.
[18] Ibn al-Athir, 10:272-273.
[19] Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 36.
[20] Benjamin of Tudela specified that, besides grain, Sicily exports salt, coral, sulphur, iron, and fine silks. He also mentions the food that abounds in the countryside: lemons, organges, almonds, and melons. Benjamin of Tudela, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela: A Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue*, ed. Sandra Benjamin (New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson Associated Press, 1995), 278. The twelfth-century geographer al-Idrisi also describes the various cereals and goods produced in Sicily. These are conveniently summarized in David Abulafia, "Local Trade Networks in Medieval Sicily: The Evidence of Idrisi," in *Shipping, Trade and Crusade in the Medieval Mediterranean : Studies in Honour of John Pryor*, ed. Ruthy Gertwagen and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Taylor and Francis, 2012), 157–66.
[21] Loud, "Norman Sicily in the Twelfth Century," 468.

Sicilian farmers on the northern and eastern sides of the island also cultivated fruits and vegetables, as described in the travelogue of Ibn Jubayr from the 1180s.[22] Sicily also benefitted from its strategic location on the central Mediterranean as a stopover point for merchants, who exchanged timber, fruits, silk, and oil from Andalusia for linens, spices, and gold from Alexandria.[23]

In 1090, Roger I expanded his lands to include the island of Malta, which was under the control of unknown Muslim lords.[24] A year later, he completed his conquest of Sicily and began the lengthy process of consolidating his rule over the diverse and often rebellious island. To an extent, Roger embraced the plurality of the conquered by maintaining a large contingent of Muslim soldiers in his army, funding and founding Greek and Latin monasteries, and increasing the number of bishoprics in his land. Nonetheless, he also retained a high degree of control over the Church in Sicily. In an unprecedented move for the rulers of Christendom, Pope Urban II pledged to Roger and his legitimate heirs "not to appoint legates to his lands without his prior consent, to entrust the count himself with the oversight of churches instead of a legate when he felt this was appropriate, and [to give] him the right to veto the attendance of bishops at papal

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[22] Ibn Jubayr, *Rihla Ibn Jubayr* (Beirut: Dar Sadir lil-tiba'ah wa al-nashr, 1964), 297–300.
[23] Derek Keene, "Towns and the Growth of Trade," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. David Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith, vol. 4.1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 63.
[24] The sources do not provide information on what power controlled Malta at the time of Roger's invasion. Luttrell argues that it was under Muslim control but does not specify if the rulers pledged loyalty to the Zirids or other powers in the Mediterranean. Anthony Luttrell, "Approaches to Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights," in *Approaches to Medieval Malta*, ed. Anthony Luttrell (London, 1975), 28–30. Anthony Luttrell, "L'effritement de l'islam: 1091-1282," *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 71 (1994): 49–61. It is similarly difficult to divine the religious composition of medieval Pantelleria during the twelfth century. See Henri Bresc, "Pantelleria entre l'Islam et la chrétienté," *Cahiers de Tunisie* XIX (1971): 105–27.

councils."[25] These privileges proved contentious during the reign of Roger II and provided the foundation for later conflict between the Kingdom of Sicily and the Papacy.

During his reign, Count Roger maintained a high degree of control not only of the church but also of his vassals. He tended to give fiefs to his close relatives and entrust high-ranking positions in his administration to other Normans, who were still a minority in Sicily. He further mediated disputes between the various Norman personalities occupying southern Italy and Sicily, many of whom were related to his brother Robert Guiscard. This clever diplomatic maneuvering, when combined with the fertile and strategically located lands that Roger held, made many noble families in Europe seek his hand in marriage: the Capetians in France, claimants to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, and the ruler of Hungary.

Roger married three times and fathered more than ten children. He married his last wife, Adelaide del Vasto, the daughter of a prominent Ligurian nobleman, in 1089. Together they had two children, Simon (b. 1093) and Roger II (b. 1095). Adelaide remained married to Roger I until his death in 1101, at which point she became the regent to Roger's older brother Simon. When Simon died unexpectedly in 1105, though, Adelaide became regent for the heir apparent Roger. There are few sources that explicitly consider Sicilian politics in the years of Adelaide's regency, but historians have inferred that the countess acted with decisiveness in suppressing a number of rebellions across the

[25] These privileges are known as "apostolic legation." Loud emphasizes that, although unprecedented, this papal bull affirmed what was already happening in practice since Count Roger had much authority over the many monasteries he founded and funded. Graham Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard: Southern Italy and the Norman Conquest* (New York: Longman, 2000), 231–33.

island.[26] For the majority of her regency, Adelaide ruled from the eastern port city of Messina. Although Adelaide and her regents in theory laid claim to the entire island of Sicily and part of Calabria, their sphere of influence was largely restricted to northeast Sicily and southern Calabria.[27] To spread her influence, Adelaide encouraged Lombard immigrants from northern Italy to settle in Sicily, which began a process of Latin Christianization that continued during the reign of Roger II. The settlement of Christians in western Sicily paved the way for the transfer of the center of Sicilian power from Messina in the east to Palermo in the west in 1112.

A young Roger II grew up in this changing environment. Unfortunately, little is known about his childhood beyond the few likely apocryphal tales told by chroniclers. Alexander of Telese, for example, foretells Roger's aptitude as a ruler in an anecdote about a fight he had with his older brother Simon:

> Therefore, when they fought, each with companies of boys having been gathered together, Roger the younger had the upper hand. Whence, deriding his brother Simon, he said, "Certainly it is more fitting that I, triumphant, should hold the honor of ruling after the burial of our father than you. Wherefore, when I become master, I will appoint you either as a bishop or even the Roman Pope, for which you are more competent.[28]

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[26] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 25.

[27] The extent of the civil unrest in Sicily during the regency of Adelaide is disputed. See Loud, "Norman Sicily in the Twelfth Century," 446. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 24–29.

[28] Ludovica De Nava, ed., *Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, vol. 112, Fonti per la Storia d'Italia (Rome: Instituto Palazzo Borromini, 1991), 7. Loud, *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily*, 65. Another anecdote about Roger's childhood is related in Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* (written 1220-1230), in which King Sigurd of Norway stops in Sicily en route to the Holy Land. While there, "King Sigurd took the duke [!] by the hand, led him up to the high-seat, and gave him the name of king and the right of being king over the realm of Sicily; before that time there had been jarls over that realm. Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla, or The Lives of the Norse Kings*, ed. Erling Monsen and Albert Smith (New York: Dover Publications, Ltd., 1990), 104.

Beyond stories like these, which are more concerned with providing a compelling narrative about Roger's God-given talent as a ruler, it is possible to draw some broader conclusions about his upbringing and education from other sources. Around 1105, Adelaide appointed a man named Christodoulos as emir, a position that made him "a sort of prime minister" of Roger's lands and held him responsible for tutoring a young Roger II.[29] Christodoulos was a native Sicilian, likely a Latin-Christian convert from Islam or Greek Orthodoxy, and had been raised in the hybrid Arabo-Greek culture that was developing on the island. When Roger came of age in 1112, he was living in the Muslim-majority city of Palermo. For the previous seven years, he had been tutored by a native Sicilian. For much of his life, he was reared by his Ligurian mother Adelaide at the Norman court of Messina as rebellions cropped up in parts of the island. Roger's ascension as Count of Sicily came at a time when he had been exposed to the diverse peoples and cultures of Sicily. Now it was his job to govern it.

Historical Background: Ifriqiya and the Zirids

Around the same time as Robert Guiscard and Roger I were beginning their conquest of Sicily, a group of tribes known collectively as the Banu Hilal was altering the balance of power in Ifriqiya.[30] Before the arrival of the Banu Hilal in the mid-eleventh

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[29] Christodoulos' title was *amiratus*, which can be translated as "emir" or "admiral." As argued by Ménager and echoed by Johns, this position did not have any fixed duties but was instead an honorific. Léon-Robert Ménager, *Amiratus: Ameras : L'émirat et les origines de l'amirauté (XIe-XIIIe siècles),* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960), 20–26. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 71–74.
[30] A narrative history of Ifriqiya during this time is accessible in a number of works, including Jamil Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period*, 3rd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Brett, "The Central Lands of North Africa and Sicily, until the Beginning of the Almohad Period." Michael Brett, "The Maghrib," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History c.1198-1300*, vol. 5, 7 vols.

century, a Berber tribe called the Zirids controlled Ifriqiya. The Zirids had come to power initially as governors of the Egypt-based Fatimid caliphate. The founder of the Zirid dynasty, Bulukin ibn Ziri, acted as emir for the Fatimids beginning in the year 361H (972-73). In the early years of Zirid rule, Bulukin's successors spent much of their time fighting their cousins, the Hammadids, who held lands in modern-day Algeria at the beginning of the eleventh century based in the inland city of Qalʿat Bani Hammad.

Gradual changes in Ifriqiya during the late-tenth and early-eleventh centuries caused the Zirid emirs to begin breaking away from the Fatimids. The Zirid emirs relocated the original Fatimid capital of Ifriqiya from Mahdia on the coast to the inland city of Sabra al-Mansuriyya near Qayrawan. Due to Zirid conquests in inland Ifriqiya and the growing influence of Sunni scholars in the court of Sabra al-Mansuriyya, the Zirids began to see themselves as distinct from the Shiʿite Fatimids.[31] These forces helped inform emir Badis ibn Mansur's decision to split from the Fatimid caliphate in the middle of the eleventh century, likely around 1048 or 1049.[32] As a symbolic and political act, the religious officials under the command of the Zirids read their Friday sermons in the name of the Sunni Abbasid caliph (based in Baghdad) instead of the Shiʿite Fatimid caliph and the Zirids began to mint their dinars in the Abbasid style.

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 622–35. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:249–310.

[31] During the 1030s and 1040s, the Zirids sent expeditions into inland Ifriqiya and strengthened their army through victories in the region. They governed as far inland as the oasis of Nefta, which is located west of the Djerid (modern Tunisia, near the Algerian border). Through this Zirid force under the command of al-Muʿizz ibn Badis, the Zirids sought to build a "new Sunni empire to the west of Egypt." The presence of Sunni scholars in the school of Qayrawan helped to inform this ideology, which also spurned the teachings of the Fatimids. Brett, "The Central Lands of North Africa and Sicily, until the Beginning of the Almohad Period," 54.

[32] Brett, "The Central Lands of North Africa and Sicily, until the Beginning of the Almohad Period," 53.

The saga of the Banu Hilal in Ifriqiya, already considered in the introduction, was the most significant result of the break between the Zirids and Fatimids. Although not as catastrophic as French colonial historians once envisioned, the Hilalian conquests still pushed the Zirid and Hammadid dynasties from their inland capitals to more defensible coastal cities, Mahdia and Béjaïa (respectively). Defeat at the Battle of Haydaran in 1052 was a particularly decisive blow for the Zirids. As indicated by numismatic evidence, the Zirids returned to Fatimid allegiance by 1057 with their dominions greatly reduced.[33] The Zirid emirs now functioned, at best, as the first among equals in an Ifriqiya that was fragmented and ruled by relatively autonomous governors.[34] By the time of the death of al-Muʿizz ibn Badis in 1062, the Zirids held only the city of Mahdia. The major cities of Gafsa, Gabès, Tunis, Sousse, and Sfax, once under Zirid control, were now under the command of various Berber and Arab families.

When al-Muʿizz's son and successor Tamim came to power in 1062, he sought to expand his domains in Ifriqiya and Sicily. Tamim spent the early years of his reign attempting to secure the allegiance of local governors in Ifriqiya, many of whom were independent or recognized the authority of the Hammadids. While Tamim succeeded in taking Gafsa and Sousse early in his reign, he was less successful in Tunis, which the Khurasanid dynasty held.[35] Tamim launched multiple expeditions against the city during his reign but ultimately failed to conquer it. He further clashed with Hammadid armies

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[33] Idris estimates that the Zirids recognized the authority of the Fatimid caliph in 446 H (1054-1055). Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:255. Brett, "The Central Lands of North Africa and Sicily, until the Beginning of the Almohad Period," 55.
[34] See Brett, "The City-State in Medieval Ifriqiya: The Case of Tripoli."
[35] Ibn Khaldun, 6:212, 221-222. Al-Tijani, 97-98.

throughout the 1060s until the two sides agreed to sign a peace treaty in 1077, which entailed Tamim marrying his daughter to the Hammadid emir.[36]

Tamim sent multiple expeditions into Sicily to take advantage of the changing political landscape in the 1060s and 1070s.[37] However, armies commanded by his sons were unable to carve out any territory on the island. Undeterred, Tamim continued to send raiding parties to the coasts of Sicily and the Italian peninsula until 1075, when Roger I defeated a contingent of Zirid soldiers at the fortress of Mazara. Sometime after this Zirid defeat but before 1087, Roger and Tamim concluded a peace treaty. The contents of this treaty are unknown, though its existence is implied in the context of a 1087 Pisan-Genoese attack on the city of Mahdia. Once the Pisans and Genoese had conquered most of the city, they offered control of it to Roger because neither city had the strength to hold it on their own. Roger refused, though, on the basis of a treaty that was already in place between him and Tamim.[38]

Despite the peace treaty concluded by Roger and Tamim during the mid-late eleventh century, it is likely that Tamim continued to send raiding parties to disrupt the commerce of other Italian maritime powers. This is one of the main grievances of the Pisans and Genoese as cited by the *Carmen in Victoriam Pisanorum*, a Latin poem that provides the most detailed account of the Pisan-Genoese expedition against Mahdia in 1087.[39] The other rationale for the attack according to this poem is Tamim's taking of

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[36] Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:299-300.
[37] Idris' use of the term "Holy War" in his speculation about the reasons behind Tamim's ambitions is compelling but unsubstantiated by the sources. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:283–86.
[38] Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae comitis et Roberti Guiscardi ducis fratris eius*, V:590–91.
[39] See Cowdrey, "The Mahdia Campaign of 1087."

Christian captives, which is directly tied to his raiding. The result of the Pisan-Genoese attack was the sack of Mahdia's suburb of Zawila. Tamim was forced to accept a conciliatory peace treaty with the Pisans and Genoese, one that forced him to pay 100,000 dinars and to give his attackers commercial privileges in his ports.

The reason for Tamim's piratical activities was likely economic. In the wake of the Hilalian invasions, the Zirid dynasty lost much of its arable land because it was forced to the Mediterranean coast and rival dynasties had claimed other coastal cities. The pastoralist Banu Hilal repurposed much of the land in inland Ifriqiya for their animals and, as a result, much of the area that had once been a breadbasket for the Roman Empire was used as pasture for semi-nomadic tribes. Many in Ifriqiya fled elsewhere in the Mediterranean, including Sicily and Italy, in response to this unrest.[40] State-sponsored piracy was an alternative to the agricultural production of wheat, barley, and olive oil that had previously helped sustain the economy of North Africa. According to Ibn Khaldun, some "lands of the Franks" even provided tribute to the Zirids in return for protection from Zirid piracy.[41] This brand of piracy was common in the central Mediterranean, disrupted commerce substantially, and provided one of the main grievances that led Roger II to invade Ifriqiya during the 1140s.[42]

At the same time, though, Tamim and various lords in Ifriqiya that ruled from the coast still maintained profitable trade routes. Merchants traveling east-west and north-

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[40] Monica Green's forthcoming research on Constantine the African might help to shine some light on one example of a migrant who traveled from Ifriqiya to Sicily during the mid-eleventh century.

[41] This example comes from the reign of Tamim's successor Yahya and will be discussed shortly. Ibn Khaldun, 6:213.

[42] The Hammadid capture of monks from Montecassino in 1114, as will be discussed shortly, is another example of this piracy. So too are the examples of piracy found in the Cairo Geniza, which will be discussed in Chapter Three.

south across the Mediterranean passed through North Africa and exchanged goods in their ports. The port city of Amalfi in particular was a prosperous trading hub that exchanged agricultural products for North African oil and wax.[43] The lords of North Africa also retained trading contacts with merchants in sub-Saharan Africa, where they traded salt, olive oil, and some manufactured textiles for gold, slaves, and luxury goods like ivory and animal pelts.[44] Instead of trading directly with these merchants, though, the Zirids and other lords ruling on the coast likely traded with the inland Arab tribes, who then exchanged these goods with merchants from sub-Saharan Africa.[45]

These trade routes were part of a larger system of mercantile exchange that connected North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. Merchants, soldiers, and pilgrims crossed this landscape through a series of routes that were connected by oasis towns.[46] Although there are no registers or systematic records that survive to record this network of exchange, entries from medieval geographers provide some indication of this trade.[47]

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[43] Armando Citarella, "Patterns in Medieval Trade: The Commerce of Amalfi Before the Crusades," *The Journal of Economic History* 28, no. 4 (December 1968): 553.
[44] Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 15.
[45] Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD." Michael Brett, "Islam and Trade in the Bilad Al-Sudan, Tenth-Eleventh Century A.D.," *The Journal of African History* 24, no. 4 (1983): 431–40. Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 15–17.
[46] Historians dispute the exact routes of these networks. Lombard advocates three primary routes that terminated in Sijilmasa, central Algeria, and the Djerid in Tunisia. Brett largely supports Lombard's analysis but disagrees with his "gold theory" of Ifriqiyan prosperity (as discussed in the Introduction). Vanacker and Baadj, meanwhile, add another trade route that extended east through Fezzan (modern-day Libya) and Chad. Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam* (New Jersey: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1975), 58–59. Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD," 350–52. Claudette Vanacker, "Géographie économique de l'Afrique du Nord selon les auteurs arabes du IXe siècle au milieu du XIIe siècle," *Annales* 29, no. 3 (1973): 659–80. Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 15.
[47] Al-Tijani, for example, mentions the profitability of the salt flats of inland Tunisia when he traveled there. Al-Tijani, 206-207. The work of Ibn Hawqal, al-Bakri, and al-Idrisi are of particular importance for their writing on the region of Ifriqiya. Overviews of these entries and others from medieval geographies can

Gold, slaves, and luxury goods like live animals and animal skins were the primary goods in which sub-Saharan merchants dealt. They exchanged these goods for salt from North Africa (particularly from the Chott el Djerid, a salt lake in southwest Tunisia) as well as textiles and luxuries from the Far East. In addition, the steady stream of Muslim pilgrims traveling to and from Mecca fed an economic system that required caravanserai, inns, and associated industries. Emir Tamim and his Zirid successors were part of this larger economic system, one that was lucrative enough to attract the attention of the Normans.

Tamim continued to vie for supremacy in Ifriqiya until his death in 1108.[48] Of lasting importance during his reign was a raid he launched in the eastern Mediterranean in the year 480H (1087-88), in which he captured a family of Armenian officials that had fallen out of favor with the Byzantines. Among this family was a man named George of Antioch, who became a major official in both the Zirid and Norman governments. The Egyptian historian al-Maqrizi provides the most in-depth biography of George's life.[49] After falling out of favor with the Byzantine ruler of Constantinople (likely Alexius Comnenos), George and his family were intercepted by a fleet of Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz, which had been on a raiding expedition. When George's family was brought before Tamim, they offered their services as accountants. Their administrative experience

be found in Vanacker, "Géographie économique de l'Afrique du Nord selon les auteurs arabes du IXe siècle au milieu du XIIe siècle."

[48] Ibn ʿIdhari mentions an attack by the *Rum* (an Arabic term generally used to describe Latin or Greek Christians – a further analysis of the term is found in Chapter Five) upon Mahdia in 1104-1105 but unfortunately does not provide any further details. It is possible that this was a Norman assault, although based on the treaties established by Roger I and those later confirmed by Roger II, it is unlikely that this is the case. Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:303.

[49] Adalgisa De Simone, "Il mezzogiorno normanno-svevo visto dall'Islam africano," in *Il mezzogiorno normanno-svevo visto dall'Europa e dal mondo mediterraneo*, ed. Giosuè Musca (Bari, 1999), 261–93. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 80–83.

allowed them to thrive in the Zirid government and George was eventually appointed as governor of Sousse.[50] George's connection to Antioch and the Zirid government played pivotal role in dictating the relationship between the courts of Palermo, Mahdia, and Cairo in the coming decades.

At the time of Tamim's death in 501H (February 1108), he controlled Sfax, Sousse, and Mahdia. Local lords controlled the other major cities of Ifriqiya – the Banu Khurasan in Tunis, the Banu Dahman in Gabès, the Banu al-Rand in Gafsa, and either the Banu Khazrun or the Banu Matruh in Tripoli (the sources are ambiguous).[51] Tamim was succeeded by his son Yahya, who began his reign by capturing the castle of Kelibia and launching raids against Christians in Sardinia and Genoa. He also sent a fleet toward Byzantine lands, presumably as a raid, in which six of his galleys were captured. Nonethelss, Ibn al-Athir reports that after this battle, the strength of the Zirid military was such that "there was no defeat for the army of Yahya by sea or land."[52] Yahya further maintained a positive diplomatic relationship with his Fatimid overlords by recognizing their authority upon his succession to the throne.[53]

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[50] Johns speculates that George's appointment likely came in 482H (1089-90) following an attack on Sousse by the Arab shaykh Malik ibn ʻAlawi. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 81. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:293.
[51] *EI2*, "Ṭarābulus al- G̲h̲arb." Brett, "The City-State in Medieval Ifriqiya: The Case of Tripoli," 81–84.
[52] Ibn al-Athir, 10:479. Ibn ʿIdhari corroborates this report by mentioning that Yahya raided the lands of the Rum, although he does not specify that Yahya was never defeated after this battle. Ibn ʿIdhari, I.305.
[53] The relationship of Yahya's predecessor, Tamim, to the Fatimids is unexplored in the sources. The chronicles, as well as an inventory of gifts, notes positive exchanges between the Fatimids and Zirids during the reign of al-Muʿizz ibn Badis before he split with the Fatimids. For the reign of Tamim, there was little to no contact with the Fatimids. Johns argues that, during the reign of Tamim, "there is only one recorded contact between the two courts, and that of no great significance." Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 94. See also Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:255. Ghāda al Ḥijjāwī al-Qaddūmī, trans., *Book of Gifts and Rarities, Kitāb Al-Hadāyā Wa Al-Tuḥaf* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

During the first several years of Yahya's reign, the event that had the most lasting impact on the relationship between the Normans and the Zirids was the defection of George of Antioch to Palermo. While governing Sousse, George's brother Simon fell out of favor with Yahya, who at this point was still a prince. Yahya then ordered Simon to be strangled.[54] When Yahya became emir in 1108, George feared for his safety and wrote to the vizier of Roger II, a man that the Egyptian chronicler al-Maqrizi identifies as ʿAbd al-Rahman (another name for Christodoulos), requesting help. Christodoulos obliged and George managed to defect aboard a galley that had docked at Mahdia in 502H (1108-09).[55] The defection of George of Antioch to Palermo provided a young Roger II with an apt administrator who also knew the inner workings of the Zirid government in Ifriqiya.

Despite George of Antioch's flight to Sicily, there is no evidence of enmity or violence between the courts of Palermo and Mahdia in subsequent years.[56] The same was not true of other cities on and around the Italian peninsula, which suffered at the hands of Yahya. Ibn Khaldun notes the numerous raids that he carried out against Christians:

> He constantly set forth expeditions to the 'land of war' until the Christian states from beyond the sea, [specifically] the lands of the Franks, Genoa, and Sardinia, protected themselves from him with tribute (الجزى). Due to this, for [Yahya] there was a tradition of [this] strong phenomenon.[57]

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[54] The timeline of these events is vague. They probably happened in the middle of the 1090s, around the same time as Yahya colluded with Shah Malik against his father. According to al-Tijani, Yahya was kidnapped by a Turkish lord named Shah Malik but ended up conspiring with him to overthrow his father. Al-Tijani, 51-52. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:294–96.

[55] Catlos considers the Armenian family from which George of Antioch was from and its influence in Mediterranean. Brian Catlos, *Infidel Kings and Unholy Warriors: Faith, Power, and Violence in the Age of Crusade and Jihad* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014), 64–68.

[56] Ibn al-Athir mentions that Yahya launched a fleet against the Rum in 503H (1109-10). It is possible that this was an attack against Roger II in retribution for helping George of Antioch. However, it is also possible that this was one of the many raids Yahya conducted against the Christian powers of the Mediterranean. Ibn al-Athir, 10:478.

[57] I translate this text with the amendment given for footnote two in the edition of Ibn Khaldun's text, in which the word *Ifriqiya*, which does not make sense in this context, is replaced with *al-Franja*. Although Louis de Mas Latrie takes this word to mean the lands of southern France, the vagueness of the word *al-*

None of the Latin or Arabic texts specify that Yahya ever launched an attack against the lands of Roger II. In keeping with the tradition set by his father Tamim, Yahya maintained a stable relationship with the Normans in Sicily, one that continued once Roger reached his majority. The details of this economic relationship are unknown but likely involved the flow of merchants and relevant officials between the courts of Mahdia and Palermo to regulate trade.[58]

Count Roger II and Emir Yahya

Roger II's coming of age in 1112 had little impact on the dynamic between the courts of Palermo and Mahdia. At the beginning of Roger's reign, there is no evidence of him interacting with the Zirid emir Yahya, from which we can assume that he continued his parents' fruitful relationship with the Zirids. The first documented interaction between Roger II and an emir of Ifriqiya came in 1114 when Hammadid pirates seized a group of monks that were returning from Sardinia to (presumably) the Abbey of Montecassino. According to the *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis*, upon hearing news of the monks' capture, the abbot of Montecassino sent some men with ransom money to the Hammadids. These men, though, were blown off course by strong winds and landed in Sicily. When Roger II heard of the monks' mission, he was "led by love of the most Holy Father Benedict" and intervened with the Hammadids on their behalf.[59] Roger told the

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Franja means that these raids could have been carried out virtually anywhere in the Christian Mediterranean. Ibn Khaldun, VI :213. Louis de Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix et de commerce et documents divers concernant les relations des chrétiens avec les arabes de l'Afrique septentrionale au moyen âge*, 34. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:308.

[58] Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 19. Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 40.

[59] *MGH, SS,* 34:516.

Hammadid emir that the monks should be returned to their monastery "if he should desire to delight in his love and to enjoy his peace."[60] The Hammadid ruler al-ʿAziz immediately obliged and released the monks.[61]

This account from the *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis* indicates that there was open diplomatic contact between the Normans and Hammadids during the early years of Roger II's reign.[62] While the Hammadids did not hesitate to seize Christian monks from Italy in what was likely one of many state-sponsored raids, they were willing to negotiate with Roger II for their release. Roger's decision to help the monks of Montecassino was also a calculated political move to show his loyalty to the Christian monastic communities of Sicily and Southern Italy despite tension between him and Pope Paschal II. Upon coming of age, Roger had made a concerted effort to establish his authority over religious institutions in Sicily and southern Italy. In 1112, Roger placed the Latin Archbishop of Reggio Calabria under his direct authority. Two years later, the Archbishop of Cosenza complained to Pope Paschal II that Roger "had forced him... to return to a monastery."[63] These issues hearken back to Pope Urban II's privilege to Roger I, which had granted Roger and his successors control over church appointments in his lands. An 1117 letter from Pope Paschal II to Roger II confirms this tension and contains a warning that Roger not use his power against the wishes of divine authority. Roger's

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[60] *MGH, SS,* 34:516.
[61] Al-Aziz is called "king of the city of Calama." This is derived from the original Hammadid capital of Qalʿat Bani Hammad, which, unbeknownst to the author of the *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis,* had been abandoned following the Hilalian invasions. By 1114, the Hammadid rulers governed from the coastal city of Béjaïa. *MGH,* SS, 4:516.
[62] Ferdinand Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1907), 369–70. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 32–33.
[63] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 34–35.

display of power over the church in 1112 proved unpopular to both the Pope and local bishops, which motivated Roger to intervene on behalf of the captured Montecassino monks to show his loyalty to the monastic communities under his authority.[64]

Around the time of Roger's negotiations with the Hammadids in 1114, the Zirid emir Yahya appointed his son (and future successor) to govern Sfax and another son to govern Sousse.[65] According to Ibn al-Athir, this was an unpopular decision, as the people of Sfax rebelled against their new governor and sacked the royal palace. It was only by spreading dissent among the ranks of the people that Yahya managed to break their unified front. Little else is known of Yahya's governance until he died two years later under mysterious circumstances on the day of the Festival of Sacrifice, 25 April 1116. There are several accounts of Yahya's death in the Arabic chronicles, including the contradictory ones of Ibn ʿIdhari and Ibn al-Athir. Ibn ʿIdhari recounts how three men dressed as alchemists mortally wounded Yahya and killed his vizier Abu Khunus at the Zirid palace in Mahdia in 509H (1115-16).[66] While suffering from his wounds, Yahya banished his son al-Futuh to the fortress of Ziyad (located between Mahdia and Sfax) for

[64] Hubert Houben argues that this exchange gave Roger "the chance to act as the protector of Christendom in the Mediterranean." This perspective is not supported in the source materials, for none of the Latin or Arabic sources, pro-Norman or otherwise, advocate this instance as a statement of Roger's intent to protect Christendom. Even the unabashedly pro-Roger Alexander of Telese does not mention this episode. It is not until 1126 that royal charters mention Roger as the "protector and shield" of Christianity. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 32. It is not until 1129 that Roger began adopting this title with any regular frequency. Brühl, *Roger II diplomata*, document 7.
[65] The accounts of Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun differ. Ibn al-Athir writes that Yahya appointed his son Abu al-Futuh to govern Sfax in 503H (1109-1110). Ibn Khaldun, meanwhile, writes that Yahya appointed his son and future successor ʿAli to govern Sfax in 508H (1114-15). Ibn al-Athir, 10:478. Ibn Khaldun, 6:213.
[66] Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:305-306.

his suspected role in the plot before Yahya died soonafter on the day of the Festival of Sacrifice. Yahya's successor ʿAli later exiled al-Futuh and al-Futuh's family to Egypt.

Ibn al-Athir tells a similar story but under his entry for the year 502H (1108-09), in which three alchemists failed to assassinate Yahya but succeeded in killing his advisor, Abu al-Hasan.[67] Following Yahya's narrow escape, he exiled his brother (not son, as Ibn ʿIdhari reported) Abu al-Futuh ibn Tamim to the fortress of Ziyad and executed several conspirators, including several men with "the clothing of the people of al-Andalus."[68] After Yahya's death in 509H (1115-16), his successor ʿAli sent his uncle Abu al-Futuh, Abu al-Futuh's wife Ballara, and their son ʿAbbad ibn Abi al-Futuh to Egypt, where they would come to play an important role in the Fatimid administration.

H.R. Idris has considered in detail the differences between the accounts of Ibn ʿIdhari, Ibn al-Athir, and other authors who comment on the death of Yahya ibn Tamim.[69] Regardless of whether this assassination was successful and/or occurred in 502H or 509H, the details of the plot shine some light on Zirid rule under Yahya. The first of these details is the distrust that Yahya had toward his immediate family. There is not enough information in the Arabic chronicles to reconstruct the dynamics of Zirid dynastic politics on a consistent basis. Instead, stories like these help inform our perception of how tenuous the Zirid emir's power was not only over other governors, but also over other family members.[70] While Yahya acted in the tradition of his fathers in

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[67] Ibn al-Athir, 10:472-473.
[68] Ibn al-Athir, 10:473.
[69] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:310–15.
[70] Yahya himself rebelled against his father Tamim in the late 1090s. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:294–96.

sending his sons to govern cities, as indicated in the year 508H (1114-15) when he appointed his son ʿAli to govern Sfax, he was also distrustful enough of his brother or son (depending on the chronicler) to implicate him as a conspirator in his attempted assassination.[71]

Also significant is what this story reveals about Zirid relations with other Muslim powers in the southern Mediterranean. The presence of people in Andalusian dress indicates contact between Ifriqiya and either the *taʿifa* states of al-Andalus or the Almoravids during the early twelfth century. Yahya's suspicion of people wearing this dress further underlies the perceived threat to his rule from foreigners to the west. At the same time, though, the decision of Yahya's successor ʿAli to exile the plotters of his father's assassination to Alexandria indicates an amicable relationship between the Zirids and their Fatimid overlords to the east. When Abu al-Futuh and his family arrived in Cairo, they were not imprisoned, but welcomed into the Fatimid administration. The friendship that Yahya and ʿAli sought to cultivate with the Fatimids is also seen in both 505H (1112-12) and 511H (1117-18), when they received envoys from the Fatimids that bore gifts and letters of greeting.[72]

Before his death in 509H (1115-16), Yahya also sought to maintain the amicable relations with his Hammadid cousins established by his father Tamim, who had arranged a marriage between his daughter and the Hammadid emir. Yahya followed suit, marrying his daughter Badr al-Dawja to the Hammadid lord al-ʿAziz.[73] Although these two

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[71] Ibn Khaldun, 6:213.
[72] Ibn al-Athir, 10:472-473. ʿIdhari, I:305-306.
[73] Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:305.

marriage agreements might have helped quell some violence between the rival families, they still fought over ownership of Tunis and the island of Djerba around the beginning of the twelfth century. The picture to emerge of the Zirid dynasty in the mid-1110s is thus one in which they were well connected to other Muslim powers in the southern Mediterranean like the Hammadids and Fatimids. At the same time, though, they were suspicious of possible collusion between other Muslim powers (like those in al-Andalus) and overly ambitious relatives.

Yahya's attitude toward the Normans was unchanged following Roger II's succession in 1112.[74] Although the chronicles report that Yahya engaged in raids against the lands of the *Rum*, an ambiguous term that could apply to either Latin or Greek Chriistians, there is no evidence that he raided the lands of Roger II.[75] The closest he came was a raid in 1113 that, according to the *Annales Cavenses*, landed in Lucania, Salerno, Amalfi, and Sardinia.[76] At this time, Roger was only nominally in control of Sicily and Calabria, neither of which were raided according to the Latin and Arabic sources. Yahya's decision not to raid Roger's lands but to attack virtually all of the territories adjacent to them is evidence of the continuation of the peace treaties that had existed between Roger I and Tamim.

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[74] Amari sees the relationship between Roger II and the Zirid emirs as an overwhelmingly negative one early in his reign. However, Chalandon has sufficiently refuted this argument as being based on problematic readings of vague descriptions of violence between the Zirids and rulers of the lands of the Rum. Michele Amari, *Storia dei musulmani di Sicilia*, 2nd ed., vol. 3 (Catania: Romeo Prampolini, 1937), 368. Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, 1907, 1:370.
[75] The term "*Rum*" is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.
[76] *MGH, SS,* 3:191. This is collaborated in Ibn Khaldun, 6:213 and Ibn ʿIdhari I:204-205. Ibn ʿIdhari reports that the fleet of Mahdia returned from the lands of the Rum in the year 507H (1113-14) with many captives.

The Affair at Gabès, 511H (1117-18)

When Yahya died on the day of the Festival of Sacrifice in 509H (25 April 1116), his son ʿAli succeeded him. It is during ʿAli's reign that we see the first instance of Norman military intervention in the affairs of Zirid Ifriqiya. This took the form of a standoff, the course of which is disputed in the Arabic chronicles, between the Norman and Zirid fleets in 511H (1117-18) outside the city of Gabès. This encounter caused a hardening of attitudes between the once-friendly dynasties. ʿAli in particular was so wary of Roger II that he reached out to the Almoravids of Morocco, seeking an alliance to invade Sicily. The fallout from this affair at Gabès and the establishment of the Zirid-Almoravid alliance was foundational to tension between the Normans and Zirids that would persist for the next decade.

In the first several years of his reign, ʿAli sought to maintain and expand his rule in Ifriqiya by launching attacks on Tunis, Djerba, Mount Wasilat, and Gabès.[77] The Arabic chronicles provide the most detail on his campaign against Gabès, which took place in 511H (1117-18) and was the first during Roger II's reign to involve the presence of the Norman navy in Ifriqiya. The chronicles of Ibn al-Athir and al-Tijani provide detailed but different accounts of the story.[78] Ibn al-Athir relates how the independent governor of Gabès, Rafiʿ ibn Makan al-Dahmani, had constructed a merchant ship during the reign of Emir Yahya, a move that made the new Zirid emir ʿAli feel threatened.[79] Fearing retaliation from the Zirids, Rafiʿ requested aid from Roger II in keeping his ship

[77] Ibn al-Athir, 10:512-513, 521-522.
[78] For an overview of these accounts, see Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:319–24.
[79] This narrative is also used in Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Arab fi funun al-adab*, 2:164-165.

at sea. Roger obliged and sent his own fleet to Gabès. When ʿAli saw the Norman fleet traveling to Gabès, he retaliated by dispatching his own fleet. The two fleets met outside of the city. Although no battle took place, the Normans were forced to withdraw in what we can presume was some sort of negotiated truce. ʿAli then defeated Rafiʿ and his Arab allies in a series of battles outside of Gabès, Mahdia, and Qayrawan. At the request of Arab tribes and other unnamed nobles in Ifriqiya, ʿAli and Rafiʿ made a peace treaty in which Rafiʿ was permitted to continue governing Gabès.[80]

Despite this treaty, Ibn al-Athir relates that the standoff between the Norman and Zirid navies prompted an estrangement between the courts of Palermo and Mahdia. In the wake of Norman intervention at Gabès, Roger II addressed ʿAli in inappropriate terms and sent him an insulting letter. ʿAli responded by building up his fleet and planning to invade Sicily with the help of the Almoravid dynasty.[81] The expansion of the Zirid navy and the threat of a Zirid-Almoravid alliance was enough to cause Roger II to back down from his insulting actions. Although there was no bloodshed, Ibn al-Athir is explicit that the Gabès affair sowed the seeds for future tension between the Normans and Zirids.[82]

The alienation of the courts of Mahdia and Palermo that Ibn al-Athir describes is echoed in the narrative of al-Tijani, although there are meaningful differences between the two stories.[83] Al-Tijani narrates how Rafiʿ of Gabès requested aid from Roger because ʿAli had seized his merchant ship. The Norman fleet arrived at Gabès, where

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[80] Ibn al-Athir, 10:529-530.
[81] The Almoravids were a Berber dynasty that ruled in modern-day Morocco, western Algeria, and southern Spain during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They campaigned actively against both Muslim and Christian lords in these lands and made particularly effective use of the Balearic Islands as a base from which to launch attacks against Christians in Iberia.
[82] Ibn al-Athir, 10:530.
[83] Al-Tijani, 398-99. Ibn Khaldun also briefly mentions this encounter. Ibn Khaldun, 6:161.

Rafiʿ invited the soldiers into the city for a banquet. It was at this moment that the squadron of ʿAli arrived and ambushed the unsuspecting Normans. The Zirid fleet won a decisive victory and many Normans were killed while trying to escape. The rest of al-Tijani's narrative echoes that of Ibn al-Athir. ʿAli followed this victory with defeats of his rivals at Gabès, Mahdia, and Qayrawan. He also reached out to the Almoravids about working together to attack the lands of Roger. Al-Tijani sees the Gabès affair as the primary reason for the hardening of tensions between Roger II and ʿAli.

Al-Tijani's extensive quotation of the Zirid contemporary Abu al-Salt makes me more inclined to believe his account of the events. Fortunately for us, though, the details of the naval campaign at Gabès are less important than its consequences, on which both Ibn al-Athir and al-Tijani agree. The result of this episode was increased tension between the Normans and Zirids, one that would lead to estrangement in the future. Roger II's first documented interaction with the Zirids was thus one that saw him intervening on behalf of an Ifriqiyan governor against the wishes of emir ʿAli. This interaction marks a dramatic departure from the more passive policies of Roger I. As early as 511H (1117-18), Roger II was willing to bring his navy to Ifriqiya and, if Ibn al-Athir is to be belived, use abusive language against the Zirid emirs.[84] He might have also sought to use

[84] The work of John Pryor has been formative for the study of navies in the medieval Mediterranean. He argues that technological limitations of sailing during the central Middle Ages meant that it was only possible to sail in the Mediterranean during the summer, that it was standard practice to sail along the coast or within sight of coastline, and that warships needed to remain close to the coast because of the need to have fresh water. Sicily and Ifriqiya are notable because they are joined together by a chain of islands that allow for navies to sail between them with fewer problems than other, longer routes. The ships that the Normans and Zirids had for their fleets was the light war galley (also called a dromon in certain sources). These ships featured a sail (sometimes more than one) alongside oars for propulsion. The primary goal of engagement for these ships was not to sink the opposing ships, but to board and capture them. Pryor refers to them as "really huge rowing shells" because of their ability to hold large numbers of sailors relative to their size. John Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the*

economic leverage against the Zirids. Ibn ʿIdhari briefly mentions how, in the year 512H (1118-19), envoys from Sicily arrived in Mahdia and demanded new contracts for trade.[85] This demand might have been tied to the conflict at Gabès that happened in 511H (1117-18) when Rafiʿ of Gabès constructed his own merchant ship. Whether this is an extension of the same encounter or a separate one, it helps to substantiate the growing political and economic tension between Roger II and al-Hasan.[86]

The Gabès affair simultaneously shows ʿAli's power over local lords in Ifriqiya and, to an extent, over the Normans of Sicily. The singular might of the Zirid army was enough to overcome the alliance of Rafiʿ of Gabès and various Arab tribes in Ifriqiya. Furthermore, after ʿAli either defeated the Norman navy in combat or negotiated with it (depending which chronicler you believe), Roger II did not respond with military force against the Zirids. His preferred course of actions was to taunt the Zirid emirs with inappropriate language and to demand new trading contracts, a strategy that ultimately failed when ʿAli built up his own fleet. Roger was unable or unwilling to confront the Zirid navy in 511H (1117-18). He was also unable to bully the Zirids because of the strength of ʿAli's military and his diplomatic connection with the Almoravids. The

Mediterranean, 649-1571 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 65. See also John Pryor and Elizabeth Jeffreys, *The Age of the Dromon: The Byzantine Navy C. 500-1204* (Boston: Brill, 2006).

[85] Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:307.

[86] Charles Stanton's monograph on the Norman navy is the most recent and comprehensive work dedicated to Norman maritime power in Sicily and southern Italy. He finds several accounts of specific numbers of ships in the Norman navy during the early twelfth century. The first is from Albert of Aachen, who notes a flotilla of two trireme dromons carrying five hundred men (this number is likely an exaggeration) and seven ships laden with treasure accompanying Adelaide del Vasto to the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The second is from the medieval scholar al-Nuwayri, who records that Roger dispatched a fleet of 24 vessels to Gabès in 511H (1117-18). In the same encounter, al-Nuwayri records the Zirids as dispatching only 10 ships to blockade Gabès. It is unlikely that this force of 24 Norman vessels comprised the bulk of the Norman navy. Stanton argues that Roger must have increased the size of his fleet in the years after the Gabès affair because al-Tijani records a force of 30,000 men in 300 ships that set sail to Ifriqiya in 1123, as will be discussed shortly. Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 70–73.

picture to emerge from this episode, then, is one in which the Zirids had a significant military and political presence in the Mediterranean. They defeated a coalition of local lords in Ifriqiya, negotiated or defeated the Norman navy, and renovated their own navy as a show of power that forced Roger II to respect their autonomy.

There is an important economic dimension to the affair at Gabès as well. The backdrop to this conflict was Rafiʿ seeking to use a merchant ship to conduct trade, likely with the Normans. ʿAli's response to this was either aggression against Rafiʿ or the threat of aggression. Whichever of these accounts we trust, it is clear that the the Zirid emir sought some degree of control over maritime trade in Ifriqiya. As discussed above, the Zirid economy was reliant upon the exchange of Norman grain for gold from sub-Saharan Africa. ʿAli would not allow Rafiʿ of Gabès to have his own mercantile force uncontested and had no reservations about conflict with the Normans to enforce this.

Events happening around the same time as the affair at Gabès show that Ifriqiya was just one of several areas across the Mediterranean where Roger sought to expand his influence. One of these areas was the Italian Peninsula. In 1116, Roger granted a Genoese consul and his brother a strip of land near Messina, the first documented commercial interaction between Norman Sicily and Genoa. The contract permitted the brothers to construct buildings along this piece of land to support trade and provided trading privileges to goods that passed through there.[87] The strait of Messina, which was located on a major shipping line that ran to Syria and Alexandria, had sufficient traffic to warrant Genoese investment in the trade route as it passed by Sicily. Roger's assertion of

[87] Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 62–64.

authority over the church of Sicily also brought him into a heated exchange with Pope Paschal II. A letter from 1117 represents the culmination of this correspondence, in which the Pope warned Roger to "support the Church and not to persecute it" and to "not judge or oppress bishops but honor them as the representatives of God."[88] This exchange did not result in any military action or policy reversals. Instead, it shows the persistent tension between the Normans and Papcy that would lead the Papacy to support the Normans' enemies throughout the 1120s and 1130s.

In addition to his interactions in the Italian peninsula, Roger also looked west to expand his authority through his marriage to Elvira Alfónsez (the exact date of which is unknown), daughter of the late Alfonso VI of Castile and León. At the time of Alfonso VI's death in 1109, he claimed the titles of "Emperor of the whole of Spain" and "Emperor of the two religions."[89] He had worked with the Papacy to introduce Roman liturgical practices into his kingdom and undertaken successful campaigns against Muslim rulers in al-Andalus during the late eleventh century.[90] Although Elvira did not hold any lands in al-Andalus and had little chance of obtaining them due to the succession crises that followed the death of her father, this marriage still had clear political overtones. Elvira's family ruled a religiously divided land on the Mediterranean and her father was famed for conquests against local Muslim rulers, a situation reminiscent to that of Roger II. Elvira also had demonstrable connections to the esteemed

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[88] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 35.
[89] Bernard Reilly, *The Contest of Christian and Muslim Spain, 1031-1157* (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996), 74–98.
[90] Simon Barton, "Spain in the Eleventh Century," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 4.2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 179–81. See also Bernard Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VI, 1065-1109* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

counts of Burgundy in France.[91] Marrying the daughter of Alfonso VI bolstered Roger's own standing by connecting him to one of the preeminent families of al-Andalus, and by extension, France.

Roger's desire to strengthen Norman ties to the powers of the western Mediterranean might have been related to his simultaneous loss of power in the Latin East. Following Roger's coming of age in 1112, his mother Adelaide had married King Baldwin I of Jerusalem under the condition that, should the couple not produce an heir, Roger would inherit the kingdom.[92] The problem with this marriage was that Baldwin was already married to an Armenian woman named Arda of Edessa, a fact that Baldwin's vassals brought up when he, still heirless, fell ill in the winter of 1116. These vassals, with the help of the Patriarch of Jerusalem (and possible Pope Paschal II), forced Baldwin to repudiate his marriage to Adelaide, who promptly returned to Sicily in 1117. William of Tyre relates that this affair caused Roger to have a "mortal hatred" against the kingdom of Jerusalem, one that caused him not to offer aid to the Crusader states during the later years of his reign.[93]

Around the year 1117, Roger was thus engaged in multiple fronts in the Mediterranean. He made economic agreements with Genoa, quarreled with the Papacy,

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[91] Dawn Marie Hayes is currently conducting research on the connections between Roger II, Elvira, and the counts of Burgundy. Dawn Marie Hayes, "Kinship and Aspiration in the Medieval Mediterranean: Identity and Shared Experience during the Reign of Roger II of Sicily, C. 1112-1154" (19th Annual Mediterranean Studies Association International Congress, Palermo, 2016). Dawn Marie Hayes, "The Wives of Roger II of Sicily: Reflections on the Marriage Strategies of an Evolving Monarchy" (The Normans in the South: Mediterranean Meetings in the Central Middle Ages, Oxford, 2017).

[92] William of Tyre provides the details of this episode. Houben, based on the evidence that Patriarch Arnulf of Jerusalem was in Rome in 1116, speculates that Pope Paschal's II potential involvement in this affair might have caused relations between him and Roger to sour. William of Tyre's account is found in *PL*, 201:507-508. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 35.

[93] *PL,* 200:201. See also Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 29.

married into a powerful Iberian family, lost his claim to the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and sent a navy to the Ifriqiyan coast. The conflict between Roger and the Zirids can thus be contextualized in Roger's larger desires to expand his authority across the Mediterranean, some of which would prove more successful and long-lasting than others.

The Zirid Victory at al-Dimas, 517H (1123-24)

Emir ʿAli took precautions against Roger's rising assertiveness in the Mediterranean by preparing his navy and contacting the Almoravids in Marrakesh about working together to invade Sicily.[94] He died, though, in 515H (1120-21) before his assault with the Almoravids came to fruition. This attack did become a reality, though, under ʿAli's son al-Hasan, who succeeded him at the age of twelve.[95] An Almoravid fleet raided the city of Nicotera, located on the coast of Calabria in southern Italy, at the beginning of the year 516H (spring/summer 1122).[96] This attack provoked Count Roger to act against both the Almoravids and their Zirid allies.[97] He mobilized his navy and put an embargo on travel to Ifriqiya and "the lands of the Maghreb."[98] Seeing these actions

[94] Al-Tijani, 339. Ibn al-Athir, 10:611.
[95] In the early years of his reign, al-Hasan relied on the help of older advisers and generals to reign, first the eunuch named Sandal and then a general named Abu Aziz Muqaffaq. Ibn al-Athir, 10:588-589.
[96] Ibn al-Athir, 10:611. Roger II had obtained part of Calabria in 1122 as a concession from his lord, Duke William II of Apulia. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 37. A letter from the Cairo Geniza written by Abraham ibn Habib at an unknown date mentions the Almoravid raid consisting of a fleet of 17 shups. Simonsohn argues that the letter references this 1123 attack. Simonsohn, *Between Scylla and Charybdis: The Jews in Sicily*, xlii. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 1978, 1:308.
[97] Houben argues that Roger was motivated to attack al-Hasan because of civil unrest in Ifriqiya. However, there is little evidence to suggest that there was unrest in Ifriqiya during the initial reign of the last Zirid emir, even though he was still a minor when he came to power. Ibn al-Athir specifically mentions that al-Hasan was surrounded by competent officials. There is no mention of specific revolts in the years between al-Hasan's rise to power and the Norman attack on Mahdia. Instead, Roger's actions ought to be seen as a direct response to the perceived Almoravid-Zirid alliance that raided the coast of southern Italy in 1122. Ibn al-Athir, 10:577-588, 611-613. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 38.
[98] Ibn al-Athir, 10:611

from Roger, al-Hasan reached out to the Fatimid caliph al-Amir for the first time during his reign and pledged his allegiance to him.[99] In doing this, al-Hasan was acting in the tradition of his father and grandfather, both of whom had pledged allegiance to the Fatimids early in their reigns.[100] Al-Hasan had other motivations, though, as he sought their assistance due to his fear of an impending Norman attack. Ibn Muyassar, a thirteenth-century Fatimid historian, records that caliph al-Amir intervened with Count Roger and restored peace between him and al-Hasan.[101]

This episode is the first during the reign of Roger II to involve Fatimid intervention in the affairs of both the Zirids and Normans. Despite conflict between these two powers, the Fatimids sought to maintain amicable relationships with both. The Zirids and Fatimids exchanged gifts and emissaries during the reigns of the last three Zirid emirs, which is unsurprising since the Zirids were the vassals of the Fatimids.[102] The Normans and Fatimids also "maintained close, friendly, and regular contact with each other" during the early twelfth century.[103] The chronicler al-Maqrizi mentions that Roger II "dispatched George [of Antioch] as an ambassador to Egypt" many times during the early years of his reign.[104] Jeremy Johns has argued convincingly that the root of the

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[99] The timeline for when al-Hasan reached out to the Fatimids in relation to Roger's actions against the Zirids in the summer of 1123 is ambiguous. Ibn Muyassar tells us that al-Hasan sent an envoy to Cairo and pledged his allegiance to the caliph al-Hafiz in Jumada I 517H. It is likely therefore, that this envoy arrived while Roger was building up his fleet but before he attacked the Zirids, which (as will be discussed) happened at the very end of this month. See Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 94–95.

[100] The sending of emissaries and gifts was a common way for the Fatimids to communicate with their viceroys. Michael Brett, "The Diplomacy of Empire: Fatimids and Zirids, 990-1062," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 78, no. 1 (February 2015): 149–59.

[101] Ibn Muyassar, 93. Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 94–95.

[102] Yahya and ʿAli received Fatimid envoys in 505H (1112-12) and 511H (1117-18), respectively. Ibn al-Athir, 10:472-473. ʿIdhari, I:305-306.

[103] Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 267.

[104] Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 81.

strong relationship between these courts was the friendship of George of Antioch and Bahram, a Christian Armenian employed as caliph al-Hafiz's vizier.[105] Both individuals were likely born in Byzantine Antioch but displaced following its seizure during the First Crusade – George to Ifriqiya then Palermo and Bahram to Egypt. In their new positions of power, they remained in contact and helped cultivate a positive relationship between these dynasties despite conflict between the Normans and the Fatimids' Zirid vassals.[106]

The peace brokered by the Fatimids between the Normans and Zirids, as recorded by Ibn Muyassar, did not last. In the summer of 517H (1123) Roger II dispatched a fleet of some 300 ships with the goal of attacking Mahdia.[107] Al-Hasan had anticipated this attack, though, and gathered a number of "people from the lands of the Arabs" to assist him in the impending battle.[108] Ibn Hamdis recorded the names of these Arabs, including troops from the tribes of the Banu Hilal and its composite groups (the Dahman, Zayd, and Sahr), some of whom were under the command of a powerful emir in Tunis, Muhriz ibn Ziyad.[109] Before a battle between these forces could even begin, though, unfavorable winds sank a number of Roger's ships and the survivors landed on the island of

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[105] Johns provides a detailed explanation of this possible relationship, which is based largely on the earlier work of Canard. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 258–67. M. Canard, "Une lettre du calife fatimite al-Hafiz (524-544/1130-1149) à Roger II," *Atti del convegno internationale di studi ruggeriani* 1 (1955): 125–46.

[106] The Normans hired Fatimid artisans to design the muqarnas ceiling of the Capella Palatina in Palermo. Britt, "Roger II of Sicily: Rex, Basileus, and Khalif? Identity, Politics, and Propaganda in the Cappella Palatina," 28–29; Jeremy Johns, "I re normanni e i califfi fatimiti: Nuove prospettive su vecchi materiali," in *Del Nuovo sulla Sicilia Musulmana, Gornata de Studio* (Rome, 1995), 9–50. Jehel's argument that Roger II multiplied his offensives against Tunisia in the years between 1118 and 1127 is unfounded in the sources. Jehel, *L'Italie et le Maghreb au moyen âge: conflits et échanges du VIIe au XVe siècle*, 51.

[107] The attack took place in Jumada I 517H (27 June - 26 July 1123). Idris' narrative of this attack notes the variations between the Arabic texts. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:334–42.

[108] Ibn al-Athir, 10:612

[109] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:335.

Pantelleria, which the Normans conquered and pillaged. The fleet then moved to Ifriqiya and attacked the fortress of al-Dimas.[110] Although Roger's forces seized part of the fortress, they were soon encircled by Muslim forces. The Normans who had made it back to their ships watched as their comrades at the fortress were slaughtered by the combined forces of al-Hasan and his Arab allies.[111]

For the young emir al-Hasan, this was a momentous triumph. In commemoration of his victory, he sent out a letter to his neighbors. The letter, part of which survives intact in the work of al-Tijani, allows us to analyze the position of the Zirid emir after his victory over Roger II and the rhetoric that he used to commemorate his triumph.[112] Likely written by the Zirid panegyrist Abu al-Salt[113] soon after the victory, this letter portrays a battle undertaken as one of Muslims united against an evil Christian enemy:[114]

> Indeed, the lord of Sicily was obstinate in the tyranny of his trespassing. He continued his aggression and his injustice. The evil of [Roger's] taxation and the wickedness of his scheming, which oppressed the side of Islam, burdened [al-Hasan]. [Roger] thought that this plan, which was close to his desire, would be easy [to accomplish]. Thus he mobilized and gathered an army. He called upon [his soldiers] to fight. When [Roger] was of the opinion that his affairs were in order and his planning finished, which was to be his annihilation, his fleet set out toward

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[110] Idris thinks that this fortress was located on a promontory between Mahdia and Monastir at the ruins of the ancient site of Thapsus. Johns supports this conclusion. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:336. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 85.

[111] This entire affair took four days, from 25 Jumada I through 28 Jumada I (21-24 July 1123).

[112] The text of the letter can be found in al-Tijani, 337-339. The French translation of al-Tijani's *Rihla* does not contain a translation of this letter. It only contains a short summary in a footnote. H.R. Idris, however, wrote a loose translation of this letter in a short 1951 article. H.R. Idris, "Analyse et Traduction de Deux Textes de L'époque Ziride," *70ème Congrès de l'A.F.A.S.*, 1951, 209–16. al-Tijani, *Voyage du scheikh et-Tidjani dans la régence de Tunis pendant les années 706, 707 et 708 de l'hégire (1306-1309)*.

[113] Abu al-Salt was an Andalusian scholar who traveled across the Mediterranean before settling in the Zirid court. He made occasional visits to Sicily, likely as a physician. Mercè Comes, "Abū al-Ṣalt: Umayya Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Abī al-Ṣalt al-Dānī al-Andalusī," ed. Thomas Hockey, *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers, Springer Reference* (New York: Springer, 2007). Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 85–90.

[114] D.S. Richards' statement that Ibn Shaddad wrote this victory letter is likely incorrect. The work of Ibn ʿIdhari specifically mentions that Abu al-Salt wrote this letter. Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:309. See also Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:335.

> Mahdia - God defend it! - with three hundred ships bearing on their decks 30,000 soldiers and about 1,000 cavalry.
>
> But its departure was ill-fated and bound to misfortunes. For God, who is the first and most radiant in the production of beauty, destroyed [the fleet] with the loss of equipment and the perdition of souls. He made visible his providence, which does not reveal its truth without abundant praise, such that he sent on them a wind that moved them toward destruction. It came upon them with the cold of the water and the heat of fire. Their destruction befell them, alternating between the piercing of spears and the flashing of blades...
>
> Then, we sought assistance by summoning the surrounding tribes of the Arabs to us. For they drew near in band upon band. The arrival of the torrent, which was a very violent commotion and surged in waves, came. All of them came with intentions of pure jihad.

The rest of the letter complements the above passage. It gives a detailed description of the Muslim victory at al-Dimas with particular attention given to the role of the Arabs in defeating the Normans. Invective against the Norman invaders is found throughout. The letter ends with an invocation to God that emphasizes His triumph over the idolaters, "Thank God, who has triumphed for the hand of Islam, elevated it, and granted it victory. He, who has destroyed, ruined, debased, and driven away idolatry."[115]

This letter, which is the only one to survive from the Zirid court in the twelfth century, is invaluable for the way it presents the Zirid triumph over the Normans. First, it extolls the virtues of the Arabs who fought on behalf of al-Hasan, which indicates al-Hasan's desire to maintain a positive relationship with the groups that surrounded his lands. Because al-Tijani mentions that al-Hasan distributed this letter to all those around him, we can assume that these Arab tribes were among those who would read the letter. Al-Hasan had relied on these Arab tribes for success in battle and responded by praising

[115] Al-Tijani, 339.

their virtues to those in Ifriqiya. Al-Hasan's alliance with these Arab tribes also suggests the fluidity of the political landscape in twelfth-century Ifriqiya. The alliance that had once existed between governor Rafiʿ of Gabès and various Arab leaders in 511H (1117-18) against al-Hasan gave way to a new one between al-Hasan and other unnamed Arab tribes in the summer of 517H (1123).

Furthermore, this letter sheds some light on the otherwise lost rhetoric surrounding the relationship between the Normans and Zirids in the early twelfth century. Abu al-Salt's dramatic and deliberate slandering of Roger II provides evidence of the extent to which the once friendly relationship between the two groups had deteriorated. This letter demonstrates the coldness between the Zirid emirs and Roger that the Arabic chronicles mention in passing.[116] Abu al-Salt's invective against the lord of Sicily is grounded in his oppressive exploitation of the Zirids, framed as part of a broader assault on Islam itself. The victory that the Zirids won over the Normans is thus construed along triumphant, religious lines. Far from the "agony" advocated by Idris in his characterization of the reign of al-Hasan, this letter reveals the rhetoric of a confident dynasty that saw itself as triumphant in the face of a Christian foe.

This panegyric, though, ought not to be seen as the final word on the relative strength of al-Hasan and the Zirids in Ifriqiya. The fluidity of alliances between the local lords of Ifriqiya, as manifest in the 511H (1117-18) affair at Gabès, the 517H (1123) Zirid victory at al-Dimas, and (later) the Hammadid attack on Mahdia in 529H (1134-35), shows the ever-changing political landscape of Ifriqiya. In this arena, the Zirids were a

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[116] Ibn al-Athir, 10:530. Ibn ʿIdhari, I.307. Al-Tijani, 74.

prominent force but not one with the divinely manifest power described in this letter. Although Abu al-Salt interpreted Zirid rule as dominant and triumphant, the actions of al-Hasan in the context of Ifriqiya and the Mediterranean reveal a more complicated picture, one in which the Zirids were a powerful player in Ifriqiya but still constrained by the dynastic politics that surrounded them.

Another Almoravid Raid, 521H (1127-28)

Despite the bombastic rhetoric of al-Hasan, relations between the Zirids and Normans calmed in the years following the battle at al-Dimas. Neither Latin nor Arabic sources reveal anything about the relationship between Roger II and al-Hasan until the year 521H (1127-28), which proved pivotal. In this year, Roger conquered the islands of Malta and Gozo, an Almoravid fleet raided several cities in Sicily, and Roger's lord—Duke William of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily—died.[117] The first two of these events highlight the continued tension between the Normans and Muslim leaders on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The third event, meanwhile, provides an explanation for Roger II's lack of intervention in Ifriqiyan affairs after the year 1128.

Little is known about Roger's conquest of Malta and other unnamed islands in the Mediterranean. The chronicler Geoffrey Malaterra noted Roger I's conquest of Malta in 1090. The next mention of the island comes in the chronicle of Alexander of Telese, who

[117] The timeline of these events is ambiguous in the texts although it is possible to infer their order. Alexander of Telese places Roger's island conquests as taking place before Duke William's death on 28 July 1127. Based on the incredibly short amount of time between the Almoravid raid on 17 July 1127 and the date of William's death, it is most likely that Roger seized these islands before the Almoravids attacked the Sicilian coast.

recorded Roger II's conquest of Malta in 1127.[118] In the intervening years, Malta had presumably fallen into the hands of a local Muslim lord.[119] Roger's conquest of Malta likely happened around the same time as the conquest of the neighboring island of Gozo. The most detailed account of these conquests comes from the so-called *Tristia ex Melitogaudo*, a Greek poem composed by a member of the Norman court exiled to Gozo during the middle of the twelfth century. The anonymous author dramatically summarizes the Norman conquest over the majority Muslim population of the island:

> The most resplendent of all the leaders,
> Having mustered only a small naval expeditionary force
> And a host of spear-bearing archer-infantry,
> Sailed to Melitogaudos [Malta and Gozo], the country of Hagar, [and]
> Not having been dismayed at the impudence of the godless [sons of Hagar],
> Having encircled [them] with diverse engines of war,
> He subdued [them] with the might and main for the Lord.
> When he saw, on the one hand, these [inhabitants]
> Invoking only the heresiarch, the all-abominable Mohammed,
> He banished from the country their sheikhs,
> With all their households and [their] black slaves, not indeed a few.
> He, on the other hand, brought out into the open
> The pious inhabitants of the place, together with the bishop,
> Who, having departed from the Pact of old,
> Got rid of the hated things by which they used to invoke Mohammed.[120]

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[118] It is unclear based on the entry in Alexander of Telese's chronicle when the conquest of Malta happened. Based on the proximity of Alexander's brief description of the conquest to the death of William, Duke of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, who demonstrably died in the summer of 1127, it is likely that the Maltese conquest also happened in that year. De Nava, *Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, 112:97.

[119] Luttrell's work on Malta has highlighted this paucity of source material but has drawn some tentative conclusions about the religious and ethnic composition of the people there during the twelfth century. He argues that the population was exclusively Muslim by the time of Roger I's conquest in the eleventh century and that during the following 100 years, the island underwent a gradual process of Christianization. Luttrell, "Approaches to Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights." Anthony Luttrell, "The Christianization of Malta," *The Malta Year Book* 1977 (1977): 415–21. Anthony Luttrell, "Slaves and Captives on Malta: 1053/4 and 1091," *Hyphen* 7, no. 2 (1992): 97–104. Luttrell, "L'effritement de l'islam: 1091-1282."

[120] This translation is taken from Busuttil, Fiorini, and Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo*, 166–67. Issues of Christian and Muslim populations during the Middle Ages have been significant issues in the historiography of medieval Malta. Luttrell, "The Christianization of Malta."

This account of the Norman conquest of Malta and Gozo, written probably around 20 years after the event, uses laudatory rhetoric to show the triumph of the Christian Normans over native Muslims. In the greater scheme of Roger II's administration, we can also see these island conquests as part of Roger's larger plan for imperial and commercial control in the central Mediterranean. Malta and Gozo, located only 55 miles from the coast of Sicily, were ideal locations from which hostile powers could launch raids on Sicilian lands and were useful as pirate bases.[121] By conquering these islands, Roger II inhibited pirates in the area and held for himself a strategic base off the coast of Sicily that was also close to Ifriqiya.[122]

Soon after the Normans' island conquests, the Almoravids carried out another raid against the lands of Roger II, this time in Sicily. The most complete Latin-language account of the raid comes from the chronicle of William of Tyre.[123] He mentions how, in the summer of 1127, Roger launched forty galleys to Africa (meaning the city of Mahdia).[124] The people of Mahdia, though, were forewarned of the arrival of this fleet

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[121] Historians have long held that pirate activity on Malta and Gozo drove Norman expansion there. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:338. Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 31. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 41.

[122] It is possible that the Normans took other islands in the central Mediterranean around this time. The sources are not specific enough to inform us of which islands, though. Wieruszowski argues that Roger also seized the island of Pantelleria. Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 21. A twelfth-century letter from the Cairo Geniza in which a merchant ship lands on an uninhabited island somewhere between Sicily and Ifriqiya proves that the Normans did not conquer all of the islands in the region. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 1978, 1:322.

[123] *PL*, 201:570-571. For William of Tyre's reliability on Sicilian affairs, see see Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 21. Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 75.

[124] The equation of Africa with Mahdia in the Latin tradition is discussed at length in Chapter Four. William of Tyre does not explicitly say the month or day of the raid, but specifies that it occurred around

and managed to repulse the Christians all the way back to Sicily. Once this Mahdian fleet reached Sicily, it raided the city of Syracuse, massacred many people, and enslaved the rest. The *Annales Siculi* specifies that the raid took place on 17 July 1127 against the cities of Patti and Syracuse.[125]

The Arabic chroniclers provide a different but not wholly incompatible narrative.[126] None of the chronicles mention Roger launching a fleet to the coast of Africa and the people there repulsing it. Instead, the chronicles tell us of an Almoravid fleet under the command of Muhammad ibn Maymun raiding Sicily.[127] These chronicles further mention that this raid alienated Roger from the Zirid emir al-Hasan, whom he suspected was once again collaborating with the Almoravids against him. A letter from Djerba, reproduced by al-Hilati but written by an unknown author at an unknown date, further mentions that the "Christians" took Djerba in 521H (1127-28).[128] This chronology aligns with statements in the Latin sources that the Normans' attacks stretched to the coast of Ifriqiya itself.

When we combine these Latin and Arabic stories, we thus are presented with a narrative in which Roger II advanced on Malta and other Mediterranean islands. These conquests reached the coast of Ifriqiya before being repulsed. As a result of this

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the same time as the conflict of Bohemond II and Joscelin in the Crusader states, which happened in the summer of 1127.

[125] The *Annales Siculi* was initially thought to have been an appendix to the chronicle of eleventh-century chronicler Geoffrey Malaterra but now is more commonly read as a work that merely drew heavily on Malaterra. Charles Stanton, "Anonymus Vaticanus: Another Source for the Normans in the South?," ed. William North and Laura Gathagan, *The Haskins Society Journal* 24 (2013): 79–94.

[126] Al-Tijani, 339, Ibn Khaldun, 6:214.

[127] Ibn Khaldun refers to the Almoravid general as Ahmed and al-Tijani calls him Muhammad. Al-Tijani might have mistakenly recorded this name, however, since he equates the leader of the 1127 raid with that of the 1122 raid, whose name (according to him) was ʿAli. Al-Tijani 335-339, Ibn Khaldun 6:214.

[128] Ahmad al-Hilati, *ʿUlamaʿ Djerba* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1998), 42–43.

aggression, the Zirids or Almoravids retaliated. William of Tyre's narrative indicates that it was possibly the Zirids who executed this raid but the Arabic sources tell that it was the Almoravids who conducted it. In a similar response to the Almoravid raid of 1122, Roger assumed the attack was the result of collusion between the Almoravids and Zirids, causing relations between him and al-Hasan to deteriorate once again.[129]

These island conquests represent an important change in the policy of Roger II. Unlike previous incursions into Ifriqiya, in which Roger reacted to a request or act of aggression against him, these attacks placed Roger on the offensive. The reason for this change of tactics was likely tied to the ascent of George of Antioch to the position of emir, which took place in 1126 when Roger's former teacher Christodoulos was deposed. Al-Maqrizi provides the most detailed explanation of George of Antioch's rise to power. He explains how George and Christodoulos shared power in Sicily when Roger came of age. Over time, though, George slandered Christodoulos to such an extent that Roger eventually executed Christodoulos and appointed George of Antioch to his position.[130] This change in personnel within the Norman administration corresponds with a radical change in policy toward Ifriqiya and is unlikely to be a coincidence. George played a formative role in the change of policy in 1127, which involved proactive attacks on Mediterranean islands that extended to the coast of Ifriqiya.

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[129] Wieruszowski's assertion that the time between 1122 and 1127 was a war between the Normans and Almoravids/Zirids seems a bit overstated. Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 21.

[130] Roger initially sought to assign his vizierate to the scholar Abu al-Daw but he refused. For a discussion of Abu al-Daw and his role in the Norman administration, see Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 81–90.

The reason that the Normans formulated this more aggressive policy against Ifriqiya is left to speculation, although I think that revenge was a motivating factor for both George of Antioch and Roger II. George left the Zirid caliphate because of the perceived threat to his own life following the death of his brother at the hands of the Zirid emir. While in Palermo, George could have coupled his knowledge of the inner workings of the Zirid court (specifically its financial and military strength) alongside his desire to seek retribution for the death of his brother to motivate Roger II to attack the lords of Ifriqiya. The Norman count likely would have responded positively to this suggestion, for it would allow Roger to avenge his earlier defeat against the Zirids at al-Dimas. Furthermore, these attacks aligned with Roger II's goal of increasing Norman commercial and military power in the Mediterranean, which manifested in treaties that were being negotiated contemporaneously with the Normans' island conquests.

In the spring of 1128, Roger II concluded a series of treaties with Savona, a Genose protectorate in northwestern Italy.[131] Preserved today in three documents, these treaties begin with the Savonese requesting that Roger release one of their galleys that he currently held. Roger agreed to this on condition that the Savonese swear never to harm any of Roger's subjects by land or sea. In the second document, Roger promises protection to Savonese travelers in his lands. The third and final document states that the Savonese would not consider Roger's requisitioning of seafaring equipment as piracy if

[131] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 9.

Roger used them with prudence. The document then details the mechanisms of "judicial inquiry" to prevent conflicts arising from Genoese and Sicilian interests.[132]

The language used in these treaties shows the extent of Roger II's Mediterranean ambitions. In the first treaty, the Savonese agreed not to harm the people or boats of Roger II in "the entire sea, which is from Numidia up to Tripoli, and all the sea and all the land that is between us."[133] Roger's assertion that these waters, which span from roughly Algeria to Tripoli in Libya, fall under his sphere of influence indicates his goal of asserting himself in the south-central Mediterranean and Ifriqiya. These treaties also show that Roger was actively seeking to requisition naval equipment in what was essentially state-sponsored piracy or privateering, presumably to support his own commercial and military interests. Indeed, strengthing the Norman navy proved beneficial both for Roger II's campaigns on the Italian Peninsula in the late 1120s and for his Ifriqiyan conquests in the 1130s and 1140s.[134]

As Roger was negotiating these treaties with Savona, he was also looking for allies in the western Mediterranean. He found one in the form of Raymond Berengar III, Count of Barcelona.[135] In the beginning of 1128, the two counts finalized a treaty with

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[132] Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 67.
[133] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 9.
[134] Abulafia argues that there were also non-written agreements in place between the Genoese and Normans during the reign of Roger II on the basis of the language of treaties written during the reigns of Roger's successors. Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 69–71.
[135] Raymond had previously formed alliances with other Christian rulers against Muslim powers in the Mediterranean. With the spiritual support of Pope Paschal II and the physical help of a number of lords from Italy and Andalusia, Raymond had led a prolonged campaign against Ibiza, Majorca, and the Balearic Islands from 1114-1115. These islands, under control of the Almoravids and independent Muslim ṭa'ifa rulers, had been centers of piracy in the westen Mediterranean. Although Raymond succeeded in capturing the islands, his victory was fleeting and the Almoravids managed to reconquer them in 1116. Undeterred, Raymond undertook campaigns with cooperation from Pisa against Muslim-held cities of Valencia, Lleida,

the express goal of Roger providing aid and council due to the "multiple incursions of Saracens in parts of Hispania."[136] According to the treaty, Roger would provide fifty ships, several of his vassals, and an unspecified number of soldiers to aid the armies of Raymond. The target of this expedition is not specified in the treaties beyond "Hispania," but if Michele Amari is to be believed, Roger and Raymond were likely planning on attacking the Balearic Islands, whence the Almoravids had been launching their raids on Christian lands.[137] Wherever Roger and Raymond intended for this campaign to go, nothing materialized of it.[138] Although the reason for the failure of this alliance is not explored in the sources, it is likely that Roger prioritized the use of his military in southern Italy during the summer of 1128 in the wake of the death of Duke William.[139]

On 28 July 1127, Duke William of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily died unexpectedly and childless. Roger sought to usurp his dukedom immediately, a move that brought him into conflict with both the Papacy and local Italian lords. Pope Honorius II threatened Roger with excommunication, raised his own troops for an impending war, and invested

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and Tortosa. He also led a papally sponsored campaign against the city of Tarragona in 1118. Reilly, *The Contest of Christian and Muslim Spain, 1031-1157*, 174–80.

[136] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 9. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:397.

[137] Amari, *Storia dei musulmani di Sicilia*, 1937, 3:384–85. Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 9.

[138] Abulafia and Wieruszowski see the Savona treaty as a way for Roger to fulfill his Ifriqiyan ambitions. Abulafia argues that part of the terms of the first treaty, which specified that the captured galley and crew from Savona must provide forty days of service to Roger, were meant for a forthcoming naval expedition to North Africa. Wieruszowski similarly sees the terms of this treaty as helping Roger prepare for his "future role as lord of the African sea." While this may have been Roger's initial plan, the narrative presented above supports the idea that Roger wanted to use his captured Savonese ships to assist his campaigns in Italy. Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 65–68. Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 21.

[139] Houben echoes this argument. However, Chalandon argues that the reason this treaty fell through was because Raymond did not ratify it during the eight days that followed the arrival of Roger's envoys. He provides no evidence for this claim. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 41. Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, 1907, 1:378.

a rival claimant to the dukedom, Robert II, with the duchy of Capua.[140] It was these subsequent campaigns in Italy that occupied Roger's attention during the entire summer of 1128 and likely distracted or rendered him unable to help Raymond in Iberia. The campaigns that Roger undertook in the wake of Duke William's death were the first of many in his fight to establish himself as the duke of Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria. Embroiled in these affairs, Roger did not commit himself militarily to the affairs of Ifriqiya for seven years. While these years did not see direct Norman intervention in Ifriqiya, they did witness important developments in Roger II's use of Christian rhetoric in his royal titles.

In the middle of the twelfth century, Roger began to deliberately alter his royal titles in charters. This is first seen in his correspondence with Raymond III. In these documents, Roger refers to his rule by the grace of God and directs his galleys to be sent "in the service of God and the aid of the armies" of Hispania.[141] Another charter from 1126 is the first in which Count Roger presents himself as *Christiane religionis, auctore Deo, defensor et clipeus* ("defender and shield, by the authority of God, of the Christian religion").[142] Charters in subsequent years see Roger manipulating Christian rhetoric in his titles. In various charters from the years 1127-1129, he refers to his rule as being given *gratia Dei* ("by the grace of God").[143] One charter from 1129 calls Roger a ruler *divina favente clemencia* ("with the favor of divine mercy").[144] Another charter from

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[140] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 43–46.
[141] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 9. The three documents prior to this one also see the use of the phrase "by the grace of God." Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 6, 7, 8.
[142] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 7.
[143] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 8, 9, 12, 13, 14.
[144] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 11.

1129 refers to Roger as *adiutor et clipeus Christianorum* ("helper and shield of Christians").[145] A final charter from 1129 calls him *ecclesiarum Dei augmentator et Christianorum arma et clypeus* ("increaser of the churches of God and the weapons and shield of Christians").[146] In the late 1120s, at the same time as Roger was asserting himself more vigorously in the affairs of Ifriqiya, Italy, and the Mediterranean, he was consequently experimenting with the use of religious rhetoric in his royal titles.[147]

The content and audience of these charters is significant, for they reveal how Roger II altered his royal title in charters depending on the circumstances of their creation. The charters in which Roger evokes his protection of Christianity were written to monastic communities.[148] Roger's treaties with the secular rulers of Savona make no mention of God but instead emphasize the glory of his and his father's rule.[149] In his treaty with Raymond of Barcelona, Roger refers to his rule *gratia Dei* ("by the grace of God") and indicates the divine righteousness with which his galleys will undertake their campaigns in Iberia.[150] The variability of these charters demonstrates Roger's willingness to mobilize language of religiosity toward his rule in the late 1120s and provides evidence of his deliberate use of varied royal epithets to groups in the Mediterranean with whom he sought to cultivate positive relationships.

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145 Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata,* document 14.
146 Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 13.
147 The use of the word *clypeus* or *clypeus* (Latin for "shield) might have had its origins in the titles of the dukes of Apulia, for the rhetoric of protecting Christianity is found in their Latin titles. Horst Enzensberger, "Chanceries, Charters, and Administration in Norman Italy," in *The Society of Norman Italy* (Boston: Brill, 2002), 142–45.
148 These charters are addressed respectively to the Monastery of Santa Maria Latina in Jerusalem, the Carthusians and the houses of Santa Maria "de Turri," and the Monastery of Montecassino. Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 8, 13, 14.
149 Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 10.
150 Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 9.

Conflict in Mahdia and Djerba, 529H (1134-35)

In the wake of Duke William's death in 1127, Roger devoted most of his time and resources trying to secure the loyalty of local lords on the Italian peninsula, many of whom were hostile to him and enjoyed the support of Pope Honorius II. The death of Honorius in 1130 presented an opportunity for Roger to gain papal recognition for his legitimate rule when the subsequent election resulted in the contested appointment of Pope Anacletus II, whom Roger supported, and Pope Innocent II, who had the support of most of the rest of Europe (including Bernard of Clairvaux and Emperor Lothair II). Roger and his advisers justified the need for there to be a "King of Sicily" to Anacletus, who agreed with them. Anacletus subsequently crowned Roger as King of Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria on Christmas Day 1130. This coronation was met with opposition from supporters of Pope Innocent II as well as barons in southern Italy. These divisions furthered the conflict between Roger and powerful barons in Campania and Apulia, which lasted through the early 1130s.[151]

Even as he was occupied with events within his own kingdom, Roger did not lose sight of affairs abroad. Of particular concern to him was the succession of Prince Bohemond II of Antioch, who had died in 1130 and left his daughter Constance, still a minor, as heiress. According to William of Tyre, Roger claimed that Antioch and all of its possessions belonged to him by hereditary right.[152] When a council of nobles from Antioch chose Raymond of Poitiers to wed Constance, they feared Roger would try to

[151] For details, see Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 60–66.
[152] Roger II's paternal cousin, Bohemond I, had captured Antioch during the First Crusade. Bohemond I's son and heir, Bohemnd II, was therefore Roger II's first cousin once removed. *PL*, 201:599-600, 624-627.

prevent Raymond from traveling to Antioch so as to advance his own line's claim to the Principality of Antioch. When Raymond set out on his journey incognito in 1135, Roger laid out traps in every coastal city in Apulia to catch him. Raymond, dressed like a humble pilgrim, managed to escape Roger's plots and arrived safely in Antioch.

Except for his scheming in Antioch, which did not require any military exertion, Roger's energy in the years following the death of Duke William was firmly fixed on the Italian peninsula. His relationship with al-Hasan in Ifriqiya appears to have been stable, based on a lack of any evidence to the contrary. Across the Strait of Sicily, al-Hasan displayed a similar attitude of non-intervention. However, the reasons for al-Hasan's lack of action are unclear. None of the Arabic chronicles mention al-Hasan in the years 522-528H (1128-34). Beyond a description of the conquest of Tunis by the Hammadid emir Yahya ibn al-ʿAziz, the chroniclers are silent on the affairs of Ifriqiya. To best explain the history of Ifriqiya in these years, it is necessary to use later entries from Arabic chronicles for details. Ibn al-Athir's entry for 529H (1134-35) is particularly revealing.

In this year (likely in the summer of 1135), the Hammadid emir Yahya ibn al-ʿAziz launched an expedition against the Zirid capital of Mahdia.[153] According to Ibn al-Athir, al-Hasan favored an Arab man named Maymun ibn Ziyad, who was an emir of a large group of Arabs.[154] This made other Arabs envious and caused them to reach out to

[153] Ibn ʿIdhari is alone in asserting that the Hammadid attack on Mahdia came in the year 530H (1135-36). Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:312.
[154] Ibn al-Athir, 11:31-32. I suspect that Ibn al-Athir miswrote "Maymun" for "Muhriz" in this entry. Muhriz ibn Ziyad was a veteran Arab leader from the Banu Riyah who ruled at the fortress of La Malga near Tunis. When al-Hasan was forced to flee Mahdia in 543H (1148-49), he goes to the lands of Muhriz because he had favored him "over all the Arabs and treated generously." This circumstantial evidence of friendship between al-Hasan and Muhriz, combined with the similar spellings in Arabic between Muhriz and Maymun, makes me suspect this mistake. Ibn al-Athir, 11:129.

the Hammadid emir Yahya ibn al-ʿAziz, whom they asked to invade Mahdia on their behalf.[155] Spurred by this request, letters from discontented shaykhs in Mahdia, and general jealousy of the Zirid line, Yahya ibn al-ʿAziz gathered his forces. The Hammadid army, accompanied by a large number of Arabs, besieged Mahdia by land and by sea. Although the Hammadid general Muttarif ibn Hamdun initially sought to take the city peacefully, he eventually commenced with an attack. The Hammadid fleet dominated the seas outside of Mahdia and the army pressed forth toward the walls. The tides of battle turned quickly, though, in an account from Ibn al-Athir that details al-Hasan's heroism:

> Al-Hasan ordered the opening of the sea-facing gate and he was the first of the people to exit it. He bore himself forth and cried out to those who were with him, "I am al-Hasan!" When those who were fighting him heard this, they called out to him, saluted him, and retreated from him out of respect for him. Then, at that moment, al-Hasan sent out his fleet from the harbor. Four ships from the fleet [of the enemy] were taken and the remaining [ships] were defeated. Then, help arrived from Roger the Frank, lord of Sicily, at sea in the form of twenty ships, which encircled the fleet of the lord of Bijāya. Al-Hasan ordered them set free, which they were. Then, Maymun ibn Ziyad arrived with a large group of Arabs to assist al-Hasan. When Muttarif [ibn Hamdun] saw this and that support was coming for al-Hasan by land and by sea, he perceived that he did not have the power [to defeat] them. So he departed from Mahdia disappointed. Roger the Frank ostensibly made right [the situation] with al-Hasan such that there was the conclusion of a truce and an agreement. Despite this, [Roger] was constructing a fleet and increasing its numbers."[156]

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[155] Other Arabic chronicles provide different reasons for the attack. Ibn Abi Dinar, a seventeenth-century historian, says that Yahya attacked Mahdia because al-Hasan had signed a treaty with Roger. Baadj and 'Uways believe that Ibn al-Athir's account is most accurate, although the two explanations need not be mutually exclusive. Between 1127 and 1134-35, it is possible that the Normans and Zirids mended the ill feelings caused by earlier conflicts because Roger II intervened on behalf of al-Hasan against the Hammadids. Abd al-Halim ʿUways, *Dawlat Banī Ḥammād* (Cairo: Sharikat Suzlar li-al-Nashr, 1991), 158–60. Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 34. Ibn Abi Dinar, 90.

[156] Ibn al-Athir, 11:31-32.

In this account, Roger II came to al-Hasan's aid in the face of aggression from rival lords in Ifriqiya. This represents a significant departure from the events of previous decades, when al-Hasan used alliances to resist Roger. The Arabic sources do not provide an explanation for the declining military capacity and political clout of the Zirids. Based on their narrative description of the Hammadid attack on Mahdia, we can speculate that the ever-changing political landscape of Ifriqiya had shifted to the misfortune of the Zirids, whose loyalty to a certain Arab lord caused others in the region to feel alienated. Al-Hasan, without Almoravid aid, turned to his on-and-off rival Roger II to help repel the Hammadid attack. This episode also shows that the relationship between Roger and al-Hasan had warmed in the time between the events of 1127 and the Hammadid attack in 1135 to the extent that Roger intervened on behalf of the Zirids. More importantly, though, it shows that al-Hasan ibn ʿAli felt the need to reach out to a Christian power, the same Christian power he had derided in 1123, in order to maintain his governance. The tables had turned at the expense of the Zirids.

Roger II likely had ulterior motivations for assisting the Zirids at Mahdia, which came to fruition shortly after this campaign. Following the battle outside of Mahdia, Roger attacked and conquered the island of Djerba, which according to the Arabic chronicles was a haven for piracy.[157] Ibn al-Athir describes how the people of Djerba "exceeded the proper bounds such that they were not under the authority of a sultan and

[157] The reputation for piracy that is clear in the Arabic sources might be the result of Ibn Shaddad's hatred of the Ibadi community of Muslims that resided there. The piracy in question could have been merchant shipping that the Ibadi community on Djerba conducted outside the watchful eye of the Zirids. Earlier Zirid attacks against the Ibadis show that the dynasty struggled to keep them under its control.

were known for wickedness and committing highway robbery."[158] Roger's decision to come to the aid of al-Hasan was likely tied to his desire to bring the troublesome island of Djerba under his control. This strategic island, which provides easy access to the major port cities of Ifriqiya around the gulf of Gabès, would come to serve as a base from which Roger II could more closely monitor the affairs of Ifriqiya.

News of Roger's conquest of Djerba soon reached the European mainland. In August 1135, Emperor Lothair II held a court at Merseburg (modern-day Germany) in which a Byzantine lord and priest along with Venetian envoys beseeched the court to take action against Roger II. They argued that Roger had "conquered Africa, which is discerned to be the third part of the world, from the king of Greece" and usurped the royal name there.[159] The delegates then promised to send a fleet to assist the armies of Lothair II should he undertake an expedition against Roger II. Although Roger II only held Djerba and a series of Mediterranean islands at the time of this court, the extent of his conquests was perceived differently to the Venetians and Byzantines, who sought to emphasize (or lie about) their scope in order to persuade the German Emperor into action. Their apprehensions about Roger's ambitions highlight his rising power in the Mediterranean and the cooperation needed to stop him.

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[158] Ibn al-Athir XI:32. The *Tristia ex Melitogaudo* somewhat corroborates this. It states that the Normans, "threshed the impudence of Djerba that vaunted herself above every race by its evils." Whether this is an allusion to piracy or religious heterodoxy is unclear. Busuttil, Fiorini, and Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo*, 171.

[159] This passage from the *Annales Erphesfurtenses* can be found in *MGH*, *SS rer. Germ.*, 42:171-172.

Conclusion

From the succession of Roger II in 1112 through the affair at Mahdia in 1135, there were dramatic changes in the relationship between the Normans and Zirids. In roughly the first two decades of Roger's reign, the Zirid emirs of Ifriqiya dictated the terms of their relationship with the Normans. They repelled a Norman fleet in 511H (1117-18) when Roger II had sided with the governor of Gabès against them and followed this with a series of victories against a coalition of Arab tribes. Several years later, in 517H (1123-24), the Zirids forged an alliance with the Almoravids that led to raids against Norman territory and a victory over a Norman army at the fortress of al-Dimas. Finally, in 521H (1127-28), the Zirids repulsed another Norman attack and leveraged their alliance with the Almoravids into a raid against Sicily. During this time, the Zirids' diplomatic maneuverings dictated the political relationship between Sicily and Ifriqiya. The Zirids were a demonstrably potent military and political force, shown through their victories over the Normans and local Ifriqiyan lords. It was not until 529H (1134-35) that the Zirids became vulnerable to the machinations of the Normans, which was due to both the collapse of the Zirids' alliances and the growing strength of the Normans under Roger II and George of Antioch.

For Roger II, Ifriqiya was one of several fronts on which he sought to further his power. In 1117 alone, he married Elvira Alfónsez of Castile and León, quarreled with the Papacy over his authority to appoint church officials, and extended trading rights to Genoese merchants. With the appointment of George of Antioch as his admiral in 1126, Roger began to pursue a more militarily aggressive policy in the Mediterranean, seen in

his conquest of Malta, Gozo, and Djerba over the next decade. The motivations that Roger II had for involving himself and his military resources in Ifriqiya were political and economic. These campaigns were one part of his larger efforts to expand his regnal authority, shown elsewhere in the Mediterranean through diplomatic and marital arrangements. Simultaneously, these conquests were an effective way to root out pirates and to ensure the security of merchant ships that navigated profitable trade routes across the central Mediterranean. Roger's relationship with Ifriqiya ought to be understood in this dynamic context.

Chapter Two

The Foundation and Fall of the Norman Kingdom of Africa

The years following the Norman conquest of Djerba in 529H (1134-35) saw the gradual ascent of the Normans over the Zirids due to the deterioration of al-Hasan's alliances, environmental crises, dissent among local Ifriqiyan governors, and the growing strength of Roger II. These combined factors rendered the last Zirid emir unable to check the rising strength of the Normans. During the 1140s, Roger II's admiral George of Antioch conducted numerous campaigns on an almost annual basis in Ifriqiya. These attacks culminated in the seizure of Mahdia and the littoral of Ifriqiya from Tripoli up to Tunis by the summer of 1148, which marked the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. Roger's overseas conquests, which were undertaken with the tacit consent of the Fatimid Caliphate, provided the Normans with political and economic control over major trading routes that crossed the central Mediterranean.

The Norman Kingdom of Africa was shortlived. Events in the early 1150s both within and outside the borders of the Kingdom of Sicily had major ramifications for Norman Africa. A new power in the Maghreb, the Almohad Caliphate, undertook a series of conquests in North Africa that brought them adjacent to Norman territories in Ifriqiya. Internal changes within the Fatimid Caliphate precipitated its falling out with Roger II and his successor William I, who came to power in 1154. The ascent of William I also brought about new internal and external conflicts in the Kingdom of Sicily that strained the resources of the nascent kingdom. When widespread revolts against Norman rule hit

Ifriqiya in the middle of the 1150s, William was unable to quell them. Norman possessions in Ifriqiya were reduced by 553H (1158-59) to Mahdia and its suburb Zawila. The death blow came several years later. An Almohad army led by ʿAbd al-Muʿmin arrived before the walls of Mahdia in 1159 and conquered the city in January 1160, ending the Norman Kingdom of Africa and establishing Almohad rule in Ifriqiya.

Although the Zirid emir al-Hasan fled from Mahdia in 1148, his dynasty did not disappear. It became embedded in both the triumphant Almohad caliphate and the fledgling Fatimid caliphate. One of al-Hasan's relatives, al-ʿAbbas ibn Abi al-Futuh, rose to the rank of vizier in the Fatimid court and contributed to the destabilization of its relationship with the Normans in the 1150s. Al-Hasan himself managed to gain favor with ʿAbd al-Muʿmin when the caliph freed him from a Hammadid prison. Upon the Almohad conquest of Mahdia, al-Hasan was put in charge of the city alongside an Almohad governor. The Zirid dynasty, which began as a line of emirs subservient to the Fatimids, thus passed to the Almohads as one of its many local governors.

The chronicles of Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani, Ibn ʿIdhari, and Ibn Khaldun provide the most detail about the political landscape within Ifriqiya and the shifting allegiances of local lords in the region. For the years following the Norman attack on Djerba in 529H (1134-35), though, they discuss the Zirids almost exclusively in relation to their increasing submission to the Kingdom of Sicily. For example, all of Ibn al-Athir's entries from the years 529H (1134-35) to 543H (1148-49) that mention the Zirids also involve the Normans. This tendency in the Arabic sources to frame the Zirid dynasty around its relationship with the Kingdom of Sicily makes it difficult to write the history of the

Zirids and other local dynasties in Ifriqiya on their own terms. Nonetheless, the careful re-examination of Arabic sources alongside the use of new and underutilized sources can help reframe the history of medieval Ifriqiya to provide more agency to its local rulers. The incorporation of sources like Almohad letters, Fatimid chronicles, and environmental data from the Old World Drought Atlas allows for the analysis of this period in a way that gives more agency to the local lords of Ifriqiya instead of seeing them as mere tools of the Kingdom of Sicily.[1]

The Beginnings of Norman Ascendancy in Ifriqiya

From roughly 1135 to 1142, there were minimal interactions between the Norman and Zirid courts. Instead, both groups jockeyed with other Mediterranean powers to expand the power of their empires. For Roger II, this meant securing southern Italy, scheming in the principality of Antioch, and maintaining friendly relations with the Fatimid Caliphate. The Zirids under al-Hasan were less successful in their Mediterranean diplomatic efforts. They continued to clash with their Hammadid rivals over favor in the Fatimid court to little effect. The beginnings of a catastrophic drought in Ifriqiya further weakened the dynasty's standing, which allowed the Normans to launch an attack on Mahdia in 536H (1141-42), setting the stage for their future domination of the Zirids.

Roger II's capture of the island of Djerba in 529H (1134-35) was an exception to his Mediterranean policy during the 1130s. For the greater part of this decade, Roger

[1] This methodology provides a counterpoint to scholars who have written about the Norman Kingdom of Africa using the sources compiled in the *BAS*. This is most pronounced in Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean"; Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 67–127.

committed his resources to southern Italy, where he fought to establish and maintain dominance against a host of rival lords. These campaigns became much more difficult in 1137, when the army of German emperor Lothair II entered southern Italy to assist Roger's rivals.[2] This expedition, which had the support of Pope Innocent II, consisted of a land force led by Lothair, a Pisan navy, and auxiliary forces from Roger's opponents on the Italian mainland. Although Roger sought to negotiate with Lothair, his efforts proved fruitless and the German army conquered a number of cities in Italy, most prominently Salerno, which surrendered on Roger's order in August 1137. The capture of Salerno, though, ultimately proved fateful to the expedition. The Pisans found the terms of the city's surrender unfavorable to them, removed themselves from the expedition, and signed a peace with Roger. Without a supporting navy, Lothair also withdrew.

With the invading army gone, Roger brought his army to the Italian mainland in late 1137 and began to conquer the cities that he had lost. He made favorable concessions to cities that had remained loyal to him during the campaigns. For example, he provided the merchants of Salerno with trading rights equal to those that Sicilian merchants enjoyed in the city of Alexandria.[3] These conquests did not sit well with Pope Innocent II, whose support of Lothair II against Roger had increased the divide between the Papacy and Kingdom of Sicily. Pope Innocent II personally led an army against Roger II

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[2] The main sources for this invasion are the *Annalista Saxo*, *Annales Cavenses*, *Annales Pisani*, *Regesta Imperii*, and the chronicles of Otto of Freising, Hugo Falcandus, and Romuald of Salerno. The expedition is summarized in Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 66–73.

[3] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 46. A letter between the Fatimid caliph al-Hafiz and Roger II likely confirms these trading privileges, as it mentions how ships of Roger II, George of Antioch, and two ambassadors were to receive exemption from import and export taxes. As Canard suggests, the two ambassadors very well could have been from Salerno. Canard, "Une lettre du calife fatimite al-Hafiz (524-544/1130-1149) à Roger II," 133–34.

in 1139. The result was a decisive victory for the Normans. Roger's forces ambushed the papal army, captured Innocent II, and forced him to recognize Roger as the King of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua.[4] Now with papal recognition, Roger continued his campaigns across Italy and brought under his authority those cities that had resisted him. By mid-1140, the entirety of Italy south and east of the Papal States belonged to Roger and his sons.

While conducting these campaigns, Roger also schemed once again to bring Antioch under his control. He had already tried and failed to inherit the Kingdom of Jerusalem through his mother's marriage to King Baldwin I and to usurp the Principality of Antioch by hindering the arrival of its legitimate successor, Raymond of Poitiers. The opportunity for Roger II to insert himself into the affairs of Antioch came via an alliance with its patriarch, Ralph, who was on poor terms with Prince Raymond of Antioch.[5] When the patriarch traveled to Rome and southern Italy, he met with Roger II "many times," which made the nobles of Antioch wary of possible collusion between the two.[6] When Ralph arrived in Antioch, Arnulf argued that the patriarch had made a secret alliance with Roger against Prince Raymond, which led to Ralph fleeing the city.[7]

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[4] Technically, the duchy of Apulia and principality of Capua were given to Roger's sons, Roger and Alfonso (respectively), although it was made clear that the lords of these two territories were subservient to Roger II. Houben argues that "from 1136 onwards, Roger II's Latin charters describe him as 'King of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia and of the principality of Capua.'" Although there is a noticeable transition in title from the previous "Roger, King of Sicily and Italy" to the above title, there are a number of charters after 1136 that refer to Roger as something other than what Houben argues. See Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 44, 46, 47, 61A/B, and 62. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 67.

[5] *PL*, 201:624-627.

[6] Willim of Tyre does not specify what these matters were, although based on the reception that Ralph had upon returning to Antioch, they might have included plans to work together to destabilize Prince Raymond of Antioch. PL, 201:626.

[7] The details of this episode are discussed in length in the chronicle of William of Tyre. Other nobles in Antioch conspired with Raymond against the patriarch Ralph, including a man named Arnulf, who went to

Roger's scheming in the Crusader states was complemented by the positive relationship he continued to cultivate with the Fatimid Caliphate. The roots of the ties between the Normans and Fatimids were their Armenian officials George of Antioch and Bahram. The importance of this relationship is revealed in a letter sent by the Fatimid caliph al-Hafiz to Roger II in late 1137 or early 1138. The letter survives today in a later transcription by Mamluk historian al-Qalqashandi to showcase how the Fatimid chancery corresponded with foreign lords.[8] Canard and Johns' analysis of the letter remains the most convincing, and my argument largely echoes their own.[9]

In this letter, al-Hafiz acknowledges the Norman attack on the island of Djerba in 529H (1134-35), which Roger II had mentioned or justified in a previous letter. Al-Hafiz does not criticize Roger for taking the island but instead suggests that Roger had done him a favor for destroying this refuge of pirates.[10] He then thanks Roger for intervening on behalf of his personal trading vessel, which a Sicilian admiral personally protected after it was erroneously seized. As a thank-you for this generosity, al-Hafiz orders that his admirals give the same protection to Roger's own ships and that import/export taxes be waived for any ships of Roger, George of Antioch, and two ambassadors (likely from

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Rome to campaign against Ralph. On the way, Arnulf stopped in Sicily and convinced Roger II to have Ralph captured on his way to Rome, arguing that doing so might permit Roger to succeed to the throne of Antioch, which had been "unjustly" taken from him. This argument convinced Roger. He captured Ralph and, after the two talked, Roger let Ralph go on the condition that he return to him upon completing his journey to Rome. These were the circumstances that led to the many meetings between Ralph and Roger, culminating in Ralph's explusion from Antioch.In the course of this narrative, William of Tyre refers to Roger as the "Duke of Apulia" even though this story took place after Pope Innocent II recognized his kingship. Perhaps this was for William of Tyre to minimize the prestige of Roger, of whom he was clearly wary. *PL,* 201:624-625.

[8] Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-aʿsha fi sinaʿat al-insha*, vol. 5–6 (Cairo, 1964), 458–63.

[9] Canard, "Une lettre du calife fatimite al-Hafiz (524-544/1130-1149) à Roger II." Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 258–67.

[10] Al-Qalqashandi, 6:459.

Salerno).[11] Al-Hafiz also acknowledges Roger's previous thanks for releasing some Sicilian captives and notes that this is a generosity he would not bestow on any other Christian king.

The bulk of the letter concerns the treatment of Bahram, the Armenian vizier who had been so essential in promoting the amicable relations between the Normans and Fatimids. When al-Hafiz sent this letter, Bahram had been ousted as vizier by a Muslim governor named Ridwan ibn Walakhshi and was being confined in a monastery in Cairo.[12] Roger had requested in a previous letter that Bahram be freed from this monastery. The lengthy response from al-Hafiz, which Johns argues was probably written by Ridwan himself, details Bahram's crimes and even notes that he will send along a trustworthy person with this letter to expand upon what is stated in it. In short, al-Hafiz was unwilling to free Bahram.[13]

This letter provides invaluable information not only about Roger's relationship with the Fatimid caliphate but also the extent of his ambitions in the Crusader states. Since Bahram and George of Antioch were both from the same Antiochene family, Roger's intervention on behalf of Bahram could have been tied to Norman ambitions in Antioch. With Bahram on his side, he could leverage any political power that Bahram had either as a member of the Fatimid government or as a member of the Antiochene nobility to his own advantage. This letter to the Fatimids was yet another attempt of

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[11] Al-Qalqashandi, 6:459-460.

[12] Johns provides the details surrounding Ridwan's coup and Bahram's imprisonment. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 261–62.

[13] The letter concludes with a panegyric devoted to Ridwan, the acceptance of a Sicilian scribe's apology for writing the incorrect caliphal title in a previous letter, the acknowledgment that Roger's gifts to the Fatimids had arrived safely, and a statement about al-Hafiz's desire to receive more news about Sicily. Al-Qalqashandi, 6:462-463.

Roger II to leverage Mediterranean politics to gain power in the Principality of Antioch.[14] The connection between Roger II, the Fatimid court, and his ambitions in Antioch was not lost on the seventeenth-century historian Ibn Abi Dinar. In his history of Ifriqiya and Tunis, he wrote that Roger II's expeditions "stretched to the East" and that he even "conquered Antioch."[15]

Al-Hafiz's letter also proves that the Fatimids were aware of the Norman conquest of Djerba and looked upon it favorably. Johns and Canard argue that Fatimids supported this attack because it helped to eliminate troublesome pirates in the region.[16] While this may be one reason for the Fatimids' support of Roger's conquests, there is another that is made apparent in a letter from the Cairo Geniza. This letter states that on 14 October 1136, "there arrived the prisoners of Djerba" in Egypt including a captive cantor named Isaac ibn Ṣedaqa, who was sold to an Egyptian benefactor.[17] Norman attacks in the central Mediterranean both eliminated piracy that interfered with Fatimid trade and provided slaves to be sold in Fatimid markets.

In the 1130s, despite substantial military investment in southern Italy, Roger II did not lose sight of affairs abroad. His negotiations with the Fatimid Caliphate, scheming in Antioch, and opportunistic attack on Djerba in 529H (1134-35) show his continued investment in Mediterranean affairs. Across the Strait of Sicily, the

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[14] Jeremy Johns similarly speculates that "it is not difficult to imagine how interested Roger, his Antiochene vizier, and Bahram might all have been in such a scheme." Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 263.
[15] Ibn Abi Dinar, 89.
[16] Canard, "Une lettre du calife fatimite al-Hafiz (524-544/1130-1149) à Roger II," 129–31. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 260.
[17] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 324. S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 117–18.

motivations and actions of al-Hasan in Ifriqiya for these years are difficult to divine based on the surviving source materials. None of the surviving primary sources provide any information about the fate of the Zirid or Hammadid rulers for the years 529H to 535H (1134-40). The environmental data for these years indicates consistently wet summers and, based on this, adequate harvests. Evidence for potential conflict in the area and tension between rival lords can only be glimpsed through interactions in later years.

For example, the Zirid and Hammadid dynasties continued to jockey for a favorable relationship with the Fatimids. In the year 536H (1141-42), an entry from the chronicle of Ibn ʿIdhari narrates how a Hammadid prince had sent gifts to the Fatimid caliph on board a ship that was in the port of Alexandria.[18] The Fatimid caliph received these presents favorably and subsequently loaded the Hammadid vessel with gifts before it returned to Béjaïa. Also in the port of Alexandria at this time was a Zirid ship. The Fatimid official stopped the Zirid ship from leaving and permitted the Hammadid ship to depart loaded with Fatimid gifts. Ibn ʿIdhari notes that the Fatimid official stopped the departure of the Zirid ship because he wanted to facilitate a closer Hammadid-Fatimid relationship and to undermine Zirid-Fatimid relations.[19] When news reached al-Hasan of this incident, he assumed that it was the result of Hammadid scheming. The Zirid emir retaliated by capturing the Hammadid ship and repurposing it for his own fleet.

This episode shines some light on Ifriqiyan history in the years following the Norman conquest of Djerba. The Zirids and Hammadids remained rivals but nonetheless

[18] Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:312-313.
[19] Ibn ʿIdhari, I.312-313. Ibn ʿIdhari al-Marrakushi, *Histoire de l'Afrique et de l'Espagne intitulée al-Bayano'l-Mogrib*, trans. E. Fagnan, vol. 1 (Algiers: Imprimerie Orientale Pierre Fontana, 1901), 470. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:347.

conducted commerce in the same ports.[20] The Fatimids, meanwhile, were more than happy to continue conducting commerce with the Hammadids but at least one port official had misgivings about trade with the Zirid dynasty. The reason for the official's blockade of the Zirid ship is not given in Ibn ʿIdhari's account. Fagnan and Idris speculate that the Fatimid port official might have been working for the Hammadids. Without further evidence, this is perhaps the most likely way to interpret this episode.[21] Through this perspective, we have evidence that the Hammadids actively undermined Zirid commercial interests in the eastern Mediterranean and that al-Hasan responded to this threat by seizing a Hammadid vessel for his own use.[22]

Although al-Hasan had won a small victory against the Hammadids by capturing one of their ships, his triumph was short-lived. Later in the year 536H (likely the spring/early summer of 1142), George of Antioch attacked the port of Mahdia and seized the vessels that were in the harbor.[23] Ibn al-Athir writes that Roger captured these ships in a move that betrayed al-Hasan. Nonetheless, al-Hasan was forced to contact Roger so that

[20] This trade between the Hammadids and Fatimids indicates that the Hammadids had renounced their allegiance to the Sunni Abbasid Caliphate and, like the Zirids, reverted to Shi'ism and nominal allegiance to the Fatimids. Al-Tijani's relation of this event specifies that the riches aboard the Hammadid ship were honorific gifts from the lord of Egypt. Al-Tijani, 339-340.

[21] The Fatimid's desire to conduct trade with the ports of North Africa makes sense given the internal political turmoil in Egypt at this time. The Fatimid caliph al-Hafiz had emerged triumphant against rebellions in 1134 and 1137. By 1141, al-Hafiz had stabilized his rule and sought to promote trade out of Egypt. Michael Brett, "Abbasids, Fatimids and Seljuqs," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. David Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith, vol. 4.2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 716.

[22] The Fatimid ability to retaliate militarily against the Zirids and Hammadids had been hindered in the beginning of the twelfth century. In 1105, the Fatimid navy lost 25 ships and 2,000 sailors when a storm drove this fleet to the shores of the Levant and into the hands of the Franks. Then, in 1123, the Venetians defeated a Fatimid fleet near the city of al-ʿArish. Yaacov Lev, "A Mediterranean Encounter: The Fatimids and Europe, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries," in *Shipping, Trade and Crusade in the Medieval Mediterranean : Studies in Honour of John Pryor*, ed. Ruthy Gertwagen and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Taylor and Francis, 2012), 137.

[23] Ibn al-Athir, 11:90. Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:313.

grain could be transported between Sicily and Ifriqiya, which at the time was suffering from a deadly famine. Al-Tijani's account is more detailed and appears to corroborate that of Ibn al-Athir. He describes how Roger stationed *jawāsīs* ("spies" or "agents") in Mahdia who wrote to him about the weakness of the Zirid navy and about commerce in the city so that he could most effectively tax its goods.[24] Reports from these spies led the Normans to raid the city. In successive years, al-Tijani reports that George of Antioch sent multiple raids against Mahdia, which weakened the city until the Normans finally seized it in 543H (1148-49).[25]

When combined, the narratives of Ibn al-Athir and al-Tijani show that much had changed between the Normans and Zirids since the 1120s. The pressure that al-Hasan had been able to exert over the Zirids through his alliances with the Almoravids and local Arab lords was gone. Instead, we see a Zirid dynasty that the Normans could bully with apparent impunity. What had caused this dramatic change?

Several developments led to the Normans having increased control over their Zirid neighbors. The first was the stabilization of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily following Roger II's second coronation in 1139 and the finalization of his conquests in southern Italy.[26] With his realm firmly intact, Roger could reap the economic, military, and political benefits of ruling over one of the most prosperous regions of the Mediterranean. Prominent among these benefits was the expansion of the Norman

[24] Al-Tijani, 240.
[25] Ibn Abi Dinar notes that al-Hasan was unable to pay back Roger's agents for money that the Norman King had loaned to him, which had led to "coldness" between the two. This statement is likely an inference made from Ibn Abi Dinar's reading of Ibn al-Athir and al-Tijani. Ibn Abi Dinar, 93.
[26] Loud, "Norman Sicily in the Twelfth Century," 452.

military, which Roger II could then direct against his Zirid rivals.[27] The Zirids, meanwhile, were unable to compete with the ascendant Normans. Their alliance with the Almoravids disappeared during the 1120s and 1130s, likely due to the Almoravids having to devote their military and political might to combat the upstart Almohads in the Maghreb. Local Ifriqiyan lords, too, were unwilling to support the Zirids in the wake of the joint Zirid-Norman victory at Mahdia in 529H (1134-35).

Continued Norman Aggression

Some historians have suggested that the events of 536H (1141-42) effectively saw the end of an independent Zirid dynasty. Idris speculates that the Normans made Mahdia an "economic protectorate."[28] David Abulafia similarly argues that the Norman attack on Mahdia resulted in it becoming a "protected city, under Sicilian control in all but its internal affairs."[29] He argues that the concessions al-Hasan provided to Roger included customs revenues, Sicilian control over Zirid external relations, and the right for Roger to seize cities that rebelled against Zirid lordship. The evidence for Abulafia's argument comes from subsequent encounters (to be discussed) between the Normans, Zirids, and other lords in Ifriqiya.[30] In return for Sicilian grain and Norman military aid, al-Hasan

[27] The treaty that Roger made with Savona, as explained above, helped fuel the expansion of the Norman navy.
[28] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:348.
[29] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 33. See also Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 26.
[30] Johns similarly claims that "by the 1140s, George of Antioch, on behalf of Roger, already claimed authority over all Ifrīqiya as overlord of the Zīrid emir." Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 290.

had to forfeit his political autonomy. This perspective, which I argue is overstated in the light of ambiguous documentary evidence, will be considered shortly.

The Norman attack on Mahdia in 536H (1141-42) is the first instance of the medieval chronicles mentioning Zirid dependence on Norman grain. This leverage that the Normans had over the Zirids coincides with the first mention of famine in Ifriqiya, which began in 536H (1141-42) and continued through the Norman conquest of Mahdia in 543H (1148-49).[31] Several Arabic chroniclers, presumably reporting the outcome of the famine based on evidence provided by Zirid prince Ibn Shaddad, noted its severity. Ibn al-Athir wrote that nomads from inland Ifriqiya traveled to towns such that "the lands were empty and whole families died."[32] Some in Ifriqiya managed to migrate to Sicily, where they were met with great hardship. Ibn Khaldun reported cannibalism in Ifriqiya and mortality rates such that the dead outnumbered the living.[33]

The travelogue of Benjamin of Tudela, a Jewish rabbi who traveled across the Mediterranean during the 1160s and early 1170s, confirms Ifriqiyan dependence on Norman grain and specifies how the Normans benefitted from this trading relationship. He writes:

> Sicily's main export is wheat, of which most goes to North Africa. In times of commotion in North Africa, when Muslims fight among themselves or when Muslims lands are set upon by Berbers or by pagan tribes, the consequent food shortages there swell Sicily's coffers with the tax on grain exports. Sailors on ships all over the Great Sea are nourished by hard bread made of Sicilian wheat.[34]

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[31] Ibn al-Athir, 11:90.
[32] Ibn al-Athir, 11:124.
[33] Ibn Khaldun, 5:233.
[34] Benjamin of Tudela, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela: A Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue*, 278.

Data from the Old World Drought Atlas helps to quantify the scope of the famines that beset Ifriqiya in the 1140s. Every summer from 1143 through 1149 in Ifriqiya is classified as "moderate" to "extreme" drought according to the Palmer Drought Severity Index, which indicates unfavorable conditions for crop growth. Conversely, the dendrochronological data from Sicily reveals generally favorable climatic conditions.[35] These stark differences in relative precipitation and subsequent crop yields compounded the pattern of increased Sicilian economic leverage in Ifriqiya.[36]

This change in climate corresponds with a change in Norman policy toward Ifriqiya. Beginning in 536H (1141-42) and extending through 543H (1148-49), the Normans launched attacks against and conquered various cities in Ifriqiya on an almost annual basis. The first attack was in 537H (1142-43) against the city of Tripoli. The rationale for the attack boils down to political scheming, although the specifics are disputed in the Arabic and Latin sources. According to the Arabic chronicles, Roger attacked Tripoli because it had been "rebellious toward al-Hasan" by defiantly installing a new governor.[37] Acting ostensibly on behalf of his recently subjugated Zirid neighbor,

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[35] OWDA: 1143-49.

[36] It is possible for there to be radical differences in precipitation between Sicily and Ifriqiya because of the geography of the Mediterranean Basin. North Africa is subject to a Mediterranean wind pattern called the "Sirocco," which originates in the Sahara and moves northward. It batters North Africa with winds that are dusty and dry. As it moves over the Mediterranean, it accumulates moisture, which it dumps on Sicily and southern Italy. Differences in precipitation for a year in the OWDA could be due to a high frequency of such winds. John E. Oliver, "Sirocco," *Encyclopedia of World Climatology* (New York: Springer Dordrecht, 2005).

[37] Ibn al-Athir, 11:91-92. Although located on an important trade route that linked Egypt to Ifriqiya and the Maghreb, "virtually nothing" is known of the city in the years preceding the Norman attack. There are even conflicting reports from the Arabic chronicles about the ruling dynasty when the Normans attacked. Al-Tijani and Ibn Khaldun write that the Banu Khazrun, a Zanata Berber tribe, governed the city while Ibn al-Athir writes that the Banu Matruh, an Arab tribe, held power there. Michael Brett speculates that it is more likely that the Banu Matruh were governors of Tripoli at the time of the Norman attack in 1143 because they "played a leading part in the resistance to the Normans of Sicily, in the government of the city by the

Roger II sent a fleet to the city.[38] The Norman navy arrived at the city on 25 June 1143 but was rebuffed from its walls. Soon after, the people of Tripoli were reinforced by a group of Arabs. These combined forces defeated the Normans, who were forced to flee. The Norman fleet compensated for this loss by raiding Jijel, a coastal Hammadid town located in modern-day Algeria. The Normans demolished the town including a Hammadid palace and those that the Normans caught were enslaved.[39]

The Norman's increasing assertiveness in Ifriqiya was not lost on the Fatimid caliphate. Ibn Muyassar reports that the Fatimids dispatched a messenger to Roger in 537H (1142-43) to discuss his recent campaigns.[40] Since the invasion of Djerba in 529H (1134-35), Roger had launched campaigns against lands belonging to the Zirids (Mahdia), Hammadids (Jijel), and local Ifriqiyan lords (Tripoli). The Fatimids of Cairo, who had previously benefitted from Norman conquests in Ifriqiya, sought to ensure that these attacks would similarly help their position. Unfortunately, the result of these talks is

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Normans, and in the freeing of the city from the Normans." Brett, "The City-State in Medieval Ifriqiya: The Case of Tripoli," 82. Ibn al-Athir, 11:91. Al-Tijani, 173-174. Ibn Khaldun 5:232.

[38] A slightly different motivation for the Norman attack on Tripoli is found in the Latin *Ferraria Chronicle*, which was a continuation of the chronicle of Falco Benevento. This work describes how "certain citizens of Tripoli" came to Sicily and promised to surrender their city and rule it on behalf of King Roger. He obliged and sent forces under George of Antioch to besiege the city in 1143. When the Normans arrived at Tripoli, though, the men who had requested Roger's aid in the first place "acted with treachery" and the siege failed. The *Ferraria Chronicle* does not mention the subsequent raid on Jijel or any future Norman campaigns in Africa. Gaudenzi, *Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis S. Mariae de Ferraria Chronica et Ryccardi de Sancto Germano*, 26. Loud considers the complicated textual history of these Latin manuscripts in Loud, *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily*, 55–58. In comparing these two accounts, I am inclined to believe the Arabic sources because of their specificity, because of the Latin source's general lack of concern with Norman movements in Ifriqiya, and because of Tripoli's consistent resistance to Norman rule (as will be discussed). Nonetheless, the differences between these two accounts are minimal; one sees Roger intervening because of political turmoil in the city while the other sees Roger scheming to create political turmoil in the city. The end result, though, is the same: a Norman navy rebuffed at Tripoli.

[39] Ibn al-Athir, 11:92.

[40] Both Idris and Johns assert that this correspondence took place in 538H (1143-44). However, the chronicle of Ibn Muyassar reports that the correspondence occurred in 537H (1142-43). Ibn Muyassar, 85-86. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:349. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 265.

unknown. Whatever negotiations took place between the Normans and Fatimids, the relationship between the two powers remained stable over the next several years, during which time George of Antioch led attacks against the Hammadid town of Brashk in 539H (1144-45) and the Kerkennah islands in 540H (1145-46).[41] These attacks set the stage for sweeping Norman conquests in Ifriqiya that culminated in the capture of Mahdia and the expulsion of the Zirid emir from his ancentral home.

The Formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa

From 1146 to 1148, Roger II launched annual campaigns against the Ifriqiyan coast, which resulted in the formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. During this three-year span, Roger avoided other conflicts so that he could focus his military efforts on the southern Mediterranean. His actions toward the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire are evidence of this. According to the *Ferraria Chronicle*, Roger "conceded and confirmed a truce" with Pope Lucius II because of his desire "to acquire the African kingdom and Tripoli in Barbary."[42] The Papacy, which had been wary of Roger's growing power in the Mediterranean during the 1140s, was placated for the time being.

Around the same time, Roger II narrowly averted conflict with his rivals in Germany. During the early 1140s, Conrad III of Germany sought an alliance with Manuel

[41] Brashk is the modern town of Sidi Brahim (western Algeria). The Kerkennah Islands are located in the Gulf of Gabès near the coast of Tunisia. Al-Hasan, who claimed authority over the Kerkennah islands, reminded Roger of the treaties between them, to which Roger responded that these people were not al-Hasan's subjects. In both of these attacks, the Norman fleet plundered the region, massacred many of the men, and took the women captive. Ibn al-Athir, 11:102, 106. Ibn ʿIdhari reports that Roger seized Sfax in 538H (1143-44). However, his report is contradicted by every other Arabic source, which lists 543H (1148-49) as the year of its capture. Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:313.

[42] Gaudenzi, *Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis S. Mariae de Ferraria Chronica et Ryccardi de Sancto Germano*, 28. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 90–92.

I Komnenos of the Byzantine Empire against Roger.[43] Conrad sought to avenge his father's failed campaign against the Normans and Manuel was eager to attempt to reclaim territory in southern Italy.[44] The German-Byzantine alliance was realized at the beginning of 1146 with the marriage of Conrad's adopted daughter Bertha to Manuel I. Roger responded to this new threat not with direct violence but instead by voicing his support for Welf VI, a powerful baron in Germany, against Conrad.[45]

The German-Byzantine alliance, though, failed to act against Roger. The primary reason for this was the fall of the County of Edessa in 1144 and crusade called to retake it, which led both Conrad III and Louis VII of France take up the cross in 1146. Conrad's commitment to this expedition averted the threat of a joint attack by the Germans and Byzantines against the Kingdom of Sicily.[46] Roger even used the impending crusade to his advantage. Fearing the arrival of thousands of unruly Frankish and German troops, Manuel I withdrew soldiers from the edges of his kingdom to Constantinople. This allowed George of Antioch to attack more vulnerable Byzantine outposts on the western edge of the Adriatic Sea in the spring of 1147, most prominently Corfu and Corinth.[47] Roger also reached out to the French king Louis VII, offering to provide supplies for

[43] Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 91.
[44] John Kinnamos reports that the Byzantines envoy, a man named Basil Xeros, placed Roger "on an equal plane of greatness" to the Emperor Manuel. When Roger's embassy arrived in Byzantium, though, the emperor treated them as a joke, which infuriated Roger. Romuald of Salerno reports that Roger sent envoys to the emperor but that they were imprisoned. These stories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Iōannēs Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, trans. Charles M. Brand (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 75–76. Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, 7.1:229–30.
[45] Roger had earlier tried to prevent this alliance by offering the marriage of one of his sons to a Byzantine princess but this failed.
[46] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 88–90.
[47] Stanton provides a detailed narrative and chronology of these raids. Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 92–97.

Louis' upcoming crusade and to send one of his sons on the crusade if the French king agreed to route his army through the Kingdom of Sicily. Roger's plans ultimately went unrealized, though, as Louis elected to travel through Constantinople.[48]

With the threat from northern Europe temporarily eliminated, the stage was set for sweeping Norman conquests on the Ifriqiyan littoral that formed the core of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. The first of these conquests was Tripoli. Near the beginning of 541H (June 1146), George of Antioch led a Norman fleet against the city. Unlike the assault that had taken place several years earlier, the Normans had the advantage this time of arriving in the midst of chaos. A group within Tripoli had expelled the Banu Matruh and appointed an Almoravid as governor. As the Normans laid siege, infighting erupted between groups supporting the Banu Matruh and the Almoravids, which helped the Normans storm the city on 18 June 1146. Women and property were seized. Those who were able fled and sought refuge with unspecified Berbers and Arabs.[49] After the initial sack, George of Antioch issued a proclamation granting sanctuary for those who had fled, at which point many returned.[50] Eventually, the Normans appointed a member of the Banu Matruh to govern Tripoli on their behalf. Roger encouraged the people of Sicily and Rum to travel there and "affairs of the city were rectified."[51]

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[48] Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem: The Journey of Louis VII to the East*, ed. Virginia Gingerich Berry (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1948), 10–15.
[49] The most detailed descriptions of the conquest come from Ibn al-Athir, 11:108-109 and Ibn Khaldun, 5:232.
[50] Ibn Khaldun, 5:232.
[51] Ibn Khaldun writes that people in Sicily "set out" to Tripoli while Ibn al-Athir writes that people "were obliged" to travel there. Either way, the two agree on the movement of peoples from Sicily to Tripoli. Ibn al-Athir, 11:109. Ibn Khaldun, 5:232.

The following year, in 542H (1147-48), the Normans attempted to take the city of Gabès. Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun provide the greatest level of detail on this episode.[52] In the 1140s, Gabès was ruled by a clan of the Banu Hilal called the Banu Dahman. The governor of the city, a man named Rushayd, died in 1147 and left behind two sons, Muhammad and Muʿammar. Although Muʿammar was the older son and the expected successor to Rushayd, one of Rushayd's advisers named Yusuf expelled him from the city and installed the younger Muhammad as governor. Yusuf soon took control of the city. The chroniclers recount how Yusuf grew unpopular in Gabès because of his reputation for molesting the women of Rushayd's harem, one of whom was a member of the Banu Qurra tribe. When her brothers heard of this situation, they traveled to Gabès to retrieve her. Yusuf refused to give her up, so the members of the Banu Qurra united with the exiled brother Muʿammar and complained to emir al-Hasan. The Zirid emir attempted to mediate the situation but was unsuccessful.

Yusuf responded to this nascent alliance between the Zirids and Banu Qurra by offering his allegiance to Roger II, telling him, "I want from you a robe of honor and promise of the governance of Gabès such that I am a representative for you as you made the Banu Matruh in Tripoli."[53] Roger accepted Yusuf's offer. Then, both Yusuf and al-Hasan sent envoys to Sicily to explain their sides of the developing situation.[54] According to the chronicles, Yusuf's envoy spoke negatively of al-Hasan and blamed him for the

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[52] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120-121. Ibn Khaldun 5:232-233.
[53] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120.
[54] The chronology of this episode is unclear. Ibn al-Athir places it as a moralizing story that "the sound mind" ought to know in the section following his account of the Gabès affair. Based on his characterization of Yusuf as the "lord of Gabès," this story took place during the time between Yusuf's overthrow of Muhammad and Yusuf's downfall. Ibn al-Athir, 11:121.

diplomatic crisis at hand. When al-Hasan heard about this accusation, he intercepted the ill-speaking envoy on his way back to Gabès. He paraded him on a camel through Mahdia as a crier proclaimed, "This is the recompense for anyone who tries to make the Franks lords of Muslim lands."[55] The people of Mahdia then stoned the envoy to death. After this dramatic episode, al-Hasan and Muʿammar attacked Gabès.[56] This was largely unnecessary, though, as the people of Gabès were already revolting because of Yusuf's submission to Roger II. Al-Hasan was welcomed into the city and captured Yusuf, who was executed. The Banu Qurra took away their sister from the harem, Muʿammar became the governor of Gabès, and Yusuf's brother, ʿIsa, fled to Sicily.

The incident at Gabès reveals much about the Zirids' political standing in Ifriqiya. Al-Hasan's seizure of the city with the support of the Banu Qurra shows his ability to form alliances with other powers in Ifriqiya and act indepedent of the Normans, who supported the usurper Yusuf. While Abulafia argues that the Zirid dynasty was "under Sicilian control in all but its internal affairs" by 1142, this episode shows that the Zirids under Emir al-Hasan still had control over their political destiny.[57] On the other hand, though, this episode also shows the extent to which Roger II had become something of a power broker in Ifriqiya. Yusuf sought the protection of Roger II from al-Hasan and his allies knowing that Roger had the power to resist them. When al-Hasan and Yusuf sent envoys to the Kingdom of Sicily, they did so knowing that Roger II's support could

[55] Ibn al-Athir, 11:121.
[56] Ibn Abi Dinar, 94.
[57] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 33.

bolster their power in Ifriqiya. Although al-Hasan had demonstrable power, the outside influence of the Kingdom of Sicily was impossible to ignore at this point.

The dynastic struggle in Gabès, although clearly precipitated by familial politics, was likely exacerbated by environmental turmoil.[58] The Arabic chronicles report that the famine in Ifriqiya in the summer of 542H (1147) was the worst since the beginning of the drought. Ibn al-Athir records that "most traveled to a city in Sicily" from their towns and villages in Ifriqiya, where there was cannibalism and rampant mortality.[59] The data from the Old World Drought Atlas confirms the extent of this famine, which stretched throughout Ifriqiya and the eastern Maghreb.[60] The PDSI for the summer of 1147 is -4, the lowest possible value, which quantifies as an "extreme drought." During the twelfth century, only the summers of 1197 and 1198 are comparable in terms of dryness.[61]

In the wake of this drought and political turmoil, the Normans conquered the Zirid capital of Mahdia in 543H (1148-49). According to Ibn al-Athir, Roger knew of the devastating drought afflicting Ifriqiya and was mad at himself for not using the chaos at Gabès as justification for conquering other lands in Ifriqiya.[62] In 543H (1148-49), therefore, he sent out George of Antioch with a fleet to conquer Mahdia from al-Hasan. First, he captured a Zirid ship off the island of Pantelleria and sent out messenger pigeons with fake messages saying that the Norman fleet was sailing to Constantinople. George

[58] Stanton undermines the agency of Ifriqiyan lords when he wrote that the 1140s saw a time when "only famine ruled the region." Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 103.
[59] Ibn al-Athir, 11:125.
[60] Ibn al-Athir records that the Maghreb in 543H (1148-49) too suffered from famine due to lack of rain and enemy invasions. Data from the OWDA confirms significantly low rainfall in the Maghreb in 1148 and 1149. Ibn al-Athir, 11:137. OWDA: 1149-49.
[61] OWDA: 1147, 1197-98.
[62] Ibn al-Athir, 11:125.

intended to launch a sneak attack on the city under the cover of night, but this plan was thwarted by unfavorable winds. The Norman fleet arrived before Mahdia on the morning of 22 June 1148. George sent to al-Hasan a message, which said that this fleet was seeking revenge for the removal of Muhammad ibn Rushayd from Gabès. George asked that al-Hasan assist the Normans with re-installing Muhammad, in accordance with their treaties.[63] Al-Hasan responded by convening a council of leading scholars and nobles. Although the council urged al-Hasan to fight the Normans, al-Hasan decided that it was in the people's best interests to abandon the city. Ibn al-Athir reports him as saying:

> I am scared that he is going to disembark, encircle us by land and by sea, and block us from supplies. We do not have food to support us for a month. We will be seized by force. I reckon that saving Muslims from capture and death is more virtuous (خيراً) than ruling. [George of Antioch] asked from me an army against Gabès. If I do this, then I am not allowed to aid unbelievers against Muslims.[64] But if I refuse, he will say, 'The peace between us is destroyed.' [George of Antioch] only wants to hinder us until he can bar us from the land. We do not have the energy to fight him. My judgment is that we set out with [our] family and children and leave the city. Those who want to do as we do should hasten with us.[65]

Following this speech advocating departure from the city, al-Hasan ordered the people to leave with their families and whatever they could carry. Most followed his order although some decided to hide with Christians and within churches. Near the end of the day, the winds turned and the Norman fleet entered Mahdia without resistance. The Norman

[63] This incident provides some of the rationale given by Abulafia and Wieruszowski that the Normans had control over the external relations of the Zirids.

[64] The perspective advocated by al-Hasan in this situation was shared by the Maliki legal school on the basis of hadith. Aid from non-Muslims, except in the case of sailors and servants, was to be avoided. A more detailed analysis of the Maliki school and its influence on the local lords of Ifriqiya in relation to the Normans can be found in Chapter Three. Michael Lower, "Christian Mercenaries in Muslim Lands: Their Status in Medieval Islamic and Canon Law," in *The Crusader World*, ed. Adrian Boas (London: Routledge, 2015), 420–25.

[65] Ibn al-Athir, 11:126.

soldiers sacked Mahdia for two hours before George declared safe passage for those wishing to return to the city, provided they pay a poll tax.[66] Ibn al-Athir elaborates on the measures George took to secure the loyalty of those in and around Mahdia on the morning following the conquest,

> He sent to those who were nearby among the Arabs and they came to him. He treated them well and gave them much money. He also sent out some among the army of Mahdia which had remained there as a group. They carried the promise of safety to the people of Mahdia who had fled along with mounts to carry the children and women to the city. They were close to death from hunger, but they had their hidden treasures and wealth in Mahdia. When [news of] the safe passage came to them, they returned. Before Friday most of the people of the city had returned.[67]

A week after seizing Mahdia, George of Antioch sent out two fleets against the nearby cities of Sousse and Sfax. Although the chroniclers disagree about who ruled in Sousse at this time, they agree that the city capitulated without resistance on 12 Safar (2 July 1148).[68] The people of Sfax were less willing to see their city in Norman control and joined with "many Arabs" to resist the invading force.[69] Their efforts were in vain, though, as the Norman army emerged victorious on 13 July 1148, taking the surviving men prisoner and enslaving the women. Following this victory, safe passage was proclaimed, the townspeople returned to Sfax, and those who were able ransomed their

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[66] Ibn Khaldun, 5:233.
[67] Ibn al-Athir, 11:127.
[68] Ibn al-Athir reports that the governor of Sousse, a son of emir al-Hasan, had joined his father in flight following the capture of Mahdia. Al-Tijani writes that Sousse was instead under the authority of Jabara ibn Kamil from the Riyad branch of the Banu Hilal. It is possible, according to H.R. Idris, to see these accounts as not mutually exclusive but instead to imagine Sousse "commanded at the time by a nominal Zirid governor and by an omnipotent Riyad emir." This possibility is considered in Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:359. I am inclined to believe the report of al-Tijani, since Jabara ibn Kamil would become a prominent figure in later Ifriqiyan resistance to the Normans and, later, the Almohads.
[69] Ibn al-Athir, 11:128.

women and children. Roger II initially appointed a scholar named Abu al-Hasan al-Furrayani as governor but he requested that Roger instead appoint his son, ʿUmar ibn Abi al-Hasan as governor. Roger obliged and took Abu al-Hasan as a hostage back to Sicily. Much like the people of Mahdia, the Normans "treated gently" the people of Sousse and Sfax.[70] Roger even sent out letters to "all of the people of Ifriqiya" guaranteeing "safety and good promises."[71]

After conquering Sousse and Sfax, George of Antioch moved with his fleet to the castle of Iqlibiya, located on the peninsula of Cape Bon near Tunis. Following his arrival, a group of unspecified Arabs assembled to fight the Normans. The Arabs emerged triumphant in the battle and many Normans were killed, forcing them to withdraw to Mahdia. This failed attack at Iqlibiya was the last documented military endeavor in Ifriqiya during 543H (1148-49) and the next several years.

These conquests established the Norman Kingdom of Africa, which extended from Tripoli up to Tunis.[72] Implicit in this description of Norman lands is the submission (likely peaceful) of Gabès, which is the only major coastal city in Ifriqiya not named in the Norman conquests.[73] The western limit of Norman control was Tunis, which managed to avoid Norman control despite political turmoil within the city.[74] With the completion

[70] Ibn al-Athir, 11:128.
[71] Ibn al-Athir, 11:128-129.
[72] Richards' translation of the word *al-magrib* as "Maghreb" in Ibn al-Athir's chronicle here does not make much sense, for it would mean that the Normans held land from the Maghreb (Morocco) all the way to Qayrawan, which is not mentioned in any part of the chronicle. The translation of "west" makes more sense given the context. Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, trans. D.S. Richards, vol. 2 (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 20.
[73] Gabès revolted against Norman rule in 551H (1156-57) alongside Sfax and Tripoli, as will be discussed.
[74] Ibn ʿIdhari provides the most detailed account of Tunis' internal politics. In 543H (1148-49), the Hammadid governor of Tunis, Maʿadd ibn al-Mansur, planned to send a merchant ship full of wheat to lands controlled by the Normans, presumably to one of their Ifriqiyan cities. When the people of Tunis

of these conquests, the Normans had control over lucrative trade routes that passed both east-west along the Mediterranean and north-south from Africa to Europe.[75] These territories also provided strategic bases from which the Normans could patrol the waters of the central Mediterranean that had been home to troublesome pirates for decades.[76]

Conspicuously absent in the narrative of the formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa is the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt, which Jeremy Johns has already considered at length. He convincingly argues that the Norman conquests in Ifriqiya were carried out with the consent of the Fatimids due to the positive diplomatic relationship cultivated by George of Antioch and the Fatimid vizier Bahram. Through correspondence between the courts at Palermo and Cairo, the Fatimids formulated a "policy of tacit approval" toward Norman intervention in Ifriqiya, likely shaped by the Fatimid's desire to rid the coast of

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heard this, they revolted because they did not want to see their grain used to feed Christian cities. Local shaykhs took control of Tunis and appointed a man named Abu Muhammad ʿAbd al-Mumʿin as their leader. Fearful of retaliation, he first sought to put Tunis under the protection of the veteran Arab lord Muhriz ibn Ziyad. However, the people of Tunis refused to give allegiance to an Arab lord and instead attacked Abu Muhammad ʿAbd al-Mumʿin, who responded by asking a member of the Banu Khurasan, the previous ruling dynasty of Tunis, to return to rule. Abu Bakr ibn Ismaʿil ibn ʿAbd al-Haqq ibn Khurasan accepted and ruled for seven months until he was assassinated. Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:313-316. Muhriz ibn Ziyad had been an active lord and military commander in Ifriqiya since at least 517H (1123-24), when he assisted al-Hasan in defeating the Normans at the fortress of al-Dimas. *EI2*, "Banū K̲h̲urāsān." Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:316. The sole mention of Tunis paying tribute to the Normans comes from the fourteenth-century chronicle of Andrea Dandolo, who claims this on the bases of unknown sources. I suspect that Andrea Dandolo confused the cities of Mahdia and Tunis, which is conceivable considering that Tunis was the largest port in Ifriqiya by the fourteenth century and Mahdia was relegated to a smaller, more regional port. Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 35. Ibn al-Athir specifically says that the Normans controlled the lands from Tripoli "up to nearly Tunis." Ibn al-Athir, 11:129.

[75] The economic implications of the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa are discussed at length in Chapter Three.

[76] The centrality of these expeditions to Roger II's foreign policy is clear from his lack of military involvement elsewhere on the Mediterrnean during the year 543H (1148-49). At the same time as his navy was campaigning in Ifriqiya, a joint Venetian-Byzantine fleet launched a prolonged assault on a Norman outpost at Corfu off the coast of Greece. Although the attack eventually failed, Roger's decision to not send reinforcements to this strategic fort indicates the significance of these Ifriqiyan possessions. Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 98–99.

disruptive piracy and by their own inability to commit military resources to Ifriqiya.[77] Although Bahram died in 1140, the policies put in place between him and George of Antioch appears to have remained in place during the Normans' conquests later that decade.[78]

The formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa can thus be attributed to several factors that coalesced in the 1140s. Although Roger II had intervened in Ifriqiyan affairs during the earlier years of his reign, the political stability of the Kingdom of Sicily and the lack of an external threat from Europe during the mid-1140s allowed him to devote more of his resources to campaigns in the southern Mediterranean. This period also coincided directly with a time of unprecedented drought in Ifriqiya that caused untold death and destruction, emigration, and fighting between local lords. The timing was ideal for Roger II and George of Antioch.[79] Annual campaigns launched against Ifriqiya culminated in sweeping conquests in 543H (1148-49) that led most of the coastline to submit to Norman rule. With these conquests came control over major shipping lanes in the central Mediterranean, which brought substantial economic and military benefits to the Kingdom of Sicily.

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[77] Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 263.

[78] Johns argues that, "while we cannot show that the two monarchs were actually in league over Norman activity in Africa, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that Roger had reason to be confident that the Fāṭimid ruler would not intervene on behalf of his Zīrīd vassal." Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 97.

[79] Stanton's claim that the 1140s saw Roger's "long-postponed plans to claim the coast of North Africa" come to fruition is thus a bit overstated. I prefer Johns' thoughts on the long-term thinking of Roger II. He argues that "we should certainly be careful not to mistake the characteristic opportunism of medieval rulers for carefully planned and articulated policy." Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 89. Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 99.

The Flight of the Zirids and the Death of Roger II

In the years after the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, Roger II remained engaged in efforts to expand his domains, although he now set his gaze east to the Byzantine Empire and north to the Holy Roman Empire. By the time of Roger's death in 11154, he left behind a kingdom to his son William that was as wealthy as it was coveted by a host of powerful enemies.

After completing his African conquests, Roger II continued to harass his Byzantine enemies and to cultivate alliances in Europe. George of Antioch raided the port of Constantinople and defeated a Byzantine navy at Cape Malea in 1149.[80] Ibn al-Athir wrote that Roger "would have ruled all the lands of Ifriqiya" had he not devoted his navy to these conquests in the eastern Mediterranean.[81] Roger also opportunistically improved his relationship with King Louis VII of France by rescuing him from a hostile Byzantine fleet while Louis was returning from the disastrous Second Crusade.[82] Several years later, in the early 1150s, Roger fomented rebellion in Germany against Conrad III by supporting the campaigns of his rival Welf VI.[83] The Norman king might have even had a

[80] Stanton provides the most recent analysis of this campaign. Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 99–102.
[81] Ibn al-Athir, 11:145.
[82] The details of this incident are unclear. Stanton argues that a Sicilian fleet gave assistance to a fleet of Louis VII and Eleanor of Aquitaine that was being attacked by a Byzantine navy. Roger brought Louis and Eleanor to Calabria and treated them with respect. Roger and Louis met for three days at Potenza in August 1149. Unfortunately, we "know nothing of what was discussed at this conference." Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 93. Stanton deconstructs in detail the chronology of the Norman raid on Constantinople and the rescue of Louis. Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 98–102.
[83] Welf VI passed through Sicily in 1148/49. Roger II treated him with great respect and honor, undoubtedly in the hope that Welf would be sympathetic to the idea of causing trouble for Conrad III. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 90.

hand in persuading certain groups in the Balkans to revolt against Byzantine rule in the autumn of 1149.[84]

The diplomatic scheming of Roger II fueled pervasive animosity between the Kingdom of Sicily and the Byzantines, Germans, and Papacy. The death of Conrad III in 1152 and ascendency of Frederick Barbarossa, who considered Italy to be part of his royal domain, only increased the possibility of an attack on Roger's lands.[85] The successors to Pope Innocent II also refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Kingdom of Sicily despite prolonged negotiations during the late 1140s and early 1150s.[86]

Fortunately for Roger, affairs in Ifriqiya stabilized even as the picture in Europe became increasingly bleak. The prolonged famine that had oppressed Ifriqiya for the better part of a decade finally subsided in 1150, as recorded by the Old World Drought Atlas. Furthermore, the Normans provided grain and sponsored infrastructural projects in their newly acquired territories to improve the region's economy.[87] When Roger II designated his son William to be his co-ruler in 1151, there is no indication of any policy changes toward Ifriqiya. Even George of Antioch's death in 546H (1151-1152) did not apparently cause any disruption in Norman Africa.

For the Zirid emirs, the Norman conquest of Ifriqiya was an unmitigated disaster that displaced Emir al-Hasan from his ancestral capital. Immediately following the conquest of Mahdia in 543H (1148-49), al-Hasan and his family fled to Muhriz ibn

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[84] Ferdinand Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1907), 146–47.
[85] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 97, 166–68.
[86] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 92–93.
[87] This process is discussed at length in Chapter Three. OWDA: 1150.

Ziyad, who held the fortress of La Malga near Tunis and whom al-Hasan had favored "over all the Arabs and treated generously."[88] En route, though, he had encountered an Arab lord named Hasan ibn Thalib, to whom he owed money and to whom he was forced to give his son Yahya as a hostage.[89] When al-Hasan reached the friendly lands of Muhriz, he remained there in comfort for several months before purchasing a ship with the goal of sailing to Egypt. However, George of Antioch got wind of this plan and deployed ships to capture him. Abandoning his initial plan, al-Hasan sought to travel west to the Almohad caliph, ʿAbd al-Muʿmin, who reigned in modern-day Morocco. In order to reach his lands, al-Hasan had to travel through the lands of his rival, the Hammadid emir Yahya ibn al-ʿAziz, who had "openly rejoiced" upon hearing of the fall of Mahdia.[90] Despite this enmity, al-Hasan received permission from Yahya to pass through their lands. This promise was a false one. When al-Hasan arrived in Hammadid territory, he and his sons were imprisoned at Jazaʿir Bani Mazghannan (modern-day Algiers). For the time being, the last Zirid emir would remain at the mercy of his rival.

Further west in the Maghreb, political changes were taking place that would have a substantial impact on the future of al-Hasan ibn ʿAli. Abd al-Muʿmin, the caliph of the Masmuda Berber dynasty known as the Almohads, had established his authority in the Maghreb and much of al-Andalus during the 1140s.[91] The Almohad movement was explicit in "signaling its discontinuity with the recent past" by minting distinct square

[88] Ibn al-Athir, 11:129.
[89] Ibn Khaldun, 5:233.
[90] Ibn al-Athir also notes that Yahya had been denigrating al-Hasan previously and had also "published his faults." Ibn al-Athir, 11:159.
[91] "Almohad" in Arabic literally means "the monotheists" or the "unified."

coins, using non-Kufic script in inscriptions, and returning to two of the oldest sources of Islamic law, the Qur'an and hadith, while rejecting much contemporary jurisprudence.[92] These changes led the Almohads to abolish the protected status of Jews and Christians, the *dhimmi*, which had been a hallmark of Islamicate governments since the early Islamic conquests.[93] Without *dhimmi* status, Christians and Jews under Almohad rule lived a precarious existence and many chose to emigrate.[94] These policies would later have substantial repercussions for Christian populations in Ifriqiya, particularly those who lived in Norman-held cities.

During the 1150s, the Almohads rapidly expanded east from the Maghreb into western Ifriqiya. In 547H (1152-53), ʿAbd al-Muʿmin deposed the last Hammadid emir, Yahya ibn al-ʿAziz, and conquered the city of Annaba from the Normans.[95] These conquests proved a boon for the Hammadid's prisoner, the Zirid emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli.

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[92] Maribel Fierro, "The Legal Policies of the Almohad Caliphs and Ibn Rushd's Bidāyat Al-Mujtahid," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 3 (1999): 227–28.See also Maribel Fierro, "The Almohads (524-668/1130-1269) and the Hafsids (627-932/1229-1526)," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam: The Western Islamic World Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 70.

[93] Jean-Pierre Molénat, "Sur le role des almohades dans la fin du christiamsme local au Maghreb et en al-Andalus," *Al-Qantara* 18 (1997): 393–401.

[94] Although historians have often wrote about the intolerance of the Almohads toward Christians and Jews, their relationship with these religious minorities was very complicated. Almohad policy was geared more toward the desire to centralize governmental authority, the economy, and military power rather than any concentrated religious animosity. This is seen during the later twelfth century, when the Almohads established treaties with Christian rulers that allowed the establishment of trading centers for Christian merchants in their port cities. Fierro, "The Almohads (524-668/1130-1269) and the Hafsids (627-932/1229-1526)," 86. Maribel Fierro, "Alphonse X 'The Wise': The Last Almohad Caliph?," *Medieval Encounters* 15 (2009): 177–85.

[95] Some Hammadid cities surrendered peacefully to the Almohads while others resisted. Of particular note is a coalition of Berber tribes that stood against the Almohads in late 547H (1152-53) but was swiftly defeated near Béjaïa. Idris evaluates in detail the narratives given in both Almohad and non-Almohad chronicles. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:363–68. Ibn al-Athir, 11:159-160. Yahya made plans to escape from North Africa via Sicily so that he could later travel to Baghdad. These plans, though, were thwarted when ʿAbd al-Muʿmin sent him to the Maghreb. He died in the city of Sale in 557H (1161-62). Some of Yahya's family might have succeeding in fleeing to Sicily as well. Al-Tijani, 247. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:368–70.

Following the Almohad capture of Béjaïa, ʿAbd al-Muʿmin made al-Hasan a "close companion" and bestowed upon him a "high position" in the Almohad ranks, one that would later involve al-Hasan travelling with the Almohad army on a campaign against the Normans in Ifriqiya.[96]

The rapid conquests of the Almohads in Ifriqiya did not escape the attention of other rulers in Ifriqiya, including the Normans. Following the defeat of various Berber tribes in a battle near Béjaïa, a number of Arab tribes "from Tripoli to the furthest Maghreb" met to resist the invading Almohads in 548H (1153-54).[97] Ibn al-Athir reports that Roger II encouraged specific leaders, including Muhriz ibn Ziyad, to fight against the approaching Almohads. Roger even offered 5,000 of his own soldiers to fight with this coalition. The tribes refused this offer, though, saying that "we do not ask for help from anyone other than Muslims."[98] In the subsequent Battle of Setif, the Almohads destroyed the coalition and took many of the resisters' wives and children back to Marrakesh.[99] The Almohads then wrote to the defeated Arab emirs, telling them that they should come to Marrakesh to be with their families. When the Arabs received this letter, they departed

[96] Ibn al-Athir, 11:159. Al-Hasan likely converted to Sunni Islam once he entered the service of the Almohads.
[97] Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun provide slightly different accounts of which tribes conspired together against the Almohads. Both name the Atbag, Zugba, and Riyah tribes as participating. The chroniclers differ as to the fourth participating tribe. Ibn al-Athir names the Banu Hilal and Ibn Khaldun names the Banu Qurra. Ibn al-Athir, 11:185-186. Ibn Khaldun, 6:235-236.
[98] Ibn al-Athir, 11:186.
[99] Évariste Lévi-Provençal, *Trente-sept lettres officielles almohades* (Rue de Poitiers: Imprimerie Économique, 1941), 26–34. In the years between his victory at Setif and his return to conquer Norman possessions in Ifriqiya, ʿAbd al-Muʿmin still had to deal with some internal dissent in eastern Ifriqiya. Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 53–56.

for Marrakesh. ʿAbd al-Muʿmin treated them well upon their arrival and returned their families too them, which caused them to remain in the Maghreb under his employ.

Soon after the Battle of Setif, Roger II looked to expand his territories in Ifriqiya westward, perhaps to create a buffer zone against the ascendant Almohads. In 548H (1153-54), he sent a navy under the command of the eunuch Philip of Mahdia, one of his so-called "palace Saracens" and one of the highest-ranking government officials in the Kingdom of Sicily, to the city of Annaba.[100] With the aid of unspecified Arabs, Philip conquered the city in the autumn of 1153, took many of the inhabitants captive, and appointed a member of the Banu Hammad to govern the city.[101] In the same year, potentially on the same expedition, the Normans seized the Kerkennah Islands and once again attacked the unruly population of Djerba, both of which had presumably revolted against Norman rule.[102]

Philip of Mahdia's fortunes turned upon his return to Palermo.[103] Ibn al-Athir reports that Roger had Philip imprisoned on charges that he had treated the Muslim inhabitants of the city leniently.[104] In collaboration with an assembly of clergy and knights, Roger then determined that Philip was secretly a Muslim and, along with an

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[100] Metcalfe provides a useful overview of the role of these figures in the Norman court. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 193–207.
[101] Ibn al-Athir, 11:63-64. Al-Idrisi, 1:291-292.
[102] Al-Idrisi, 1:305. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:376. Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 47, 102. The timing of these Norman attacks might have been tied to the Almohad campaigns that directly preceded them. Perhaps the Muslim inhabitants of these places thought the time was right to revolt against the Normans and pledge loyalty to the Almohads.
[103] The details of Philip of Mahdia's death and trial are considered in detail in Catlos, "Who Was Philip of Mahdia and Why Did He Have to Die? Confessional Identity and Political Power in the Twelfth-Century Mediterranean," 86–102.
[104] Ibn Khaldun's account of the execution of Philip of Mahdia is similar but less detailed that of Ibn al-Athir. Ibn al-Athir, 11:187. Ibn Khaldun, 5:235-236.

unspecified number of other crypto-Muslims, ordered him to be burned alive. Romuald of Salerno's account of these proceedings is similar but focuses on the issue of Philip's religion. He writes that Philip was accused of many crimes, most seriously of pretending to be a Christian while secretly following Islamic rituals.[105] Roger cried while the charges against Philip were substantiated yet condoned his execution, an act that helped purge the kingdom.[106] The death of Philip of Mahdia, already well studied by historians, provides a compelling juxtaposition of Roger's foreign and domestic policy.[107] While Roger was willing to negotiate alliances with the Muslim tribes of Ifriqiya and to utilize Muslim administrators in his government, the issue of apostasy and crypto-Islam remained a contentious one within his court.

In the last few years of Roger II's reign, the peaceful relationship between the Normans and the Fatimid Caliphate also soured. The Fatimid caliph al-Hafiz died in October 1149, ending the cordial relationship between him and Roger. The deaths of George of Antioch and the Fatimid vizier Bahram further distanced the two courts. In addition, the presence in the Fatimid court of at least one Zirid prince contributed to these deteriorating relations.[108] After the death of Yahya ibn Tamim in 1116, his successor ʿAli

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[105] Romuald's account presents Roger II as a model king who was "filled with zeal for God but [acted] with his usual wisdom." Romuald concludes his account of this episode with the statement that this affair showed that "Roger was a most Christian and catholic leader." Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, 7.1:234–36.

[106] Catlos, "Who Was Philip of Mahdia and Why Did He Have to Die? Confessional Identity and Political Power in the Twelfth-Century Mediterranean," 73.

[107] See, for example, Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:375. Catlos, "Who Was Philip of Mahdia and Why Did He Have to Die? Confessional Identity and Political Power in the Twelfth-Century Mediterranean." Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 215–18. Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 46–50.

[108] Romuald of Salerno briefly mentions that "for his honor and convenience, [Roger] made peace with the King of Babylon." The King of Babylon is probably al-Hafiz, the Fatimid caliph. The timeline and circumstances for this reconciliation, though, are vague. Romuald does not mention Roger being at war with the King of Babylon previously and the nearest chronological event to this peace-making is the death

feared the machinations of his relative Abu al-Futuh. As a result, ʿAli exiled Abu al-Futuh, his wife Ballara, and their son al-ʿAbbas ibn Abi al-Futuh to the Fatimid court at Cairo. The account of the Fatimid court provided by the twelfth-century author Usama ibn Munqidh relates their fortunes in Egypt.[109]

Following the death of Abu al-Futuh in an unspecified year, Ballara remarried al-ʿAdil ibn Sallar, the Fatimid vizier. Al-ʿAdil was then assassinated, and after a scramble to claim the vizierate among several high-ranking Fatimid officials, al-ʿAbbas ibn Abi al-Futuh, the son of Ballara and the Zirid prince Abu al-Futuh, became vizier of the Fatimid Caliphate in 1153.[110] The presence in the Fatimid court of this Zirid noble, who must have known about the Norman conquest of Ifriqiya, contributed to a break between the courts of Palermo and Cairo. Although ʿAbbas was only vizier for two years – he was executed in the summer of 1155 – his presence in the Fatimid government undoubtedly contributed to its deteriorating relationship with the Kingdom of Sicily.

King William I and the Fall of Norman Africa

King Roger II died in February 1154 and was succeeded by his only surviving son, William I, whom historians have unfortunately deemed "The Bad."[111] Although

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of John II Komnenos, the Byzantine Emperor, which happened in 1143. Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, 7.1:227.

[109] Usama ibn Munqidh, *The Book of Contemplation: Islam and the Crusades*, trans. Paul Cobb (New York: Penguin Classics, 2008), 26–34.

[110] *EI2*, ʿAbbās b. Abi 'l-Futūh. Johns, "*Malik Ifriqiya*," 98-99. Al-ʿAdil had not been appointed to the vizierate. Rather, he ousted the vizier appointed by the caliph in an unspecified year.

[111] Loud's analysis of this perhaps unfair nickname details the many problems that William I faced upon his ascent to the throne and the anti-William stance taken by the chronicle of Hugo Falcandus, which is the most detailed chronicle to consider William's reign. Graham Loud, "William the Bad or William the Unlucky?," *The Haskins Society Journal* 8 (1999): 99–113.

William's reign saw rampant internal strife and the loss of the Normans' Ifriqiyan possessions, it would be wrong to place the blame for this fully on William. The geo-political landscape that William inherited from his father was heavily stacked against him.[112] The papacy refused to recognize the validity of the Norman kingdom, the Byzantines and Germans were plotting an invasion in southern Italy, the once-amicable relationship with the Fatimids had soured, and there was recent unrest in Djerba and Kerkennah. The troubled relationships that the Normans had with all of these powers would come crashing down on William in the early years of his reign and, when combined with the ascendency of the Almohads, would lead to the destruction of the Norman Kingdom of Africa.

Mounting animosity between the Normans and Fatimids is first seen in a Norman raid against the Fatimid city of Tinnis around 1154.[113] This raid shows that the policy of non-intervention between the Fatimids and Normans that had existed during the reign of Roger II had given way to animosity. Although this falling-out began in the early 1150s due to the ascendency of a Zirid prince as Fatimid vizier, it first led to military conflict in this raid against Tinnis during the first year of the reign of William I. The policy of

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[112] Stanton, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, 67. Houben writes that Roger "left his successor a full treasury, some splendid palaces and a developing, and for its time efficient, administration, but also some unresolved problems." Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 166.

[113] The timeline of this raid is unclear. Ibn al-Athir records that a Sicilian fleet raided Tinnis in 548H (1153-54). The *Tarikh Mansuri* dates a Sicilian attack on Tinnis to 549H (1154-55). The Egyptian historian al-Maqrizi mentions a Sicilian raid against Tinnis, Rosetta, Alexandria, and Damietta in Jumada II 550H (August 1155) launched by "Roger son of Roger." The continuation of the chronicle of Sigebert of Gembloux notes that William I launched a fleet to Tinnis in 1154. An 1156 letter from the Fatimid vizier Tala'i ibn Ruzzik to Pisa refers to a Sicilian attack on Tinnis in an unspecified year. The quantity of the sources that narrate the Sicilian expedition against Tinnis convincingly disproves the hypothesis of Amari that Ibn al-Athir was referring to the Algerian city of Tannis. These sources are considered in detail in Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 98. Michele Amari, *Storia dei musulmani di Sicilia*, 2nd ed., vol. 3.2 (Catania: Romeo Prampolini, 1938), 433.Johns, "*Malik Ifriqiya*," 98.

neutrality in Ifriqiyan affairs that the Fatimids had adopted during the 1130s and 1140s was now no longer a guarantee.

The threat of Fatimid intervention in Ifriqiya was minimal, though, compared to the developing situation in mainland Italy. During the first two years of William I's reign, the Byzantines launched a fleet against southern Italy, where at the same time Norman nobles had revolted against William with the encouragement of Pope Adrian IV.[114] Because of these threats, William campaigned in Italy throughout 1155 and 1156. His campaigns were largely successful. He recaptured cities taken by the Byzantines and Norman rebels on the mainland, solidifying his hold on southern Italy by the summer of 1156. Following a decisive victory at the city of Bari, William and Pope Adrian IV signed the Treaty of Benevento, in which Adrian recognized William as the King of Sicily, a title he had earlier refused to bestow upon him.[115] William remained in southern Italy for the summer, consolidating his authority and issuing charters in his name.[116]

William's focus on affairs in Sicily and Italy came at the apparent neglect of his African possessions. At the beginning of 1156, while William was campaigning in Italy, a series of popular uprisings in Ifriqiya resulted in the Normans losing many of their coastal bases.[117] Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun provide similar accounts of these uprisings. The first city to revolt was Sfax, led by its governor by ʿUmar ibn Abi al-

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[114] Falcando, *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*, 14, 20–21.
[115] Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document 12. Pope Adrian IV had earlier addressed him as "lord." Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 166–67.
[116] William issued two charters from central Italy during the summer of 1156. One was issued around Naples in July 1156 and one was issued in nearby Salerno in the same month. A charter from August 1156 confirms that William returned to Palermo soon after issuing the Salerno charter. Enzesberger, *Guillelmi I*, documents 13-15.
[117] The causes of these revolts are considered in-depth in Chapter Three.

Hasan al-Furriyani.[118] Upon conquering Sfax in 543H (1148-49) and appointing ʿUmar as governor, the Normans had taken ʿUmar's father, Abu al-Hasan, to Sicily as a hostage. Before leaving for Sicily, though, Abu al-Hasan had told his son to revolt against the Normans when "the right opportunity enables you."[119] This opportunity arrived in the beginning of 551H (late February or early March 1156) when ʿUmar rallied the people of Sfax to battle, as shown in the following dialogue from the chronicle of Ibn al-Athir:

> [ʿUmar] said, "Let a group from among you climb the walls and a group proceed to the housing of the Franks and the Christians, all of them, and kill them all." [The people of Sfax] said to him, "But our lord the shaykh, your father, we are frightened for him." He said, "He commanded me to do this. If thousands from among the enemies are killed for the shaykh, then he has not died." The sun had not risen before they killed the Franks to the last.[120]

Ibn al-Athir records that other cities in Ifriqiya followed the lead of ʿUmar in revolting against the Normans in 551H (1156-57).[121] Abu Yahya ibn Matruh led a revolt in Tripoli, Muhammad ibn Rushayd instigated one in Gabès, and the islands of Djerba and Kerkennah followed suit. The people of Zawila, incited by ʿUmar ibn Abi al-Hasan of Sfax, also rose against Norman control and attacked Mahdia in late 551H (1157) with the aid of "Arabs from the region," the people of Sfax, and unspecified others.[122] While these armies besieged Mahdia by land, King William offered the first semblance of resistance

[118] Ibn Khaldun provides two slightly different accounts of the revolt of Sfax. One echoes that of Ibn al-Athir almost to the word. The other, though, includes a statement that the Christians of Sfax brought harm to Muslims and that this was a motivating factor for the revolt of ʿUmar. These two descriptions are not necessarily incompatible. Ibn Khaldun, 5:205 and V:223-224. Brett finds the second of these entries a more convincing explanation for the Sfaxian revolt. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 356.
[119] Ibn al-Athir, 11:203.
[120] Ibn al-Athir, 11:205.
[121] Ibn al-Athir, 11:203-205. Ibn Khaldun, 5:237-238.
[122] Ibn al-Athir XI:204.

to these uprisings by supplying the defenders of Mahdia with reinforcements and a fleet of twenty galleys. He also managed to bribe several Arab tribes to defect when the Franks sortied out of the city in 552H (1157-58).[123] The people of Zawila and Sfax initially stood to fight, but when the Franks surrounded them, the fighters from Sfax fled. The people of Zawila attempted to retreat to their city but they found the gates locked. The Normans won a decisive victory, pillaged the city, and killed those within it.

When word reached William I of ʿUmar ibn Abi al-Hasan's revolts, he demanded that ʿUmar's hostage father, Abu al-Hasan, write to his son to return him to Norman authority. Abu al-Hasan refused, saying that "one who has the audacity to do this will not return because of a letter."[124] Undeterred, William sent on envoy to Sfax. Upon reaching the city, the envoy was not allowed inside. Instead, the following day, he watched as the people of Sfax carried a coffin outside of the city in memory of the doomed Abu al-Hasan. When William heard this, he had Abu al-Hasan crucified.[125]

The people of Tripoli also revolted against Norman rule a year later in 553H (1158-59).[126] Al-Tijani provides the most detailed account of this uprising.[127] According to him, the Normans demanded that Muslim religious officials in Tripoli denounce the

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[123] Ibn Khaldun, 5:237-238.
[124] Ibn al-Athir, 11:204.
[125] Ibn al-Athir reports that he "did not cease to call out to God the Almighty until he died." Ibn al-Athir, 11:204. Ibn Khaldun's narrative of this episode is shorter but virtually identical to Ibn al-Athir's. Ibn Khaldun, 5:237-238.
[126] The chronology of this revolt is unclear. Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun write that the revolts of 551H (1156-57) reduced Norman rule in Ifriqiya to Mahdia and Zawila, implying that Tripoli also revolted in this year. Al-Tijani, though, writes that the revolt at Tripoli against the Normans happened in 553H (1158-59). The level of detail in al-Tijani's account makes me inclined to believe his narrative. Ibn al-Athir, 11:204. Ibn Khaldun, 5:237-238. Al-Tijani, 241-242.
[127] Al-Tijani, 241-242.

Almohads from their pulpits.[128] These officials, led by qadi Abu al-Hajaj, refused to do so because it was not part of the contract between the city and the Normans. Although the Normans withdrew this demand, this interaction prompted Abu Yahya ibn Matruh and other nobles in the city to plan a revolt. When the time came, the people barricaded the streets and decisively defeated a Norman garrison in the streets. Abu Yahya ibn Matruh then became the independent governor of the city until the arrival of the Almohads.

The response of William I to these widespread revolts was limited. When the armies of Zawila and Sfax marched on the Norman stronghold of Mahdia in late 551H (1157), Ibn Khaldun reports that the Norman king sent reinforcements to Mahdia and persuaded hostile Arab tribes to desert.[129] Following the Norman victory at Mahdia, Robert of Torigny reports that William settled Christians, including an archbishop, in nearby Zawila.[130] In Tripoli, too, al-Tijani reports that William sought to secure the loyalty of its people by making them denounce the Almohad caliphate. Beyond this, though, there is no surviving correspondence between the Normans, local lords in Ifriqiya, or the Almohads from 1154-1160. From this evidence, it appears William wanted to retain his African possessions but was unwilling or unable to provide

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[128] It is possible that Tripoli revolted against the Normans in 551H (1156-57) along with the other cities in Ifriqiya but that this revolt failed. If this is the case, though, such a revolt goes unmentioned in al-Tijani's travelogue. Also, the Almohads attacked Tunis in 552H but opposing forces led by its governor, ʿAbd Allah ibn Khurasan, and the Arab chieftain Muhriz ibn Ziyad managed to force the Almohads back to Béjaïa. The Normans' fear of the Almohads might have been due to their armies, which had campaigned unsuccessfully near Tunis a year earlier. Al-Tijani, 247-248. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:384. This victory is further confirmed by a letter that ʿAbd Allah ibn Khurasan sent to the archbishop of Tunis. Louis de Mas Latrie, "Documents sur l'histoire de l'Algérie et de l'Afrique septentrionale pendant le moyen âge: relations avec Pise," 137–39.

[129] Ibn Khaldun, 5:237-238.

[130] Robert of Torigny, *Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I: The Chronicle of Robert of Torigny, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Michael-in-Peril-of-the-Sea*, 4:191.

significant military power for their upkeep. Although he provided a relief fleet for Mahdia and retained small garrisons in his African cities, most of his military power was devoted to quelling rampant unrest in southern Italy.

The Norman Kingdom of Africa survived, albeit in a reduced size, for several years after the revolts of the mid-1150s. The end of Norman Africa came in 554H (1159-60) at the hands of the Almohads. According to Ibn al-Athir, the Almohads' motivation for attacking Mahdia was directly linked to earlier revolts against the Normans.[131] In the aftermath of the battle between the Normans and the people of Zawila, many Zawilans fled to ʿAbd al-Muʿmin in Marrakesh and implored him to defeat the Normans. ʿAbd al-Muʿmin distributed money to these refugees and promised that he would undertake this expedition. Soon after, he set out with a large army and navy for Ifriqiya.[132]

Despite the warm welcome that the Almohad army received in Zawila, the army of ʿAbd al-Muʿmin received a mixed response in other parts of Ifriqiya. When it reached Tunis in the summer of 554 (1159), the city initially resisted.[133] However, during the cover of night, a group of nobles from the city covertly descended to ʿAbd al-Muʿmin and offered their surrender, which the caliph accepted. ʿAbd al-Muʿmin seized half the goods of the people of Tunis (except for the surrendering shaykhs, who were granted immunity) and ordered that the Christians and Jews in the city either convert to Islam or

[131] Ibn al-Athir, 11:241.
[132] There is some ambiguity in the chronicles (particularly between the Almohad and non-Almohad ones) about the time in which these conquests were prepared and the strength of the force of ʿAbd al-Muʿmin. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:384–89. Ibn al-Athir describes the control that ʿAbd al-Muʿmin exercised over his army such that it "marched among the crops and not an ear of corn was damaged." He also notes the piety of those within the army, for when the call to prayer began, no one "failed to join the congregation." Ibn al-Athir, 11:242.
[133] Al-Tijani, 241-246. Ibn Khaldun, 6:218-219. Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:316.

be executed. The governor of Tunis, who had not been involved in these secret negotiations, was then exiled to Béjaïa. ʿAbd al-Muʿmin installed one of his viziers in Tunis before departing for Mahdia, where he arrived on 5 August 1159.

Upon seeing the approaching Almohads, Norman "princes and leading knights" retreated to the protection of the walled city of Mahdia and ʿAbd al-Muʿmin entered the suburb of Zawila uncontested. Within an hour of the Almohads' arrival, Zawila "became a flourishing town" as auxiliary forces of Berbers, Arabs, and local people joined the army.[134] ʿAbd al-Muʿmin, realizing it would take a prolonged siege to take the city, collected provisions for the besiegers in the form of two mountain-esque heaps of wheat and barley. While the siege dragged on, the Almohads secured the loyalty of the surrounding lands, cities, and forts.[135] Tripoli, Sfax, and Gafsa, submitted to the Almohads peacefully. Gabès and a number of other unspecified territories, though, resisted the Almohads without success.

With the Almohad siege of Mahdia underway, William I took action. In the summer of 554H (1159-60), he had sent out a raiding force against the island of Ibiza, presumably to root out Almoravid pirates that remained a nuisance to him. On the way back from this expedition, William ordered the fleet to Mahdia to break the Almohad siege. It arrived on 8 September 1159, around a month after the siege had begun. Ibn al-Athir recounts how the Franks were horrified at the number of soldiers assembled outside of the city while ʿAbd al-Muʿmin wept and prayed for a Muslim victory. In the

[134] Ibn al-Athir, 11:241-243.

[135] Almohad letters detail these campagins, which are otherwise given little description in the Arabic chronicles. Lévi-Provençal, *Un recueil de lettres officielles Almohades*, 45–49. Lévi-Provençal, *Trente-sept lettres officielles almohades*, 99–121.

subsequent battle, the Almohad navy won a decisive victory and captured many Sicilian ships.[136] This report is corroborated in Romuald of Salerno's *Chronicon*, which mentions that the Norman commander Qaʾid Peter lost a naval battle to the Almohads at the cost of many Norman galleys.[137]

With the Norman fleet defeated, the defenders of Mahdia resisted the Almohads for another six months before surrendering the city to ʿAbd al-Muʿmin.[138] Hugo Falcandus' account of the defense emphasizes both the garrison's heroic resistance and the treachery within the Norman court that permitted the city to fall.[139] He accuses certain palace eunuchs in Palermo of sending letters to the Almohads that explained how William I did not plan to send further assistance to the city. Falcandus also asserts that

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[136] Ibn al-Athir, 11:244.

[137] Qa'id Peter, also known as Peter Ahmad Barrun, was a leading figure in the court of William I during the early years of his reign. When his position in Sicily became precarious in the 1160s, he defected to the Almohad caliphate in Tunis and had a distinguished career. His life story is discussed in detail in Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 222–28. Peter was one of many court eunuchs that the Norman court employed because of their desire to create a "mirror-image" of the Fatimid court in Cairo. The biggest difference between the use of eunuchs was that the Normans employed Muslims who then publically converted to Christianity while the Fatimids employed Christians and Jews. Ibn Jubayr provides an invaluable firsthand account of the presence of eunuchs in Palermo during the 1180s, in which he says that many of them appeared to be Christian but secretly practiced Islam and worked to convert other palace workers to Islam. Catlos, "Who Was Philip of Mahdia and Why Did He Have to Die? Confessional Identity and Political Power in the Twelfth-Century Mediterranean," 89. Ibn Jubayr, *Rihla Ibn Jubayr*, 299–300. Jeremy Johns details the lives of several court eunuchs in Palermo, including Philip of Mahdia, Qa'id Martin, Qa'id Peter, Qa'id Richard, all of whom exercised considerable power in the Norman administration during the twelfth century. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 212–34. See also Joshua Birk, *Norman Kings of Sicily and the Rise of the Anti-Islamic Critique: Baptized Sultans* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 173–205. Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, 7.1:242. Hugo Falcandus, wary as he was of the presence of Muslims in the corrupt Norman court, acknowledges the defeat of the Normans but attributes it to the command of Qaʾid Peter, who retreated treacherously from combat and allowed the Almohads to capture some of the Normans' ships. Falcando, *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*, 25–28.

[138] The Almohad chronicle of al-Baidaq provides a brief description of the Almohad capture of Mahdia. Lévi-Provençal, *Documents inédits d'histoire almohade: fragments manuscrits du "legajo" 1919 du fonds arabe de l'escurial*, 200–202.

[139] Falcando, *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*, 27–28.

Maio of Bari used Mahdia as a tool for destabilizing the rule of William I, for Maio had convinced the king that his popularity would be unaffected by the loss of Mahdia. The implication of this statement is that people would think the king had become mad for giving up such a prosperous city, revolt against him, and install Maio to the throne. As a result of this, Hugo Falcandus reports that many people in Sicily thought Maio "permitted [Mahdia] to be captured."[140] In other words, some Sicilian Normans thought that the fall of Norman Africa was a political tool through which Maio could convince people that he was a capable ruler and William I was not.[141]

While Falcandus' description of the fall of Mahdia is grounded in the internal politics of the Norman court, Ibn al-Athir instead emphasizes the grandiose generosity of ʿAbd al-Muʿmin. The Almohad caliph made multiple offers to the Normans in Mahdia and, even though they refused repeatedly, he still allowed them to send letters to Palermo. Eventually, ʿAbd al-Muʿmin won over the defenders of Mahdia with his "soft words" and the Normans surrendered the town on the morning of 21 January 1160.[142] Although ʿAbd al-Muʿmin provided the defenders with ships to leave the city, many drowned in the choppy winter waters of the Mediterranean and only a few reached Sicily. Following his entrance into the city, ʿAbd al-Muʿmin organized the affairs of the city and repaired its fortifications. He appointed an unspecified Almohad in charge of the city along with al-

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[140] Falcando, *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*, 25.

[141] Loud argues that there was an "atmosphere of suspicion, paranoia and factional dispute" within the court of William I during the time of the Almohad conquest of Mahdia, a statement that is affirmed by Hugo Falcandus' description of tensions in Palermo. Falcando, *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by "Hugo Falcandus," 1154-69*, 19.

[142] Ibn al-Athir, 11:245. Richards misleadingly states that the Norman garrison at Mahdia capitulated on 21 January 1159, even though his translation of Ibn al-Athir's text reads 21 January 1160. Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, 2007, 2:106.

Hasan ibn ʿAli, the Zirid ruler whom the Normans had ejected twelve years prior. Both al-Hasan and his sons received land before ʿAbd al-Muʿmin departed for the Maghreb at the beginning of February 1160.[143]

Before leaving for Marrakesh, though, ʿAbd al-Muʿmin requested aid from various local lords to fight his campaigns in al-Andalus.[144] Although these lords initially agreed to follow him on this campaign, they later reneged on this agreement. ʿAbd al-Muʿmin sent a contingent of his army back to corral the deserters and there was a large battle at Horn Mountain near Qayrawan. Many local lords of Ifriqiya were eventually defeated. Muhriz ibn Ziyad was killed in the battle, the goods and families of the deserters were taken to the Maghreb, and the surviving Arab tribesmen subsequently pledged their allegiance to ʿAbd al-Muʿmin. Following this victory, Ibn al-Athir reports that Ifriqiya was overwhelmingly "safe and peaceful" under Almohad rule.[145]

Conclusion

From 1135 to 1160, the Ifriqiyan littoral was twice conquered by outside powers, both of which used a combination of diplomacy and violent conquest to solidify their territorial holdings. The Norman invasions of the 1140s occurred after Roger II had secured his lands in mainland Italy and the threat from northern Europe had temporarily dissolved. They also occurred at the same time as Ifriqiya was in the midst of a

[143] Idris' dramatic statement that, "in 1160, the Sanhajan Barbary was no more" is a bit overstated. There were Sanhajan governors in Ifriqiya like al-Hasan ibn ʿAli but they ruled on behalf of the Almohad Caliph. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:404.
[144] Ibn al-Athir, 11:245-247.
[145] This statement of Ibn al-Athir is evaluated in Chapter Five. Ibn al-Athir, 11:247.

devastating drought that caused mass starvation and emigration. The time was perfect for Roger to expand his imperial domains to include the coastline of Ifriqiya, which gave him complete control of lucrative trade routes in the central Mediterranean. The sweeping Norman conquests of 543H (1148-49), some of which were peaceful and some of which were violent, formed the core of the Norman Kingdom of Africa and displaced the Zirid emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli from his ancestral throne.

The initial years of Norman rule in Ifriqiya were peaceful. The deaths of George of Antioch and Roger II did not bring about significant change in Ifriqiya, although they did contribute to mounting animosity against the Fatimid Caliphate. When William I came to the throne in 1154, rebellious lords in southern Italy and foreign powers like the Byzantines sought to conquer lands within the Kingdom of Sicily. With Norman military resources stretched across Italy, William and his admiral Maio of Bari were unable combat widespread revolts in Ifriqiya that occurred during the mid-1150s. Although these revolts drastically reduced the reach of Norman territory in Ifriqiya, it was not until the Almohads arrived that the Norman Kingdom of Africa was lost. The Almohad armies of ʿAbd al-Muʿmin, like those of Roger II, received a mixed reception upon their entrance into Ifriqiya. Some cities welcomed the Almohads as liberators while others resisted. When Mahdia finally fell to the Almohads in 554H (1159-60), ʿAbd al-Muʿmin installed the deposed Zirid emir al-Hasan to its throne. The Zirids thus remained governors of their ancestral capital at Mahdia, albeit in the service of the Almohad caliph in Marrakesh instead of the Fatimid caliph in Cairo.

Chapter Three

The Society of Norman Africa

The political history narrated in the previous two chapters has raised many questions about the Norman Kingdom of Africa. How did the Normans govern their African territories? Did the Normans seek to revitalize the Ifriqiyan economy? What role did religion play in this enterprise? How did the establishment of Norman rule in Ifriqiya affect the people living there? What did the people of Ifriqiya think of Norman rule? Why did Muslim populations in Ifriqiya revolt against Norman rule in the mid-1150s? The following chapter will answer these questions through the synthesis of relevant Arabic, Greek, Latin, and Judeo-Arabic sources.

The Normans ruled most of their territories on the Ifriqiyan littoral through proxy Arab and Berber governors. They appointed these local governors using traditional Islamic customs like the ceremonial bestowal of robes and the distribution of contracts that specified the terms of their investiture. In the city of Mahdia and the islands of the central Mediterranean, Norman governors took direct control of their cities and were more involved in quotidian operations. Nonetheless, in all of these overseas territories, Norman garrisons worked to ensure order and adherence to lucrative trade regulations. Political stability in Ifriqiya under the Normans helped to facilitate economic growth. The Normans improved the infrastructure of their Ifriqiyan territories through building projects. They also encouraged commerce and immigration to them. These policies proved a boon for Christian traders, particularly those from Genoa, but were detrimental

to Jewish merchants. Christians in Ifriqiya further benefited from the Normans' tax structure, which imposed a *jizya* ("head tax") on Muslims under their rule.

These changes fundamentally altered the power dynamics of Ifriqiya to favor Christians at the expense of the Muslim majority. This shift, when combined with disparaging attitudes that Christians had regarding Muslims, the sweeping conquests of the Almohads in northwest Africa in the early 1150s, longstanding Maliki legal customs that advocated resistance to non-Muslim rule, and Ifriqiya's tradition of opportunistic holy war fueled the fire that led to widespread revolts against Norman rule in the mid-1150s. When the Almohads eventually took control over the region several years later, they put measures in place to ensure that they would be able to control Ifriqiya more effectively than the Normans. Norman rule in Ifriqiya thus produced significant changes to the region's society that facilitated its eventual downfall.

Historiography: Analyzing Norman Africa

Scholars writing about the Norman Kingdom of Africa have considered various aspects of its society – most prominently its political structure, economy, and the religiosity of its inhabitants. While much of this research has produced convincing arguments about particularities of the Kingdom of Africa, none of it has provided a holistic view of the changes and continuities brought about by Norman rule. This is because no scholar has yet considered the substantial collection of source materials related to Norman Africa and attempted to synthesize it into one study. Through the careful examination of the diverse pool of sources available for the study of the Norman

Kingdom of Africa, I will show how Norman Africa created an unsustainable society that favored Christians at the expense of the Muslim majority in Ifriqiya.

Scholars have traditionally seen the Normans as taking a hands-off approach to governing their possessions in Africa.[1] Roger II and George of Antioch appointed local governors and judges to govern the populations of their cities. Although the Normans likely exercised more direct control over Mahdia, the rest of their governors were allowed to rule unmolested as long as they paid their taxes. Economic considerations were at the forefront of this political strategy. Michael Brett succinctly argues that concern about the economy "runs through the account of the Norman conquest, and emerges as a principal concern of George of Antioch in his endeavors to make Norman rule over Ifriqiya as palatable to the vanquished as it was worthwhile to the victors."[2] While this argument is convincing overall for some of the major cities that the Normans conquered (Gabès, Sfax, Sousse, and Tripoli), it deserves some nuancing through the analysis of texts from the nearby islands of Djerba, Gozo, and Malta, which paint Norman rule on this island as far more involved than in the cities on the coast of Ifriqiya.

There is likewise agreement among historians that the Normans made infrastructural improvements to their African possessions to facilitate economic recovery.[3] The Arabic chronicles are explicit about improvements the Normans made to their coastal cities, particularly Tripoli, that facilitated growth in Ifriqiya. The fate of

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[1] See, for example, Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 34–35. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:360. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 164–65.

[2] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 353–54.

[3] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 36. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 291. Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 165.

merchant communities, though, is less explored. Scholars of the Cairo Geniza have unearthed letters from the twelfth century that mention Ifriqiya under the Normans, but neither they nor scholars of Norman Sicily have considered how these letters play into larger narratives about Norman Africa.[4] Although scholars have ably considered the rise of Christian merchant communities in the southern Mediterranean in the years after the Norman conquest, their research can be expanded by analyzing these texts in relation to letters from the Cairo Geniza.[5] Furthermore, the recent discovery of a new document from the islands of Malta and Gozo permits the reconsideration of the taxation system that the Normans used in their overseas territories.[6]

The most contentious aspect of Norman Africa is that of religious change and continuity. Historians have disagreed about the role the Normans had in facilitating the growth of Christian populations in Ifriqiya and how this might have factored into the fall of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. One group of historians sees Norman efforts at Christian settlement as limited and the subsequent fall of Norman Africa as the direct result of the invading Almohad armies. Helen Wieruszowski, for example, writes that Roger "did not desire to change the overwhelmingly Moslem character of his new

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[4] S.D. Goitein, "Sicily and Southern Italy in the Cairo Geniza Documents," *Archivio Storico per La Sicilia Orientale* 67, no. 1 (1971): 9–33. Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*. Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily: 383-1300*. Simonsohn, *Between Scylla and Charybdis: The Jews in Sicily*.

[5] David Abulafia, "L'Attività commerciale genovese nell'Africa normanna: la città di Tripoli," *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Studi sulla Sicilia Normanna*, 1973, 1–8. David Abulafia, "Pisan Commercial Colonies and Consulates in Twelfth-Century Sicily," *The English Historical Review* 93, no. 366 (January 1978): 68–81. Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*. Steven Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

[6] Jamil and Johns, "A New Latin-Arabic Document from Norman Sicily (November 595 H/1198 CE)," 144–59.

province."[7] The Muslim population of Ifriqiya was spurred to overthrow the Normans only when the armies of the Almohads arrived. David Abulafia slightly amends the argument of Wieruszowski by speculating that Roger "may also have encouraged new Christian settlement in Africa" but was ultimately more concerned with securing loyalty from the majority Muslim population.[8] To Abulafia, Norman rule in Ifriqiya "aimed to be benign."[9] This policy proved futile, though, as governors in Ifriqiya were eager to switch their allegiance to the Almohad caliphate when the time came in the mid-1150s. Donald Matthew too sees the rise of the Almohads as the cause behind the revolts in Norman Africa.[10] Amar Baadj similarly argues that the uprisings against Norman rule in 551H (1156-57) was carried out "no doubt in anticipation of the arrival of the Almohads."[11]

Other scholars refute this argument. H.R. Idris argues that "bad governance" by the administration of William I and Maio of Bari, which included the persecution of local Muslims, spurred cities to revolt against their rule.[12] Michael Brett expands upon this argument and sees local Christian populations as taking an active role in Norman governance of Ifriqiya and consequently playing a significant role in its demise. He argues that the number of indigenous Christians and immigrant Christians increased

[7] Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 28–31.
[8] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 38–39.
[9] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 36.
[10] Matthew argues that "the main influence brooding over North African politics was the threat presented by the growing force of the Almohads in Morocco." To him, the local lords of Ifriqiya's "fear of these fanatical Muslims" persuaded some North African rulers" to accept Norman rule. Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, 58–59.
[11] Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 57.
[12] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:379.

during the ten years of Norman rule, particularly in urban coastal areas. This, in tandem with Christian "misdeeds" and the Islamic legal culture of the region, provoked the uprisings that would spell an end to Norman domination.[13] Alex Metcalfe largely follows Brett's argument. He sees "religious motifs" against the Normans in the Arabic sources as indicating popular resentment against the Normans, particularly in the case of Abu al-Hasan al-Furriyani in Sfax, who led these revolts.[14]

Henri Bresc finds fault with the idea that the misdeeds of Christians contributed to the fall of Norman governance in Ifriqiya. He instead only sees the increased presence of Christians as being the driving force behind revolts to Norman rule. Bresc argues that the increased wealth of the church in Ifriqiya is evidence that Roger II made a concerted attempt to settle Christians there and move indigenous Christian populations into cities.[15] The presence of Christians in the Norman government further regrouped indigenous Christian communities in Ifriqiya and led them to be more noticeable. This effectively reversed the hierarchy established by the Zirid dynasty to the detriment of Muslims. Bresc finds that these demographic and structural changes were the primary causes for the Muslim uprising against the Normans, not Christian misdeeds against Muslims, for which he finds no evidence.

This study will evaluate these historiographical claims through the careful examination of texts previously analyzed by scholars alongside other relevant sources that have been neglected. It will also expand the geographic bounds of previous research

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[13] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 20.
[14] Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 174–78.
[15] Bresc, "Le royaume normand d'Afrique et l'archevêché de Mahdiyya."

to comprise not only cities on the coast of Ifriqiya but also the islands of the central Mediterranean. The Normans subjugated these islands – Malta, Gozo, Pantelleria, Kerkennah, and Djerba specifically – around the same time as they were attacking and conquering cities in Ifriqiya. The inclusion of these islands permits the examination of useful and diverse sources outside of the Arabic chronicles, including Ibadi sources from Djerba, poetry from Gozo, and a tax document that the Normans levied on Malta and Gozo. When examining these sources, it is necessary to assume that their authors held perspectives that were in some degree reflective of other people in similar situations. In the case of an anonymous Christian poet from twelfth-century Gozo, for example, I will assume that this author's bleak perspective on the island and its Muslim inhabitants is reflective of the perspective of other Christian nobles in the Norman court.[16] Drawing these analogies across time and space is not ideal but, in the absence of other sources, it is a necessity.

The Politics of Norman Africa

The role of the Norman administration in Ifriqiya varied depending upon the location.[17] For most of the major cities of the Ifriqiyan littoral, the Normans played a largely symbolic role. In accordance with medieval Islamic tradition, the Norman kings bestowed robes of allegiance to their appointed Berber/Arab governors, distributed a

[16] Busuttil, Fiorini, and Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo*.
[17] For the sake of simplicity, "Norman" in this context means an administrator from the Norman court of Palermo. This could comprise people from many different confessional and ethnic backgrounds, as historians have long acknowledged. What is relevant here, though, is not the plurality of the court of Palermo but rather that the "Normans" here were distinct from the Arab/Berber governors that ruled Ifriqiya. Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 24–25.

contract that specified the terms of each governor's obligations to the Normans, took hostages to ensure the loyalty of their new governors, and left a garrison to enforce order. The daily governance of these cities was left to their appointed governors. Such was not the case in the de-facto Norman capital of Mahdia, which was governed initially by the Norman admiral George of Antioch before passing to an unknown member of the Norman administration. Here, the Normans exercised significant political control and their presence was more noticeable than in cities under the rule of proxy governors. This was also the case on the islands between Sicily and Ifriqiya that the Normans conquered – Malta, Gozo, Pantelleria, Kerkennah, and Djerba – which were governed by unknown Norman officials.

The process through which the Normans established their authority over cities on the Ifriqiyan littoral – specifically Gabès, Sfax, Sousse, and Tripoli – had a clear pattern and method of execution that was dependent upon whether the city surrendered peacefully or whether it was defeated by force. When a city surrendered peacefully, the governor was made to wear a robe of allegiance in return for the right to rule the city.[18] This was the case at Gabès in 542H (1147-48), when the usurper Yusuf pledged his allegiance to Roger II. Ibn al-Athir quotes Yusuf as saying to Roger (presumably in a letter), "I want from you a robe of honor and the contract of the government of Gabès so that I am a representative for you just as you made the Banu Matruh at Tripoli."[19] Roger sent him what he requested. Yusuf put on the robe and read the contract in front of an

[18] Footnotes in this chapter pertaining to events that were discussed in chapters one and two will be limited to the chronicler with the most detailed description of events. When necessary, I will include other chroniclers and secondary citations, particularly from H.R. Idris. Ibn al-Athir, 11:120-121.
[19] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120.

assembly at Gabès. The details of the contract, which will be discussed shortly, detailed the relationship between the Normans and their new governor.[20]

The Normans also distributed robes of honor in cities that resisted their initial conquest, although not before substantial bloodshed. Following the conquest of Tripoli "by the sword" in 541H (1146-47), there was bloodshed as the Normans seized women and property throughout the city.[21] Although many fled Tripoli, they returned when the Normans issued a proclamation that all were safe. Roger II then bestowed robes and a declaration to rule upon the new governors of the city, the Banu Matruh, as he did with cities that surrendered peacefully.[22] A similar process happened in Sfax in 543H (1148-49), which only fell after fierce fighting.[23] The survivors were enslaved and those that had fled were permitted to return to the city and pay the ransoms of those who had been captured. At Annaba, too, Philip of Mahdia enslaved much of the population after they resisted his navy in 548H (1153-54). His lenient treatment of the notables of the city was a contributing factor too that led to his execution later that year.[24]

The manner in which Roger II bequeathed *khilʿa* ("robes of honor") onto his Ifriqiyan vassals is indicative of his desire to maintain the status quo in Ifriqiya.[25] The

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[20] The process through which Yusuf pledged allegiance to Roger II was similar to other cities that came under Norman control without resistance. At Sousse, for example, the people "were treated kindly" when it surrendered peacefully in 543H (1148-49) and Roger sent the people letters with guarantees of safety. Ibn al-Athir, 11:128-129.
[21] Ibn al-Athir, 11:108-109.
[22] This description comes from Ibn al-Athir's account of the 542H (1147-48) affair at Gabès. According to him, the Banu Matruh of Tripoli and Yusuf of Gabès received similar treatment when they came under the jurisdiction of the Norman kings. Ibn al-Athir, 11:120. Brett, "The City-State in Medieval Ifriqiya: The Case of Tripoli," 82–84.
[23] Ibn al-Athir, 11:127-128.
[24] Ibn al-Athir, 11:187.
[25] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120. Fahmida Suleman, "Gifts and Gift Giving," ed. Josef W. Meri, *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 295–96. *EI2*, "K̲h̲il'a."

tradition of distributing robes of honor was a common practice for Muslim rulers during the Middle Ages. The Abbasid caliphs gave robes of varying costs (one chronicler gives a range of 300 dinars to 30 dinars) to various subordinates.[26] Even as the Abbasid caliphs waned in power, they continued to bestow robes with pomp upon to their vassals. The Turkish emirs of Damascus, for example, received robes of honor when the Abbasid caliph agreed to their investiture in the early twelfth century.[27] This ceremonial process was common throughout the Islamicate Mediterranean to the extent that "throughout most of the Islamic era and in most parts of the Islamic world, the conferring of robes of honor was a ubiquitous symbol of bonding between a superior and an inferior."[28] Both Sunni and Shiʿa rulers bestowed the *khilʿa* upon their favored subjects, whether man or woman, slave or free person, Muslim or non-believer. There were a variety of robes that rulers could bestow on their subject, including robes of appointment, viziership, pardon, and honorable dismissal.[29] This was also a well-documented practice in the Fatimid caliphate, where an inventory of gifts shows robes distinguished by the amounts of precious materials like silk, gemstones, and gold in them.[30]

There is evidence that the Zirids undertook a similar process for their vassals, distributing both *khilʿa* and gifts to their subjects during the succession of a new emir.

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[26] Dominique Sourdel, "Robes of Honor in ʻAbbasid Baghdad During the Eighth to Eleventh Centuries," in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. Stewart Gordon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 141.

[27] Saladin also received robes of honor from the Abbasid caliph in 1180. Sourdel, "Robes of Honor in ʻAbbasid Baghdad During the Eighth to Eleventh Centuries," 143.

[28] Gavin R.G. Hambly, "From Baghdad to Bukhara, from Ghazna to Delhi: The Khilʿa Ceremony in the Transmission of Kingly Pomp and Circumstance," in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. Stewart Gordon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 215.

[29] *EI2*, "K̲h̲il'a."

[30] Paula Sanders, "Robes of Honor in Fatimid Egypt," in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. Stewart Gordon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 232–33.

When Yahya succeeded Tamim in 501H (1107-08), he distributed large sums of money to his subjects.[31] When ʿAli succeeded Yahya in 509H (1115-16), he gave robes of honor and gifts to his nobles.[32] When al-Hasan succeeded ʿAli in 505H (1121-22), he gave money to his soldiers and robes of honor to his dignitaries.[33] When the Normans conquered Zirid lands, they sought to maintain this status quo through similar acts. Roger II bestowed robes of honor to his new governors, as was specified at both Gabès and Tripoli.[34] The Normans also adapted the Zirids' practice of giving money or gifts to their subjects by distributing gold to nearby tribes. Like the Zirid emirs before them, this was an act that symbolized the generosity of the new ruler and provided a disincentive for these groups to foment dissent. For the Normans, we see this after the conquest of Mahdia, when George of Antioch presented nearby Arab tribes with large sums of money.[35] These acts indicate that the Normans were looking to govern Ifriqiya in the tradition of the Zirid emirs they had deposed and to minimize the negative effects of this transfer of power by adhering to local traditions.

Roger II's bestowal of *khilʿa* upon his Ifriqiyan governors was distinct from how he treated local governors and cities during his campaigns in southern Italy in the 1130s. Here, there is no record of Roger distributing robes to newly appointed governors. He instead killed or exiled the leaders of cities that once opposed him, as was the case with Roger of Plenco and Tancred of Conversano (respectively).[36] Unlike the appointment of

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[31] Ibn al-Athir, 10:451. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:305–6.
[32] Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:306. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:315–17.
[33] Ibn Khallikan, 4:101. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:333–34.
[34] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120.
[35] Ibn al-Athir, 11:127.
[36] Loud, *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily*, 93, 191.

governors in Ifriqiya, Roger was directly involved in the conquest of cities in Italy and had deep-seated rivalries with many of their governors. His method of asserting power, therefore, alternated between acts of kindness to appease local populations and acts of extreme force to scare them into submission.[37] Whichever strategy Roger applied, it did not involve the ceremonial bestowal robes of honor. The closest thing to the *khilʿa* tradition in this context was when Pope Innocent II bestowed banners to Roger II and his sons Roger and Alfanso, indicating their respective investiture for the Kingdom of Sicily, the dutchy of Apulia, and the principality of Capua.[38] This tradition was an established papal custom, which the Normans sought for the legitimacy of their Italian conquests, and was distinct from that of the *khilʿa*.[39]

Once the Normans had taken control over an Ifriqiyan city, whether peacefully or not, their next charge was to appoint someone to govern on their behalf. The chronicles provide specific examples of the rulers that Roger II installed, each of whom was a member of an elite family within that city. In Tripoli, he appointed either Abu

[37] For an example of the former, see De Nava, *Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, 112:48–49. For an example of the latter, see Gaudenzi, *Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis S. Mariae de Ferraria Chronica et Ryccardi de Sancto Germano*, 19–20.
[38] De Nava, *Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, 112:74–75.
[39] The papacy distributed banners to allies during the papal reformations of the mid-eleventh century. Pope Alexander II, for example, dispatched a papal banner to William the Conqueror in anticipation of his 1066 conquests and even gave one to Roger I in support of his Sicilian conquests. These banners were part of the larger expansion of Papal support of certain wars. In the years of conflict between the Papacy, Holy Roman Empire, and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily during the 1130s, there is a compelling example of the symbolic power of the banner. Rainulf of Alife was one of Roger II's adversaries on the Italian Peninsula and had the support of both Pope Innocent II and Lothair III. In a symbolic gesture, Rainulf was invested (in theory) with the territories of southern Italy claimed by the Holy Roman Empire. This process was undertaken with a lance bearing a banner, with Innocent and Lothair bestowing it together upon Rainulf. When Pope Innocent II bestowed banners upon Roger and his sons, he was doing so to reflect this legitimizing tradition. Brett Whalen, *The Medieval Papacy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 104. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 20, 66–67, 71. Josef Deér, *Papsttum und Normannen; Untersuchungen zu ihren lehnsrechtlichen und kirchenpolitischen Beziehungen* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1972), 234–38.

Muhammad ibn Matruh or Abu Yahya ibn Matruh al-Tamimi, both of whom were members of the Banu Matruh tribe, which had vied with the Almoravids for control of Tripoli prior to the Normans' conquest of the city.[40] In Sfax, he initially appointed a member of the ulema, Abu al-Hasan, but upon Abu al-Hasan's request chose instead his son, ʿUmar ibn al-Hasan.[41] In Gabès, Roger appointed Muhammad ibn Rushayd, whose brother had clashed with the usurper Yusuf over control of the city.[42] In Sousse, he appointed Jabbara ibn Kamil al-Fadighi, who had previously been a close ally of the Zirids and is mentioned in the context of the city at other points in the Arabic chronicles.[43] These appointments show that Roger II sought to leave the status quo in his African cities intact. His governors were already established elites and, in the case of Sfax, Roger considered the wishes of the local leaders in determining who was to rule.[44]

The same was true of judges. The Normans appointed qadis ("judges") to decide cases for the Muslim populations in their cities. Al-Tijani describes how Roger II appointed the jurist Abu al-Hajaj Yusuf ibn Ziri as qadi of Tripoli with the power to settle the lawsuits of all Muslims, a power that Christians in the city could not oppose.[45] The chronicles do not mention the names of other judges, but based on al-Tijani's description of Tripoli, we should assume that they likewise played a significant role in the governing

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[40] Al-Tijani provides a more detailed account of the events in Tripoli than Ibn al-Athir so I am more inclined to trust his narrative that Abu Yahya ibn Matruh al-Tamimi was the city's ruler. Al-Tijani, 241-242. Ibn al-Athir, 11:203.
[41] Ibn al-Athir, 11:203-204.
[42] Ibn al-Athir, 11:204.
[43] Al-Tijani, 30. Ibn al-Athir, 11:185-186. See also Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 291. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:358–59.
[44] Al-Idrisi mentions that the city of Annaba was governed by an agent of Roger from the Banu Hammad. In the absence of other evidence about the city, we can assume that this tribe had significant authority there before the arrival of the Normans. Al-Idrisi, 1:291-292.
[45] Al-Tijani, 242.

of Muslim communities in Ifriqiya. As will soon be discussed, legal rulings of qadis from the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence were a contributing factor to the widespread revolts against Norman rule in the mid-1150s.

The Normans also followed established political conventions in Ifriqiya by taking hostages from the families of those they appointed to govern their territories.[46] During the conquest of Tripoli in 541H (1146-47), George of Antioch took hostages from the city's rival ruling parties – the Almoravids and Banu Matruh.[47] Once Roger II decided to appoint a member of the Banu Matruh as governor, he returned the Almoravid hostages but kept the others. At Sfax, Roger appointed ʿUmar ibn al-Hasan and took his father Abu al-Hasan hostage.[48] When ʿUmar ibn al-Hasan revolted against Norman rule in 551H (1156-57), William I tried to use ʿUmar's captive father as leverage to suppress the revolt, a strategy that ultimately failed.[49] The practice of taking hostages to ensure the loyalty of vassals was common among medieval rulers across Europe and the Mediterranean.[50] In this case, the Normans used their hostages as a deterrant to revolt, which shows the distrust that existed between the Normans and their Ifriqiyan rulers.

This distrust is also evident in Roger II and William I stationing garrisons in the cities that they conquered. The primary source of evidence for this comes from the revolts of Tripoli and Sfax. Al-Tijani reports that the people of Tripoli revolted in 553H

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[46] Adam J. Kosto, "Hostages during the First Century of the Crusades," *Medieval Encounters* 9, no. 1 (2003): 3–31. Adam J. Kosto, *Hostages in the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 92–121.
[47] Ibn al-Athir, 11:108.
[48] Ibn al-Athir, 11:203-205.
[49] The fate of hostages from other cities in Ifriqiya that revolted against Norman rule is unknown. If the fate of Abu al-Hasan is representative, though, they met an unpleasant end.
[50] Roger did this in Italy too. Ibn al-Athir, 1:320-321. Loud, *Roger II and the Creation of the Kingdom of Sicily*, 190.

(1158-59) after the Normans insisted that the city's religious officials publicly denounce the Almohad caliph.[51] Al-Tijani describes the scene of the revolt, in which Norman horsemen charged into the streets in a failed attempt to quell the disturbance. The presence of these soldiers during these riots shows that the Normans had a garrison in the city. Furthermore, in Ibn al-Athir's description of the massacres at Sfax, he quotes ʿUmar ibn Abi al-Hasan as saying to the revolting populace, "let a group from among you climb the walls and a group proceed to the housing of the *niṣāra* ("Christians") and the *franj* ("Franks"), all of them, and kill them all!"[52] The distinction between the *niṣāra* and the *franj* is important. In other descriptions of the Norman conquests in Ifriqiya, Ibn al-Athir reserves the word *franj* for the Normans under Roger II and William I.[53] This description, therefore, implies the presence of a group of *franj* that could well have been a garrison.

The presence of Norman garrisons in their Ifriqiyan cities did not mean that they sought to rule with an iron fist. Based on the few interactions described in the chronicles between the Normans in Sicily and their local governors, the Normans had little political or military clout in the Ifriqiyan littoral. In 548H (1153-54), for example, a coalition of tribes "from Tripoli to the furthest Maghreb" united against the encroaching armies of the Almohads.[54] This coalition included the Norman governor of Sousse, Jabbara ibn Kamil al-Fadighi. Looking to support the alliance, Roger II offered 5,000 of his own knights to fight with them on the condition that the participating Arab tribes provide hostages for

[51] Al-Tijani, 242.
[52] Ibn al-Athir, 11:203-204. D.S. Richards translates *niṣāra* as "local Christians." Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, 2007, 2:76.
[53] See Chapter Five for a detailed analysis of Ibn al-Athir's linguistic choices.
[54] Ibn al-Athir, 11:185-186.

him. The coalition refused, though, because they only wanted aid from other Muslims. Although the alliance was promptly crushed by the Almohads, the ability of Jabbara ibn Kamil to refuse Norman military aid indicates that he had some degree of autonomy in governing Sousse and could form political relationships independent of the Normans. At Tripoli, too, the qadi Abu al-Hajaj refused the demand of the Normans to curse the Almohads from his pulpit because it was "not in the contract between them."[55] These two examples demonstrate that local leaders exercised demonstrable autonomy from the Normans even though they were nominally ruling as their vassals.

In the cities of Gabès, Sfax, Sousse, and Tripoli, the political relationship between the Normans and their local lords was detailed in an *'aqd* or *'ahd* ("contract") that Roger II sent to his governors.[56] These contracts contained provisions about the religious freedom of Muslim communities and protocol for the administration of justice.[57] They also almost certainly included provisions about taxation, which Norman officials and garrisons enforced, and other quotidian affairs that the medieval chroniclers did not see fit to detail. As with the rest of the Normans' policies for establishing rule over Ifriqiya, these contracts were presented to local governors in a style that was familiar and accessible to them. The administration of Palermo was well equipped by the 1140s to write Arabic script in the style of an Islamic chancery, specifically emulating that of the

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[55] Al-Tijani, 242.

[56] An *'aqd* is a "contract" and an *'ahd* is a "covenant." Both are used in Islamic law for the legal act of a contract and *'ahd* is often "a virtual synonym" of *'aqd*. Michael Brett, in his analysis of the contracts that the Normans gave to their governors in Ifriqiya, translates *'ahd* as "treaty" and *'aqd* as "binding agreement" but functionally treats them the same in his analysis. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 349. Brett, "The City-State in Medieval Ifriqiya: The Case of Tripoli," 83.Wael B. Hallaq, "Contracts and Alliances," ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān* (Boston: Brill, 2001), 431.

[57] This is seen in al-Tijani's account of the revolt in Tripoli against Norman rule. Al-Tijani, 242.

Fatimids.[58] Furthermore, George of Antioch's career under the Zirids meant that he was aware of diplomatic conventions in the region. Although the specifics of these contracts are difficult to divine, we can be reasonably sure that their provisions were communicated in a way that was familiar to local governors.[59]

Norman policy in Ifriqiya was thus relatively uniform for the cities of Gabès, Sfax, Sousse, and Tripoli. The Normans conquered a city, either through diplomacy or conquest, appointed a governor and qadi from local elites, bestowed ceremonial robes on them, specified the terms of their political relationship through a contract, took hostages to ensure their loyalty, and then left a small garrison there. In following this standardized protocol, Roger was acting "exactly as a Muslim ruler would have done."[60]

In Mahdia, though, the situation was different. With the departure of the Zirid emir and his family, there was a power vacuum in the city that the Normans had to fill. The Arabic chronicles do not provide direct evidence as to who the Normans appointed to govern Mahdia, but there are clues as to how the Normans administered power in the ex-Zirid capital. They hint that George of Antioch played a significant role in the early administration. Following the capture of Mahdia, he distributed the wealth of the Zirid

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[58] Abu al-Daw in particular was an important administrator in the Norman *diwan* who wrote official documents in Arabic and had contact with the Zirid court. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 193–211, 252–53. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 351–52.

[59] It is unknown in whose name the Muslims' call to prayer was held in Norman-controlled cities. Based on the religious liberties guaranteed in the contracts discussed above, the prayers in cities with Muslim governors were held in the name of local lords. In Mahdia and the islands between Sicily and Ifriqiya, though, it is unclear whose name would be read, if any.

[60] Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 291. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, we can speculate that the Normans followed this strategy in other cities that they seized along the coast like Annaba and Zawila. The only evidence for these two cities comes from Muhammad al-Idrisi, who mentions that Roger II installed a governor from the Banu Hammad at Annaba following its conquest in 548H (1153-54). Al-Idrisi, 1:291.

court to local Arab tribes to ensure their loyalty, sent soldiers to the countryside to inform the displaced inhabitants of Mahdia that the city was safe, and thwarted the plot of the displaced al-Hasan ibn ʿAli to travel to Egypt.[61] George further used Mahdia as a base of operations from which to secure the loyalty of nearby cities like Gabès, Sfax, and Sousse. At an unknown time after these conquests, he also launched an unsuccessful attack on the castle of Iqlibiyya on Cape Bon and then "withdrew to Mahdia."[62] Ibn Khaldun even indicates that George of Antioch was the "lord of Mahdia" following its conquest.[63] With Mahdia as his base of operations, George of Antioch played a crucial role in the first months of Norman governance in the ex-Zirid capital.

In the years following the Norman capture of Mahdia in 543H (1148-49), the administrative role of George of Antioch is less concrete. George led campaigns in the eastern Mediterranean for several years before dying in 546H (1151-52). There are no surviving records of his return to Mahdia, although based on his involvement in the city in years prior, it is conceivable that he governed or took an active role in managing it. An aspect of these duties was likely to oversee the Norman garrison, which was large enough to withstand prolonged sieges in both 551H (1156-57) and 554H (1159-60).[64]

Even less is known about the role of George's successors. The sources do not name anyone as governor of Mahdia from 546H (1151-52) until the city's fall to the Almohads in 554H (1159-60). The individuals most commonly named in conjunction with Norman Ifriqiya during this time, though, are George of Antioch's successors: Philip

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[61] Ibn al-Athir, 11:125-129.
[62] Ibn al-Athir, 11:129.
[63] Ibn Khaldun, 6:233-234.
[64] Ibn al-Athir, 11:205, 244-245.

of Mahdia and Maio of Bari. Philip, who presumably was from Mahdia (based on his name), led a successful campaign against the city of Annaba in 548H (1153-54) that might have been launched from Mahdia.[65] Several years later, Maio acted as the chief advisor to William I during the revolts in Ifriqiya against Norman rule.[66] These administrators informed Norman policy in Ifriqiya, so it would be unsurprising if they were involved to some degree in the governing of Mahdia. This perspective is reinforced by the Almohad conquest of Mahdia, which saw Abd al-Muʿmin reinstate the deposed Zirid emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli as its governor and not one of the local lords whom the Normans might have appointed.[67] In Mahdia, therefore, we can assert that the Normans took more direct control over the city than in their other coastal holdings.

The little evidence to survive from the islands between Sicily and Ifriqiya indicates that the Normans also took an active role in governing them, similar to their strategy at Mahdia. The Arabic chronicles mention that the Normans bloodily attacked Djerba in 529H (1134-35) and took many captives.[68] This is corroborated in a letter from the Cairo Geniza, in which a captive Jew from Djerba is ransomed to an Egyptian benefactor.[69] The specifics of Normans rule on the island, though, are difficult to discern from the medieval sources, including those produced in Djerba.

[65] Ibn al-Athir, 11:187.
[66] Hugo Falcandus, 24-28.
[67] Ibn al-Athir, 11:244-245.
[68] See, for example, Ibn al-Athir, 11:32 and Ibn Khaldun, 5:230-231.
[69] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 324.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Djerba was inhabited primarily by a community of Muslims from the Ibadi sect.[70] The educated elite of the island, particularly legal scholars, produced a considerable amount of writings that survive today. The main history for this period is the *Kitab Siyar al-A'imma wa-Akhbarihim* ("Book of the Lives of the Imams and their Notable Rulings") by Abu Zakariya, which was written near the end of the twelfth century.[71] Although the author painstakingly catalogs the *ʿazzāba* (council of Ibadi elders) and shaykhs throughout the island's history, there is no mention of either during the time of the Normans.[72] This lack of evidence for native Djerban governance on the island, combined with the Djerbans' revolt against Norman rule in 551H (1156-57), indicates that the Normans had an established presence on the island.[73] They likely ruled from the northern fort of Burj al-Kabir and were governed by a Norman administrator. The reputation of Djerba as a haven for piracy might have also driven the Normans to more acts of violence against the local population. This would help explain the absence of any local Ibadi government in the history of Abu Zakariya.

At Malta and Gozo, which are located some 55 miles off the coast of Sicily, there too is evidence that the Normans maintained an active administration. A recently

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[70] For an overview of Ibadism, see *EI2*, "al-Ibāḍiyya." Tadeusz Lewicki, *Les Ibadites en Tunisie au moyen âge* (Rome: Signerelli, 1959). Valerie Hoffman, *The Essentials of Ibadi Islam* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2012).
[71] Abu Zakariya, *Kitab siyar al-a'imma wa akhbarihim*.
[72] Farhat Ja'biri referred to the time of the Norman invasion as one in which the "system was weak." Ja'biri also wrote that the history of Djerba is difficult discern during the first half of the twelfth century (which he called the sixth order of the *ʿazzāba*) because of a paucity of materials. He argues that there was "a weakness" for two reasons: emigration from Djerba and the lack of immigration of ulema from other reasons. Conflict between those in Djerba, local lords in Ifriqiya, and Christians produced this weakness. Farhat Jaʿbiri, *Nizam al-'azzabah 'inda al-Ibadiyah al-Wahbiyh fi Jirbah* (Tunis, 1975), 197–98.
[73] Brett, on the basis of Ibn Abi Dinar's chronicle, argues that the Normans appointed their own governor for the island. Johns too uses Ibn Abi Dinar to argue that the Normans reduced the population of Djerba to serfdom. Ibn Abi Dinar, 95. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 348. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 290.

discovered document from 1198 rewards the people of Malta and Gozo for their loyalty to the Norman monarchy by making the island part of the royal demesne.[74] Written in both Latin and Arabic, the document also exempts the Christians of the islands from paying a tax that King Roger II had imposed upon them previously for killing a Muslim. The ability of Roger II to levy this tax during his reign shows that there was direct royal involvement in Malta and Gozo. Other evidence supports this idea.

In the middle of the twelfth century, a poet from Sicily was exiled to the island for unknown reasons. There, he composed for George of Antioch a poem in which he begged the admiral to let him return to Sicily.[75] The poem, which modern scholars have titled the *Tristia ex melitogaudo*, laments the state of the prison tower in which the author was sometimes confined. It is likely that Norman guards distinct from the countless *Hagarenes* (the word often used in the poem to describe Muslims) oversaw the author's imprisonment, which shows a Norman presence on the island.[76] This evidence indicates that Norman officials from Sicily governed the islands located between Sicily and Ifriqiya and that a military presence of some sort was there to enforce order. With no evidence to consider specifically the islands of Pantelleria or Kerkennah, which were

[74] Jamil and Johns, "A New Latin-Arabic Document from Norman Sicily (November 595 H/1198 CE)," 112.
[75] The poem was originally written in Greek. The Greek text and an English translation is found in Busuttil, Fiorini, and Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo*.
[76] Malta and Gozo were convenient places for the rulers of Sicily to exile their political adversaries. Frederick II sent the entire population of the town of Celano there in 1224. He also sent Joannes Dracone there in 1240. Busuttil, Fiorini, and Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo*, xxii, 113.

conquered in 517H (1123-24) and 540H (1145-46) respectively, we can speculate that the Normans treated the island similarly to Djerba, Malta, and Gozo.[77]

In both the Ifriqiyan littoral and the islands mentioned above, the Norman kings might have circulated coins bearing their names and titles. Two coins survive from the Norman mint at Mahdia, one from 543H (1148-49) and one from 549H (1154-55).[78] Modeled on both Fatimid and De Hauteville tradition, these coins were "triumphal issues" to mark the victory of Roger II over the Zirids and the succession of William I (respectively).[79] It is unknown whether similar coins were produced in the intervening years. The inscriptions on the coins praise the Norman kings as "powerful through God" in the same way that the Fatimids invoked religious rhetoric in their coinage.[80] Although the *'alāma* (motto or signature) of these coins drew upon De Hauteville tradition in Sicily, the religious language used in the coins would have been familiar to the Normans' Ifriqiyan subjects. To the people of Ifriqiya, then, the political message embedded in these coins was that there were new rulers based in Mahdia, but this did not mean radical changes would be happening under their rule.[81]

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[77] These are the only islands that the chronicles mention the Normans conquering. The other islands between Sicily and Ifriqiya were probably uninhabited. A letter from the Cairo Geniza written during the mid-twelfth century mentions a group of merchants arriving on a deserted island between Sicily and Ifriqiya. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 1978, 1:322. Other cities on the coast of Ifriqiya that the Normans attacked, like Jijel and Brashk (located in Hammadid lands) were raiding expeditions aimed at plunder and destruction. There is no evidence that the Normans made any effort to govern these places in the years after their attack. Idrisi even reports that the town of Jijel, which the Normans raided in 537H (1142-43), was deserted and that its inhabitants had fled to the mountains. Al-Idrisi, 1:268-269.

[78] Abdul-Wahab, "Deux dinars normands de Mahdia." It is unknown where Abdul-Wahab found these coins or what their provenance is. Coinage from Ifriqiya before the thirteenth century is exceedingly rare. No Zirid coins survive from the twelfth century and only a handful from the eleventh century do. Hazard, *The Numismatic History of Late Medieval North Africa*, 53–56, 232–33.

[79] Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 92–93.

[80] Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 93–94.

[81] Johns further argues that the Arabic text inscribed in the Mahdia coins had "already been used in Sicily and had there come to symbolize the nature of their rule and, in particular, their policy towards the Muslim

There is little evidence to suggest that the Normans exercised any political authority over inland Ifriqiya. Ibn al-Athir reports that the Normans held the coastline and land almost up to the city of Qayrawan, which is around 30 miles from the coast.[82] The local governors that the Normans appointed, therefore, likely held control over their city and its adjacent infrastructure. Beyond this threshold, a combination of Berber and Arab tribes controlled inland Ifriqiya. Evidence for these groups is thin on the ground and what little does exist comes from the geographical compendium of al-Idrisi and reports about the tribes around Gafsa from Almohad letters.[83] These sources contain no evidence that the Normans exerted any influence over inland regions. The refusal of a diverse coalition of tribes to cooperate with Roger II in 548H (1153-54) further supports the idea that Norman power did not expand past this small stretch of coastline.[84]

From this array of evidence, we can craft a rough impression of how the Normans governed their African territories and nearby islands.[85] The political landscape on the Ifriqiyan littoral was little different than it had been before the arrival of the conquering Normans. In most cities, Roger II utilized Muslim traditions to delegate authority to local elites that already possessed significant political clout before his arrival. For these

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population of the island… [The Norman kings'] African subjects, who were already familiar with De Hauteville rule through contacts with the island and from the earlier Norman 'protectorate' of Mahdia (Abulafia 1985, 33) would have understood this message and would have felt relieved." Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 93. Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 33.

[82] Ibn al-Athir, 11:129.

[83] Al-Idrisi's description of the lands around Gafsa are particularly expansive. Al-Idrisi, 1:276-280. Lévi-Provençal, *Un recueil de lettres officielles Almohades*, 45–49. Lévi-Provençal, *Trente-sept lettres officielles almohades*, 99–121.

[84] Ibn al-Athir, 11:185-186.

[85] Johns succinctly compares the experience of high-ranking Muslims living under Norman rule in Sicily and Ifriqiya. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 289–97.

governors, the daily administration of their towns continued as it had before the arrival of the Normans. The presence of a Norman garrison was the primary reminder of these governors' new political allegiances. In Mahdia, though, the Normans exercised greater control. Norman governors, including George of Antioch in the months after the initial conquest, held control in the city and minted coins in the name of the Norman kings to be circulated regionally. On the islands off the coast of Ifriqiya, the situation was similar. Evidence from Djerba, Malta, and Gozo indicates that they were ruled directly by the Norman administration and not through local governors.

The Economy of Ifriqiya

Before considering in detail the economic changes that the Normans brought to Ifriqiya, it is necessary to outline region's rural and urban economies in the years leading up to 1148, which is a difficult task because so few relevant sources survive. There are no census records, government registers, or law codes that survive from Ifriqiya in the early-mid twelfth century. Scholars have instead had to rely on documents that give snapshots of the Ifriqiyan economy across time. These include mentions of populations and production in travelogues, descriptions of cities in geographies, mentions of the economy in chronicles, and legal rulings that give evidence of commerce.

Nonetheless, historians have been able to extrapolate some broad trends from these sources. Port cities in Ifriqiya prospered in the tenth and eleventh centuries from trans-Mediterranean trade that ran both north-south and east-west. Of particular importance was the exchange of Sicilian wheat for Ifriqiyan gold and slaves. Cities in

Ifriqiya also produced a variety of goods for consumption and export. During the eleventh century, the two main cereal crops for the region were wheat and barley, which were most often cultivated in northern Tunisia extending west from Cape Bon. The eastern coastline of Tunisia, where many of the region's major metropolitan centers existed, also excelled in the cultivation and production of olive oil. Beyond these major industries, cities in Ifriqiya produced agricultural goods that ranged from dates in Tozeur, figs around the Jebel Nefusa, and pistachios in Gafsa.[86] Cities in Ifriqiya used a system of aqueducts that had been existed and improved since the Romans alongside aquafers to hydrate their people and crops.[87]

The invasion of the Banu Hilal in the mid-1050s was disruptive to the urban economy of Ifriqiya and led to emigration. Even if we accept that their arrival was not as horrific as described by Ibn Khaldun, the conflict that accompanied the Hilalian conquests likely led to the destruction of some arable land and structures used to support infrastructure. Furthermore, in the years after these conquests, merchants that traded gold from sub-Saharan Africa to the Mediterranean increasingly focused on trade with western termini in the Maghreb and western Ifriqiya.[88] With less gold flowing into the coffers of the Zirid emirs, it became increasingly difficult for them to pay the Normans for the Sicilian grain upon which their people were relient. The decade-long drought of the 1140s, which brought about widespread death and emigration, provided the opening for the Normans to seize the Ifriqiyan littoral.

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[86] H.R. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirides: Xe-XIIe siècles*, vol. 2 (Limoges: A. Bontemps, 1962), 627–30.
[87] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirides: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 2:625–26.
[88] Brett, "Ifriqiya as a Market for Saharan Trade from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century AD," 359–64.

Despite these troubled economic times, entries from medieval geographers indicate that trade and industrial production continued along the Ifriqiyan littoral but at reduced quanitities. Al-Bakri, who wrote his geography *Kitab al-Masalik wa al-Mamalik* ("Book of Highways and Kingdoms") in the 1060s, describes the city of Gabès in positive terms, indicating the many suburbs, markets, and caravanserai in the city. He notes its three ports and mentions that it is the only city in Ifriqiya to produce silk.[89] The situation in Gabès as described by the geographer al-Idrisi in the 1150s is much different, however. He notes that the port is in a terrible condition and that the people of the city often resort to banditry.[90] There is no mention of silk production in al-Idrisi's entry. Entries like these provide some indication of regional decline in urban centers in the wake of the Hilalian invasions, pervasive drought in Ifriqiya, and years of conflict with the Normans.

In addition to agricultural production, the breeding of horses, camels, and sheep was a substantial industry in Ifriqiya. These animals' military capacity, their utility in transporting goods in caravans, their meat, and their hides made them a staple in both rural and urban areas. Writing in the tenth century, the geographer Ibn Hawqal described the number of camels that the nomadic peoples of the region utilized. In the wake of the Hilalian invasions a century later, these numbers likely increased as the nomadic Banu Hilal devoted more land in inland Ifriqiya to pasturage than agriculture. This idea is supported by the Arabic chronicles, which describe on multiple occasions armies from groups in Ifriqiya possessing substantial numbers of animals. Take, for example, Ibn al-

[89] al-Bakri, *Kitāb al-masālik wa al-mamālik* (Algiers: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1857), 19–20.
[90] Al-Idrisi, 1:289-90.

Athir's entry for the year 529H (1134-35), in which he describes the army that the Hammadid emir Yahya brought into battle outside the city of Mahdia. He notes that Yahya "sent the armies, both horsemen ("*al-fāris*") and foot-soldiers" into battle.[91] Another entry from Ibn al-Athir for the year 548H (1153-54) mentions how an Almohad army seized the people, goods, and flocks ("*nʿar*") from the Arab tribes that they had conquered.[92] These are two of numerous example that show the presence of large quantities animals amid the populations of Ifriqiya, whether they were used for military or economic purposes.

Beyond these references to herds of animals, the economy of rural and inland Ifriqiya during the eleventh and twelfth centuries is difficult to discern from the surviving source materials. Nonetheless, scholars can make certain inferences about its history. Prior to the Hilalian invasions, there was both agricultural production and pasturage. Al-Bakri describes the environs of Qayrawan and Gafsa, which contain pistachio trees and orchards with diverse fruits, while other inland cities like Nefusa and Tozeur produce sugar and bananas through their own orchards.[93] There is no evidence from that these cities produced their own wheat or barley, which indicates that they likely traded for it in their markets. Rural areas also contained pastures for herding animals. A *fatwa* from the area of Constantine (modern-day Algeria) mentions that the value of short-tailed sheep

[91] Ibn al-Athir, 11:31.
[92] Ibn al-Athir, 11:186.
[93] al-Bakri, *Kitāb al-masālik wa al-mamālik*, 47–49.

was not inferior to that of big-tailed sheep.[94] There is also evidence from several cities in inland Ifriqiya that dogs were bred for consumption.[95]

The arrival of the Banu Hilal into Ifriqiya brought change to the rural and inland economy of the region. The nomadic lifestyle of these tribes necessitated the use of land as pasture for their animals. Evidence for the transition from agriculture to pasturage in Ifriqiya comes from both medieval geographers and modern studies on soil erosion. Al-Idrisi, for example, notes the devastation caused by the Banu Hilal in his description of a road leading from inland Ifriqiya to Tripoli. He writes that "all of the places that we have recounted on this road are deserted" because of the devastation caused by the Banu Hilal. He also records that the area's "structures were destroyed, its people wiped out, and its goods have disappeared."[96] The absence of people and infrastructure from areas like this allowed nature to overtake them. This process allowed grasses and small shrubs to grow, which helped feed the livestock of Hilalian pastoralists.

This transitional process from agriculture to pasturage is reflected in one of the few soil-based studies conducted for medieval Tunisia. Led by Jean-Louis Ballais, this study found that soil erosion, a process associated with agricultural use, was limited during the time of the Hilalian conquests.[97] Thus, it is likely that the Banu Hilal's main effect in the region was "to substitute pastures for cultivated fields" in order to support

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[94] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirides: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 2:631.
[95] This evidence comes from the tenth-century geographers al-Muqaddasi and al-Bakri. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirides: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 2:631.
[96] Al-Idrisi, 1:297.
[97] Ballais, "Conquests and Land Degredation in the Eastern Maghreb during Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages," 133–34.

their livestock.[98] Ballais does note, however, that urban areas with access to irrigation did not see this change in soil erosion, which indicates that agricultural production continued in coastal urban areas, including those like Tripoli and Gabès that were governed by sedentary groups of the Banu Hilal.

Finally, in the decade leading up to the Norman conquest of Ifriqiya, the region suffered years of intense drought that had a catastrophic impact on local populations. The Arabic chroniclers recorded the intensity of this drought, which caused famine, mass starvation, the migration of peoples to coastal cities and, if they could afford it, emigration to Sicily or Egypt.[99] Environmental data from the Old World Drought Atlas confirms and quantifies the extent of this decade-long drought, which brought instability as local elites jostled for control within and with nearby cities.[100] The lack of census data makes it impossible to quantify the scope of this drought, but the accounts mentioned above indicate that it was substantial.

Although the Normans had long traded with the Zirids, Roger II's conquests of the Ifriqiyan coastline put the Normans in control of a region with an economy that had undergone substantial changes with the arrival of the Banu Hilal and had become depopulated from the recent drought. Through the resources available to the Norman administration, Roger II and George of Antioch now sought to bolster the region's economy to increase revenue for the Kingdom of Sicily.

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[98] Ballais, "Conquests and Land Degredation in the Eastern Maghreb during Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages," 134.
[99] Ibn al-Athir, 11:124-125. Ibn Khaldun, 5:233.
[100] OWDA, 1142-1149. Metcalfe speculates that a royal Sicilian register from 1141 assigned immigrant Muslims from Ifriqiya the status of landless "villeins." Metcalfe, "The Muslims of Sicily under Christian Rule," 291.

The Economy of Norman Africa

Despite the minor political changes that came from the Norman conquests in Ifriqiya, there were nonetheless noticeable economic shifts that stemmed from this new order. The Normans made a concerted effort to stimulate the economy of the region by improving local infrastructure, encouraging resettlement in cities, and promoting trade. These actions helped bolster the economy of the struggling Ifriqiyan littoral, which had been suffering from years of drought. The revitalization of coastal cities allowed the Normans to profit from increased trade, both from east-west and north-south routes, happening in their ports. Despite this overall growth, merchant letters from the Cairo Geniza indicate that years of on-and-off conflict in Ifriqiya had an overwhelmingly negative effect on commerce for this Jewish community. Their abandonment of Ifriqiya left openings for Christian traders, who prospered from increased business with the Normans and later the Almohads. For Muslim populations living under Norman rule, the arrival of their new Christian overlords brought some negative financial consequences. The Normans levied a *jizya*-style head tax on Muslims that showed clear preference for the financial wellbeing of indigenous and immigrant Christians.

Upon conquering the coast of Ifriqiya, a priority for the Normans was to return the region to the prosperity that had defined it in centuries past. The Norman fleet, commanded by George of Antioch, treated the cities it conquered in Ifriqiya with mildness when compared to similar conquests undertaken by Roger II in Sicily and southern Italy. As discussed above, the Normans only looted the cities in Ifriqiya that resisted before sending messages of safe conduct to the fleeing populace. Although there

was certainly death and destruction in these places – particularly Sfax and Djerba – this destruction was minimal compared to some of Roger II's conquests in southern Italy. At Venosa, for example, Roger torched the city and the people with "such cruelty towards Christian people as has scarcely or ever been heard of in our century."[101] At Montepeloso, Roger executed a traitorous governor by hanging, sacked the city, then burnt it to the ground.[102] At Bisceglie, Trani, and Bari, he destroyed the fortifications and resettled parts of the population to quell collective unrest.[103]

The disparate treatment of cities in Ifriqiya and southern Italy indicates different motives for attacking them. In southern Italy during the 1130s, Roger often used a combination of leniency and extreme violence to ensure the submission of its people. In Ifriqiya, George of Antioch showed relative restraint toward the local populations, whether elites or commoners, to facilitate economic recovery. Ibn al-Athir reports that following the Norman conquest of Tripoli in 541H (1146-47), the Normans remained in the city for six months "until they fortified its walls and dug its moat."[104] During this time, the displaced residents returned to the city, others from Sicily and Byzantium came to Tripoli, and affairs returned to normal.[105] After the Normans conquered Mahdia,

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[101] Gaudenzi, *Ignoti Monachi Cisterciensis S. Mariae de Ferraria Chronica et Ryccardi de Sancto Germano*, 20.
[102] Alexander of Telese justifies this harsh treatment on the grounds that a similar fate happened to King Zedekiah when he betrayed Nebuchadnezzar. De Nava, *Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, 112:44–45.
[103] De Nava, *Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie Calabrie atque Apulie*, 112:47.
[104] Ibn al-Athir, 11:108. No archaeological remains exist of Norman building projects in Ifriqiya. Lézine speculates that the remains of one tour in Mahdia might be of Norman construction but he has no evidence that pins its construction down to the twelve years of Norman rule in Mahdia. In my own examination of the tower, I found no evidence that it was unique from the other tower ruins that exist on the historic peninsula. Lézine, *Mahdiya: Recherches d'archaéologie islamique*, 57–58.
[105] The language that Ibn al-Athir uses to describe the obligation of people from Sicily and Byzantium to visit the city if peculiar. He wrote that "the people of Sicily and the Rum were compelled to travel there." This could indicate that Roger II and/or the Byzantines made refugees from Tripoli return there. The

George of Antioch distributed large sums of money from the treasury of al-Hasan ibn ʿAli to neighboring Arab tribes. Around the same time, Roger sent letters to the people of Ifriqiya with guarantees of "safety and good promises."[106]

The Norman kings also encouraged immigration to their African holdings. The Arabic chronicles specifically mention the arrival of Frankish immigrants to Sfax and Tripoli with the approval of Roger II.[107] The Latin chronicle of Sigebert of Gembloux notes that William settled Christians in the region during the 1150s.[108] Likewise, Robert of Torigny's *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* ("Deeds of the Norman Dukes") tells of how William I sent Christians to live in *Sibilla* (Zawila) and placed an archbishop in command of the suburb.[109] These combined entries provide evidence that both Roger II and William I sought to repopulate the cities that they had conquered in Ifriqiya. Unfortunately, the chronicles do not specify who these immigrants were. They could have been merchants, people displaced from Ifriqiya in previous decades, or others from the Kingdom of Sicily. In the absence of more specific evidence, the only firm conclusion that we can reach is that the Norman monarchs actively sought to repopulate their African territories.

The Normans' actions in Ifriqiya show that their intention was to facilitate the revival of these cities in order to promote commerce through them.[110] This, in turn,

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evidence for this does not exist beyond this cryptic sentence. Richards too is uncertain of the intent of this sentence. Ibn al-Athir, 11:109. Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, trans. D.S. Richards, vol. 1 (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 380.

[106] Ibn al-Athir, 11:129.

[107] Ibn al-Athir, 11:108-109. Al-Tijani, 74. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 354.

[108] *MGH, SS,* 6:453

[109] Robert of Torigny, *Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I: The Chronicle of Robert of Torigny, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Michael-in-Peril-of-the-Sea*, 4:191.

[110] David Abulafia argues that the Normans "took care to treat the Mahdiyyans well; the royal court knew that Mahdiyya was an important trade centre, and there was great anxiety lest business should be

promoted economic growth in Ifriqiya and led to additional revenues for the administration through customs duties. But did the Normans' plan for commercial growth work? How were merchant communities affected by this new system? Were these changes enough to offset the years of violence that had afflicted the central Mediterranean? The answer to these questions depends on the group in question. For Jewish merchants, Norman involvement in Ifriqiya had negative consequences that led them to seek other ventures. For Italian Christian merchants, the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa led to new commercial opportunities that worked in tandem with their larger efforts to conduct trade across the southern Mediterranean.

The perspectives of Jewish merchants are found in letters from a synagogue in Fustat, Egypt, that has since become known as the "Cairo Geniza."[111] A geniza is a storehouse attached to a synagogue in which documents bearing the name of God are stored, for Jewish custom forbids them from being destroyed. As such, this repository of some 300,000 manuscripts is an "anti-archive," in which documents never meant to be archived have been archived.[112] The contents range from commercial letters to legal proceedings to religious texts and are written in many languages including Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, and Judeo-Arabic. The documents provide an unparalleled glimpse into the social, economic, and religious life of this Jewish community and the world they

transferred elsewhere." Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 34.

[111] Goitein's work is foundational for the study of the Geniza. Recent works by Greif and Goldberg in particular have refined and challenged many of Goitein's original arguments. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 1978. Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy: Lessons from Medieval Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and Their Business World*.

[112] Goldberg, "The Use and Abuse of Commercial Letters from the Cairo Geniza," 127–29.

inhabited. Letters from the Cairo Geniza written during the early-mid twelfth century show that conflict between Normans and Zirids brought the deepening of religious tensions between Christians and non-Christians, which had negative consequences for Jewish traders in Sicily and Ifriqiya.

There are several letters that testify to the impact of Norman military involvement in Ifriqiya and the effects it had upon Jewish merchants. In a letter from around 1130, Abraham ibn Habib mentions an Almoravid raid on mainland Italy that "took much booty."[113] Although the middle part of the letter is destroyed, the concluding portion relates a misfortune that befell his friends:

> Do not ask what happened to our fellow merchants at the hand of the Christians which they hired together with them. They took the fare and sailed to the land of Sicily. Then they attacked the Jews in their company and took from R. Abraham Ibn al-Baṭīṭi al-Iṭrābulusī 220 dinars and 103 letters; and from my brother-in-law, Abū'l-Ḥasan (they took) 40 dinars. They disembarked and capsized the boat.

The proximity of Abraham's description of the Almoravid raid on Italy and the Christian attack on the Jews is unlikely to be coincidental. The letter connects Almoravid violence against the Kingdom of Sicily to Christian aggression against merchants. Although the letter indicates that there was still interfaith mercantile cooperation – Jewish merchants hired Christians for their venture in the first place – the subsequent Christian attack on these merchants indicates the violence that could nonetheless occur on the high seas.

Other Geniza letters written after 1130 show how the Norman conquests impacted trade. One letter from 1136 tells of captives taken during the Norman conquest of Djerba

[113] Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily: 383-1300*, 393.

arriving in Egypt, including one Jewish "cantor," to be ransomed in Fatimid markets.[114] Another letter, written by the merchant Abu Sa'id, specifies that his boat encountered the Norman fleet that had conquered Djerba. Although the non-Christians on board were horrified, they were not harmed. He then mentions that he arrived safely in Béjaïa, which was controlled by the Hammadids, and did "profitable business" there.[115] The fear that Abu Sa'id's fellow travelers felt upon seeing the Norman fleet supports the idea that the conflict between the Normans and people of Ifriqiya cultivated an atmosphere of fear for non-Christians conducting business in the area. This was a tension that could turn violent, as testified in the 1130 letter, or one that could remain peaceful, as was the case for Abu Sa'id. These letters also reveal how both the Norman and Fatimid courts benefitted from the Norman attacks on Ifriqiya. The Normans brought captives from their attacks, including Jewish merchants, to markets in Egypt for sale. Norman sailors benefitted from this sale, as did the Fatimids, since the sales were taking place in their markets.

The violence directed against Jewish populations in and around Ifriqiya during the 1130s caused some families to emigrate. An 1136 Geniza letter mentions how famine and debts, potentially caused by the Norman attack on Djerba, caused a man to sell his large home on the island for 90 dinars.[116] A letter from the middle of the twelfth century bemoans the situation in Tunis, where prices were high "in these difficult times."[117] In another letter, this one from 1140, a merchant laments the fate of Ifriqiya and announces his intent to focus on trade from Sicily to Egypt:

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[114] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 324. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 1978, 3:117–18.
[115] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 324.
[116] S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 4 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 283.
[117] Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily: 383-1300*, 400–401.

> I entered Sicily with my family coming from Tunis because of the privations suffered there and the horrors witnessed in Ifriqiya and also because of my longing for you. I intended to travel to Egypt via Sicily, for it is no longer possible to travel to Egypt directly from Ifriqiya… If you intend to move [from Egypt], the best thing is to come to Sicily (or, Palermo), for the spices of the Orient sell here well.[118]

This merchant, dismayed by the horrors of Ifriqiya and its failing markets, urges his fellow traders to focus on Sicilian markets. When these letters are put in dialogue with the evidence presented in the Arabic chronicles, they paint a picture of a southern Mediterranean landscape in which the merchants involved in Ifriqiyan trade were changing. This is most effectively shown in an episode from 536H (1141-42), in which both a Hammadid and Zirid vessel travel directly from Alexandria to their respective ports in Béjaïa and Mahdia, a route that the above Geniza merchant claimed was no longer possible.[119] For the Zirid and Hammadid ships, though, this route was navigable. Therefore, we can see that by the beginning of the 1140s, there was a redistribution of traders between Egypt and Ifriqiya that involved merchants outside of the scope of the Cairo Geniza, likely those in the service of Ifriqiyan dynasties and the Kingdom of Sicily.

In the years after 1140, when violence between the Zirids and Normans further escalated, the reputation of Ifriqiya for the Geniza merchants fell even further. A letter written around 1148 by Abraham Yiju testifies to the bleakness of the situation:

> Find out who is the best of the sons of my brother Joseph or the sons of your sister Berakha, so that I may marry him off to my daughter. After your coming here, we shall live in Aden or Fustat or Alexandria, if it will not be possible for us to go to al-Mahdiyya or to Ifriqiya, namely, to Tunis or Qayrawān. Everything, of course, is in God's hand… I heard what happened to the coastland of Ifriqiya, Tripoli,

[118] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 325.
[119] This episode is discussed in Chapter Two in the context of tensions between the Zirids and Fatimids. Ibn al-Athir, 11:90. Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:313.

> Djerba, Qarqanna, Sfax, al-Mahdiyya, and Sūsa. No letter, however, from which I could learn who died and who remained alive, has arrived. By God, write exact details and send your letters with reliable people to soothe my mind.[120]

For Abraham Yiju, the Norman conquest of the Ifriqiyan littoral brought about uncertainty. He was unsure if he would be able to travel there in the future. He was also unaware of the fate of his acquaintances in Norman-held cities. While the letter testifies to the continued presence of Jews in Ifriqiya up to the Norman conquests, it does not provide an optimistic outlook for their future post-1148. Many of them likely emigrated. Goitein argues that the Jewish trading family of a man named Perahya (the nephew of Abraham Yiju) left Ifriqiya around the time of the Norman conquest of Mahdia in 1148 and moved to the port of Mazara in southwestern Sicily.[121] The letters of the Cairo Geniza thus indicate that conflict between the Normans and Zirids during the twelfth century had adverse effects on Jewish merchants and their families. The conflict brought about migration, changes in patterns of commerce, and the destruction of property.

Although these examples show the adverse effects that Norman involvement in Ifriqiya had on Jewish traders, it would be incorrect to argue that these seizures were the result of a policy aimed specifically at restricting Jews from trading in the central Mediterranean. Instead, these merchants were caught in the middle of military conflict and environmental upheaval. Conflict between the Normans and Zirids, which extended from the mid-1130s through the 1140s, created a maritime space that included violence and looting. Political strife within Ifriqiya also contributed to this atmosphere. The affair

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[120] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 206.
[121] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 201–6, 327–30. Simonsohn, *Between Scylla and Charybdis: The Jews in Sicily*, 34–35.

at Gabès in 511H (1117-18) and the Zirid seizure of a Hammadid ship in 536H (1141-42) both involved merchant ships caught in the middle of conflict between competing polities. The Geniza letters allude to similar tensions that merchants faced when sailing to Ifriqiya, whether the outcome involved capture or not. Finally, the backdrop to many of these letters is the devastating drought that ravaged Ifriqiya during the 1140s, one that brought adverse consequences to all in the region, not just Jewish merchants.

The adverse effects that Norman rule in Ifriqiya brought to Jewish communities have similarities and differences to the treatment of Jews in Norman Sicily. While Jews in Sicily prospered as artisans and were allowed a certain degree of autonomy, they were also subject to unfavorable taxes and potential violence from Christians. The most detailed contempotary account of Jews in Sicily comes from Benjamin of Tudela, who traveled across the island in the early 1170s. He mentions that Palermo alone is home to around 1,500 Jews and that Messina contains around 200.[122] Some Jews on the island are skilled silk makers and others prosper as fish mongers.[123] They are allowed to worship their religion freely and can settle disputes in their own courts with their own judges. Benjamin concludes that Jews "can live a very good life" in the region.[124] Othe records indicate that Jews could hold property in Sicily, as is shown in an 1161 register in which the Norman administration sold an estate to a Jew from Palermo.[125] The appeal of the

[122] Benjamin of Tudela, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela: A Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue*, 278–82.
[123] Roger went so far as to raid Byzantine islands in the eastern Mediterranean in order to take back Jewish silk crafters to Sicily. Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily: 383-1300*, xxxvi. David Jacoby, "Silk Crosses the Mediterranean," in *Le vie del Mediterraneo. Idee, uomini, oggetti (secoli XI-XVI)*, ed. G. Airaldi (Genoa, 1997), 55–79.
[124] Benjamin of Tudela, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela: A Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue*, 282.
[125] Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 202.

island was such that one merchant from the Cairo Geniza wrote around 1140 that, should his brother have the opportunity, he should move to Sicily.[126]

At the same time, though, life for Jews in Norman Sicily was not ideal. Jews and Muslims had to pay a *jizya*-style tax because of their religious affilitation. Although they had access to their own courts, royal Christian courts still had jurisdiction over serious criminal cases and inter-religious disputes.[127] Near the end of his reign, Roger II also put increased pressure on Jews and Muslims to convert to Christianity.[128] Furthermore, documents from the thirteenth century indicate that there might have popular anti-Jewish sentiment in Sicily, as seen in a law of Frederick II, which specified that "we cannot in the least permit Jews and Saracens to be defrauded of the power of our protection… just because the difference of their religious practice makes them hateful to Christians."[129] While there were opportunities for Jews to prosper in Norman Sicily, nonetheless there were some obstacles to their success and reasons for them to live elsewhere.[130]

If the merchants of the Cairo Geniza were so ill affected by the military involvement of the Normans in Ifriqiya and deterred from participation in its commercial sphere, what groups (if any) replaced them? The cartulary of Giovanni Scriba and the Arabic chronicles indicate that Christian merchants filled the void left by the departure of

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[126] Goitein, *Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*, 326.
[127] Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily: 383-1300*, xxxvi–xli.
[128] Simonsohn, *Between Scylla and Charybdis: The Jews in Sicily*, 29.
[129] Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 293.
[130] The history of the Jews in Norman Sicily is a well trodden subject. Beyond the citations considered above, the work of Henri Bresc is substantial. See, for example, Henri Bresc, *Arabes de langue, Juifs de religion: l'evolution du judaïsme sicilien dans l'environnement latin, XIIe - XVe siècles* (Paris: Editions Bouchene, 2001). Henri Bresc, "La Sicile médiévale, terre de refuge pour les juifs: migration et exil," *Al-Masāq: Islam and the medieval Mediterranean* 17, no. 1 (2005): 31–46.

the Geniza merchants.[131] Scriba's cartulary provides the first systematic record of trade from the northern Italian city-state of Genoa and is the oldest extant cartulary in all of Europe.[132] It contains 1,306 legal acts written between 1154-1164, some of which detail the involvement of Genoese merchants in Sicily and Ifriqiya. David Abulafia and Erik Bach have already carried out exhaustive work on the content of these contracts as they apply to the city of Tripoli but there is still room to consider the trade routes of these Genoese merchants with an eye toward their relationship to the Norman Africa.[133] This methodology reveals significant and widespread Genoese trade with coastal cities in Ifriqiya and the Maghreb during and after the Norman conquests. Although the cartulary only stretches back to 1154, circumstantial evidence indicates that these merchants frequented Ifriqiyan ports for the duration of the Norman Kingdom of Africa.

The cartulary of Giovanni Scriba mentions trade with Tripoli on three separate occasions. The first, dating to June 1157, involves Albertono de Custode, Oberto Corso, and Enrico Fledemerio creating a *societas* (a commercial union) with plans for Enrico to conduct business in Tripoli that summer and the following summer.[134] The next, dating to September 1160 similarly sees the banker Baldwin and one Oberto Transasco forming a

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[131] Mario Chiaudano, ed., *Il Cartolare di Giovanni Scriba*, 2 vols. (Torino: S. Lattes & C. Editori, 1935).
[132] Cartularies were books, usually made of paper, in which a notary recorded legal acts on a variety of subjects. With the appropriate witnesses, documents in these cartularies "carried the force of law, and hence the cartulary served as a repository of memory in a society still overwhelmingly oral." Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese*, 55.
[133] Abulafia, "L'Attività commerciale genovese nell'Africa normanna: la città di Tripoli." Erik Bach, *La cite de Gênes au XIIe siècle* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1955).
[134] Mario Chiaudano, ed., *Il Cartolare di Giovanni Scriba*, vol. 1 (Torino: S. Lattes & C. Editori, 1935), 99. A *societas* was one of three forms of contract used in the cartulary. In a societas, both partners contributed capital for a trading venture. One of the partners travelled to the designated location (in the example above Tripoli), sold it, and then the two partners divided the net profits between themselves. This is unique from the *commenda*, in which a travelling partner took capital from an investor and traded it in return for a share of the profit, and the sea loan, in which a partner borrowed money for a venture and promised to pay a specified sum in return. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese*, 56.

societas for trade to Tripoli and elsewhere.[135] The third, dating to July 1164, describes a loan of Vassallo di Minuta, which included a ship that had previously been trading in Tripoli.[136] In addition to these three contracts, there exist two others in the cartulary that use Tripoli in a cognomen of traders. One contract from March 1164 mentions Petro de Tripoli and another from July 1164 mentions Xeche BoÇostro de Tripoli.[137]

The date range in which these charters were produced is significant, for it extends both within and beyond the time when the Normans controlled Tripoli. The city revolted against Norman rule in the year 553H (1158-59), which means that the contract from June 1157 was created and executed when the Normans held the city.[138] The existence of this contract also supports the idea that the Normans sought to make Tripoli a trading hub. Ibn al-Athir specifies that the Normans made improvements to return Tripoli to prosperity, which included renovating its walls and encouraging immigration to the city.[139] When this information is paired with the June 1157 contract, which is the only

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[135] Chiaudano, *Il Cartolare di Giovanni Scriba*, 1935, 1:414.

[136] Mario Chiaudano, ed., *Il Cartolare di Giovanni Scriba*, vol. 2 (Torino: S. Lattes & C. Editori, 1935), 217.

[137] The content of these two contacts do not mention the city beyond these names. Chiaudano, *Il Cartolare di Giovanni Scriba*, 1935, 2:187, 219–20.

[138] The Genoese even possibly enjoyed special trading benefits in Tripoli based on a contract made between Palermo and Genoa in 1156. This contract was made between two Genoese consulars on behalf of the commune and details the reduced taxes that Genoese merchants would pay at Norman ports. Although Norman cities in Africa are not considered explicitly in it, it is possible that some of the trading privileges granted to them in this treaty extended to the Normans' African ports. Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document 18. Abulafia speculates that the increased head-tax placed by the Normans on Genoese merchants at the city of Mazara was a way of compensating the Sicilian crown for increased pressure on Norman towns in Africa, since ships would often depart from Mazara to the North-African coast. He does acknowledge, though, that it is impossible to know whether the rate imposed on the Genoese was particularly high or low in comparison to other cities in the Kingdom of Sicily. Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 94.

[139] Ibn al-Athir, 11:108-109.

cartulary to mention trading in Norman ports in Ifriqiya, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the Normans sought to promote trade out of Tripoli.[140]

When the Normans lost Tripoli in 553H (1158-59), the Banu Matruh governed the city independently for about a year before submitting to the Almohads under ʿAbd al-Muʿmin. Despite these changes in leadership, the Genoese continued to trade with Tripoli, as shown by the two contracts from September 1160 and July 1164. Tripoli was not the only Almohad-controlled port that Genoese merchants frequented. Genoa negotiated a teaty with the Almohads at the beginning of the 1160s and regularly renewed treaties that secured the protection of Genoese merchant ships in Almohad lands.[141] By 1182, port cities in Ifriqiya accounted for 37% of overall Genoese trade.[142] This traffic is reflected in the cartulary of Giovanni Scriba, in which there are 73 contracts that involve North Africa (excluding Egypt), most which were directed toward the ports of Béjaïa and

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[140] Genoese merchants trading in Tripoli might have also traded in other major Norman ports on the coast of Ifriqiya like Gabès, Mahdia, Sfax, Sousse as well as Norman-controlled islands on the Mediterranean. The format of Giovanni Scriba's cartularies is such that only one destination of a given venture is supplied, which Abulafia calls the "first place of destination." While it was most profitable for merchants on long-distance voyages to sail between two large ports as quickly as possible, uncooperative weather and piracy often caused ships to re-route to smaller ports that were serviceable. Goitein provides extensive analysis of these routes. Perhaps Norman merchants frequented Mahdia, which was held by their own governors, while Italian merchants frequented Tripoli? Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 99. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 1978, 1:211–13, 318–32. There is also the idea of *cabotage* ("tramping"), which is the shipping of wares short distances often within the territory of one ruler. Horden and Purcell estimate that this practice, petty piracy, and the transportation of pilgrims were "probably responsible in aggregate for many more of the movements of goods and people around the sea than was *le grand traffic maritime*" during the Middle Ages. Braudel likewise referred to "boats of small tonnage" as "proletarians of the sea" whose activites comprised the "overwhelming majority" of Mediterranean shipping during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000), 140–44. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 296.

[141] Remie Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900-1500* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 42–44. Baadj, *Saladin, the Almohads and the Banū Ghāniya: The Contest for North Africa (12th and 13th Centuries)*, 68–69.

[142] Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*, 298.

Tunis.[143] This compares to 84 contracts for trade in Sicily and 58 in Alexandria. The total value of the contracts to emerge from North Africa was ₤6,103, whereas Sicily and Alexandria accounted for ₤6,689 and ₤9,031 (respectively). From this we see that the cities of North Africa comprised a substantial and profitable portion of the cartulary.[144]

Unfortunately, there is no quantitative data with which to contrast these figures with earlier Genoese trading patterns.[145] Anecdotal evidence, including the 1087 Pisan/Genoese attack on Mahdia and a 1136 Genoese raid on Béjaïa, indicates Genoese interest in profiting off the coast of Ifriqiya prior to the establishment of the Norman Kingdom of Africa.[146] The lack of charter or tax-based evidence, though, inhibits any comparison with the cartulary of Giovanni Scriba.[147] In addition, we ought not to use this cartulary as indicative of the practices of all merchants operating in Genoa. Giovanni

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[143] Bach, *La cite de Gênes au XIIe siècle*, 50–51. Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 99.

[144] When all overseas contracts are totaled, North Africa comprises 18% (₤6,103 / ₤33,905) of total trade in the entire cartulary of Giovanni Scriba.Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 99.

[145] The Pisans also actively traded with the Almohad caliphate and other Muslims powers in the central and western Mediterranean. Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900-1500*, 42–44. David Abulafia, "Christian Merchants in the Almohad Cities," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2, no. 2 (June 2010): 251–57.

[146] Epstein chronicles the gradual shift in Genoese trading interests toward the eastern Mediterranean during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, so it is possible that Genoese trade was more focused on Ifriqiya and the Maghreb in the years prior to the creation of Scriba's cartulary. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese*, 38–53. Jehel, *L'Italie et le Maghreb au moyen âge: conflits et échanges du VIIe au XVe siècle*, 67.

[147] The appearance of these Italian traders engaging in commerce in Ifriqiya supports the general conclusion of Yves Renouard. He argues that the mid-twelfth century was a time when Italian merchants, primarily from Genoa, Pisa, and Venice, began acquiring gold from North Africa and making substantial impacts on these southern ports. Scarcity of evidence, though, when compared to later centuries, makes it difficult to consider the lives of these men in detail. Renouard calls them *voyageurs* who either operated on the coastline or in the interior, working to establish themselves in networks of markets. In the case of North Africa, these men operated exclusively on the coastline. Yves Renouard, *Les hommes d'affaires Italiens du moyen age* (Paris: Libraire Armand Colin, 1949), 73. On the whole, though, Renouard is more concerned with events of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which see the flowering of individual merchants of great power in Genoa, banking systems in Venice, and vast Florentine companies. The twelfth century is a precursor to this "revolution" that sweeps the Mediterranean during the later Middle Ages. Yves Renouard, "Lumières nouvelles sur les hommes d'affaires italiens du moyen age," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 10e, no. 1 (March 1955): 65.

Scriba was working with a small slice of the mercantile community in Genoa.[148] This invaluable set of contracts reveals Genoese trade with Ifriqiya during Norman and Almohad rule but it should not be used to make overarching claims about the collective trading interests of this one city.

Alongside the shifting demographics of traders in Ifriqiya, the Normans also instituted changes to coinage. The Norman kings minted gold dinars in Mahdia with their own triumphal issues.[149] It is unknown, though, whether the Normans sought to monopolize coinage in Ifriqiya. In the years before the Norman conquests, governors in major Ifriqiyan cities minted their own coins as a sign of their political autonomy.[150] Given the Normans' hands-off approach to governance in Ifriqiya, cities under Norman control might have minted their own coins. At the same time, though, the emphasis that the Normans placed on reviving commerce in cities under their control might have led them to standardize coinage. Whatever the case, the currencies used in Ifriqiya during the twelfth century did not circulate widely.[151] There are also no surviving coins from Norman Africa in the numismatic collections of Italian city-states from the twelfth century, which indicates that the dinars minted in Mahdia had a limited circulation.[152]

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[148] Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese*, 55–56.
[149] Abdul-Wahab, "Deux dinars normands de Mahdia."
[150] The last surviving coin from Ifriqiya in the years before the Norman conquests was a 461H (1068-69) coin from the governor of Sfax, Hammu ibn Malil. Beyond this, a coin from Rafiʿ of Gabès might survive on the basis of an illustration by Prieto y Vives but its whereabouts are currently unknown. Hazard states that "no coins are recorded from the other local Arab and Berber rulers of cities or tribes in Tunisia, Tripolitania, or eastern Algeria during this turbulent period, though some few of them may have minted a little gold." Hazard, *The Numismatic History of Late Medieval North Africa*, 56. Hamid Ajjabi, *Jami' al-maskukat al-'Arabiyya bi-Ifriqiyya* (Tunis, 1988).
[151] P. Grierson and L. Travaini, *Italy III: South Italy, Sicily, Sardinia*, vol. 14, Medieval European Coinage (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 77–79, 104–6.
[152] The Normans used dinars from Mahdia to service to local economy only and did not incorporate them into their larger and regulated system of coinage in Sicily and southern Italy. The traders who brought this

The arrival of the Normans into Africa also brought changes to taxation. The Normans almost certainly imposed customs duties on the ports of their African territories, although there is no evidence that explicitly states this. Circumstantial evidence, though, shows the centrality of these duties to Norman Africa. During the twelfth century, the Normans and local governors of Ifriqiya had most often been brought into conflict over issues of shipping and commerce. Furthermore, given the improvements that the Normans made to cities they conquered, it would be foolish to assume that they did not seek financial gain from these holdings. The specifics of these taxes, though, are unexplored in the sources beyond a mention in the travelogue of Benjamin of Tudela, who wrote that food shortages in Ifriqiya "swell Sicily's coffers with the tax on grain exports."[153] Once Roger II had control over the Ifriqiyan littoral, he might have briefly lessened these taxes to spur long-term economy growth, but he still would have sought to profit over the exportation of grain. It is unknown whether the Ifriqiyan economy under the Normans recovered its agricultural production to the point that it could produce enough food to feed its population.[154]

The Normans also imposed a *jizya*-style head tax on non-Christians in Ifriqiya. In Islamic societies, the *jizya* is a per capita tax on non-Muslims, particularly Christians and Jews. The Arabic sources indicate that Roger II amended the *jizya* in Ifriqiya such that

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gold to Mahdia Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 59–65. Grierson and Travaini, *Italy III: South Italy, Sicily, Sardinia*, 14:104–6.

[153] Benjamin of Tudela, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela: A Medieval Mediterranean Travelogue*, 278.

[154] In Sicily, Roger controlled economic production across large tracts of demesne land and taxed merchants in his ports. Although Roger didn't seek similar control of land in Ifriqiya, we should assume that he sought to profit off his ports as he did in Sicily. Abulafia, *The Two Italies: Economic Relations between the Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Northern Communes*, 31–48, 59–84.

Muslims and Jews who were forced to pay it.[155] Ibn Khaldun wrote that Roger II took over the coast of Ifriqiya and "placed on its people the *jizya*."[156] In other parts of his chronicle, Ibn Khaldun also mentions the cities of Tripoli, Sousse, Sfax, Mahdia, and Djerba being put under the *jizya*.[157] This evidence refutes the argument of Michael Brett, who wrote that it was conceivable for the *jizya* to be leveled in cities under direct Norman control like Mahdia, but that the Normans did not do so in cities ruled by local Arab or Berber governors "on psychological grounds." He speculates that the "gentleness" of the ruling Normans extended to "Muslim pride as well as Muslim pockets," thereby making the levying of the *jizya* unlikely.[158]

Brett's argument is unconvincing. First, Ibn Khaldun is explicit on several occasions that the *jizya* was leveled in specific cities and throughout Norman lands in Ifriqiya. For a time and place when documentary evidence is so thin on the ground, these synchronous descriptions are as convincing as a scholar can find.[159] In addition, Brett's idea that the Normans were gentle to their Ifriqiyan population is overstated. The Arabic chronicles describe the bloodshed that accompanied some of the Normans' conquests

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[155] The Normans also implemented the *jizya* in Sicily, as is shown in royal registers (*jarāʾid*) from Sicily, which required that Muslims pay a head tax in coin and an additional land tax in grain. Timothy Smit, "Commerce and Coexistence: Muslims in the Economy and Society of Norman Sicily" (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2009), 116.

[156] Ibn Khaldun, 6:213.

[157] Ibn Khaldun, 5:231-234.

[158] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 350.

[159] Brett's analysis of Ibn Khaldun only includes his mentions of the *jizya* in Tripoli, Mahdia, and Djerba. It curiously omits the other mentions of the *jizya* in the chronicle, as described above. For Brett, who is usually so thorough in his analysis of sources, these omissions are puzzling. He also writes that Abulafia and Idris agree with him on this point, but this is not the case. Both Abulafia and Idris, among others, state that the Normans leveled the *jizya* on the people of Ifriqiya. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 348–50. Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 38. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:360. Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 34. Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, C. 1050-1614*, 106.

(like Djerba and Sfax) and the need for the Normans to send notices of safety to the inhabitants of the city.[160] This may be "gentle" by medieval standards but it was still not a pleasant process for those who experienced it. Furthermore, the act of imposing the *jizya* on the people of Ifriqiya mirrored Norman policy in Sicily, thus ensuring that Muslims in both areas were in similar economic situations.[161] Brett is likely correct, though, in arguing that the taxes collected in Ifriqiya were done so with the assistance of Norman proxy governors and with less systematic oversight than in Sicily, where registers meticulously recorded the populations under their control.[162] Nonetheless, Ibn Khaldun makes clear that the Normans levied a *jizya* on the Muslims of Ifriqiya.

Roger II and William I also reserved the right to impose additional taxes upon groups of people as they saw fit. This is made explicit in a document from Malta-Gozo from the late-twelfth century. Although written in 1198, the document refers to a tax that Roger imposed on the Christians of the islands for the slaying of a Muslim.[163] This document, when combined with the evidence for the utilization of the *jizya*, shows that the Norman monarchs were willing to level taxes on groups of people *en masse* in their overseas territories. Taxation in Norman Africa thus came in many forms – from commerce, religious affiliation, and communal misdeeds. Although commercial taxes were nothing new in the region, the latter two kinds of taxation were innovations of Norman Africa that had meaningful consequences on local populations.[164]

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[160] Ibn al-Athir, 10:32, 128-129.
[161] Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 34–36.
[162] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 350.
[163] Jamil and Johns, "A New Latin-Arabic Document from Norman Sicily (November 595 H/1198 CE)."
[164] Christians living under Norman rule in Sicily, Italy, or Ifriqiya also paid various forms of taxes. Roger II collected dues on or took portions of crops, meat, timber, and textiles. Vassals of the Norman kings, particularly those on mainland Italy, provided financial resources from their respective domains. Donald

This limited pool of evidence indicates that the Normans made meaningful changes to the people and economies of the port cities under their control. The fate of other groups in Ifriqiya, whether rural or urban, is impossible to divine from the surviving source materials. Ifriqiya was home to a variety of urban industries during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Although many production centers were hurt by the invasion of the Banu Hilal in the mid-1050s, evidence from the geographer al-Idrisi indicates that urban centers continued to produce consumer goods in coastal Ifriqiya through the 1140s.[165] Based on the Normans' goal of reviving commerce in coastal cities, I find it probable that they would have likewise supported the recovery of local industries. We know, for example, that the city of Gabès was a major exporter of silk before the Hilalian invasions.[166] When al-Idrisi wrote about Gabès during the 1140s, though, he noted that it only exported leather.[167] Perhaps the Normans, who launched invasions against Byzantine port cities in the 1140s with the goal of capturing Jewish silk spinners, sought

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Matthew summarizes the dues collected by the government: tenths, curial dues, payments in harbors and ports of call, pannage, a burial tax, gabelle of gates, fish levies, the right to take men into dependence, payments for grass, payments for pasture, patments for slaughterhouses, and tolls on crossing rivers or into Sicily. The degree to which all of these taxes were enforced is unknown, but charters that grant exemptions to some of these taxes indicate that they were collected with some regularity. Matthew argues that the varied and confusing terminology for different kinds of monetary collection within the Kingdom of Sicily "reveals the complexity of the taxation pattern in the kingdom and the enormous scope this gave for local variations and indeed bargaining." Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, 234–41. Jeremy Johns also notes the ability for the Normans to level collective fees or taxes as they saw fit. One of these, leveled on the Christians of Malta and Gozo, has already been discussed. Another, the *redemptio* ("redemption" or "ransoming") was leveled on cities or areas that had resisted the Normans, as was the case after the peninsular uprisings of the 1160s during the reign of William I. Suffice it to say, even though Christians were not subject to the *jizya* tax under Norman rule, they still were forced to pay substantial tribute to their Norman lords. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 288.

[165] Al-Idrisi's description of Sfax, for example, mentions its unparalleled cultivation of olives. Al-Idrisi, 1:280-281.

[166] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirides: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 2:636.

[167] Al-Idrisi, 1:289-90. There are also some legal rulings from Ifriqiya that concern the production of silk worms. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirides: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 2:632.

to use some of their captive spinners to help revive Gabès' industry that had evidently been abandoned after the Hilalian invasions?

Historians are limited to this kind of speculation regarding urban and rural production in the Norman Kingdom of Africa. The fate of farmland and pasture from 1148 to 1160 is unexplored in the sources and it is unclear how much authority the Normans exercised outside of cities. In accounts of the Norman conquests of 543H (1148-49), urban populations often fled from cities under attack, where the Normans presumably had no control, before the attackers issued a call for safe passage and allowed local populations to return. Once the Normans solidified control over these cities, they might have sought control in rural areas but there are no documents to attest to this.[168] In the Almohad chronicles that detail their Ifriqiyan campaigns of the 1160s, there there is no mention of Norman influence in inland Ifriqiya.[169] This lack of evidence, combined with maritime commerce being the one of the primary preoccupation of the Normans in the years leading up to their Ifriqiyan conquests, makes it likely that the Normans' primary goal was to promote economic recovery exclusively on the Ifriqiyan littoral.[170]

[168] According to the accounts of the Arabic chroniclers, the drought that hit Ifriqiya during the 1140s was so severe that there might not have been very many people in inland Ifriqiya in the first place. Ibn Khaldun, for example, reported that the dead outnumbered the living. Ibn Khaldun, 5:233.

[169] Lévi-Provençal, *Trente-sept lettres officielles almohades*, 99–121.

[170] Even though Roger II held large portions of agricultural land in Sicily as part of his royal demesne, the political situation in Ifriqiya was so radically different than Sicily that it is incredibly unlikely that he would have sought similar control over inland agricultural areas or any agricultural area that was not immediately adjacent to cities.

Religion and the Fall of Norman Africa

Roger II's conquest of the Ifriqiyan coast altered the region's political structure and helped revive its once-prosperous ports. The conquest also placed Christians at the top of the religious hierarchy, which was an unwelcome prospect for the Muslim majority that the Normans governed. Christian governors and garrisons exercised authority in ports, the imposition of the reverse *jizya* clearly benefitted Christians, and Christian immigrants held potentially negative views of local Muslims. These changes fundamentally altered the religious dynamic of Ifriqiya and were not sustainable.

At the time of the Norman conquests in Ifriqiya, there existed small communities of indigenous and immigrant Christians, although their numbers are hard to quantify. Pope Leo IX wrote two letters to the bishops of Carthage and Gummi (Mahdia) near the end of 1053 in which he lamented how at one point the African church held a council of 205 bishops but that now only five bishops existed.[171] Twenty years later, Pope Gregory VII confronted the Christian community of Carthage, which had brought charges against its bishop, Cyriacus, and subjected him to the authority of a Muslim lord.[172] In a letter to Cyriacus, Gregory mentions that although less than three bishops remain in North Africa, the bishop of Carthage will retain his supremacy there.[173] The decrease in bishops from five to (presumably) two in the years between 1053 and 1073 highlights the decline of the Church's presence and the number of Christians in Ifriqiya during the eleventh century.

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[171] J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus*, vol. 143 (Paris, 1853), 727–31.
[172] *MGH, Epistolae, Epp. Sel.,* 2.1:36-39.
[173] *MGH, Epistolae, Epp. Sel.,* 2.1:39-40.

Other evidence for the presence of Christianity in Ifriqiya in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is scattershot.[174] Pope Gregory VII wrote a letter to the Hammadid emir al-Nasir in which he approves the appointment of a bishop to administer to Christians in Hammadid lands.[175] The *Carmen in Victoriam Pisanorum* speaks at length about Christian captives that the Zirid emir Tamim had taken through his piracy.[176] Various inscriptions and archaeological remains in Ifriqiya testify to the presence of Christian structures and peoples.[177] The geographers al-Bakri and al-Idrisi mention the presence of a community of Berbers in Gafsa (inland Tunisia) speaking a Latin dialect during the twelfth century.[178] Ibn al-Athir notes that upon the arrival of the Norman fleet in Mahdia in 543H (1148-49), people hid with Christians and in churches.[179] From these scattered records, we see the continued presence of Christians in Ifriqiya. However, their role in the society (merchants, native inhabitants, or captives) is unknown, as are their numbers.

The establishment of the Norman Kingdom of Africa brought an influx of Christians to the region. Sicilian and Italian merchants traded in the ports of Ifriqiya,

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[174] For a summary of this evidence, see Dominique Valérian, "La permanence du christianisme au Maghreb: l'apport problématique des sources latines," in *Islamisation et arabisation de l'Occident musulman (VIIe-XIIe siecle)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2011), 131–49. Brett Whalen, "Corresponding with Infidels: Rome, the Almohads, and the Christians of Thirteenth-Century Morocco," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 41, no. 3 (2011): 487–513. Talbi's work is also fundamental for this subject, as he shows that there were Christian communities present in Ifriqiya, particularly around Gafsa, during the twelfth century. He also rejects the idea that the Almohad conquests brought a complete end to indigenous Christianity in Ifriqiya. Mohamed Talbi, "Le Christianisme maghrébin de la conquête musulmane à sa disparition: une tentative d'explication," in *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands*, ed. Michael Gervers and Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi (Toronto: Medieval Institute Publications, 1990), 338–40.

[175] *MGH, Epistolae, Epp. Sel.,* 2.1:287-288.

[176] Cowdrey, "The Mahdia Campaign of 1087."

[177] Bresc, "Le royaume normand d'Afrique et l'archevêché de Mahdiyya," 347–48.

[178] Valérian, "La permanence du christianisme au Maghreb: l'apport problématique des sources latines," 141.

[179] Ibn al-Athir, 11:126.

Norman garrisons patrolled city streets, and Christians were encouraged to immigrate. These Christians, in addition to the native Christians that had already been living in Ifriqiya, were now in positions of privilege over the urban Muslim population. Although the Normans allowed Muslims to resolve judicial disputes through their own judges, Muslims were still subject to new taxes like the reverse *jizya*. The Malta-Gozo tax document from 1198 further reveals that the Normans could levy taxes upon groups of people for crimes committed against people of other religions.[180] In this case, the document reprieves Christians of a tax that had been put on them when one in their community killed a Muslim person. There is the possibility, though, that similar fines could have been leveled on Muslim communities for their transgressions. The potential for the Normans to levy additional taxes reinforced the new structures of power in the region. Even though Muslim governors oversaw the daily operations of many Norman-held cities, the new structures of power that they enforced were different and unmistakably Christian.

The increased presence of the ascendant Christians in Ifriqiya caused some degree of tension between the new arrivals and local Muslim inhabitants. This is expressed most directly in the *Tristia ex Melitogaudo*, a mid-twelfth-century poem written by a Norman noble who had been exiled to the island of Gozo. Although Gozo is not in Ifriqiya proper, it nonetheless was conquered around the same time as the rest of Ifriqiya and was

[180] Interfaith conflict in Malta-Gozo was not dissimilar from Sicily and southern Italy, where the "killing of Saracens by Christians was by no means rare." A law of Frederick II in the Constitutions of Melfi from the thirteenth century considers specifically the fine depending on the religion of the person who was slain. James M. Powell, *The Liber Augustalis or Constitutions of Melfi Promulgated By the Emperor Frederick II for the Kingdom of Sicily in 1231* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 30. Jamil and Johns, "A New Latin-Arabic Document from Norman Sicily (November 595 H/1198 CE)," 116.

governed similarly to Mahdia and Djerba. Thus, its contents are useful for considering quotidian interactions between Christians and Muslims in the Norman Kingdom of Africa. In the verses of the *Tristia*, the author laments the differences between the Muslim inhabitants of the island and himself:

> To what end have I been flung in the midst of the trackless seas
> where the children of godless Hagar[181] live,
> [I] not enjoying even little comforts,
> I, woe betide me, not drinking any wine,
> [not] even for the good of my stomach…[182]

The author, surrounded by godless Hagarenes (Muslims), is unable to enjoy the benefits of alcohol, which he used to calm his stomach. In another section of the poem, he laments that he cannot even speak to the Hagarenes without the use of interpreters, which only increases his sense of isolation on the island.[183] Furthermore, he is disdainful of the customs of the Muslim inhabitants of the island. He writes that:

> What mind may be able to comprehend
> the whole throng of evil happenings from which I, wretched me, suffered harm,
> even if someone were to be well-versed in countless languages?
> For who would endure to utter, in uncouth speech,
> the unjust arrogances of the intemperate,
> the insolence, [the] lawlessness of foreigners,
> the hunger and thirst and seizure of things possessed,
> sleeping-mats both of an unfortunate and of a well-adjusted [person],
> and the change and the turned-back posture,
> the manner of sitting and of rising up,
> the unholy bridlings of words,
> alas, the suppression of unallowed hymns?

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[181] "Hagarenes" was the term used for Muslims in much of the medieval Christian world during the Middle Ages. It was also commonly used in the Greek language to refer to villeins, as is shown in a series of twelfth-century Sicilian documents. Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 57.
[182] Busuttil, Fiorini, and Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo*, 171.
[183] Busuttil, Fiorini, and Vella, *Tristia Ex Melitogaudo: Lament in Greek Verse of a XIIth-Century Exile on Gozo*, 69.

The dress, speech, and customs of the Muslim population of Gozo annoys the author of the *Tristia ex Melitogaudo* to a great degree. Although this poem contains dramatic and hyperbolic imagery to fully convey the anguish that the author feels in exile, the specificity of his distaste for the Muslims of the island is revealing. The Christian author denigrated the beliefs of the Muslims around him in a way that was unlikely to be unique to his circumstances. If we take his perspective to be reflective to some degree of other Christians in the region, there was a cultural disconnect between Christians and Muslims across the Strait of Sicily that could turn into contempt and even hostility. Furthermore, if we consider that the author wrote this poem to sway the attitude of George of Antioch and the Norman court to reverse his exile, the disdain that the author felt toward these Muslims might have been reflected among Norman elites as well.

The changes in the social and religious landscape of Ifriqiya to benefit Christians complemented visual changes to the landscape, especially in Mahdia. We know from Ibn al-Athir's description of the conquest of Mahdia that churches existed within the city during the reign of the Zirids, for some Muslims sought refuge in them when George of Antioch conquered it.[184] Little else is known about these churches beyond what is found in the inventories of two churches that Archbishop Cosmas of Mahdia evacuated before the city fell to the Almohads. The inventories detail the treasuries of the Cathedral of Mahdia and the Church of Saint Nicholas, which eventually made their way to the Cappella Palatina in Palermo.[185] The combined inventories detail some 100 textiles, 18

[184] Ibn al-Athir, 11:126.

[185] The inventories were first published in L. Garofalo, *Tabularium regiae ac imperialis capellae collegiate divi Petri in regio Panormitano palatio* (Palermo: Regia Typographia, 1835). They were later republished in Bresc, "Le royaume normand d'Afrique et l'archevêché de Mahdiyya," 362–66.

books, and 31 ecclesiastical accoutrements that range from the golden rings of priests to old towels. The level of detail for the items varies. For example, item #23 from the inventory of the Cathedral of Mahdia reads, "One great gold ring of a bishop with a great sapphire and four smaller jacinths, two emeralds and two dark-green emeralds and four pearls and four smaller pearls." Other entries are less descriptive. Entry #4 from the inventory of the Church of Saint Nicholas describes "another silver cross decorated with bronze" and entry #41 from the same inventory mentions "four old palliums."[186]

Unfortunately, the descriptions of the items in these inventories are too vague to make any definitive statements about the place of production or sale of these products. Isabelle Dolezalek's study of the inventories concludes that "evidence of specific textile connections… is hard to find" and while certain parallels can be observed between garments described in the inventories and surviving ones in Sicily, these styles were common in the Mediterranean and are impossible for modern scholars to pin down to one specific location.[187] The same is true of other kinds of objects – reliquaries, devotional items, and books – found in the inventories. Their provenance is unknown and their descriptions are too vague to pin down their origin.

Nonetheless, the presence of churches in Mahdia with this measure of wealth was a departure from the African church under the Zirids, which by all accounts was in decline. The inventories describe a variety of "old" and "very old" artifacts alongside

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[186] Palliums were wool vestments often given to an archbishop by the Pope. Perhaps these four old palliums were relics from the eleventh century or prior, when North Africa was home to multiple archbishops. Bresc, "Le royaume normand d'Afrique et l'archevêché de Mahdiyya," 363–66.
[187] Isabelle Dolezalek, "Textile Connections? Two Ifrīqiyan Church Treasures in Norman Sicily and the Problem of Continuity across Political Change," *Al-Masāq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 25, no. 1 (2013): 104.

newer and more ostentatious items. This juxtaposition indicates that the Norman presence in Mahdia brought an injection of wealth to the once-ailing church.[188] The renovated appearance of these Christian spaces was probably visible to the people living in Mahdia whether through improvements to architecture or through the spectacle of ostentatiously clothed priests.[189]

The Arabic and Latin sources do little to help us reconstruct the religious landscape of areas outside of Mahdia. The chronicler Robert of Torigny mentions that William I installed an archbishop in *Sibilla* (Zawila) following the city's failed revolt against Norman rule.[190] Beyond this, there is no evidence from the nearby cities of Gabès, Sfax, Sousse, and Tripoli to indicate the establishment or enhancement of

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[188] It is difficult to quantify the scope of the wealth of the church at Mahdia relative to other ecclesiastical institutions in the Kingdom of Sicily and the Mediterranean. The geographically and temporally closest inventory to that of the Mahdian churches that I could locate comes from the city of Monza in 1275. The population of this Northern Italian city during this time is unknown, but it was likely reduced from its previous population because of successive sackings in 1255 and 1259. Nonetheless, the 1275 inventory of the cathedral of Monza dwarfs that of the Mahdian churches. It contains 239 total items, including 100 books. These items overall are more thoroughly described than the Mahdian churches and include more detailed descriptions of gemstones and precious metals. From this juxtaposition, the Mahdian churches appear to not have the wealth of this cathedral in mainland Italy. This is not to say that the Mahdian churches were poor, though. The catalog from Archbishop Comas only contains items that could be evacuated from Mahdia before the arrival of the Almohads. It is possible that other items had to be left behind for sake of space, particularly large items like altarpieces. Even if the churches in Mahdia were not as wealthy as their counterparts in Sicily and southern Italy (which they likely were), the comparison of "old" items in these inventories with newer items indicates an increase in wealth due to the Norman presence. Anton-Francesco Frisi, *Memorie storiche di Monza e sua corte*, vol. 2 (Milan: Stamperia di Gaetano Motta, 1794), 131–34. There are other modern cathedral inventories that contain artifacts from the twelfth century but these are far less complete than the inventories recorded in the thirteenth century. Such inventories include those of Basel Cathedral and the various workshops around Palermo. Timothy Husband, *The Treasury of Basel Cathedral* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001). Maria Andaloro, *Nobiles Officinae: Perle, Filigrane E Trame Di Seta Dal Palazzo Reale Di Palermo*, 2 vols. (Catania: Giuseppe Maimone, 2006). The modern inventory of the Monza Cathedral can be found in Roberto Conti, ed., *Il Duomo di Monza*, 2 vols. (Electa, 1989).

[189] The liturgical language of these churches, Latin, could also have altered the religious soundscape of the cities, which had been dominated by the Arabic *adhan* ("call to prayer"). Valérian, "La permanence du christianisme au Maghreb: l'apport problématique des sources latines," 149.

[190] Robert of Torigny, *Chronicle of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II., and Richard I: The Chronicle of Robert of Torigny, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Michael-in-Peril-of-the-Sea*, 4:191.

churches. Circumstantial evidence, though, supports the idea that the status of the church was enhanced in these cities. Newly arrived Christian merchants and soldiers required places to pray and priests to administer religious services. With the injection of wealth in the Mahdian churches, it is possible that other churches in Ifriqiya received similar infusions of wealth with which to administer to these populations. The ascendancy of local churches, when combined with the changes in governance and taxation that favored Christians at the expense of Muslims, contributed to the societal changes in Norman Africa that fundamentally altered the religious hierarchy of the region.

Within the Kingdom of Sicily, too, the Norman administration struggled with how to incorporate Muslims into their kingdom. The execution of Philip of Mahdia provides a case study for considering the attitude of the Norman court toward them. Philip of Mahdia was executed in 1153 for crimes that included being a crypto-Muslim and showing leniency to the captured city of Annaba in North Africa.[191] Historians have argued that Philip's death was emblematic of changing attitudes in Palermo toward Muslim populations under Norman rule. Michael Brett refers to the execution as a "violent rejection at Palermo of the principles on which the regime in Ifriqiya had been built."[192] Brian Catlos argues that the death of Philip of Mahdia was emblematic of the "growing communal conflict" between Christians and Muslims in the Kingdom of Sicily.[193] Hubert Houben too sees the episode as indicative of the growing Latinization of

[191] The specifics of Philip's indictment vary depending on the sources. Ibn al-Athir, 11:187. Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, 7.1:234–36.
[192] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 357.
[193] Catlos, "Who Was Philip of Mahdia and Why Did He Have to Die? Confessional Identity and Political Power in the Twelfth-Century Mediterranean," 97.

the Norman court, which in turn could have marginalized Muslim and Arabic-speaking elites in Palermo.[194]

Philip of Mahdia's death, therefore, highlights the Norman court's evolving attitude toward Muslims in the Kingdom of Sicily during the 1150s and the difficulty of running an interfaith administration.[195] In the Norman Kingdom of Africa, similar issues of interfaith exchange spurred meaningful change. The Normans levied taxes on Muslims and reserved the right to impose taxes on religious groups for individual crimes. They bolstered the standing of the church in Ifriqiya by appointing bishops and funding their churches, particularly in Mahdia. The anonymous author of the *Tristia ex Melitogaudo* also shows the linguistic, religious, and cultural divides that existed in a society where a Norman minority ruled over a Muslim majority. Norman involvement in Ifriqiya thus simultaneously increased the presence of Christians in the region and spurred societal changes that were not conducive to sustained and peaceful interfaith coexistence.

Muslim Resistance to Norman Rule

The changes brought about by Norman rule were one of several factors that contributed to the revolts of the mid-1150s that reduced Norman territories in Ifriqiya to Mahdia, Zawila, and Sousse. The causes for these revolts, though, were not limited to the actions of the Normans. As the economy of Ifriqiya rebounded from the devastating drought of the 1140s, Muslim jurists and governors looked for ways to dethrone the

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[194] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 112.
[195] Scholars have thoroughly documented religious inequity in Norman Italy and Sicily. See, for example, Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 46–51. Annliese Nef, *Conquérir et gouverner la Sicile islamique aux XIe et XIIe siècles* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2011), 586–611.

Normans. Muslim jurists utilized legal arguments from the Maliki school of jurisprudence to justify revolt against non-Muslim overlords. Muslim governors were raised in a tradition of opportunistic holy war against Christians, through which violence against the Normans was easily justified. These precedents fueled widespread revolts in the mid-1150s. In some cases, these revolts were aided by the Almohad conquests across northwest Africa, which provided Ifriqiyan lords with an alternative dynasty to which to pledge their loyalty.

Long-held Islamic legal perspectives were a driving factor in motivating the revolts that undid Norman rule in the mid-1150s. Michael Brett argues that a legal framework is most effective for understanding the unravelling of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. In both Ifriqiya and the Maghreb, the dominant *fiqh* ("school of Islamic jurisprudence") was the Maliki school.[196] The writings on the Maliki school are vast and comprise analyses of the sources of Islamic law, customs of people throughout the Muslim world, and legal rulings derived from the work of the eponymous Malik ibn Anas. Of relevance to Norman Africa is the body of Maliki literature concerning how Muslims ought to live when their lords are not Muslims. The writings of the twelfth-century jurist al-Mazari, whose works survive in the fifteenth-century *al-Miʿyar al-muʿrib* ("The Clear Standard") of al-Wansharisi, provide the most descriptive analysis of this topic written around the time of the Norman Kingdom of Africa.[197]

[196] *EI2*, "Mālikiyya."
[197] Al-Qabisi's earlier rulings are also relevant and are found in al-Wansharisi, *al-Miʿyar al-muʿrib wa al-jʿamiʿ al-mughrib ʿan fatawi ʿulamaʿ ifriqiya we al-andalus wa al-maghreb*, 1981. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 327.

At the heart of al-Mazari's analysis is how *ʿadala* ("justice as defined by Islamic law") ought to be administered when under the rule of someone who exhibits *ʿadawa* ("hostility to the law").[198] In one legal opinion, al-Mazari is asked if the *ʿadala* of a judge who was appointed out of compulsion or necessity, including one appointed by non-Muslim rulers, ought to be followed. He argues that the ruling of these judges should be accepted. His analysis makes clear that Muslims should not live in the *dar al-ḥarb* ("house of war," i.e. a place governed by a non-Muslims) unless absolutely necessary. If they do live in this state, though, it is better to accept the judgment of a Muslim judge than to have no legal rulings whatsoever. In other words, he thought that "even bad government was better than no government."[199]

If we accept the words of al-Mazari to be indicative of jurists in Ifriqiya during the time of Norman dominion, we learn several important things. The first is that the rulings of the judges that the Normans appointed in their cities (like Abu al-Hajaj in Tripoli) were valid. The second is that the circumstance of Muslims living under Norman control in the *dar al-ḥarb* was not ideal. While al-Mazari acknowledges that sometimes it is necessary to live in this poor environment, he asserts that Muslims should endeavor to either leave or revolt if they are able. Brett convincingly argues that this legal mindset was instrumental in both spurring the littoral of Ifriqiya to submit to the Normans in 543H (1148-49) and then to revolt when the time was right in 551H (1156-57).[200] Brett

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[198] Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Wansharisi, *al-Miʿyar al-muʿrib wa al-jʿamiʿ al-mughrib ʿan fatawi ʿulamaʿ ifriqiya we al-andalus wa al-maghreb*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Maghrib al-Islami, 1981), 133–34. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 326.

[199] Metcalfe, "The Muslims of Sicily under Christian Rule," 296.

[200] Al-Hasan's decision to flee Mahdia rather than aid the Normans in their assault on Gabès was partially informed by this legal tradition. The Maliki school held that it was not permissible in most situations for

further finds that al-Hasan ibn ʿAli's decision to flee Mahdia was based on these legal opinions, which dictate that departure from the infidel's realm is laudable.[201]

If Maliki legal judgments were at the forefront of the qadis' and governors' minds, why did they not resist or revolt against Norman rule sooner? The answer to this question is both economic and political. The decade preceding the Norman conquests was marked by drought, military conflict, and emigration. Although the Christian Normans were a bitter pill to swallow for Muslim communities, their presence stimulated the economy and allowed the region to recover from the events of the previous decade. Incoming grain from Sicily combined with a return to typical levels of rainfall helped the port cities of Ifriqiya bounce back from the events of the past decade.[202] Once cities had recovered economically, the "advantages of submission to the Normans" disappeared and paved the way for revolt.[203]

While much of Brett's analysis of Islamic legal tradition in Ifriqiya is convincing, I argue that there are other factors at play as well. Specifically, the tradition of opportunistic holy war in Ifriqiya was fundamental to the mentality that led to revolts against Norman rule in 551H (1156-57). During the twelfth century, there were multiple instances of local lords in Ifriqiya marshaling support for military campaigns against Christians from Muslim allies, at times using religious rhetoric to bolster their cause. The Zirid emirs ʿAli ibn Yahya and al-Hasan ibn ʿAli forged an alliance with the Almoravids

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Muslims to aid non-Muslims in combat. Lower, "Christian Mercenaries in Muslim Lands: Their Status in Medieval Islamic and Canon Law," 420–25.

[201] Whatever the legal framework through which Brett justifies al-Hasan's departure from Mahdia, it is also likely that al-Hasan did not have the military might to stand up to the approaching Norman fleet.

[202] OWDA.

[203] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 359.

against the Normans that took the form of raids against Norman lands in the 1120s.[204] In 517H (1123-24), al-Hasan boasted of the Arab tribes that fought for jihad when they defeated the Normans at the fortress of al-Dimas.[205] When Yusuf usurped the governorship of Gabès in 542H (1147-48) and pledged his loyalty to Roger II, the agitated Muslim populace of the city worked with the army of al-Hasan to overthrew Roger's newest vassal.[206] In 548H (1153-54), a coalition of Arab tribes rejected Roger II's offer of 5,000 Frankish knights to fight alongside them against the encroaching Almohads because they only wanted to seek aid from other Muslims.[207] When ʿAbd al-Muʿmin conquered Mahdia from the Normans, he used rhetoric of jihad to mobilize local Arab tribes to fight with him against Christians in Iberia.[208]

The Arabic chronicles do not make explicit all the rhetoric that surrounded these alliances that formed between the Muslim powers of Ifriqiya against or excluding Christians. However, there is explicit evidence that both al-Hasan and ʿAbd al-Muʿmin used the notion of jihad to motivate Arab tribes to fight on their behalf in 517H (1123-24) and 554H (1159-60), respectively. It is unlikely that other incidents of conflict between Muslims and Christians in Ifriqiya were far divorced from this ideology. This mentality of holy war was opportunistic, though, and was only applied when it suited the interest of its rulers. We cannot ignore the occasions in which Muslim rulers in Ifriqiya worked alongside the Christians to achieve their political ends. Rafiʿ ibn Makkan al-Dahmani of

[204] Al-Tijani, 335-339. Ibn al-Athir, 10:611. Ibn Khaldun, 6:214. Ibn Muyassar, 93. *PL*, 201:615.
[205] Al-Tijani, 338.
[206] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120.
[207] Ibn al-Athir, 11:185-186.
[208] Ibn al-Athir, 11:245-247.

Gabès sought the protection of Roger II against the predatory ʿAli ibn Yahya in 511H (1117-18).[209] Al-Hasan ibn ʿAli requested help from Roger when the Hammadids attacked Mahdia in 529H (1134-35).[210] Yusuf of Gabès asked for the allegiance of Roger in 542H (1147-48) so that he could rule the city.[211]

Conflict in Ifriqiya, therefore, was both interreligious and intrareligious. Local governors threw in their lot with whatever power was at the present best positioned to help their cause. In some cases, this involved making alliances with the Normans. But when the situation called for fighting the Normans, the rhetoric of war changed to include a religious dimension not found in Muslim-Muslim conflict. This style of opportunistic holy war was common in Ifriqiya during the years preceding 543H (1148-49) and it is unlikely that this mentality went away when the Normans conquered these cities. In the years after the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, when the economy had stabilized and cities became more prosperous, local leaders saw the opportunity to regain their independence through the rhetoric that either they or their predecessors had once used. Because Brett's argument frames resistance to the Normans through the lens of Islamic jurisprudence, this political and military dimension is neglected. Combining these ideas, though, produces a picture of resistance to Norman rule that is ultimately more convincing. Using the writings of scholars like al-Maqizi, Muslim jurists could justify both acceptance and resistance to Norman rule when it suited them. As the economy of

[209] Ibn al-Athir, 10:529-530.
[210] Ibn al-Athir, 11:31-32.
[211] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120-121.

Ifriqiya stabilized, it became advantageous for ambitious governors to reject Norman rule, a decision that had political precedence and that jurists could easily justify.

Furthermore, there is evidence there was disdain for the Normans among the Muslim masses of Ifriqiya. Examples of this are seen during the 1140s, when the Normans were in the middle of their Ifriqiyan conquests. In 542H (1147-48), the people of Gabès revolted against their governor Yusuf for becoming subservient to Roger II.[212] A year later, the people of Tunis overthrew their governor simply for trying to trade with the Normans.[213] When the Normans took control over cities in Ifriqiya, it is unlikely that this popular hatred went away.

The causes for this animosity, beyond the nearly constant conflict between the Normans and local Ifriqiyan lords during the 1140s, might have been intensified by the disparaging attitude that Norman elites had toward Muslims in Ifriqiya. The evidence for this comes from contextualizing the content of the *Tristia ex Melitogaudo*. A member of the Norman nobility wrote this poem to win back the good graces of George of Antioch and the Norman court. He did this not only by bolstering the status of the Norman administration through repeated allusions to the Greco-Roman world, but also by demeaning the Muslims that surrounded him. His likely rationale for this latter strategy was to win the sympathy of the Norman court by tapping into their anti-Muslim biases. This disdain for Muslims in Ifriqiya could have translated into daily interactions that are otherwise lost in the primary sources. Ibn Khaldun cryptically writes of Christians causing loss and harm to Muslims in the city of Sfax, which contributed to Abu al-

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[212] Ibn al-Athir, 11:121.
[213] Ibn ʿIdhari, 1:313.

Hasan's uprising against the Normans.[214] The altered political, economic, and religious climate of Ifriqiya could help to explain this harm, particularly if there was an inciting incident like a rise in taxes or a perceived miscarriage of justice to light this powder keg.

But what of the Almohads? Wierusowski, Abulafia, Matthew, and Johns all have argued that the imminent arrival of the Almohads into Ifriqiya fueled the decision of local governors to revolt against the Normans and pledge their loyalty to the Almohads.[215] There is evidence to support the idea that the conquests of the Almohads disrupted Norman rule, although it would be an overstatement to say that it was the central or primary factor for the Ifriqiyan revolts of the 1150s. The evidence for the influence of the Almohad primarily comes from the case of Tripoli, where the qadi Abu al-Hajaj refused to denounce the Almohads in 553H (1158-59) despite William I's demand.[216] The mere need for the Normans to request that the religious elite of Tripoli denounce the Almohads indicates that there were worries in Palermo that the spreading movement would gain traction in Ifriqiya. The response of Abu al-Hajaj confirmed these suspicions, as he was unwilling to denounce his co-religionists.

It would be wrong, though, to see the Almohads as a welcome force in Ifriqiya to whom local governors were eager to pledge their allegiance.[217] Many tribes from western Ifriqiya fought against the Almohads during their campaigns in the early 1150s, including

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[214] Ibn Khaldun, 6:223-224. Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 356.

[215] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 41–42. Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, 58. Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 30–31.

[216] Al-Tijani, 241-242.

[217] Johns oversimplified the pictures when he wrote that "when the moment came, each governor [in Ifriqiya] led his citizens in revolt against Sicilian rule, and transferred his allegiance to the Almohads." Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 291.

the Hammadids, a coalition that included Muhriz ibn Ziyad and Jabbara ibn Kamil of Sousse in 548H (1153-54), and another alliance between Muhriz ibn Ziyad and ʿAbd Allah ibn Khurasan of Tunis in 552H (1157-58). The latter of these two alliances is particularly telling of the Almohads' unpopularity. ʿAbd Allah ibn Khurasan was the governor of Tunis, the same city that had rejected Muhriz ibn Ziyad as its ruler several years earlier. Muhriz was willing to ally with the people who had previously rejected his rule to stave off the advances of the Almohads.[218]

When the Almohads arrived in Ifriqiya in 554H (1159-60), they received a mixed reception.[219] The people of Zawila, who had solicited the Almohads for help in the first place, welcomed them with open arms. The governors of Sfax, Sousse, and Tripoli peacefully surrendered and in turn were permitted to rule on behalf of ʿAbd al-Muʿmin. Other cities, though, did not accept Almohad supremacy. The governors of Tunis, Gabès, Gafsa, and the Djerid resisted the armies of the Almohads, although they were ultimately unsuccessful in stopping their advance. Upon the Almohad conquest of Mahdia in 554H (1159-60), another coalition of Arab tribes (including Muhriz ibn Ziyad and Jabbara ibn Kamil) fought unsuccessfully against ʿAbd al-Muʿmin outside of Qayrawan.[220]

Local resistance in Ifriqiya to the Almohads conquests makes it unlikely that local lords had any intention of submitting to them until they had no other choice. The factors discussed above – changes in society that favored Christian populations, recovery from the economic stress that had gripped Ifriqiya in the 1140s, Maliki perspectives on living

[218] Al-Tijani, 247-248. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:378–79.
[219] The details of these campaigns are in Lévi-Provençal, *Trente-sept lettres officielles almohades*, 99–121. See also Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:378–79, 384–400.
[220] Ibn al-Athir, 11:247.

under non-Muslim rule, and the tradition of opportunistic holy war in the region – provided the rationale for the uprisings against Norman rule. The Almohads' conquest several years later was yet another in a series of foreign invasions that had gripped Ifriqiya for the better part of a century.

In the years after the fall of Mahdia in 554H (1159-60), there is little evidence that the Norman presence in Ifriqiya had a lasting impact on the region. If anything, the arrival of the Almohads minimized any effects of the Norman occupation. The Almohads pursued a policy of conversion, emigration, or death for the Christians of Mahdia and probably enacted similar policies in other cities under their control.[221] The execution of this policy accelerated the decline of indigenous Christianity in Ifriqiya, which had been struggling for centuries and had only recently been bolstered through Norman intervention. Nonetheless, the arrival of the Almohads did not bring an end to Christianity in Ifriqiya, for like the Normans, the Almohads welcomed Italian merchant communities into their cities immediately after their conquests.[222] In 1180, King William II of Sicily made peace with the Almohads and trading between the Kingdom of Sicily and Ifriqiya resumed.[223]

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[221] Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 360. Valérian, "La permanence du christianisme au Maghreb: l'apport problématique des sources latines," 149.
[222] Foundational studies of this include Louis de Mas Latrie, "Documents sur l'histoire de l'Algérie et de l'Afrique septentrionale pendant le moyen âge: relations avec Pise." Louis de Mas Latrie, *Relations et commerce de l'afrique septentrionale avec les nations chrétiennes au moyen âge* (Paris: Imprimeurs de l'Institute, 1886). See also Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*, 298. Constable, *Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain: The Commercial Realignment of the Iberian Peninsula, 900-1500*, 42–44. Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay*, 187.
[223] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 43–45.

Conclusion

During the years of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, governance in Ifriqiya was largely left in the hands of local lords who had held positions of power prior to the arrival of the Normans. In certain places, like Mahdia and the islands between Ifriqiya and Sicily, the Normans exerted more direct control over local populations by appointing governors from their own lands. The Normans also encouraged immigration from Sicily to Ifriqiya, a move that bolstered the presence of Christians and necessitated an increased ecclesiastical presence there. The inventory of two churches in Mahdia indicates an influx of wealth for these institutions. The influx of Christians from Sicily likely caused tension with local Muslim populations, as shown in the contempt that the author of the *Tristia ex Melitogaudo* held toward the inhabitants of Gozo. Norman control also brought Christian merchants to the ports of Ifriqiya, which filled a gap left by fleeing Jewish traders, and helped revitalize the economy of the region. The end to the devastating drought of the 1140s further assisted this recovery. These changes, when combined with the instillation of a *jizya*-like tax on Muslims under Norman control, fundamentally altered the hierarchy of religious power in Ifriqiya.

As the cities of Ifriqiya returned to prosperity, local governors utilized Islamic legal traditions and the region's history of opportunistic holy war as precedent for widespread revolts against Norman rule in the mid-1150s. Several years later, the Almohads subjugated the entirety of Ifriqiya in a campaign that was met with resistance from many local lords. When the Almohads finally subdued the region, they brought forth new strategies of governance that minimized any impact that Norman involvement

might have had. Despite the minimal long-term impact of the Norman Kingdom of Africa on the politics, economy, and religion of the region, contemporary and later writers did not necessarily perceive this. Medieval authors held varied perspectives about the legitimacy and scope of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, one that was particularly divided between those writing in Latin and those writing in Arabic.

Chapter Four

Rex Africe

The previous three chapters have considered the circumstances that led to the extended involvement of the Normans in Ifriqiya and the eventual downfall of Norman governance there. Now it is time to consider how the Normans, the people they conquered in Ifriqiya, and other contemporary rulers perceived Norman rule there from 1148 to 1160. At the heart of this discussion is the use of the title “King of Africa” – rendered in Latin as *rex Africe* and in Arabic as *malik Ifriqiya* – in sources produced both within and outside of the jurisdiction of the Norman kings of Sicily. This chapter will be devoted to the examination of the Latin *rex Africe* while the next chapter will focus on the Arabic *malik Ifriqiya*.[1]

Roger II never adopted the epithet *rex Africe* in his royal charters in the years following his African conquests (1148-1154), instead preferring to use the title that Pope Innocent II bestowed on him: “king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua.” Nonetheless, in other contexts like official seals and private charters, there is evidence that Roger cultivated an image of *rex Africe* in cities that showed strong support for the Norman monarchy like Naples and Palermo. The same trend holds true for his successor William I. During the first six years of his reign (1154-1160), there are multiple instances of the evocation of the title *rex Africe*. These all occur either in cities that had strong ties to the Norman monarchy, such as Naples and Molfetta

[1] An abridged version of this chapter can be found in Matt King, “The Norman Kings of Africa?,” *The Haskins Society Journal* 28 (2017): 143–66.

in southern Italy, where William I sought to show the power of the Norman monarchy in an unruly region. The title also occurs in writings produced by individuals with demonstrable ties to the monarchy, as is the case with Henry Aristippus.

Through this scattered evidence, we can begin to craft an image of *rex Africe* as an unstable political aspiration of the Norman monarchy. The geographic limits of the title were vague and the payoff of being fashioned as *rex Africe* unclear. It was a titled enmeshed in a larger history of the relationships between the Normans and their subjects, one that shows the variety of ways in which individuals within the Kingdom of Sicily saw their kings and in which the Norman kings presented themselves to their subjects.

A Divided Historiography

In the secondary literature about Norman involvement in Africa, the question of whether Roger II and William I ever adopted the title of *rex Africe* is disputed. Some historians have argued that Roger and William widely adopted this royal epithet. Giuseppe La Mantia was among the first to state this when he noted that Roger II willingly adopted the name *rex Africe* in his dedications.[2] Helen Wieruszowski followed this line of reasoning when she wrote that Roger "liked to style himself" with the title of *rex Africe*.[3] Georges Jehel likewise emphasized that Roger "did not hesitate to proclaim himself *rex Africe*" in the years after his African conquests.[4] In these arguments, primary

[2] Giuseppe La Mantia, "La Sicilia ed il suo dominio nell"Africa settentrionale, dal secolo XI al XVI," in *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, vol. 44 (Palermo: Boccone del Póvero, 1922), 167.
[3] Wieruszowski, "The Norman Kingdom of Sicily and the Crusades," 27.
[4] Georges Jehel, *L'Italie et le Maghreb au moyen âge: conflits et échanges du VIIe au XVe siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2001), 52.

source materials related to the reign of William I are not considered nor is the Arabic equivalent of *malik Ifriqiya*. Statements about *rex Africe* are, at best, seen as offshoots about the imperial ambitions of Roger II.

Other historians have pushed back against the idea that Roger II widely adopted this title. In his seminal article on the Norman Kingdom of Africa, David Abulafia writes that the Norman kings did not adapt the royal title in official documents, although he leaves unresolved evidence from sources outside of the royal chancery that mention Roger and William as kings of Africa.[5] Jeremy Johns goes a step further than Abulafia and previous historians by considering the use of both *rex Africe* and the Arabic *malik Ifriqiya*. For the Latin *rex Africe*, Johns follows Abulafia in arguing that there is no evidence to show that the Norman kings adopted the title of *rex Africe* themselves. However, he finds that the use of the title in private contexts suggests experimentation with it. With regard to *malik Ifriqiya*, though, Johns finds considerable evidence for its use. On the basis of Arabic numismatic and epigraphic sources, he argues that the epithet "should be regarded as an official royal title: the Norman king did claim sovereignty over his African possessions and, what is more, he did so through the medium of his Arabic title."[6] He further explains that this title was likely experimental and not adopted for regular use due to the Normans' desire not to alienate their Fatimid allies.

The most conservative reading for the use of *rex Africe* comes from Hubert Houben, who wrote in his biography of Roger II that the few uses of this epithet are

[5] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 40–41.
[6] Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 90–94.

"isolated" examples to be considered "with caution," because the title was never used in royal documents. He argues that because Roger was never referred to as *rex Africe* in a document that he or his chancery produced, we "ought not to speak of a 'Norman kingdom of Africa'" at all.[7] Arguments about the use of the title *rex Africe* are thus varied. The above historians used a combination of epigraphic, numismatic, and written evidence to support their claims. However, none of them have done so in a holistic fashion. I propose the use of new sources of evidence to support the deployment of the title *rex Africe*, primarily found in private charters from the city of Molfetta that are now located in the archive of Badia di Cava.[8]

Furthermore, it is possible to re-orient this historiographical debate beyond the question of whether the Norman kings ever officially adopted the title of *rex Africe* and ask instead the questions of why and for whom were they *rex Africe*. Scholars thus far (with the exception of Johns) have not endeavored to explore some of the larger issues related to this question or to contextualize the title of *rex Africe* in the greater Mediterranean environment in which the Normans ruled. They have taken for granted that the title simply means "king of Africa" and ignored the connotations that the Latin

[7] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 83.
[8] Badia di Cava is the colloquial name for the Benedictine abbey of La Trinità della Cava, which was founded in the early eleventh century. The monastery is located in the modern province of Salerno near the town of Cava de' Tirreni. The archive contains thousands of charters concerning the abbey as well as surrounding monastic houses, which it acquired primarily due to the suppression of various religious orders in the nineteenth century. For medieval historians, the archive is most famous for its collection of Lombard and other pre-Norman charters concerning regional monastic houses. The contents of the archive from 792 to 1065 can be found in the eight-volume *Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis*. The rest of the medieval contents are (to my knowledge) either unpublished or found in assorted compilations of documents like Francesco Carabellese's *Le carte di Molfetta*, which will be discussed at length. Graham Loud, "History of the Library," *Biblioteca Statale Del Monumento Nazional Badia Di Cava*, n.d., http://www.bibliotecabadiadicava.it/index.php?com=statics&option=index&id=2485.

words carried for the people who produced them. In addition, there is the thorny question of what was at stake for the Norman kings either to consciously call or not call themselves the kings of Africa. A similar question can be asked for the private documents that contain this title - what were the possible motivations for individuals outside of the royal circle to use this grandiose title? Through the examination of questions like these, we can arrive at a better understanding of how the Normans kings sought to present their African conquests and if the modern usage of the term "Norman Kingdom of Africa," which implies the existence of a king, is appropriate. Pursuing this question will further permit us to interrogate how individuals living within Norman lands perceived their kings' African conquests.

The First King of Africa?

During the twelfth century, Roger II and his successors cultivated an idea of kingship built around a combination of Papal, Byzantine, and Fatimid precedents. For Roger II in particular, the need for his kingship to be papally sanctioned was paramount. He spent much of the 1120s fighting to be recognized as the king of Sicily, a title that Pope Anacletus II finally bestowed on him in 1130 and was confirmed by Pope Innocent II in 1139.[9] Although there are no records that the title "king of Sicily" had any historical precedent, Roger made certain to present his territories "not as something which he himself had built from scratch, but rather as a legitimate kingdom" restored by the

[9] As explained in Chapter Two, the recognition of Pope Anacletus II proved insufficient to Roger II since Anacletus was later labeled an antipope. Loud, "Norman Sicily in the Twelfth Century."

Papacy and governed with the consent of the people.[10] He convened a council to discuss the precedent for having a king of Sicily, which the council unsurprisingly discovered had existed in the past during the rule of the ancient Romans but had been "for a long time in abeyance."[11]

The importance of papal-sponsored kingship to Roger II is seen in the consistency with which he uses his royal title in the years following his coronation in 1139. Prior to this year, his titles varied. In the 34 Latin surviving royal charters from the years 1130 to 1139, Roger used variations of the titles "king of Sicily and Italy," "king of Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria," and "king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua."[12] But from 1139 until his death in 1154, Roger held the title "king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua" in 29 of 32 surviving royal charters.[13] The consistent use of this title is a reflection of Pope Innocent II's investiture. Innocent II granted the Kingdom of Sicily to Roger and the duchy of Apulia and the principality of Capua to his two sons.[14] Roger II retained these divisions in his royal title once Innocent II granted it to him. The same is true for William I, who kept his father's title of "king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua" throughout his reign despite losing large tracts of Apulia to invasion and rebellion.

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[10] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 54–57.
[11] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, document 48.
[12] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 15 – 47. For these three variations, the original Latin reads, *Sicilie et Italie rex*; *Sicilie Apulie et Calabrie rex;* and *rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue*. For an example of each of these three titles, see Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 15, 17, and 50. This list of charters includes changes made in Enzensberger's compilation of charters from the reign of William I.
[13] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 48, 49, 50, 52 – 60, 63 – 79. This list excludes document 51 because it does not contain Roger II's name. The three other charters refer to him as *Sicilie Calabrie et Apulie rex* ("king of Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria"). Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata,* documents 61A, 61B, and 62.
[14] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 71, 120–25.

Roger's desire to receive papal sponsorship for his throne was not out of the ordinary. During the central Middle Ages, it was commonplace for rulers in Western Europe to claim political legitimacy on the basis of Papal coronation.[15] The Holy Roman Emperors, for example, held coronation ceremonies that centered on the Pope crowning the emperor in the tradition of Charlemagne and Otto the Great. This act meant that there was divine precedent and approval for their reign. For the Norman kings of Sicily, Papal approval signified their divine right to rule, which in turn weakened rival claims to lands within the Kingdom of Sicily. The Holy Roman Emperors, who had coveted Norman lands for much of the 1120s and 1130s, now had to acknowledge the political legitimacy with which the Norman kings reigned. Papal recognition put the Norman kings on equal theoretical footing with their rivals.[16]

Although Roger II fought for papal approval for most of his reign and retained the title that Innocent II bestowed on him, he simultaneously cultivated an idea of Norman kingship that circumvented papal authority so that he could have more direct control over his clergy. Roger's assertion of power over his priests has its roots in the reign of his father, Roger I. In the late eleventh century, Pope Urban II promised to Roger I and his legitimate heirs that they would receive special control over clergy in their lands, including the power of lay investiture.[17] This declaration, which became a source of

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[15] Part of the Holy Roman Emperor's coronation ceremony during the central Middle Ages included a pledge to protect the Latin Church. Papal coronation of Holy Roman Emperors existed from the reign of Charlemagne through that of Charles V in 1530 with a break during the Avignon Papacy, during which time various cardinals performed the coronation ceremony. Reginald Maxwell Woolley, *Coronation Rites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 42–57.

[16] James Greenaway, *The Differentiation of Authority: The Medieval Turn Toward Existence* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 191.

[17] Pope Urban II pledged to Roger I and his legitimate heirs "not to appoint legates to his lands without his prior consent, to entrust the count himself with the oversight of churches instead of a legate when he felt

conflict during the reign of Roger II, contributed to the tension that existed between the Kingdom of Sicily and the Papacy during the 1120s and 1130s. In order to assert his royal authority over the clergy, therefore, Roger drew on Byzantine precedent. The philosophy of kingship in Byzantium was such that "the emperor was held to be Christ's representative on earth and responsible only to God," a perspective that made the Papacy redundant.[18] Roger II supported this ideology by sponsoring the work of the Byzantine writer Nilos Doxapatres, who wrote that Rome was subordinate to Constantinople in the hierarchy of the patriarchal thrones.[19] This perspective on kingship is further seen in the church of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio (also known as the Martorana), which contains a mosaic of Roger II dressed in Byzantine garb and receiving his crown directly from God, not the Pope.[20]

The power that Norman kings held over their priests is seen in an engraving made in the beginning of the mid-1150s, in which the priest Grizant identifies not with the Pope but instead as a "priest of the king of Sicily" and a "priest of the reigning monarch," which in this case was William I.[21] The Papacy thus occupies a curious role in the royal imagination of Roger II and his successors. Although they recognized the importance of Papal investiture because of its precedent in other European monarchies, they

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this was appropriate, and [to give] him the right to veto the attendance of bishops at papal councils." Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard: Southern Italy and the Norman Conquest*, 231–33.

[18] Britt, "Roger II of Sicily: Rex, Basileus, and Khalif? Identity, Politics, and Propaganda in the Cappella Palatina," 26.

[19] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 102.

[20] Britt, "Roger II of Sicily: Rex, Basileus, and Khalif? Identity, Politics, and Propaganda in the Cappella Palatina," 26–28.

[21] The first of these identifications is made in Latin and the second is made in Arabic. The content of this inscription and its use of the title *malik Ifriqiya* are covered in detail in Chapter Five.

simultaneously used other models of kingship to de-legitimize the Pope's authority within the Kingdom of Sicily.

The Norman kings also drew upon the tradition of the Fatimid caliphs in the cultivation of their monarchical image. Roger II, for example, appointed Muslim eunuchs as high-ranking officials and entrusted much of his administration to George of Antioch, who had spent much of his career working for Muslim rulers in the southern Mediterranean. Al-Maqrizi notes that George of Antioch kept Roger II away from the public eye except on holidays, when he would proceed with "horses, adorned with saddles of gold and silver, and with caparisons studded with gemstones, and by domed litters and gilded banners, with the parasol above him and the crown upon his head."[22] The use of a parasol in these triumphant scenes was inspired by the Fatimid caliphs and there is evidence that the Fatimids even gave Roger a parasol for such ceremonies.[23] When Roger II and his successors were not parading on holidays, they remained reclusive in their royal palaces and away from the public view.[24] Similar to the Fatimid caliphs, Roger II and his successors relied upon Muslim eunuchs – often referred to today as palace Saracens – to be the "eyes of his government" and to oversee the quotidian tasks of their administration.[25]

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[22] Jeremy Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Diwan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 82.
[23] Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 265.
[24] Roger II's adoption of Fatimid traditions even led him to import Fatimid architects to help him design his royal palace with its famed *muqarnaṣ*-style ceiling. Johns, "I re normanni e i califfi fatimiti: Nuove prospettive su vecchi materiali."
[25] The term "eyes of the government" comes from Ibn Jubayr, who visited Sicily during the reign of William II. Ibn Jubayr, *Rihla Ibn Jubayr*, 295–301. Johns translates the term as "inspectors of the government" but acknowledges that the term indicates some metaphor of sight. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 288.

Norman kingship was thus multifaceted and incorporated a number of divergent traditions. The Latin title that Roger II and William I used, "king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua," was based on the title given to them by the Pope, even though they adhered to a Byzantine model of kingship that emphasized their divine right through God himself. And in practice, their popular image as king and use of Muslim officials were reminiscent of Fatimid models. When we think of the term *rex* in the context of Norman Sicily, we must thus bear in mind these intersecting conceptions of kingship.

But what of *Africe*? Divergent Latin linguistic traditions make it unclear what the exact meaning of "Africa" would have been to the Normans in Sicily.[26] Contemporary sources reveal a number of ways in which authors conceived of the territory. Popularly held notions in Europe dictated that Africa was a giant landmass. For example, in reference to Roger II's conquest of the island of Djerba, Gervase of Tilsbury wrote in 1135 that Africa was "known to be a third of the world."[27] T-O maps further testify to the size of Africa, which was often depicted as a third or a quarter of the entire world.[28] However, it is not clear if the Norman kings would have adhered to this geographical paradigm. Within the Kingdom of Sicily, there were multiple conceptions of the word *Africe*. In the chronicle of Hugo Falcandus, for example, *Affrice* (a common alternate spelling) refers to the city of Mahdia. Falcandus' account of the loss of Norman

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[26] Roger II also experimented varied the names of the lands he governed in Italy, sometimes referring to them collectively as *Italia* but at other times referring to the territories of Calabria and Apulia. For a detailed discussion of this (but without the consideration of *Africe*), see Enzensberger, "Chanceries, Charters, and Administration in Norman Italy," 136–40.

[27] Gervase of Tilsbury, *Otia imperialia*, ed. G.W. von Leibnitz, Scriptores rerum Brunsvicensium (Hanover, 1707), 943.

[28] Examples include the Hereford Mappa Mundi and the Bünting Clover Leaf Map.

possessions focuses exclusively on the Almohad conquest of the city of Mahdia, which is never named as such but is instead called *Affrice*. One passage from the chronicle shows his equation of the two:

> When [the Sicilian fleet], returning from Spain, could now be seen by the sentries of the Almohads,[29] the soldiers that were in Africa (*Affrice*), with their spirits restored, began to raise shouts, to insult the enemies, and to point out the approaching galleys... When now the fleet was drawing near the land, a huge clamor sprung up in the city (*urbe*) with the joyfulness of the soldiers.[30]

In this passage, we see both the terms *Affrice* and *urbs* being employed to mean the city of Mahdia. The geographical boundaries of this territory, so broadly defined as a third of the known world in the writings of Gervase of Tilsbury, are very different from the more geographically restricted meaning in the chronicle of Hugo Falcandus. Somewhere in between these competing conceptions of Africa are the ideas of Romuald of Salerno and Henry Aristippus. They write of *Africe* as a region roughly similar to the Roman province of Africa Pronsularis, which comprises the boundaries of modern Tunisia, eastern Algeria, and western Libya. Romuald writes that Roger II:

> Prepared the greatest fleet [and] army, which he sent with many soldiers into Africa, which he captured and held. He conquered Sousse, Bone, Gabès, Sfax, and Tripoli, [which] rendered tribute to him.[31]

Here, Romuald presents *Africa* as a territory comprising the cities that Roger conquered, which is more expansive than the one city described by Hugo Falcandus. The introductory letter of Henry Aristippus's translation of Plato's *Phaedo* further situates the

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[29] Hugo refers to the Almohads as "Masmuda," a term that derives from their Masmuda Berber origins.
[30] Falcando, *La Historia o Liber de Regno Sicilie e la Epistola ad Petrum Panormitane Ecclesie Thesaurarium*, 25. Falcando, *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily by "Hugo Falcandus," 1154-69*, 78–79.
[31] Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, ed. Carlo Garufi, vol. 7.1, Instito Storico Italia per il Medio Evo (Castello: S. Lapi, 1935), 227.

area of *Africe* as one of several territories in an area that today we call Africa. He extolls the virtues of William I:

> Whose rule Sicily, Calabria, Lucania, Campania, Apulia, Libya, and Africa applaud, whose conquering right hand is felt in Dalmatia, Thessaly, Greece, Rhodes, Crete, Cyprus, Cyrene, and Egypt.[32]

Africa is thus one of many territories, akin to Calabria or Libya. The variety in perceptions of the idea of *Africe* both within and outside the borders of the Kingdom of Sicily is evident from these passages. As such, it is difficult to tell what boundaries and connotations the epithet *rex Africe* might have had for those who evoked it. The historical usage of the title *rex Africe* does little to clear up this ambiguity. The Vandal kings of Africa referred to themselves using the title *rex* but did not denote the borders of their land using the title of *Africe*. They tended not to qualify their borders or instead they used tribal identities to demarcate their territories. For example, an inscription for Gelimer (d. 553) refers to him as "king of the Vandals and the Alans."[33] Other Vandal rulers styled themselves as "our lord king" or as simply "lord."[34] Authors of the early Middle Ages who wrote about the Vandals, such as Isidore of Seville and Gregory of Tours, acknowledged Vandal rule in Africa but never mention them as *rex Africe*.[35] It was not until the sixteenth century that some authors began to use the title *rex Africe* to refer to

[32] Henricus Aristippus, *Phaedo interprete Henrico Aristippo*, ed. Laurentius Minio-Paluello, vol. II, Corpus Platonicum Medii Aevi: Plato Latinus (London: Warburg Institute, 1950), 90.
[33] Jonathan Conant, *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439-700* (New York: Cam, 2012), 42.
[34] The former of these titles was "surely a conscious imitation of the imperial title." Conant, *Staying Roman*, 44.
[35] Isidore of Seville in *MGH, Auct. ant.* 11:241-303. Gregory of Tours *MGH, SS rer. Merov,* 1.

Vandal rule there.[36] Thus, while the title *rex* was used in the geographical boundaries of the Roman province of Africa Proconsularis during Vandal rule, it was not paired with *Africe.*

The rulers of Ifriqiya in the years following the fall of the Vandals moved away from the title *rex*. Following the Byzantine re-conquest of North Africa under Justinian, the Byzantine emperors used the Greek title of "lord" or "Augustus" in their titulature.[37] When Arab/Berber armies conquered North Africa from the Byzantines, they employed Arabic titles that shied away from the haughty title of *malik*, as will be discussed in the following chapter. It is relevant, though, that at least one Christian chronicler on the Italian Peninsula writing in the aftermath of the Muslim invasions did evoke the title of *rex Africe* to refer to a Muslim lord. The *Chronicon Salernitanum*, which was written by an unknown author in the tenth century, refers at one point to the *rex Africe* (likely referring to the Aghlabid emir Ibrahim II) who sought to invade all of Italy with a great army in the year 902.[38] This entry contains the only mention of the term *rex Africe* before the twelfth century. Later chronicles, including those of Romuald of Salerno and Bartholomew of Lucca, echo this language in their own entries for the year 902.[39]

Although it is significant that the anonymous author of the *Chronicon Salernitanum* used the title *rex Africe*, its usage in this chronicle does not indicate in any

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[36] Caius Iulius Solinus, *Polyhistor, Rerum Toto Orbe Memorabilium Thesaurus Locupletissimus* (Basileae, 1538), 162. Giovanni Battista Carusio, *Bibliotheca Historica Regni Siciliae, Sive Historicorum, Qui de Rebus Siculis* (Palermo, 1723), 20.
[37] Conant, *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439-700*, 61. James Evans, *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 58–65.
[38] *MGH*, *SS,* 3:549.
[39] Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, 7.1:163. Bartholomew of Lucca in *MGH, SS,* 39:376.

way how the Aghlabid lord Ibrahim II presented himself.[40] In this context, *rex Africe* was a term used to emphasize the scope of the Muslim conquests and the threat posed to Sicily and Italy in their aftermath. It did not reflect Aghlabid preoccupations, titulature, or linguistic traditions. Prior to the Normans' use of the title, there is no evidence that any ruler styled himself as *rex Africe*. The title *rex Africe* is thus a creation of the Normans and, for us, has an ambiguous meaning. While we can establish that the title of *rex* broadly means "king" as the Sicilian Normans saw it, the exact bounds of *Africe* are less clear. The Latin *Africe* varied in definition depending on the author, ranging in size from a third of the known world to only the city of Mahdia. It is possible that the Normans embraced this ambiguity and warped the boundaries of *Africe* to best fit their present circumstances. From the lack of evidence, though, it is impossible to prove this. *Rex Africe* had loose geographic bounds and, consequently, an unclear payoff.

Charters and Methodology

The majority of the evidence concerning the use of *rex Africe* in the Kingdom of Sicily comes from contemporary charters. Both Roger II and William I issued charters in Latin, Greek, and Arabic on issues relating to commerce, the rights of monastic houses, and the settlement of peoples in their lands. Charters issued in the name of the king and (often) containing the king's own signature are called royal charters while those concerning transactions between individuals and organizations outside the purview of the

[40] Coinage from his reign uses the title of *āmir al-Muʿminin* ("commander of the faithful"), as was common among the Aghlabids. Muḥammad Abū-l-Faraj al-ʿUsh, *Monnaies Aġlabides étudiées en relation avec l'histoire des Aġlabides* (Damas, 1982).

royal government are called private charters. This distinction between royal and private charters is common in the historiography and historians have used it consistently when considering this type of evidence in the Kingdom of Sicily.[41]

The precedent for the use of charters in southern Italy and Sicily dates to Roman Law and continues through the early Middle Ages especially during the reigns of Justinian and Charlemagne.[42] When the Normans invaded southern Italy and Sicily, they kept in place existing Lombard and Byzantine apparatuses for the construction of charters. For the reign of Roger I, for example, some 77 charters survive today modeled on Byzantine documents from southern Italy. Roger I did not have a developed bureaucracy for these charters, though, meaning that "their issuance was an *ad hoc* affair."[43] Upon Roger II's coronation in 1130, he expanded the administration of his nascent kingdom under the guidance of George of Antioch to include a hierarchy of chancellors responsible for the creation of charters. This administration was based not only on Fatimid models, but also on those from Italy, where the notarial profession had blossomed during the eleventh century. It is only after these reforms that historians "can begin to speak of an organised and professional chancery" in the Norman Kingdom of Sicily.[44]

The reforms of Roger II included the establishment of a tri-lingual bureaucracy that issued royal documents in Arabic, Greek, and Latin. Surviving Arabic documents are

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[41] See, for example, Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 90–91. Graham Loud, "The Chancery and Charters of the Kings of Sicily (1130-1212)," *The English Historical Review* 124, no. 509 (August 2009): 779–82.
[42] Enzensberger, "Chanceries, Charters, and Administration in Norman Italy," 118–19.
[43] Loud, "The Chancery and Charters of the Kings of Sicily (1130-1212)," 781.
[44] Loud, "The Chancery and Charters of the Kings of Sicily (1130-1212)," 781.

primarily *jarāʾid* ("registers," singular *jarīda*) that document the names and landholdings of Muslims within Sicily.[45] During the twelfth century and especially after Roger II's peninsula wars in the 1130s, Latin gradually replaced Greek as the language in which charters and royal correspondences were written. These documents were written by professional notaries, both lay and secular, who were employed by the Norman government. They wrote not only charters and mandates but also "correspondence, accounts, inquires, communications about the execution of mandates, and so forth."[46] In the Kingdom of Sicily (unlike Germany), it was customary for notaries to record their names on documents they issued, which allows modern historians to analyze the careers of notaries in the Norman government. The careers of Matthew of Salerno, Robert of Saint Giovanni, and Sanctorus are all traceable by examining the charters that they wrote and cross-referencing them to any mentions in contemporary chronicles.[47]

Broadly speaking, charters are "legal documents recording a juridical act," ranging from commercial transactions to acknowledgements of services rendered.[48] Although there is some variation in form, charters tend to contain two main textual components, the protocol and the text. The protocol is a formulaic statement that gives a standardized greeting and notification of the date, often in the form of the year of the ruling monarch. This establishment of time is then followed by a royal title, which in

[45] Johns exhaustively analyzes these registers in Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 91–192. Tim Smit also uses these registers in his consideration of the occupation of Muslims that lived in Norman Sicily. Smit, "Commerce and Coexistence: Muslims in the Economy and Society of Norman Sicily," 116–56.
[46] Enzensberger, "Chanceries, Charters, and Administration in Norman Italy," 125–26.
[47] Loud, "The Chancery and Charters of the Kings of Sicily (1130-1212)," 787–88.
[48] Philip Slavin, "Charters," in *Handbook of Medieval Studies: Terms – Methods – Trends*, ed. Albrecht Classen, vol. 2, 3 vols. (De Gruyter, 2010), 1706–14.

certain cases is where we see the use of the epithet *rex Africe*. The protocol section of a charter is typically followed by the text, which is more dynamic and considers the participants and the purpose of the charter. The text concludes with a sign-off from the notary or individual who wrote the document and signatures of witnesses. Charters were most often written on parchment (today often called *instrumenta*, *acta*, or *diplomata*) as opposed to registers, which were bound collections of charters written on paper.

The professional notary was central to the creation of charters. Although based on the tradition of classical Roman offices, the notarial tradition only became widespread in Italy during the late-eleventh century at the University of Bologna.[49] By the time Roger II came to power, the notarial tradition was well established in Sicily and southern Italy. Notaries had various titles depending on the authority that licensed them; we have documents surviving from royal notaries, ecclesiastical notaries, and public notaries (among others).[50] Individual notaries often marked their charters with a distinctive sign-off illustration or signature near the end of the document to show its authenticity. In both royal and private charters, notaries evoked the name and titles of the ruling monarch at the beginning and/or of any given charter. Take for example a January 1155 charter from Messina, which begins:

> In the name of eternal God and our savior Jesus Christ, amen. William, blessed by divine favor, King of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and the principality of Capua...

The same document ends:

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[49] Kathryn Reyerson and Debra Salata, *Medieval Notaries and Their Acts: The 1327-1328 Register of Jean Holanie* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2004), 2. David Herlihy, *Pisa in the Early Renaissance: A Study of Urban Growth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), 1–20.

[50] Reyerson and Salata, *Medieval Notaries and Their Acts: The 1327-1328 Register of Jean Holanie*, 11.

> ...We ordered that [this document] be written by the hand of Ioannes, the royal cleric, and confirmed by the hand of our own "admiral of admirals"[51] in the year of the incarnation of the Lord 1155, in the month of January, in the third indiction year, also in the fourth year of our king, happily amen.[52]

In addition to these royal charters, there exist hundreds of private charters concerning transactions between individuals and institutions that do not involve the royal government. In these charters, individual notaries exercised a certain degree of agency in how they formulated the protocol section of charters, which led to varied epithets for the Norman kings. For example, one private charter from May 1157, now located in the archive of Badia di Cava, refers to William as the "most glorious king of Sicily and Italy."[53] Another charter from May 1157 in the same archive calls William "by the grace of God, magnificent and victorious, king of Sicily and Italy."[54] Yet another charter, this one from June 1157, calls William the "most serene and unconquered king of Sicily and Italy and Africa."[55] The variety of the royal epithet in these charters provides an indication of how people living under Norman rule viewed their kings and, consequently, a glimpse of how they perceived their African conquests.

This approach permits us to move away from discussions of charters only as contracts, as has been the historiographical trend, and toward one that considers how the formulaic language of notaries sheds light on the world in which they lived. Kathryn Burns' analysis of charters in particular provides a useful methodological lens through which to view the character of the notary. Drawing on the work of Hardwick and

[51] Referring to Maio of Bari, whom William I appointed as his *ammiratus ammiratorum* early in his reign.
[52] Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document 5.
[53] Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXIX, document 102.
[54] Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXIX, document 104.
[55] Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXIX, document 106.

Merwick, she argues that historians ought to "imagine the notarized document itself as an historical artifact - a space where negotiations once took place, around the notarial template, leaving traces of understandings that often belie the wording of the text."[56] Her argument examines the often-hostile landscape in which notarized documents were created in order to better understand how notaries made known their concerns in writings that they produced. From this, she hopes to move away from discussions of notarial documents as fact, fiction, or forgery but instead toward "the histories of the relationships in which the notaries were enmeshed, and the complex, specific interests that swirled around them."[57] Notaries were not necessarily neutral arbiters but had agendas in the creation of their documents beyond the capacity of their office.

It is this principle that is most fruitful to apply to the notarial tradition in the Kingdom of Sicily and the titles given to the Norman Kings of Sicily. Using Burns' approach, we can consider the use or absence of the epithet *rex Africe* as reflective of the preoccupation of the creators of the document. For royal charters, its use or absence indicates the concerns of Roger II, William I, and their notaries. For private charters, its use or absence indicates the concerns of individual notaries. This methodology permits us to move beyond the question of whether the Norman kings used the title *rex Africe* and instead toward a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which Norman involvement in the Mediterranean was reflected in titulature. When these royal and private charters are

[56] Kathryn Burns, "Notaries, Truth, and Consequences," *The American Historical Review* 110, no. 2 (April 2005): 355. Burns draws on the work of Donna Merwick, *Death of a Notary: Conquest and Change in Colonial New York* (Ithaca: Cornel, 1999). See also Laurie Nussdorfer, *Brokers of Public Trust: Notaries in Early Modern Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).
[57] Burns, "Notaries, Truth, and Consequences," 376.

put in dialogue with each other, we can see a plurality of perspectives on Norman involvement in Africa and, at times, a disconnect between what the Normans presented in their royal documents and how those living in their lands interpreted it.

Norman Royal Charters

Despite the expansive administration of the Norman Kings of Sicily, very little survives of their royal charters from the twelfth century.[58] Graham Loud estimates that around 200 Latin, Greek, and Arabic charters issued in the name of Roger II survive today. However, at least 43% of the Latin charters (37 out of 86) are demonstrable forgeries and most of the Greek charters only survive in much later copies.[59] Of these remaining charters, the majority come from a handful of monasteries in Sicily and Southern Italy, giving us only a thin slice of the administrative output of the Norman administration. Carlrichard Brühl conservatively estimates that around 1,350 charters from Roger II have been lost since the days of his administration, not taking into account letters and mandates.[60] The story is similar for the reign of William I. Only a fraction of the works produced by his administration survive: thirty-five documents (thirty of which are written in Latin), including seven forgeries.[61]

Thus, while some documents survive from the chanceries of Roger II and William I, it must be emphasized that these are but a small sample of the many charters that were

[58] Appendix Two contains a table of all public and private charters discussed in this chapter.
[59] Loud, "The Chancery and Charters of the Kings of Sicily (1130-1212)," 781.
[60] Carlrichard Brühl, "Die normannische Königsurkunde," in *Civiltà del Mezzogiorno d'Italia Libro scrittura documento in età normanno-sveva* (Salerno: Carlon & Ditore, 1994), 378.
[61] Loud, "The Chancery and Charters of the Kings of Sicily (1130-1212)," 781–82.

produced during their reigns. Based on this limited pool of evidence, though, there is no evidence that Roger II adopted the title of *rex Africe.* The Latin charters of Roger II, as compiled by Brühl, show relative consistency in his use of royal epithets in the years before and during his involvement in Africa. With some variation in spelling and scribal abbreviations, Roger is introduced from 1139 until his death most commonly as "Roger, with divine favor and mercy, king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua."[62] The specification of Roger's lordship in Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria is in keeping with the title that Pope Innocent II conferred upon him. Once Roger received this title from the pope, he was unwilling to change it in official Latin correspondence. In these documents there is no mention of Roger as *rex Africe* nor of his African conquests.

Even though Roger did not use the epithet *rex Africe* in royal charters, there is evidence from later chronicles to suggest that he nonetheless considered himself to be the ruler of Africa. Writing in the early thirteenth century, chronicler Ralph Niger described Roger II's seal, which bore the phrase, "the Apulian, the Calabrian, the Sicilian, and the African serve me."[63] Similarly, Gervase of Tilsbury (d. 1228) and Andrea Dandolo (d. 1354) report Roger ordering the same inscription to be placed on his sword. This phrase, which in Latin is *Apulus et Calaber, Siciulus Michi Servit et Afer*, rhymes and provides

[62] Brühl, *Rogerii II diplomata*, documents 41, 43, 48, 50, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64A, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80. It should be noted that the text provided for documents 27, 31A, 31B, 36A, 45, and 64 were updated in Ensensberger's collection of documents from the reign of William I and it is this text that is considered.
[63] Ralph Niger, *Radulfi Nigri Chronica*, ed. Robert Anstruther, Publications of the Caxton Society (London, 1851), 84. A poem from Rouen written during the middle of the twelfth century includes the line "Italy and Sicily were subdued, Africa was subdued by [Roger]." M. Richard, *Notice sur l'ancienne bibliothèque des échevins de la ville de Rouen* (Rouen: Alfred Péron, 1845), 163. Nef, *Conquérir et gouverner la Sicile islamique aux XIe et XIIe siècles*, 597.

what David Abulafia calls a “jingle” to celebrate Roger’s imperial power.[64] Although neither this seal nor sword exist today, the evidence from these Latin chronicles indicates that Roger sought to portray himself as ruler of Africa in some situations, likely those within his court (the sword) or in situations where Roger had some control over who would see the phrase (the seal). It is important to note, though, that this jingle does not include any mention of Roger II as *rex*, nor of him ruling over a *regnum* (“kingdom”) that included Africa. It evokes the image of the African serving Roger II, the meaning of which is unclear and may or may not have brought to mind notions of kingship to whomever heard or read the jingle.

When William I came to power in 1154, he largely emulated the royal title of his late father. The most common of his titles, “William, by divine favor and mercy, king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua,” was identical to that of his father.[65] However, in the corpus of writings from the chancery of William I, there are several documents that do not utilize the title found above, including a July 1156 charter from Naples, in which William guarantees certain rights to the town of Naples that Roger II had granted in 1130. In the course of this charter, William is called “most serene and unconquered king of Sicily and Italy and also of the entire kingdom of Africa, crowned by God, pious, blessed, always a triumphant Augustus.”[66] This document provides the

[64] The rhythm of the jingle might also explain the somewhat uncommon spelling of Africa as *Afer* instead of the more common *Africe* or *Affrice*. Abulafia, “The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean,” 41, 48–49.
[65] Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, documents 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34. Several documents (3, 19, 20, and 31) similarly refer to William as *Dei gratia rex Sicilie*.
[66] Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document 13.

only surviving mention of a Norman king being called the king of the Kingdom of Africa in a royal document.

The context of this act is important. As seen in the translation below, this charter embeds notions of King William's majesty and conquests in his restoration of the rights of Naples:

> Nevertheless, this is the word from those charters, which the middling people[67] of Naples—rising up against our most glorious lord-king and against the nobles of the city of Naples and removing and not observing the sacrament—sought to break in the time of schism, conspiracy, and revolt. Neither those nobles nor any among them made [the sacrament] then to our most glorious aforementioned lord-king. But after a blessed time, through the grace of God our lord William, most serene and unconquered king of Sicily and Italy and also of the entire kingdom of Africa, crowned by God, pious, blessed, always a triumphant Augustus, subdued splendidly his own traitors and also the Greeks and the Sicilians and other numerous barbarian peoples... He indeed instructed that the charters, which the middling people sought to break, as is read above, be restored as if they were from a past time… on the fifteenth day of the month of January, in the sixth indiction, with our above-mentioned lord William reigning, magnificent king of Sicily and Italy, in the seventh year and the fifth year of his domination of the city of Naples. [68]

This document evokes the memory of William's victories and the vastness of his territories in the face of a city divided between the rebellious *medianus populus* ('middling people') and the loyal urban nobility. Here, his African territories are leveraged alongside his victories over the Byzantines in order to highlight the grandeur of his rule. The charter emphasizes these triumphs alongside the continued loyalty of a

[67] "Middling people" is a translation of the Latin *medianus populus*. This group is most often cited opposite the *nobiles* ("nobles") in twelfth-century chronicles, meaning that it likely indicates a group of free people that are nonetheless distinct from villeins. The origins and variation of the words *medianus, mediocris, and medius* are discussed in Giles Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 342–60.
[68] Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document 13.

group of nobles within Naples, who were loyal in the years prior to this rebellion and continued to support William. It is into this context that the grandiose title of William, who reigns as king over 'the entire kingdom of Africa', is evoked. Despite the precariousness of William's rule across southern Italy during the mid-1150s due to both internal rebellion and external invasion, Cesar the notary (the author of this charter) portrays William as a king triumphant over his foes. In this context, then, *rex Africe* was used as a tool to show the strength of the Norman monarchy beyond the scope of what the typical royal title did. It was employed in Naples as a warning to the rebellious peoples there and a confirmation to the nobility that their loyalty was not misplaced.

The presence of this charter complicates the narrative painted by previous historians, who do not acknowledge the presence of royal charters that mention William as *rex Africe*. This charter provides direct evidence for William I utilizing the epithet in a royal charter and indicates official use of the title. Although Cesar the notary's sign-off at the end of the document does not invoke William as *rex Africe*, the presence of this title earlier in the charter provides us with an instance in which it was utilized and possibly suggests that it was similarly evoked in earlier documents. While this in itself is significant, it is important to note that this document is unique among the surviving charters of William I. It is the only royal charter to come from Naples during the reign of William I and is furthermore the only charter from the notary Cesar.[69] The majority of William's charters from the years 1154 to 1160 were written by Maio of Bari, but his

[69] The *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane* indicates that there was another 1157 charter from Cesar held in the Naples archive, although it is likely that this was destroyed during World War II. The destruction of this archive will be considered shortly. *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane*, vol. Anno IX-Fascicolo I (Naples: Presso Federico Furchheim, 1884), 715.

signature is conspicuously absent from this document. We are thus dealing with a highly atypical document, one that testifies to the use of *rex Africe* but should not be used to make sweeping claims about its presence during the early years of William's reign.

Two others documents from July 1156 confirm how atypical the Naples charter is. The Treaty of Benevento, made between William I and Pope Adrian IV, refers to William as "by the grace of God, the magnificent and most glorious king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua."[70] Furthermore, a charter given to the church of Troia but written in Apulia refers to William as "by the grace of God, most glorious king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua."[71] Although William's own admiral and notary, Maio of Bari, wrote both of these documents, he makes no mention of him as *rex Africe*.[72] The only mention of William as king of Africa in royal charters comes from the Neapolitan notary Cesar, from whom no other documents survive. This one charter thus provides us with a view into one notarial tradition that advocated William I as *rex Africe*, a tradition embedded in the political landscape of southern Italy and one that sought to assert the strength of the Norman monarchy.

Private Charters

Although the use of the title *rex Africe* in surviving royal charters is limited to one document from Naples, a total of nine private (i.e. non-royal) charters from the Italian

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[70] Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document 12.
[71] Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, document 14.
[72] Maio of Bari was responsibly for writing many of the charters to emerge from the administration of William I. Of the thirty charters to survive from the reign of William for the years 1154 – 1160 (based on the catalog of charters compiled by Enzensberger), Maio had a hand in creating seventeen of them. Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, documents 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29.

peninsula, one from the time of Roger II and eight from the time of William I, do make use of the epithet. The presence of this title in multiple documents written in the city of Molfetta during the reign of William I is particularly evocative. Molfetta, a city that William governed as Duke of Apulia and patronized during his reign, had close connections to the Norman monarchy and remained loyal to him during the peninsular rebellions of the 1150s. Like the city of Naples, one of the notarial traditions to emerge from Molfetta involved the utilization of *rex Africe* to highlight the strength of William and to show the city's support of him.

The only private charter to mention Roger II as *rex Africe* is no longer extant and only survives in a footnote in K.A. Kehr's foundational 1902 book *Die urkunden der normannisch-sicilischen könige*.[73] In this footnote, Kehr mentions a number of different titles found in private charters from the time of Roger II although he unfortunately does not give their provenance. One of these titles is "our lord [Roger], most serene and unconquered king of Sicily and Italy and also of the entire kingdom of Africa, crowned by God, pious, blessed, always a triumphant Augustus." This title is identical to the royal epithet in William's 1156 royal charter from Naples although there is slight variation in spelling – "Sycilie et Ytalie" in Roger's document versus "Sicilie et Italie" in William's.

The similarities between the titles in these two documents are compelling and could help establish the provenance of Roger's charter. The epithets given to the Norman kings in both public and private charters were largely tied to the location where the charter was produced and the individual notary who wrote the charter. For example, the

[73] K.A. Kehr, *Die urkunden der normannisch-sicilischen könige: Eine diplomatische untersuchung* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1902), 246.

vast majority of William's charters from Palermo in the years 1154 to 1160 were written by Maio of Bari and had a standardized title of "William, blessed with divine favor, king of Sicily, of the duchy of Apulia, and of the principality of Capua."[74] Private documents from the reign of William reveal similar consistency in his title. All 28 of the documents from Cilento currently held in the archive of Badia di Cava from the years 1154-1157 refer to William as "most glorious king of Sicily and Italy" with some variation in spelling depending on the notary.[75] The same holds true for a group of documents from Montorio al Vomano, where the scribe Roger calls William "most glorious king of Sicily and Italy" in five documents.[76]

Within this sample of documents from the archive of Badia di Cava, variation in royal title within one location is rare and only tends to occur in the spelling of proper nouns, usually the use of a "W" or "G" in William and an "I" or "Y" in Sicily and Italy. Variations in spelling tend to occur between notaries. Take, for example, the set of 28 charters from Cilento in the years 1154-1157 mentioned above. The notary Iohanne, who penned 26 of these documents, refers to the William I exclusively as *Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis* ("William, most glorious king of Sicily and Italy"). The scribe Marcus, who penned the remaining two charters, spells the king's name as *Wuililemi*.[77]

The slight differences in spelling here are significant and can be applied to the mystery document from the footnote of K.A. Kehr. Given the similarity in title but

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[74] See, for example, Enzensberger, *Guillelmi I diplomata*, documents 6-8.
[75] Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXVIII, documents 87 and 118. Box XXIX, documents 3, 6, 7, 17, 18, 37, 38, 41, 51, 53, 54, 57, 58, 59, 60, 69, 72, 78, 79, 91, 96, 107, 115, 118, 119, 120.
[76] Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXVIII, documents 75, 88, 92-94.
[77] Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXVIII, documents 87 and 118. Box XXIX, documents 3, 6, 7, 17, 18, 37, 38, 41, 51, 53, 54, 57, 58, 59, 60, 69, 72, 78, 79, 91, 96, 107, 115, 118, 119, 120.

variation in spelling between Kehr's charter and William's 1156 document from Naples, we can speculate that the former was written in Naples during the reign of Roger II by a scribe other than Cesar, who penned William's 1156 charter. If we accept this line of logic, we can point to a scribal tradition in Naples in which two scribes referred to both Roger II and William I as *rex Africe*. This makes sense for several reasons. The first is that Roger II wrestled with securing Naples' loyalty during his campaigns in the 1130s.[78] A number of contemporary chronicles noted the might of the armies at his command, including the *Chronicon Casauriense*, which proclaimed that "even the mountains themselves were forced to tremble before his countenance."[79] Some chroniclers viewed Roger's conquests as acts of despicable tyranny while others saw his actions as necessary in order to maintain order where there previously had been none.[80] Whatever their attitude, however, they all recognized the strength of Roger's armies, a strength that was likely backed by the most imposing royal title that Roger could muster. This grandiose title continued even after the death of Roger II, as William I sought to retain the loyalty of Naples by ensuring similar rights were granted to its people as had been given during the reign of his father. The notarial tradition to emerge from Naples was one that reflected the Norman king's assertions of authority there. Although the document from Roger's reign (according to Kehr) was private, the royal charter of William indicates that the Norman kings might have had a hand in manufacturing this lofty title, one that trickled down to certain circles of the Neapolitan notarial tradition.

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[78] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 66–74.
[79] Iohannes Bernardi, "Chronicon Casauriense," in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ed. L.A. Muratori, vol. 2.2 (Milan, 1726), 887–88.
[80] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 74–75.

The final reason to think that Kehr's charter is from Naples is the fact that no historian since Kehr has been able to find it.[81] Abulafia, Houbens, and Johns all note the existence of Kehr's footnote but none of them have found its location.[82] If Kehr's document was produced in Naples and held in the *Monasteri Soppressi* section of its archive, it was in all likelihood destroyed by the Nazis during the course of World War II.[83] The loss of this charter and others of similar provenance makes it difficult to understand whether the use of *rex Africe* in Kehr's charter was typical or not. At the very least, though, it points to a notarial tradition in which at least two scribes utilized this royal title, possibly at the request of the Norman kings.

The use of the title *rex Africe* in this Neapolitan tradition is echoed in a group of private documents originating in the city of Molfetta, a town located near Bari on the east coast of Italy in the region of Apulia. Historian Francesco Carabellese, who spent the greater part of his career cataloguing and writing about the history of southern Italy, transcribed a series of medieval charters from Molfetta and compiled them in his 1912 compilation *Le carte di Molfetta*.[84] This compilation is important not only because it provides evidence for the use of the title *rex Africe* but also because it contains

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[81] A charter from Nola (now a suburb of Naples) that is housed in the archive of Badia di Cava further emphasizes the tradition of Neapolitan notaries giving grandiose titles of the Norman kings. The charter calls William, "by the grace of God, the magnificent and victorious king of Sicily and Italy." Although this charter does not invoke the title *rex Africe*, it does bear some resemblance to the lofty titles found in the above-mentioned Neapolitan charters. Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXIX, document 104.
[82] Abulafia, "The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Norman Expeditions to Majorca and the Muslim Mediterranean," 41. Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 90. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 84.
[83] Retreating German soldiers destroyed much of the Naples archive on 30 September 1943. Surviving materials and lists of published documents can be found at *Guida generale degli Archivi di Stato di Napoli*, n.d., 14–19.
[84] Francesco Carabellese, *Le carte di Molfetta (1076-1309)*, Codice diplomatico Barese (Bari: Commissione provinciale di archeologia e storia patria, 1912).

transcriptions of documents no longer in existence. There are eight documents from *Le carte di Molfetta* that mention William I as "the most serene and unconquered king of Sicily and Italy and Africa."[85] Six of these documents come from the monastic archive of Badia di Cava (also known as La Trinità della Cava), located near Salerno on the west coast of Italy. These six documents still survive today and are accessible at this archive. However, the remaining two charters were housed in the *Monasteri Soppresi* section of the Archivio Napoli, which was destroyed in World War II.[86] Similar to the work of Kehr, the transcriptions of Carabellese have preserved now-lost charters that bear witness to individuals that considered the Norman kings to be *rex Africe*.

The eight private charters that call William I *rex Africe* concern the sale of land and various goods in Molfetta, some of which involve the monastery of Badia di Cava. While these charters are invaluable for their glimpse into the interactions of these communities, for our purposes they are most important for bestowing the title of *rex Africe* on William I. Unlike the royal charter of 1156 from Naples discussed above, William I's presence in these Molfetta documents is procedural. The year of his reign is evoked in the beginning of these documents in formulaic language along with the calendar and indiction year. William I had no involvement in the production of these charters. Instead, it was individual notaries whose language preserves some indication of local impressions of the Norman kings. The Molfettan charters that mention William I as *rex Africe* come from the hands of Alfanus, Alexius, and Sabinus. The language these

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[85] Carabellese, *Le carte di Molfetta*, documents 22, 24-29, 34.
[86] Carabellese, *Le carte di Molfetta*, documents 22 and 26.

scribes use to describe William is similar but not identical, as seen in Table One.[87]

Table One – Molfetta Charters that use *rex Africe*		
Date	**Notary**	**Royal Title**
Aug 1154	Alfanus	Guidelmi serenissimi | 2) Regis Sicilie et Italye ac Africe
Jan 1157	Alfanus	Guilielmi serenissimi… [DELETO] (regis) Sicilye et Italye ac Africe... Guilielmo... Sicilie et Italie ac Africe
June 1157	Alfanus	Guilielmi serenissimi ac invictissimi regis Sicilie et Italie ac Africe
Oct 1157	Alfanus	Guidelmi Serenissimi ac Invictissimi Regis Sicilie et Italie ac Africe
Dec 1157	Alexius	Guidelmo invictissimo Rege Sicilie et Italie ac Africe
Jan 1158	Alfanus	Guilielmi serenissimi ac invictissimi regis Sicilie et Italie ac Africe
1158	Alexius	Guidelmo invictissimo Rege Sicilie et Italie ac Africe
Feb 1160	Sabinus	felicissimi Guilielmi regis invictissimi Sicilie Italie et Africe

These eight documents provide insight into how this group of notaries perceived the rule of William I. Despite the slight variations in spelling and adjective use, all eight charters refer to him as *rex Africe*. Three different notaries adhered to this tradition for all of the years in which it was conceivable for William to be called *rex Africe*, for they range from the first year of his reign in 1154 up to fall of Mahdia in 1160, which was the last of his African possessions. This charter evidence thus points to the consistent use of the title *rex Africe* in all of the years of William's reign in which he was in control of cities in North Africa. Regardless of this consistency in the Molfetta charters, though, it is important not to overstate their scope. Many other documents produced in this city during the reigns of

[87] The documents from August 1154 and January 1157 are the two that were located in the archive of Naples. As such, I have preserved the formatting of the transcription from Carabellese. The six documents not from the archive of Naples are located in Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXIX, document 106 and Box XXX, documents 1, 3, 4, 6, and 54. I have made one amendment to the work of Carabellese with regard to the notaries. Carabellese wrote that the document from January 1158 was written by the notary Alexius. However, the notarial sign-off from this document clearly indicates that the notary Alfanus wrote it. Carabellese, *Le Carte di Molfetta*, document 29.

both Roger II and William I do not refer to them as *rex Africe*, instead defaulting to the relatively common classification of the kings as simply “the most excellent king” or in atypical instances, “the most serene/unconquered king.” Table Two below shows this trend.[88]

Table Two – Molfetta Charters that do not use *rex Africe*		
Date	**Notary**	**Royal Title**
Mar 1148	Laurentius Iaquintus	Roggerii regis serenissimi
Mar 1148	Laurentius Iaquintus	Rogerii regis excellentissimi
1148	Laurentius Iaquintus	Rogerii regis excellentissimi
1149	Peter Paul	Rogerii Sicilie et Italie regis magnifici[89]
Jan 1151	Laurentius Iaquintus	Rogerii regis excellentissimi
Oct 1151	Laurentius Iaquintus	Rogerii regis excellentissimi
Feb 1152	Laurentius Iaquintus	Rogerii regis excellentissimi
1157	Alexius	Guilielmo invictissimo rege
Jan 1157	Laurentius Iaquintus	Guilielmi regis excellentissimi
June 1157	Laurentius Iaquintus	Guilielmi regis excellentissimi
1159	Laurentius Iaquintus	Guilielmi regis excellentissimi
1160	Laurentius Iaquintus	Guilielmi regis excellentissimi

The notary Laurentius wrote the clear majority of these charters. The sole exception to this is the 1157 document written by Alexius, the same notary who referred to William as *rex Africe* in two other documents from 1157 and 1158. Thus, even though the Molfetta charters contain a substantial eight instances in which William is called *rex Africe*, other documents produced from 1148-1160 complicate this picture and show that, even in the city of Molfetta, there were notaries that did and did not invoke the title of *rex Africe*.

What is the cause of this variation in the Molfettan charters? To answer this

[88] Carabellese, *Le Carte di Molfetta*, documents 16-21, 26-27.
[89] This charter is found in *Codice Diplomatico Barese: Le Pergamene Della Cattedrale Di Terlizzi*, not *Le Carte di Molfetta*. It is the only charter from Molfetta in this particular collection for the years 1148-1160. Francesco Carabellese, *Le pergamene della Cattedrale di Terlizzi: (971 - 1300)*, vol. 3, Codice diplomatico Barese (Bari, 1899), 82–83.

question, we must turn to the evidence present in the charters themselves: the notaries, the people named in the documents, the purpose of the individual charters, and the witnesses. From this analysis, it appears that the use of the term *rex Africe* was contingent upon the attitude of individual notaries. There is overlap between charters in tables one and two in the list of witnesses to these charters and the content of the charters themselves. Maio Melacce, the soldier Bassallus, the witness Sapius, and a man identified only as Bisantius all appear in charters from both tables. Likewise, there is some overlap in the content of the charters from both tables, two of which consider Leo of Luca's sale of land to the monastery of Cava. These similarities, combined with the unlikelihood that these individuals would have had a say in the process of constructing the formulaic language at the beginning of these charters in the first place, make it unlikely that the presence of the title *rex Africe* was contingent upon the presence of certain witnesses or the content of the charters.

Unlike the witnesses and content of these charters, there is a fairly rigid break between the notaries that use *rex Africe* and those that do not. The notaries Alfanus and Sabinus use the title in all of their surviving charters while Laurentius Iaquinti and Petrus Paulus do not. Alexius is the sole notary to both include and not include the title in two separate charters, one dating to 1157 and one to 1158. Based on the divide between notaries in writing the title *rex Africe*, it is likely that individual notaries had some agency in choosing whether or not to use the title. The rationale behind this choice is frustratingly unclear. We know nothing about these individuals other than what is contained in their writings. It is possible that Alfanus the notary is the same person as the

Alfanus of Molfetta mentioned in a June 1157 charter, which if true would mean that Alfanus had the landed wealth for his son to sell a plot of land to the monastery of Cava. Beyond this we are reduced to conjecture.

We can, however, see the links between the Molfetta charters to name William I as *rex Africe* and those operating under a similar scribal tradition as those in Naples. The Neapolitan charters to name Roger II and William I as *rex Africe* used grandiose language to reinforce the strength of the Norman monarch to both their supporters and detractors. Like these Neapolitan charters, the Molfetta charters elevate William's rule through the use of superlative adjective like "most serene" and "most unconquered." The reason for Molfettan notaries' support of the monarchy, though, is slightly different from those of Naples. During the revolts and invasions at the beginning of William I's reign, certain cities remained loyal to the monarchy. Molfetta, which William had governed when he was Duke of Apulia, was one such city.[90] In 1162, he founded the church of Santa Maria of the Martyrs in Molfetta because of the city's continued loyalty to him despite the nearby revolts against his rule. The vocabulary in these charters therefore highlights the strength of the Norman monarch and shows support for him despite the civil unrest that permeated the Italian peninsula during the 1150s.

The use of *rex Africe* in Naples and Molfetta provides evidence for the title's use in cities with strong connections to the Norman monarchy. When put in dialogue with other notarial traditions in the Kingdom of Sicily during the mid-twelfth century, though, it becomes clear that the evocation of the Norman kings as *rex Africe* was highly atypical.

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[90] Francesco Carabellese, *La Città di Molfetta dai primi anni del secolo X ai primi del XIV* (Trani: TIpografo Cav. V. Vecchi, 1899), 22–24.

The archive of Badia di Cava, where the majority of the Molfettan charters are housed, contains hundreds of charters from throughout central Italy. I examined all of the charters in this archive dating from January 1154 through January 1158, some 160 individual documents, in order to get a sense of whether the Molfettan and Neapolitan traditions of using the title *rex Africe* was common in other areas of central Italy.[91] Based on an examination of the notaries and the titles they employed, it is clear that the Molfettan/Neapolitan tradition is in the extreme minority. None of the examined charters from outside Molfetta used the title *rex Africe*. Originating in eleven locations and comprising at least sixteen notaries, these charters on the whole exhibit remarkable uniformity in referring to William I as "the most glorious king of Sicily and Italy."[92] None of these scribes wrote of him as *rex Africe* nor showed any indication in their charters that they adhered to such a perspective. In this light, the uniqueness of the Molfettan and Neapolitan charters comes into view. This was a perspective shared by few notaries and one that was extremely limited in geographic scope.

Evidence from other archives in Italy reinforces this perspective. At the archive of Montevergine, for example, there exist fifty private documents dating from January 1154 through January 1158, none of which use the epithet *rex Africe*.[93] Only 19 of the 50 documents in this date range even mention the Norman Kings. Some only invoke the year of the incarnation, others invoke Pope Adrian IV, and one charter invokes Duke Robert II

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[91] These documents comprise Archivio Badia di Cava, Pergamene, Box XXVIII, documents 87-120; Box XXIX, documents 1-120; and Box XXX, documents 1-6.
[92] The location of thirteen of these charters is unknown. The notaries for four of these documents are also unknown.
[93] Mario Tropeano, ed., *Codice diplomatico Verginiano*, vol. 4 (Montevergine, 1980), 74–246.

of Capua. When King William's name is used, he is most often called the "magnificent king of Sicily and Italy."[94] Furthermore, even if another cluster of documents bearing the royal epithet *rex Africe* were found in an archival collection, it would only serve to reinforce the idea that this title was rare and circulated only in certain circles. Local notarial traditions dictated how the Norman kings were featured in charters and the case of the Molfettan scribes calling them *rex Africe* is unique.

Henry Aristippus and Moving Beyond a Norman Kingdom of Africa

Beyond charter and anecdotal evidence provided in later chronicles about Roger II's sword and seal, I have only been able to locate one other mention in the Latin language of Norman governance in Africa written during the time of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. Like the seal and sword of Roger II that proclaimed "the African serves me," this document does not consider the Norman kings to be *rex Africe* specifically but it nonetheless mentions their rule. In 1160, Henry Aristippus, the archdeacon of Catania cathedral (eastern Sicily), translated Plato's *Phaedo* into Latin. He included with this translation a dedicatory letter. This letter praises the cultural vibrancy of Sicily and extolls the virtues of King William I:

> Whose senate is a school; whose retinue is a gymnasium; whose single word is a philosophical axiom; whose questions are complicated; whose solutions leave nothing unturned; whose zeal leaves nothing untried; whose rule Sicily, Calabria, Lucania, Campania, Apulia, Libya, and Africa applaud; whose conquering right hand Dalmatia, Thessaly, Greece, Rhodes, Crete, Cyprus, Cyrene, and Egypt feel; whose father, that great Roger, restored such splendid deeds, more illustrious and more radiant with such brightness.[95]

[94] Tropeano, *Codice Diplomatico Verginiano*, vol. 4, documents 322, 329, and 348.
[95] Aristippus, *Phaedo interprete Henrico Aristippo*, II:90. See also Karla Mallette, *The Kingdom of Sicily, 1100-1250: A Literary History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 154–56.

Although he does not use the title *rex Africe* directly, Aristippus nonetheless equates the area of Africa as one under William's control akin to Sicily or Calabria, despite the fact that at the time he wrote this letter the Normans only held control of the city of Mahdia. Aristippus' letter echoes the triumphant tone of William's Neapolitan charter of 1156 and supports this idea that, even though William rarely adopted the title himself, some within his lands considered him to be the ruler of Africa. Aristippus' proximity to the Norman monarchy supports the notion that circles of individuals close to Roger II and William I saw them as kings of Africa. Aristippus tutored William I, produced important translations of Greek texts for William's court, and later became his *familiaris*.[96] Like the individuals writing charters in Naples and Molfetta, Aristippus considered the Norman monarchs to have rule over Africa or, at the very least, he used this style of rhetoric to bolster their rule—likely as a way of improving his own career prospects.

Through this cumulative patchwork of evidence, we can thus begin to reorient the question of whether or not the Normans were definitively *rex Africe* to one in which we consider the circumstances in which Roger II, William I, or those under their authority saw them as such. We know from multiple sources that Roger II commissioned a seal and sword inscribed with "the African serves me," indicating that in some circumstances Roger touted his sovereignty there. A private charter from Naples during Roger's reign further reveals that some individuals within the Kingdom of Sicily saw him or thought it strategic to proclaim him *rex Africe*. However, this epithet never translated to official

[96] Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 103. Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily*, 216.

diplomatic correspondence, likely due to the king's desire to maintain the title bestowed upon him by Pope Innocent II.

For William I's reign, there is considerably more evidence for the use of rhetoric that promoted the idea of Norman rule in Africa: one royal charter, eight private charters, and a letter from Henry Aristippus. The presence of this title, as in the instances of Roger II, is tied to the loyalty of a given individual to the Norman monarchy. Henry Aristippus had close ties to William I and the city of Molfetta was loyal to William since he had been its duke. In these circles, notions of Norman sovereignty in Africa existed. For William, too, the evocation of this title was a useful reminder to the divided population of Naples about the extent of his power. For the rest of the Kingdom of Sicily, though, the evidence for the use of *rex Africe* is nonexistent. No charters outside of Naples or Molfetta use the epithet *rex Africe* and less than half of the surviving charters from Molfetta use the term.

But even in cases where individuals within the Kingdom of Sicily mentioned Norman rule in Africa, there is considerable variation. The title in the Naples charter, "most serene and unconquered king of Sicily and Italy and also of the entire kingdom of Africa, crowned by God, pious, blessed, always a triumphant Augustus" is more illustrious than the title "most serene and unconquered king of Sicily and Italy and Africa" found in the Molfetta charters. The seal and sword of Roger II proclaim that the African "serves" him while the letter of Henry Aristippus indicates that Africa applauds William I's rule. In the body of evidence, there are multiple ways of expressing Norman rule in Africa, whether it be the title *rex Africe* or the perception of Africa as the object of

the Norman monarchy. Within these varied titles, the meaning of *Africe* is also unclear. Its presence alongside the likes of Sicily and Italy indicate that it was a territory similar to the Arabic *Ifriqiya* but at the same time, the grandiose proclamation of the Norman kings as rulers of "the entire kingdom of Africa" brings to mind the vastness of a domain a third the size of the world, as some medieval authors held.

Although the scope and advantages of utilizing the title *rex Africe* remain amorphous to us, the epithet was utilized in the Kingdom of Sicily in certain situations. But rather than attempting to definitively proclaim Roger II or William I as *rex Africe*, we can instead consider them cultivating the title in places loyal to their rule (Molfetta) or in places where they sought to exert their authority (Naples). The occurrence of this title in southern Italy is particularly evocative, for it indicates that the Normans marketed themselves in this rebellious region as a monarchy in control over vast territories, including Africa. The employment of this title was rare but nonetheless significant at various levels of Norman society, whether to clergymen like Henry Aristippus or to loyal notaries in Molfetta. Through the acknowledgment of the diversity of perspectives on the Norman monarchs in their own kingdom, we can move beyond debates about whether the Norman 'Kingdom of Africa' was an objective reality and instead acknowledge that it was established in the minds of certain individuals within Norman lands. To this group of people, the imperial might of Roger II and William I was incomplete without Africa.

Chapter Five

Malik Ifriqiya

The epithet *malik Ifriqiya*, like its Latin counterpart *rex Africe*, has commonly been translated into English as “king of Africa,” a definition that obfuscates a title with unclear boundaries and meanings. Although several scholars like Jeremy Johns and Brian Catlos have argued that the Norman kings adopted *malik Ifriqiya* as an official royal title, the evidence for this assertion is slim. The title appears only on the engraving of a headstone commissioned by a high-ranking Norman priest. When paired with the Latin sources discussed in the previous chapter, this limited pool of evidence confirms the idea that certain circles with direct ties to the Norman monarchy celebrated their kings as *malik Ifriqiya*. Beyond this one piece of evidence, there is no indication of the term being used. Although two dinars from Mahdia mark Roger II and William I as *malik*, the word is never paired with *Ifriqiya*. Likewise, other surviving Arabic works written during the time of Norman domination in Ifriqiya – including the famed geographical compendium of al-Idrisi – make no mention of the Norman kings as *malik Ifriqiya*.

When we broaden our source base to consider evidence from outside the Kingdom of Sicily, the perception of Norman involvement in Ifriqiya changes dramatically. Arabic-writing authors, specifically Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani, and Ibn Khaldun, systematically downplay Norman governance in Ifriqiya and instead present the Norman conquests as an interregnum between two legitimate dynasties, the Zirids and the Almohads. Although these authors mention Roger’s lordship over Sicily, titles of

governance are rarely ever applied to his African conquests. To them, the Normans were not kings of Africa and there was no Norman Kingdom of Africa. Instead, Norman involvement in Ifriqiya is painted as part of a larger conflict between Christians and Muslims, one that is monolithic across time and space. Slight variations in these chronicles attest to individual authors' agendas in writing them, but the chronicles nonetheless espouse narratives about an interfaith clash of Christians and Muslims in which the Norman invasion of Ifriqiya plays an integral part.

Malik, Ifriqiya, and *Malik Ifriqiya*

The question of whether the Norman kings adopted the title *malik Ifriqiya* has received less scholarly attention than the use of *rex Africe*. The only study of the title in any detail comes from Jeremy Johns' article "*Malik Ifrīqiya*: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids." Johns finds four instances of this Arabic title: twice on a quadrilingual headstone from Palermo and on two separate coins minted in Mahdia during the time of the Norman occupation. From this examination, he concludes that *malik Ifriqiya* was an experimental title that nonetheless "should be regarded as an official royal title: the Norman king did claim sovereignty over his African possessions and, what is more, he did so through the medium of his Arabic title."[1] Johns then argues that the title was used sparingly because the Normans did not want to alienate the Fatimids, who were complicit in the Norman conquest of Ifriqiya.

[1] Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 94.

Historians to consider this topic since Johns have adhered to his argument. Catlos writes that Roger sought to "establish himself as *malik Ifriqiya*," a title that went beyond what either El Cid or Alfonso VI of Castile had proclaimed for their own conquests in al-Andalus.[2] Metcalfe too echoes Johns and characterizes the adoption of the royal title *malik Ifriqiya* as "initially enthusiastic, but then somewhat more hesitant" due to the increasingly tenuous relationship between the Normans and Fatimids.[3] Other arguments about the general use of the title "king of Africa," as explored in the previous chapter, are varied. Houben argues contrary to Johns that it was never an official royal title and, thus, it would be incorrect for us to refer to a Norman Kingdom of Africa in the first place.[4] In all of these arguments, historians use this royal title to show the ambition of the Normans in Sicily and the Norman kings' attentiveness to the larger diplomatic context in which they were operating. These arguments, though, do not consider the connotations that both *malik* and *Ifriqiya* carried with them during the twelfth century and the implications for the Normans using these words. It is therefore necessary to evaluate what these terms meant to the Normans and other polities in the Mediterranean.

The term *malik* (pl. *mulūk*) has varied in usage and connotation since its first appearance in pre-Islamic inscriptions from Arabia and Syria.[5] In these inscriptions, it had the simple connotation of a ruler over a group of people. For example, the epitaph of the Lakhmid ruler Imruʾ al-Qays ibn ʿAmr (c. 328 CE), sports the title "king of all

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[2] Catlos, *Infidel Kings and Unholy Warriors: Faith, Power, and Violence in the Age of Crusade and Jihad*, 164–65.
[3] Metcalfe, *The Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 171.
[4] Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 83.
[5] *EI2*, "Malik."

Arabs." This early connotation changed, though, with the rise of Islam in the seventh century. The initial opposition that Muslim rulers had to the word *malik* is grounded in its root, *malaka*. This root implies, above all, ownership or possession. Various forms of the root mean "to make the owner" (*mallaka*), "to seize" (*tamallaka*), and "to control" (*istamalaka*). From this are derived nouns of ownership and possession like "reign" (*mulk*), "realm" (*malakūt*), and "seizure" (*imtilāk*).[6] Embedded in these meanings is the Qur'anic precedent for the word. Chapter 20, verse 114 of the Qur'an refers to God as *al-malik al-ḥaqq* ("the true king").[7] Early Qur'anic exegesis and hadith subsequently condemned the use of the word for anyone but God. In one hadith, for example, Muhammad called the title "king of kings" as applied to men to be "the worse of names in my sight."[8] Disdain for the title *malik* is seen in texts that demean the Umayyad caliphs by calling them *mulūk* for their ostentatious and worldly government. The term was a "morally repugnant feature of the old order" and an affront to God, himself, one that made rightly guided Muslim rulers present themselves as stewards of God, not kings.[9]

Despite initial opposition to the use of the term *malik* to describe anyone but God, the expansion of Islam into North Africa and Persia brought about changing conceptions of its appropriate usage. From the tenth century onward, dynasties like the Buyids, Seljuqs, Fatimids, and Ayyubids used the term as a royal epithet.[10] One of Saladin's

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[6] *Lane's Lexicon Supplement*, "ملك." *Lisan al-'Arab*, "ملك."
[7] *Qur'an*, 20:114.
[8] Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 188.
[9] Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society*, 185.
[10] *EI2*, "Malik." Jeremy Johns, "The Norman Kings of Sicily and the Fatimid Caliphate," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 15 (1993): 138.

honorifics, for example, was *al-malik al-nāsir* ("the champion king").[11] The title of *malik* didn't necessarily apply only to the dynastic head, though, as in certain places it was "freely applied to princes" and provincial governors.[12] The Fatimid Caliphate, for example, appointed viziers with this title. Because of this changing perspective, some rulers adopted new titles to show their superiority over other *mulūk*. The Fatimids called themselves *malik al-mulūk* ("the king of kings") and the Mamluks used the epithet *al-malik al-ṣulṭān* ("the king sultan"). Although Fatimid viziers sometimes adopted the title of *malik*, it does not appear that the Zirids ever used it. Surviving epigraphic and numismatic evidence provides the Zirids exclusively with the title of emir.[13]

Across the Strait of Sicily, the Normans incorporated *malik* into their titles, although their reason for doing so is disputed. Discussion about the origins and significance of Norman Arabic titles dates back to the pioneering work of Michele Amari, who argued that that they derive from the Kalbids of Sicily.[14] Recent scholarship, though, particularly that of Jeremy Johns, has pushed against the idea that the Normans' Arabic titles were based on Kalbid models. He argues that Norman titulature evolved in three phases and was inspired by a combination of pre-existing Islamic models,

[11] Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), xlix.
[12] *EI2*, "Malik."
[13] Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zirides: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 2:509–13. Very few Zirid coins survive to this day and the one that dates closest to the Norman conquest is one from the independent governor of Sfax, Hammu ibn-Malil, which is dates to 461H (1068-69). Hazard, *Numismatic History*, 53-56, 89-94. See also, 'Ajjabi, *Jami' al-maskukat al-'Arabiyah bi-Afriqiyah*, I:179-294.
[14] Michele Amari, *Storia dei musulmani di Sicilia*, 2nd ed., vol. 3.3 (Catania: Romeo Prampolini, 1938), 875.

Latin/Greek-Arabic transliteration, and Norman innovations.[15] The first phase of this process, from the rule of Robert Guiscard and Roger I, comprised Arabic titles that were transliterated from Latin or Greek. One title from c. 1072-1073 refers to Roger I as *al-qūmus ākh al-dūqa Ājār* ("the count, brother of the duke, Roger").[16] The second phase, from late in the reign of Roger I until 1130, shows experimentation with Arabic terms as translations of their pre-existing titles. In one example from 1109/10, Roger II is *al-imām ṣultān Ṣiqiliya Rujār* ("the imam, sultan of Sicily, Roger").[17]

It is during this second phase that the title *malik* first appears in the Norman Sicilian context. A source from 1097/1098 calls Roger I *al-imām Rujār malik Ṣiqiliya* ("the imam Roger, king of Sicily").[18] Another from 1109 refers to Adelaide del Vasto as *malika Ṣiqiliya wa-Qalāwriya al-nāṣira li-dīn al-naṣrāniya* or ("queen of Sicilia and Calabria, the defender of the religion of Christianity").[19] The intent or meaning of the word *malik* in these titles is unclear. Neither Roger I nor Adeliade claimed kingship of Sicily during their reigns, so are we to take their use of the title *malik Ṣiqiliya* as indicative of their intention to make Sicily a kingship? This is unlikely. The words *malik* or *malika* were two of several Arabic words that the Norman rulers used to present their rule, alongside *ṣulṭān* and *imam*. These varied titles indicate that Roger I and his successors, up to the coronation of Roger II as king in 1130, were looking for appropriate ways to express their governance in the Arabic language. In line with Johns' argument,

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[15] Johns, "The Norman Kings of Sicily and the Fatimid Caliphate," 135. A discussion of these titles is found throughout Jeremy Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," *Bollettino di numismatica* 6–7 (1986): 11–54.
[16] Example #3 in Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 36.
[17] Example #15 in Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 38.
[18] Example #8 in Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 37.
[19] Example #13 in Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 38.

they were searching for ways to translate Latin titles into Arabic. This ambiguity in language is seen in Johns' translation of these titles. He translates the word *malik* as "sovereign" for Roger I's 1097/1098 document of Roger I but he consistently translates it as "king" for the years of Roger II's rule after 1130.[20]

The title *malik* becomes a standard component of Roger II's titulature following his coronation in 1130, which begins the third phase of Johns' taxonomy. To Johns, this phase marks a clear break with past conventions, one in which Arabic titles are employed that are more reminiscent of the Islamic tradition of titulature (particularly the Fatimids) than the Latin or Greek ones. Thus, in Arabic titles after 1130, Roger II is most often referred to as *malik*. The exact honorific surrounding *malik* varies depending on the context.[21] Below are a few of the Arabic titles that Roger II held during his reign:

> *Rujār al-malik*
> Roger the king, 525H? (1130-31)
>
> *al-muʿtaz bi-allah al-malik Rujār al-muʿaẓam*
> The powerful by God, king Roger the great, c. 1141-45
>
> *al-malik Rujār al-muʿaẓam*
> King Roger the great, 540H (1145-46)
>
> *al-muʿtaz bi-allah Rujār malik Ṣiqiliyya*
> The powerful by God, Roger, king of Sicily, date unknown

While the exact meaning of *malik* is unclear in the years preceding 1130, it becomes more concrete following Roger II's coronation. It means "king" and is the equivalent of

[20] Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 36–44.
[21] These honorifics derive from the *ʿalāma*, which was in essence the signature of Islamic rulers during the classical period, often used in place of a ruler's name. The Fatimids made use of the *ḥamdala*, a specific form of the *ʿalāma* during their reign. Heinz Halm, *The Fatimids and Their Traditions of Learning* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 48–49.

the Latin *rex*. The consistent use of *malik* is echoed in Latin documents produced from 1130 to1154, which without fail refer to Roger II as *rex*.[22] The Fatimid caliphate even recognized this title, for in the 532H (1137-38) letter of al-Hafiz to Roger II, the Norman king is called *al-malik bi-jazīra Ṣiqiliya wa-Ankūriya wa-Āntāliya wa-Qullūbriya wa-Satralū wa-Malf* ("the king of the island of Sicily and Longobardia and Italy and Calabria and Salerno(?) and Melfi").[23]

Based on Roger II's consistent use of *malik* following 1130, it is clear that the Normans' usage of *malik* was tied to the Latin term *rex* and the connotations it held. Johns' argument that Roger's titles after 1130 had "nothing in common with the Greek and Latin royal titles" is thus incorrect.[24] The Arabic and Latin titles of Roger II after 1130 are united in their agreement that Roger II is a king, whether a *malik* or *rex*. This is significant for our examination of the title *malik Ifriqiya*, for the title represents the kind of kingship that Roger II established following a papal coronation in 1130.[25] By the time of Roger II's conquest of Mahdia in 1148, there was an established tradition for the Norman kings to use the word *malik* in their royal titles, although there was variation in the honorifics that surrounded it. Following the capture of Mahdia, we continue to see the consistent use of *malik* and, in one case, its pairing with *Ifriqiya*.

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[22] These Latin documents are discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

[23] al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-a'sha fi sina'at al-insha*.The 1123 letter that al-Hasan ibn ʿAli distributed to the people of Ifriqiya following his victory over Roger II called him the *ṣāḥib Siqiliyya* ("lord of Sicily"). Al-Tijani, 337.

[24] Johns, "The Norman Kings of Sicily and the Fatimid Caliphate," 135.

[25] The consistent use of the word *malik* in the royal titles continues into the reigns of Roger II's successors. Both of the surviving Arabic titles of William I refer to him in Arabic, either as *al-malik Ghulyālm al-hādī bi-āmr Allah* ("king William, the leader to the order of God") or *al-malik Ghulyālm al-mu'aẓam* ("king William the great"). The more numerous Arabic titles of William II similarly make consistent use of the word *malik*, even if the honorifics surrounding it vary. Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 44–47.

Much like *Africe*, the boundaries of the territory of *Ifriqiya* were varied and depended on perspectives of indvidual authors.[26] Arab historians of the initial conquests in North Africa equated Ifriqiya with the territory held by the exarch Gregory the Patrician – all the way from Tripoli to Tangiers. During the ninth century, a number of geographers wrote that the territory under Aghlabid rule was synonymous with Ifriqiya. During the reign of the Hafsids, the city of Béjaïa alternated between being placed in the Central Maghreb and Ifriqiya depending on the political leanings of individual authors.[27] Even today, there is some ambiguity surrounding the word, which can refer to both the entire continent of Africa as well as the region of Ifriqiya. Modern Standard Arabic has attempted to rectify this issue by specifying that *Ifrīqiyā* with a long "ā" signifies the continent while *Ifrīqiya* with a short "a" indicates the region. This division, though, is not present in all contexts and it certainly does not exist in medieval manuscripts.

The best approximation of how the Norman court of Roger II might have considered Ifriqiya comes from the hand of Muhammad al-Idrisi.[28] In his geographical compendium, which was commissioned by Roger II and written in Sicily, al-Idrisi makes no mention of an "Africa" that corresponds to the landmass that we today call Africa.

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[26] Modern scholars agree that the term itself "undoubtedly" originated from the Latin *Africe* and the Roman province of *Africa Proconsularis*, created after the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE. Medieval scholars, perhaps unwilling to accept the Latin root of the Arabic term, argued that the word had its origins elsewhere. Some Arab chroniclers thought it derived from one of their ancestors, Ifrikis or Ifrikish, who had migrated to the area. This line of thought originates from the geographer Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi. *EI2*, "Ifrīḳiya." Other authors like Ibn Abi Dinar thought that it was based on the root F-R-Q, which broadly means "to separate," because Ifriqiya separated Egypt from the Maghreb. Ibn Abi Dinar, 7-9. Unless noted otherwise, Talbi's analysis of the term Ifriqiya in the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* is the source for my summary. *EI2*, "Ifrīḳiya."

[27] Rouighi, *The Making of a Mediterranean Emirate: Ifriqiya and Its Andalusis, 1200-1400*, 6–8.

[28] See S. Maqbul Ahmad, "Cartography of Al-Sharīf Al-Idrīsī," in *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*, ed. J.B. Harley and David Woodward, vol. 2.1, 6 vols., The History of Cartography (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 156–74.

Instead, he describes the territory of Ifriqiya, which is located in the third climatic zone (out of seven) between the Maghreb to the west and "the land of Alexandria" to the east.[29] He indicates that the Maghreb runs from the western ocean through the city of Constantine (Algeria).[30] Ifriqiya begins just east of Constantine, at the city of Baghai (Algeria) and runs through the central Tunisia steppe. The eastern border of Ifriqiya is the city of Lebda (Leptis Magna) in Libya. The southern border of Ifriqiya is unclear, as descriptions of the region are largely restricted to coastal cities with the exceptions of Gafsa, located in inland Tunisia, and several nearby oasis towns used as trading posts for sub-Saharan gold routes.[31]

If we take al-Idrisi's geographical knowledge as reflective of the Norman court, we are presented with a picture of Ifriqiya as a largely coastal region straddling the Maghreb to the west and Egypt to the east. But if the Normans were simply transliterating the word *Africe* into *Ifriqiya*, much like they did with *rex* into *malik*, then the boundaries for the region become much less clear. *Africe* could range in meaning from only the city of Mahdia up to the massive continent known to be a quarter of the world.[32] Like its Latin equivalent, the title *malik Ifriqiya* thus has unclear boundaries. While the Normans used the word *malik* as the Arabic equivalent of *rex*, it is unclear whether *Ifriqiya* too was a transliteration or part of the Arabic titulature that the Norman kings utilized from Fatimid precedents, one that was meant to serve as a legitimizing force in the Islamicate world.

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[29] Al-Idrisi, 1:8-11.
[30] Al-Idrisi, 1:11.
[31] Al-Idrisi, 1:276-283.
[32] The linguistic tradition of *Africe* is discussed in Chapter Four.

Additionally, there is the potential that these two interpretations were meant to work in tandem with each other.

Like *rex Africe*, the title *malik Ifriqiya* was a Norman invention and does not appear in the titulature of Muslim rulers from the time of the initial Muslim invasions of the seventh century through the Norman invasions of the twelfth century. The only mention of the term I found during this period was from the index of books compiled by of Ibn al-Nadim, who lived during the tenth century. In his *Kitāb al-Fihrist* ("Book of the Index"), he included a letter sent by Bertha, the daughter of Lothair II of Lothairingia and the wife of the margrave of Tuscany, to the Abbasid court in Baghdad.[33] The story goes that one of Bertha's servants was a eunuch named ʿAli, whom her soldiers had captured during a raid on an Aghlabid ship. Bertha used ʿAli to draft a letter to the Abbasid caliphate in an attempt to create an alliance, perhaps against the Aghlabids or the Byzantines. The letter, though, was written in the "Frankish language" and required translation first into Greek and then into Arabic before it could be read.

The Arabic text begins with Bertha optimistically calling herself the "queen of all the Franks" and a former friend of the *malik Ifriqiya* (the Aghlabid king). She goes on to tell the story of ʿAli's capture and then proclaims the extent of her own lands, which are greater than the ruler of Byzantium. While this constitutes the first documented use of the title *malik Ifriqiya*, its actual use by the Aghlabids and their successors is unlikely. The Aghlabids called themselves emirs in virtually all the surviving sources - documentary,

[33] The Arabic text and English translation for this letter can be found in Daniel König, *Arabic-Islamic Views of the Latin West: Tracing the Emergence of Medieval Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 200–201.

numismatic, epigraphic - since they ruled Ifriqiya on behalf of the Abbasid Caliphate.[34] The use of *malik Ifriqiya* in this letter was likely the result of a translation process in which Bertha sought to exaggerate her connections in the most impressive way possible.

There was therefore no precedent for the self-styled title of *malik Ifriqiya* before the mid-twelfth century. We are dealing with a title that was the creation of the Normans and one that was unprecedented in the tradition of Arabic titulature. It had unclear bounds, like its Latin counterpart *rex Africe*, and likewise an unclear payoff. Nonetheless, the evidence from twelfth-century Sicily indicates that the title *malik Ifriqiya* existed among elite circles and was mobilized alongside *rex Africe* as an indicator of the perceived limits of the Norman monarchy. Other pieces of evidence from the Kingdom of Sicily further indicate that the Norman kings asserted their monarchical authority in Ifriqiya even though the title *malik Ifriqiya* was not evoked.

The Tombstone of Anna

On August 20th, 1148, a woman named Anna was buried in the church of Saint Mary in Palermo. Several months later, on May 20th, 1149, her body was moved into a chapel that her son, a priest named Grizant, had built for her in the church of Saint Michael the Archangel. This information is engraved into a quadrilingual tombstone that bears one of two known references to both Anna and Grizant (the other reference is found on the trilingual tombstone of Grizant's father, Drogo). Anna's headstone is remarkable

[34] See, for example, Talbi, *Emirat Aghlabide*. al-ʿUsh, *Monnaies Aġlabides étudiées en relation avec l'histoire des Aġlabides*.

not only for its craftsmanship, but also for its use of the title *malik Ifriqiya*, which appears in two of the four engravings.

The inscriptions on Anna and Drogo's tombstones imply that Grizant and his family were prominent members of the Palermitan nobility and had a close relationship with the Norman monarchy. On the trilingual inscriptions of Drogo's headstone, Grizant is referred to as one of the *clerici regis Sicilie* ("priest of the king of Sicily").[35] The Arabic text of Anna's headstone similarly places Grizant as *qasīs al-ḥaḍra al-mālika al-malikiya* ("a priest of the reigning monarch)."[36] On both the Greek inscription of Drogo's headstone and the Judeo-Arabic inscription of Anna's headstone, William I is named explicitly as the king whom Grizant serves, indicating that the headstone was produced in the mid-1150s.[37] The identification of Grizant as a priest of William I, not the Pope, shows the loyalty he had to the Kingdom of Sicily and his status within the Norman administration.[38] Grizant must have had substantial wealth not only to commission these headstones but also to finance the construction of the chapel in which his parents were laid to rest. His use of multiple languages played into the "propaganda of syncretism"

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[35] King William I is explicitly named in only the Greek text. Michele Amari, *Le epigrapfi arabiche di Sicilia* (Palermo: Stabilimento Tipografico Virzi, 1879), 95–96.
[36] The transcription of this text found in Amari, *Le epigrapfi arabiche di Sicilia*, 91–92. Part of Amari's transcription is amended in Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 91–92.
[37] This means that these headstones were written and erected years after the death of his parents and sometime during the reign of William I, likely between the period of 1154-60.
[38] Johns argues that Grizant was a priest of Roger II. The engravings of the two headstones, though, specifically indicate that he served king William. It is certainly possible that Grizant was a priest when Roger II reigned, but the evidence from the headstones places Grizant as a priest of William I. Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 91. Maria Andaloro, *Nobiles Officinae: perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, vol. 1 (Catania: Giuseppe Maimone, 2006), 519–23.

that was a hallmark of the Norman regime.[39] Grizant's perspectives, therefore, ought to indicate how other powerful nobles felt in the Norman court felt about the monarchs whom they served.

The inscription commissioned by Grizant is the only surviving work to contain the title *malik Ifriqiya*. This is found in both the Arabic and Judeo-Arabic inscriptions, seen below:

مالكة ينطالية وانكبرذة وقلورية وصقلية وافريقية
the king of Italy, Lombardy, Calabria, Sicily, and Ifriqiya[40]

אלמלך אלמעתם צאחב איטאליה ונכברה וקלוריה ה'וצקל ואפרקיה
the great king, the lord of Italy, Lombardy, Calabria, Sicily, and Ifriqiya[41]

These two inscriptions provide the only evidence of a Norman king being called *malik Ifriqiya* during the time of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. They reinforce the notion that there existed an idea of Norman kingship in Ifriqiya among certain circles with close ties to the Norman monarchy. This title was used in certain private and royal Latin charters as well as these dedicatory inscriptions. The idea of Norman kingship in Ifriqiya, though,

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[39] Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 91. For much of the twentieth century, historians considered the Norman regime in Sicily to be one of tolerant multipluralism that produced a society unlike any before seen in the Middle Ages. This is most explicit in John Julius Norwich, *The Kingdom in the Sun, 1130-1194* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970). Recently, though, historians have shown that the *populus trilinguis* (a term first coined by Peter of Eboli in the thirteenth century to refer to the languages of Latin, Greek, and Arabic that were used within the Kingdom of Sicily) was an enterprise used to exert control over non-Christian populations of the Kingdom of Sicily rather than it was an attempt to create an egalitarian society. This is most easily demonstrated in the numerous revolts against Muslims that broke out during and between the reigns of William I and William II. We have also seen this in the context of this dissertation with the execution of Philip of Mahdia for being a crypto-Muslim. Johns, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Dīwān*, 284–86.

[40] In the Arabic text, the word *mālika* is used here to denote the word for "king" instead of the more standard *malik*. The reason for this is unclear but it is certain that the author of the inscription intended this meaning for the word. At the beginning of the inscription, the phrase *al-mālika al-malikiya* ("the reigning king") is evoked, signaling that inscription is meant for the Norman monarch.

[41] Although William is not exactly named *malik Ifriqiya* in this inscription, he is proclaimed "lord" (*ṣāḥib*) of Ifriqiya alongside his other illustrious title, "the great king."

did not necessarily translate to other similar mediums. The Latin and Greek texts on Anna's tombstone make no mention of the king of Sicily, specifying only the date and location of the burial of Anna. On the trilingual tombstone commissioned for Grizant's father, Drogo, King William is mentioned only as the king of Sicily. The Latin and Arabic texts call him the "king of Sicily" while the Greek text calls him "great king William of Sicily."[42]

Other Arabic-language texts make no mention of the Norman monarchs as *malik Ifriqiya*. In the introduction to his geographical compendium, Muhammad al-Idrisi extols the virtues of his patron and king, Roger II. To al-Idrisi, the Norman monarch is "powerful by God, strong by his strength, king of Sicily and Italy and Longobardia and Calabria, defender of the Roman Pope, protector of the Christian religion."[43] While the geographic categories of Roger II's kingdom are similar to those in the Arabic and Judeo-Arabic tombstone texts (Sicily, Italy, Longobardia, and Calabria), Africa is noticeably excluded. Al-Idrisi, who exudes praise for Roger II in the introduction to his book and mentions the Norman presence in Ifriqiya later in the text, nonetheless does not consider Norman sovereignty to be that far-reaching. Al-Idrisi's decision to omit Ifriqiya from the royal title could even be a form of subtle political dissent, as he mentions on occasion in his compendium the harm that the Norman conquests had on Ifriqiya.[44] Similarly, other

[42] Amari, *Le epigrapfi arabiche di Sicilia*, 91–96.
[43] Al-Idrisi, 1:3. In Johns' transcription of this passage from al-Idrisi, the name *rujār* is curiously not found. Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 43–44.
[44] In his description of the island of Djerba, for example, al-Idrisi mentions that affairs there were disrupted by the arrival of Roger II. Al-Idrisi, 1:305-306.

mentions of Roger II and William I in Arabic-language government registers and court poetry make no mention of their rule in Ifriqiya.[45]

This limited evidence about *malik Ifriqiya* raises more questions than it answers. On the tombstone of Anna, the title was used in the Arabic and Judeo-Arabic inscriptions but not the Latin or Greek ones. The reason for this discrepancy is unclear. It could be due to space constraints, some hesitation that Grizant had about putting the royal title into these languages, or some other reason. Perhaps he was considering the audience of elite church-goers in Palermo that attended the church of Saint Michael the Archangel and had the ability to read any of the four languages found on the tombstone. Whatever the reason, Grizant's evocation of William I as *malik Ifriqiya* is unique in the surviving literature. No other authors writing in Arabic during the time of the Norman Kingdom of Africa associated their rule there with Norman kingship. Like the Latin *rex Africe*, this evidence indicates that some elite circles in the Kingdom of Sicily thought of their monarchs as *malik Ifriqiya*.

Two Coins from Mahdia

The other mentions of the word *malik* in the context of Norman rule in Africa come from two coins minted in Mahdia, one each during the reign of Roger II and William I. The Norman rulers of Sicily were deliberate about their use of royal epithets in coins. When the Normans first arrived in southern Italy, the coinage system varied from

[45] Mallette, *The Kingdom of Sicily, 1100-1250: A Literary History*, 138–45. Johns, "I titoli arabi dei signori normanni di Sicilia," 43–44.

city to city and region to region.[46] In the eleventh century, Norman lords tried with varying degrees of success to standardize coinage in their respective realms but it was not until the reign of Roger II that widespread standardization of coins was realized. Following his recognition as King of Sicily by Pope Innocent II in 1139, Roger sought to unify the varied currencies circulating in his kingdom. The result was a series of coinage reforms in the 1140s that combined Byzantine and Islamic characteristics with local Italian/Sicilian traditions.[47]

These reforms introduced a monetary system with five denominations – the Sicilian tari, the kharruba, the Sicilian/Salernitan follaro, the silver ducalis, and the one-third ducalis.[48] These coins were struck at several locations in the Kingdom of Sicily. Palermo, Messina, and Salerno were the primary mints but there were also ones at Amalfi and Gaeta that struck coins for local distribution. The mints at Palermo, Messina, and Salerno minted coins for use throughout the Kingdom of Sicily with standardized metal content. Despite Roger's sweeping monetary reforms, he still permitted local coinages to circulate as long as their metallic content was adapted to the Sicilian tari.

When Roger conquered Mahdia in 1148, he instituted changes to coinage that

[46] The areas of Apulia, Campania, and Calabria adhered to numismatic standards that differed in terms of their language, imagery, and value. An overview of this period can be found in Lucia Travaini, "The Normans between Byzantium and the Islamic World," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001): 179–83. Grierson and Travaini, *Italy III: South Italy, Sicily, Sardinia*, 14:76–139.

[47] The alterations Roger II made in coinage were reflective of his changing imperial persona. For example, his Arabic royal title on coins changed from Roger *al-thānī* ("the second") to Roger *al-malik* ("the king") during the 1130s to reflect his coronation as king of Sicily. Also during the 1130s he adopted more outwardly Christian elements on his coins like a cross and the inscription IC XC NI KA. Much like the conscious manipulation of his royal title in charters, so too did Roger alter his title in coins. Grierson and Travaini, *Italy III: South Italy, Sicily, Sardinia*, 14:79, 104–5. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*, 119–22.

[48] Grierson and Travaini, *Italy III: South Italy, Sicily, Sardinia*, 14:105–6.

showed his lordship of the city. Two gold dinars survive from the time of Roger II and William I's reigns in Mahdia. These Norman dinars first came to light in a 1930 article by H.H. Abdul-Wahab in *Revue tunisienne*, which fortunately contains several pictures of the coins, for their current location is unknown.[49] Abdul-Wahab transcribes the text of the coins and concludes that this numismatic evidence is a prime example of "the great tolerance of the Norman kings."[50] The coins, the design of which is based on earlier Fatimid models (and possibly now-lost Zirid coins) feature Arabic text on both sides of the coin in concentric circles.[51] This text reads as follows:

> <u>Coin #1: Obverse</u>
> (Outer margin) Struck by order of the sublime king Roger, powerful through God, in the city of Mahdia in the year 543. (Inner) Praise be to God, it is fitting to praise him and, indeed, He is deserving and worthy. (Center) King Roger.
>
> <u>Coin #1: Reverse</u>
> (Outer margin) Struck by order of the sublime king Roger, powerful through God, in the city of Mahdia in the year 543. (Inner) Praise be to God, it is fitting to praise him and, indeed, He is deserving and worthy. (Center) The powerful through God.
>
> <u>Coin #2: Obverse</u>
> (Outer margin) Struck by order of the Guide according to the command of God, King William, in the city of Mahdia in the year 549. (Inner) Praise be to God, it is fitting to praise him and, indeed, He is deserving and worthy. (Center) King William.
>
> <u>Coin #2: Reverse</u>
> (Outer margin) Struck by order of the Guide according to the command of God, King William, in the city of Mahdia in the year 549. (Inner) Praise be to God, it

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[49] Abdul-Wahab, "Deux dinars normands de Mahdia."

[50] "De la grande tolérance des rois normands." Abdul-Wahab, "Deux dinars normands de Mahdia," 218.

[51] Abulafia argues that these coins are "straightforward imitations of eleventh-century Fatimid dinars," a statement that I think is an oversimplification. While the designs of the coins were based upon that of the Fatimid caliph al-Zahir, the title is reflective not of the Fatimid model, but the De Hauteville Arabic tradition. Abulafia, "The Norman 'Kingdom of Africa,'" 41. I suspect that these Norman coins from Mahdia were directly modeled on the Zirid coins of al-Hasan ibn ʿAli but, because no coins survive from his reign (or the reign of ʿAli ibn Yahya or Yahya ibn Tamim or Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz), I can only speculate about this.

> is fitting to praise him and, indeed, He is deserving and worthy. (Center) The *Mahdi* by the command of God.

The only detailed analysis of these coins since Abdul-Wahab's article comes from Jeremy Johns' article "*Malik Ifrīqiya*: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids." Johns determines that these coins were triumphal issues minted in 543H (1148-49) and 549H (1154-55), the years in which Roger II conquered Mahdia and that William I ascended to the throne, respectively. He argues convincingly that the coins were meant to signify consistency in government first between the Zirids and Normans, and then between Roger II and William I. Johns concludes that the use of the word *malik* ("king") on these coins "is clear proof that Roger II and William I did consider themselves to be kings of Africa."[52] It is this last point of Johns' that I find problematic. While these two coins do employ the term *malik* to describe Roger and William, they do not mention the geographic scope of their kingdom. The only specific mention of geography to emerge from these coins is the city in which they were struck, Mahdia, so the idea that these coins provide clear proof of the use of the Arabic *malik Ifriqiya* is problematic. The coins combine notions of kingship with the city of Mahdia in the Arabic language but this alone does not constitute proof of the official use of the title *malik Ifriqiya*.

There is thus no evidence that the Norman kings circulated this Arabic title as one of their own, unlike the Latin *rex Africe* that appears more often in the Kingdom of Sicily. What is the reason for this? Johns argues that Roger II refrained from using the title due to his desire to maintain a positive diplomatic relationship with the Fatimid

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[52] Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 92.

Caliphate, whose lands in Ifriqiya he was technically conquering. I am uneasy with this argument for several reasons. The first is that the Normans' relationship with the Fatimids was already crumbling when Roger II and William I minted their Mahdian dinars and when Grizant commissioned the tombstone for his mother. It seems unlikely that in the 1150s the Normans would refrain from asserting their dominion over Ifriqiya for fear of retribution from the Fatimids, considering William I launched a raid against the Fatimid port city of Tinnis in either 548H (1153-54) or 549H (1154-55).[53] While Johns' argument puts in perspective the tenuous diplomatic relationship between the Fatimids and Normans, it also rests on the faulty presumption that the Norman kings used this title. The two coins from Mahdia, which only bear the title *malik*, do not provide evidence for the Norman kings utilizing this Arabic epithet. We thus must consider other reasons for why evidence for the use of *malik Ifriqiya* is so scant when compared to its Latin counterpart.

I argue that the limited use of *malik Ifriqiya* boils down to the scarcity of Arabic sources from the years 1148 to 1160. The archives of Sicily and southern Italy contain hundreds of Latin charters that highlight how notaries envisioned their kings during the twelve-year existence of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. Evidence from Latin chronicles provides even more information about this variance. The pool of surviving Arabic evidence is much, much smaller. It comes to us in the form of two coins, two headstones, and a handful of Arabic texts like the geographical compendium of al-Idrisi. With so few sources in Arabic from this time frame, it is remarkable to me that we have even one

[53] Johns details the difficulties in dating this raid. Johns, "Malik Ifrīqiya: The Norman Kingdom of Africa and the Fāṭimids," 97–98.

reference of the Norman kings as *malik Ifriqiya*. The coins from Mahdia, too, cultivate the idea of Norman kingship in the city of Mahdia with the word *malik* even if it is not paired with *Ifriqiya*.

Given the lack of Arabic primary sources that survive from the Kingdom of Sicily during the time of the Ifriqiyan conquests, there is a reasonable amount of evidence that testifies to the cultivation of an idea of kingship there. There are not enough surviving sources for us to say with any certainty that the Norman kings did or did not market themselves as *malik Ifriqiya*, but when the Arabic evidence is put in dialogue with the Latin sources, we see a multi-lingual tradition emerge in which Norman kingship in Africa was a reality.

Arabic Chronicles and Muslim Perspectives of the Normans

Arabic-language sources written in the Norman Kingdom of Sicily provide limited evidence for how the Normans viewed their rule in Africa. But what of the Zirids and other actors in the Islamicate Mediterranean? For this question, we are restricted due to the nature of the surviving primary sources. No contemporary Arabic documents produced outside the Kingdom of Sicily consider Norman Africa in any detail. This scarcity forces us to reframe the question of how the Islamicate world saw the Normans' African conquests to how later authors fit the Normans into their larger historical narratives. Such an examination will show how the only detailed narratives of the Norman conquests are embedded in authors' deeper concerns about the clash of Christian and Muslim dynasties. This examination will focus on the three most detailed accounts of

Norman Africa: the *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* by Ibn al-Athir, the *Rihla* by al-Tijani, and the *Kitab al-ʿIbar* by Ibn Khaldun.

The careful examination of these chronicles will help us understand how authors writing in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries interpreted Norman involvement in Ifriqiya. It is important to bear in mind, though, that all of these authors based their narrative on the now-lost chronicle of the Zirid prince Ibn Shaddad.[54] This work, the *Kitab al-jamaʿ wa al-Bayan al-Akhbar al-Qayrawan wa fi Man fiha wa fi Sā'ir Bilād al-Maghreb min al-Muluk wa al-ʿAyān* ("The Book of the Collection and Elucidation of Stories of Qayrawan and Those Things Which Happened There and in Other Lands of the Maghreb to Kings and Leaders"), provided the foundation for all later writings about the Norman Kingdom of Africa. Michael Brett has demonstrated convincingly that this chronicle was accessible to chroniclers in both the Maghreb and the Mashriq (Levant), albeit in two different editions.[55] The first edition circulated to authors in the Maghreb like al-Tijani and the second edition circulated to those in the Mashriq like Ibn al-Athir.

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[54] Little is known about the life of the Zirid prince Ibn Shaddad (born Abu Muhammad ʿAbd al-ʿAziz ibn Shaddad ibn Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz ibn Badis) beyond what we can infer from his writings and when he is briefly mentioned in other contemporary works. He grew up in Mahdia as part of the inner circle of emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli, with whom he shared the distinction of being grandchildren of emir Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz. When the Normans conquered Mahdia in 543H (1148-49), he likely fled with al-Hasan to the court of Muhriz ibn Ziyad. After this, his whereabouts are unknown until 551H (1156-57), when he was in Palermo (probably en route to Damascus), according to the Mamluk chronicler al-Nuwayri. Although Michele Amari argues that Ibn Shaddad was an eyewitness to the Almohad conquest of Mahdia several years later, Idris and Johns (among others) now think that he was simply reporting the testimony of someone who was an eyewitness to the city's capture. Regardless, Ibn Shaddad was living in Damascus by 571H (1175-76) according to Imad ad-Din al-Isfahani. He continued to work on his chronicle until at least 582H (1186-87). It is unknown when or where Ibn Shaddad died. *EI2*, "Ibn Shaddād." Brett, "Fitnat Al Qayrawan: A Study of Traditional Arabic Historiography," 402–4; Brett, "Muslim Justice under Infidel Rule: The Normans in Ifriqiya, 517-55H/1123-1160AD," 334–35; Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:xviii–xix.

[55] Brett analyzes various narratives about the battle of Haydaran and the arrival of the Banu Hilal in Ifriqiya to come to this conclusion. Brett, "Fitnat Al Qayrawan: A Study of Traditional Arabic Historiography," 387–425.

The differences between these two editions are unknown and impossible to determine with any degree of certainty based on the surviving Arabic chronicles.

Due to these authors' reliance on Ibn Shaddad, their narratives are similar, although slightly varied depending on the author's agenda and the edition of Ibn Shaddad's chronicle used.[56] The passages below, taken from a speech that Abu al-Hasan gave to his son before departing for Sicily, demonstrate the differences between authors:

> Ibn al-Athir
> Indeed, I am old in age and my end approaches. When the opportunity arises for you to fight against the enemy, do it! Don't have sympathy for them. Do not think about me being killed. Reckon that I have already died.[57]
>
> Al-Tijani
> Oh my son! I am old and I face death. I myself speak the truth on behalf of Muslims that when the opportunity arises for you [to fight against] those Christians, seize it! Forget about me and kill![58]
>
> Ibn Khaldun
> Oh my son! I am old in age and my end nears. When the opportunity arises for you to deliver the Muslims from the rule of the enemy, take it! Do not be afraid for me. Reckon that I have already died.[59]

While the overarching message of this speech is similar across chronicles, there are also important differences between them too – the evocation of a collective group of Muslims, the order to "kill" or "take" action, and the mention of Christian enemies. When evaluating the content of these chronicles, we should bear in mind the various authorial voices present in each of them. In these chronicles, we must confront both the agendas of

[56] Michael Brett convincingly argued that Ibn Shaddad's text circulated in two separate editions, one in Ifriqiya and one in the Mashriq. The full argument relies upon a host of sources and focuses on the eleventh century invasions of the Banu Hilal. Brett, "Fitnat Al Qayrawan: A Study of Traditional Arabic Historiography," 387–425.
[57] Ibn al-Athir, 11:203.
[58] Al-Tijani, 75.
[59] Ibn Khaldun, 5:238.

Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani, and Ibn Khaldun as well as the agenda of Ibn Shaddad in whichever edition of his chronicle these later authors accessed.

The reliance of Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani, and Ibn Khaldun on the writings of Ibn Shaddad is reflected in their respective works. All three authors present Norman rule in Ifriqiya as distinctly different from the Zirid emirs that preceded them and the Almohads caliphs that followed them. The terminologies these authors use give the impression that Norman involvement in Ifriqiya was focused primarily on conquest. As opposed to the Zirids, who governed the area, Norman involvement is limited to their military presence. The actual rule of Ifriqiya is left not to the Normans, but to the local lords whom they appointed as governors. While these authors refer to Roger II and William I as the *aṣḥāb* ("lords") or *mulūk* ("kings") of Sicily, such titles are not found in the context of their African holdings. Instead, the period of Norman rule is presented as an interregnum between the legitimate governance of the Zirids and the Almohads.

Ibn al-Athir's *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*

Most of what is known about the life of ʿIzz al-Din Abu al-Hasan ʿAli, better known as Ibn al-Athir, come from passages in his own writings and an entry in Ibn Khallikan's biographical dictionary.[60] He was born in 1160 in the city of Jazirat Ibn ʿUmar (modern southeastern Turkey).[61] His family was part of the Zankid dynasty, many of whom worked as administrators in the area around the city of Mosul. Ibn al-Athir

[60] Ibn Khallikan, 2:288-290.

[61] Information on Ibn al-Athir's life is found in Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, 2006, 1:1–6. *EI2*, "Ibn al-Ath̲īr."

studied with various teachers in Mosul, Baghdad, Syria, and Jerusalem during his early years. During the course of his teachings and travels, he witnessed some of Saladin's military conquests in the 1180s. The rhetoric of jihad that surrounded Saladin's campaigns against the Christian leaders of the Crusader states would become a central theme in certain sections of *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*.[62] Following his travels, Ibn al-Athir settled in Mosul where he wrote extensively until his death in 647H (1239) at the age of 73. Ibn Khallikan, who met Ibn al-Athir multiple times, considered him an individual "of the highest accomplishments and the most excellent qualities."[63]

Ibn al-Athir wrote *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*, his longest and most famous work, while living in his family's house near Mosul. The chronicle presents a year-by-year summary of events in the Islamicate world up to the year 628H (1231).[64] The chronicle is part of the genre called *tārīkh*. Although translated into English simply as "history," the word has a complex connotation. By the time of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, writers of *tārīkh* like Ibn al-Athir considered the genre to be a recounting of both past and present events to teach by example. As such, the genre also emphasized the narration of

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[62] Michael Köhler, *Alliances and Treaties between Frankish and Muslim Rulers in the Middle East: Cross-Cultural Diplomacy in the Period of the Crusades*, trans. Peter Holt (Boston: Brill, 2013), 228–30.
[63] Ibn Khallikan, 2:289.
[64] Ibn al-Athir's other works concern the companions of the prophet, a revision of a book by al-Sam'ani about the *nisba*, and the history of the Zankid dynasty. The respect that other writers had for *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* is seen in a reference found in al-Sahawi's fifteenth-century work about the virtues of history. Within, al-Sahawi calls Ibn al-Athir a "hadith expert and great scholar." He further states that *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* is "the best of all histories in recording the happenings clearly and distinctly." Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1952), 413. The annalistic format of *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* breaks in several places, many of them relating to North Africa. For example, the account of the Almohad conquest of Ifriqiya in the year 554H (1159-60) begins in 543H (1148-49) and extends through 555H (1160-61). Another entry for the year 514H (1120-21), which considers the rise of the Almohads, extends all the way to 544H (1149-50). This is likely due to Ibn al-Athir's reliance on the chronicle of Ibn Shaddad, which might have exhibited tendencies that do not lend themselves to an annal.

genealogies of prominent individuals and dynasties.[65] Many Muslim scholars during the Middle Ages were disdainful of this methodology because they saw it as being contrary to the idea that human progress was pre-ordained by God. This perspective made *tārīkh* a controversial and often unpopular genre.[66] It was "neither a subject in the schools nor an element in any regular curriculum" until the rise of the Ottoman Empire.[67] As such, historians were left to their own devices when studying history and received less patronage for it than writers in the more traditional sciences.[68] Ibn Khaldun made a case in his *Muqaddamah* that history ought to be regarded as a reputable science, but his case was not taken seriously until the Ottomans rediscovered his work.

Nonetheless, individual historians writing during the Middle Ages made their case for the study of *tārīkh* in their own works. Ibn al-Athir, for example, lays out his approach in the introduction to *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*.[69] He opens with an invocation to God alongside two verses from the Qur'an that allude to the importance of understanding the past, a rhetorical strategy to establish the validity of the discipline that many scholars disparaged.[70] Ibn al-Athir then argues that history is of value to those in positions of

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65 *EI2*, "Tārīkh." Historians today are dubious of many of these genealogies, particularly as they apply to Arab tribes like the Banu Hilal. See, for example, Brett, "The Way of the Nomad," 256.

66 Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kāmil fī'l-ta'rīkh*, 2006, 1:5.

67 *EI2*, "Tārīkh."

68 In his discussion of the genre, Brett states that *tārīkh* "is not in fact history; it is a peculiarly Islamic genre of miscellaneous information about humanity and the world, arranged with a passion for chronology which gives it simply the appearance of history in the Western sense." Brett, "The Way of the Nomad," 252.

69 The introduction is found in Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi al-tarikh*, vol. 1 (Beirut, 1966), 1–9. Azmul Kamaruzaman, Norsaeidah Jamaludin, and Ahmad Fadzil, "Ibn al-Athir's Philosophy of History in al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh," *Asian Social Science* 11, no. 23 (2015): 28–34.

70 The two verses read "And how many have We destroyed before them of generations? Do you perceive of them anyone or hear from them a sound?" and "Who averted [people] from the way of Allah and sought to make it [seem] deviant while they were, concerning the Hereafter, disbelievers." *Qur'an*, 19:98 and 7:45.

authority because of the lessons it can teach about governance.[71] History permits leaders to observe the losses that come with tyranny and oppression, the gains that come from practicing good governance, and the fruits that come from wise council. It is this reality that, according to Ibn al-Athir, shapes his narrative. He further argues that previous historians have written long accounts of history that are unbalanced, inaccurate, and omit certain important narratives. Of particular importance is the disconnect between the historians of the West and East. He argues that historians of the Maghreb tend to omit events of the Mashriq and vice versa.[72] By carefully combining previously disparate narratives into one book and scrutinizing previous histories, Ibn al-Athir thought he could create a chronicle that was closest to an objective truth.[73]

While H.R. Idris has painstakingly retold and juxtaposed Ibn al-Athir's history of medieval Ifriqiya with those of other chroniclers in an attempt to discern some form of historical truth, neither he nor other scholars have situated Ibn al-Athir's narrative of North African history in the greater context of his chronicle and its overarching themes.[74] This study will therefore examine chapters that pertain to Norman Africa and those that

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[71] Micheau argues that Ibn al-Athir sought to write a history of the *umma* and its accompanying lands and dynasties. His accompanying analysis of Ibn al-Athir's chronicle emphasizes the annalistic format and highlights individuals within dynasties as much as dynasties themselves. Françoise Micheau, "Le Kitāb al-kāmil fī l-tā'rīkh d'Ibn al-Athīr: entre chronique et histoire," *Studia Islamica* 104/105 (2007): 84–85, 100–101.
[72] Kamaruzaman, Jamaludin, and Fadzil, "Ibn al-Athir's Philosophy of History in al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh," 30.
[73] Ibn al-Athir argues that historians ought to concern themselves with events of real importance, not trivial matters like the affairs of minor government officials or economic minutiae. Nonetheless, within the pages of Ibn al-Athir's chronicles are numerous entries that appear to fall under his definition of unimportant or trivial matters. Take, for example, a brief entry for the year 506H (1112-13), in which Ibn al-Athir recounrs how an alchemist from North Africa arrived in Baghdad, was taken to the Caliphal Palace, and "that was the last that was heard of him." If Ibn al-Athir sought to make this a moralizing tale about the dangers of alchemy, it is not enumerated upon nor evoked in later entries. Ibn al-Athir, 10:492.
[74] Idris' narrative of medieval Ifriqiya during the time of the Norman conquests is found in Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:303–406.

are contemporary to it but geographically outside of it. In these sections, Ibn al-Athir presents Norman involvement in Africa as one part of a larger Frankish assault on the lands of Islam that encompasses all sides of the Mediterranean. Furthermore, the rhetoric surrounding the Norman conquest of Africa is strictly one of military seizure in which the Normans are little more than illegitimate occupiers.

The sections of *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* from the Frankish conquest of Sicily in 482H (1089-90) to the end of the chronicle in 629H (1231-32) contain rhetoric about widespread conflict between Christianity and Islam. Ibn al-Athir argues that the *Franj* or "Franks" – a blanket term he used for Latin Christians – established a *dawla* ("state" or "dynasty") in al-Andalus, Ifriqiya, Sicily, and Syria through encroachment on Muslim lands.[75] The interrelatedness of these theaters is seen in two episodes concerning Sicily.

Ibn al-Athir recounts how, in the year 490H (1096-97), an envoy from Baldwin the Frank sent a message to Roger I telling him of his plans to invade Ifriqiya. One of Roger's advisors voiced his opinion that this was a great idea for then "the lands would become Christian lands." Upon hearing this, Roger farted loudly and proclaimed "My religion be true! That was more useful than your words!"[76] He explained that, should Baldwin take Ifriqiya, he would have to commit numerous resources to facilitate the conquests, he would lose money from the grain trade, and he would have to break his treaties with the Zirids. Although Roger refused Baldwin's proposal, he ominously foreshadowed the future conquest of Ifriqiya at the end of the episode when he said,

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[75] This theory is articulated in Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*, 40.
[76] This story appears in Ibn al-Athir's entry for the year 491H (197-98). Ibn al-Athir, 10:272.

"When we find the strength, we will take it!"[77] This apocryphal episode, which does not appear in any other Arabic chronicles, illustrates the extent to which Ibn al-Athir considered the Frankish campaigns in the Mashriq and Ifriqiya to be related. Even though an alliance between Baldwin and Roger I never came to fruition, the implication here is that Christian leaders were actively communicating about their military activity in Muslim lands.

The interconnectivity of Christian-Muslim conflict in the Mediterranean is further seen in an episode some fifty years later in 539H (1144-45). Ibn al-Athir relates how an unnamed scholar told him the following story.[78] A fleet of Roger II had plundered the lands around Tripoli. When news came of the looting and killing from this raid, Roger II asked a respected Muslim scholar, "Where was Muhammad for those lands and their people?" The Muslim scholar replied, "He was conquering for them. He witnessed the conquest of Edessa, which the Muslims have now conquered." Sure enough, news reached Sicily several days later of the Muslim seizure of Edessa. Like the story of Roger I's interaction with Baldwin, this episode presents Frankish action in Ifriqiya and the Mashriq as interrelated. Regional politics, to which Ibn al-Athir devotes most of his chronicle, are complemented in these two episodes with a broader analysis of the conflict between Christians and Muslims.

When Ibn al-Athir narrates conflict between Muslims, the emphasis is not on the religiosity of the combatants. Instead, he focuses on the leaders of opposing groups and the peoples that comprised their armies. In the year 513H (1119-20), for example, he tells

[77] Ibn al-Athir, 10:273.
[78] Ibn al-Athir, 11:100.

of conflict between the Almoravid emir, ʿAli ibn Yusuf, and the people of Cordoba, who rebelled against the rule of his governor. Ibn al-Athir acknowledges the diversity of the soldiers that the Almoravids brought to stop the uprising – Sanhaja Berbers, Zenata Berbers, and others.[79] The conflict here, although one of Muslims against Muslims, is presented as one of a local population against its rulers. Religion has no place in it. This is seen in areas outside of al-Andalus too. In the year 497H (1103-04), for example, Ibn al-Athir recounts the diplomatic negotiations that took place in Baghdad between Barkyaruq and Muhammad to stop years of war without mentioning either group's confessional identity.[80] In Ifriqiya, too, Ibn al-Athir acknowledges conflict between Muslim lords without emphasizing their religion. In an entry for the year 482H (1089-1090), he narrates the brief seizure of Sousse by an Arab group and a subsequent battle against the Zirids near Mahdia.[81]

When Ibn al-Athir narrates conflict between Christians and Muslims, his rhetorical style changes dramatically. Instead of acknowledging the diverse populations of Muslims in a given area, of which we know that Ibn al-Athir was aware, he homogenizes them under the banner of Islam. In an entry for the year 520H (1126-27), he notes how a Frankish ruler in al-Andalus "left [his lands] with great armies from among the Franks and entered into the lands of Islam."[82] Despite resistance from the assemblage of Muslims, the Franks were victorious in battle and many Muslims were killed. In an entry for the year 505H (1111-12), Ibn al-Athir recounts how Alphonso the Frank

[79] Ibn al-Athir, 10:558.
[80] Ibn al-Athir, 10:369-372.
[81] Ibn al-Athir, 10:179.
[82] Ibn al-Athir, 10:520.

marched "into the lands of Islam" in al-Andalus and, when he was defeated, he refers to the victory being for the "Muslims" and not the emir that led them, Yusuf ibn Tashfin.[83]

This trend holds true outside al-Andalus. In his description of the Norman conquest of Mahdia, Ibn al-Athir frames al-Hasan ibn ʿAli's departure from the city as one that would save Muslims from suffering. He reports al-Hasan as saying, "I consider it better to save Muslims from slavery and death than to continue governing."[84] Similar rhetoric is found during the Almohad conquest of Mahdia in 554H (1159-60). Ibn al-Athir records William I trying to negotiate with the Almohads by threatening that "if Abd al-Muʿmin kills our companions in Mahdia, we will kill the Muslims who are on the island of Sicily."[85] Soon after, Ibn al-Athir records a speech that Abd al-Muʿmin gave to the emirs of the Arabs of the Banu Riyah. The Almohad leader tells them that, "aiding Islam is incumbent upon us… By you, the lands [of al-Andalus] were conquered at the beginning of Islam and by you, the enemy will be repelled from there now!"[86] By placing this rhetoric into the mouths of both Christian and Muslim rulers, Ibn al-Athir cements this theme in his larger history. In particular, the words of Abd al-Muʿmin establish continuity between Almohad conquests in Ifriqiya and early Islamic conquests in al-Andalus, effectively linking rhetoric of jihad across time and space.

While Ibn al-Athir's narration of the events of the Mashriq are more detailed and nuanced than those in al-Andalus and Ifriqiya, it nonetheless sometimes presents rhetoric

[83] Ibn al-Athir, 10:490-491.
[84] Ibn al-Athir, 11:126.
[85] Ibn al-Athir, 11: 245.
[86] Ibn al-Athir, 11: 246.

of Frankish aggression against a homogenous Muslim community.[87] Ibn al-Athir's description of the Frankish conquest of Jerusalem in 492H (1098-99), for example, mentions on several occasions the horrific fate of the Muslims that remained in the city.[88] In an entry for the year 543H (1148-49), Ibn al-Athir records how the king of the Germans "strove for the lands of Islam" and that the response of Muʿin al-Din of Damascus was to request one of his allies to "come to the aid of the Muslims and to drive the enemy from them."[89] Once again, Ibn al-Athir embeds the notion of a clash between Franks (Christians) and Muslims into his narrative of history. Although this theme does not permeate every entry pertaining to interactions between Christians and Muslims, the instances above nonetheless reinforce a narrative of an interconnected conflict between Christians and Muslims that affects every side of the Mediterranean.[90]

Ibn al-Athir also makes a concerted effort to downplay the legitimacy of Frankish rulers aggressing on Muslim lands, particularly in Ifriqiya. This is most apparent in the terminologies that he uses to describe various rulers and their lands. In his narration of the events of twelfth-century North Africa, Ibn al-Athir most commonly uses the word "*ṣāḥib*" (plural "*aṣḥāb* ") to refer to rulers of a city or area. The three-letter root of this word, *ṣaḥiba*, means to associate, consort, or become a companion, associate, friend. Along with these definitions, there is a connotation of protection or defense found in

[87] This homogenization of Christian powers can be contrasted with the ocassional times that he and other Arabic authors (particularly Ibn Jubayr) praise the actions of the Normans. Annliese Nef, "Dire la conquête et la souveraineté des Hauteville en arabe (jusqu'au milieu du XIIIe siècle," *Tabularia* 15 (2015): 1–15.
[88] Ibn al-Athir, 10:282-286.
[89] Ibn al-Athir, 11:129.
[90] This argument is enumerated by Cobb, who argues that the late eleventh century gave rise to a sense in the Muslim world of a "global Frankish assault on Islam." Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades*, 156. For examples in which there is interaction without the homogenization of forces as Christian or Muslim, see Ibn al-Athir, 11:33, 40.

colloquialisms that led the word to have the further meaning "to guard, keep, or protect."[91] *Ṣāḥib* functions as the present active participle of *ṣaḥiba* and has meanings that range from "companion, associate, friend" to "lord, master, possessor, owner, haver."[92] *Ṣāḥib* is often paired with a second noun, such as *ṣāḥib al-bayt* ("master of the house") or *ṣāḥib al-jaysh* ("master of the army"). In Ibn al-Athir's chronicle, the word is often applied to the ruler of a city, who is called *ṣāḥib al-medīna* ("lord of the city").

The root *ṣaḥiba* and its derivatives thus suggest associations of companionship, preservation, and guardianship. As it pertains to governance, *ṣāḥib* should be seen in a positive light, one in which there is simultaneous ownership of something but with the expectation that this owner protects and guards that thing. Ibn al-Athir is deliberate about who is and who is not a *ṣāḥib* in his chronicle. He refers to Tāshfīn ibn ʿAli ibn Yusuf, an Almoravid ruler, as *ṣāḥib al-gharb* ("Lord of the West").[93] ʿAbd al-Muʿmin, who overthrew Almoravid rule and became the first lord of the Almohads, inherits the title of *ṣāḥib al-gharb*.[94] A similar title is given to Zirid rulers, who are most often introduced as *ṣāḥib Ifriqiya* ("lord of Ifriqiya").[95] Lords who governed individual cities in Ifriqiya are similarly given titles reflective of their respective cities of governance. For example,

[91] For example, *ṣaḥibaka Allah* means "may God guard/keep/protect/defend you." *Lisān al-'Arab* gives two possible definitions for the word, *shāhid* (witness) or *nāṣir* (helper/protector). *Lisān al-'Arab*, "صحب."

[92] *Lane's Lexicon*, "صحب."

[93] Ibn al-Athir, 11:102.

[94] Ibn al-Athir, 11:241.

[95] Examples of this are found throughout Ibn al-Athir's narrative of Zirid history. For individual examples of the use of this term see Ibn al-Athir, 10:449, 478, 529 and XI:106.

Hammu ibn Malil is the *ṣāḥib Sfāqus* (Sfax),[96] Rushayd is the *ṣāḥib Qābis* (Gabès),[97] and Ahmed ibn Khurasan is the *ṣāḥib Tūnis* (Tunis).[98]

Ibn al-Athir's treatment of the Normans is more complex. He acknowledges their legitimacy in Sicily, as he alternates between introducing Roger II and William I as *ṣāḥib* and *malik* (plural "*mulūk*") of the island, but he does not do the same for Ifriqiya.[99] Despite his acknowledgment that Norman forces seized the lands once held by other *aṣḥāb*, Ibn al-Athir never refers to Roger II or William I as *ṣaḥib Ifriqiya* or *malik Ifriqiya*, preferring instead to frame their role in Ifriqiya as one embedded in conquest. The only mention of Norman governance comes when they appointed local leaders to govern on their behalf. Take, for example, the case of Tripoli. Ibn al-Athir notes that the Normans put a leader from the Banu Matruh in charge of the city. It was this leader, Abu Yahya ibn Matruh al-Tamimi, that "governed" the city. Ibn al-Athir even makes strategic

[96] Ibn al-Athir, 10:298.
[97] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120.
[98] Ibn al-Athir, 11:241. While Ibn al-Athir introduces numerous lords in Ifriqiya with the title of *ṣāḥib*, he gives special recognition to the Zirids as emirs of Ifriqiya. He refers to Yahya, ʿAli, and al-Hasan as *amīr Ifriqiya*, sometimes pairing the title with *ṣāḥib* to form "*amīr* [name], *ṣāḥib Ifriqiya*." In using this title, Ibn al-Athir could be referring to the Zirids' designation under the Fatimids and Abbasids as their emirs or he could be using the term as a generic term for "prince," which he does on numerous other occasions, including for an unnamed *amīr min al-'Arab* ("emir from the Arabs"). Since Ibn al-Athir based his account of the Zirids off that of the Zirid prince Ibn Shaddad, I am inclined to think that the first of these two options is the most likely. Whichever of these two meanings Ibn al-Athir seeks to invoke, though, the use of this term further signifies the Zirids' status among the rulers of Ifriqiya and their right to rule there. Ibn al-Athir, 11:126.
[99] The term *malik*, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, is used far more often in Ibn al-Athir's chronicle to refer to the Christian rulers of the medieval world. The Byzantine emperor is introduced as *malik al-Rūm* and the German ruler is similarly titled *malik al-Almān*. Whether or not Ibn al-Athir considered the word to be a pejorative is unclear. Although he used the word more often to refer to the Christians that sought to conquer the lands of Muslims, he also on occasion references Muslims lords as *mulūk* in a way that is not condescending. Muʿin al-Din Unur, the ruler of Damascus, is introduced as *malik al-Mashriq* ("the king of the East"). The Zirid dynasty is also summarized as "nine kings (*mulūk*) who reigned (*malaka*) from among the line of Ziri ibn Munad to al-Hasan." This is the only mention of the Zirids as *mulūk* in Ibn al-Athir's chronicle. It could be that this odd use of the word corresponds with a break in the use of Ibn Shaddad's chronicle, which informed the rest of his analysis of the Zirids. Ibn al-Athir, 11: 127, 131-132, 145.

use of the passive voice, saying that the people of Sicily and Rum "were encouraged" to travel to Tripoli, a move that helped to improve its situation, rather than admit that it was Roger II whose orders helped improve the city.[100]

To Ibn al-Athir, the Norman presence in Ifriqiya was, at best, an interlude between two legitimate lords of the region. When the Almohad leader ʿAbd al-Muʿmin conquers Mahdia, Ibn al-Athir links his lordship in Ifriqiya to the Zirid rulers who preceded him, giving no mention to the twelve years of Norman rule that separated them. He writes that, "Al-Hasan ibn ʿAli ibn Tamim ibn Muʿizz ibn Badi al-Sanhaji, who had been the lord of Mahdia and Ifriqiya, preceded [ʿAbd al-Muʿmin's] hand."[101] In other words, the lord of Ifriqiya before the conquest of the Almohads was the Zirid emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli. Norman rule had no place in this historical narrative. In this perspective, there was no Norman king of Africa and, thus, no Norman Kingdom of Africa.

Al-Tijani's *Rihla*

The *Rihla* ("Journey") of Abu Muhammad Abdallah ibn Muhammad al-Tijani is an early fourteenth-century travel diary that also provides a detailed account of the history of Ifriqiya before and during the Norman occupation. Like the writings of Ibn al-Athir, the *Rihla* draws largely upon the chronicle of Ibn Shaddad and even contains direct quotations from it. It is unsurprising, then, that the overarching narrative of Norman involvement in Ifriqiya provided by these two works is similar and emphasizes the same events. In the greater scope of these works, though, the thematic role of Norman

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[100] Ibn al-Athir, 11:109.
[101] Ibn al-Athir, 11:241.

involvement in Ifriqiya is different. Al-Tijani focuses squarely on events within Ifriqiya and makes few references to the global Christian assault upon the lands of Islam that is a central theme in the writings of Ibn al-Athir. Instead, there is a compelling tension between al-Tijani's interactions with Christians during his travels and the often-negative narrative he paints of past Christian involvement in Ifriqiya. The historically negative role that Christians played in Ifriqiya, a perspective based on the chronicle of Ibn Shaddad, contrasts with al-Tijani's interactions with them on his journey. This juxtaposition undermines the rhetorical strategy of the clash of Christianity and Islam that al-Tijani's main source for the history of the Normans in Ifriqiya espoused.

Muhammad al-Tijani was born in the mid-1270s in what is now Tunisia.[102] His family had its origins in Morocco until his great-great-grandfather moved to Tunis with soldiers of the Almohads in the 1160s. When the Hafsids declared independence from the Almohads some sixty years later, al-Tijani's family became important members of their administration based out of Tunis. As a result, al-Tijani was raised with access to the vast libraries of the Hafsids and under the tutelage of scholars from al-Andalus, Ifriqiya, and the Maghreb. He eventually became the secretary of the Hafsid prince Abu Yahya Zakariyya al-Lihyani, whom he accompanied on an expedition to Djerba against the Spanish in 706H (December 1306). Following this lengthy campaign, the Hafsid prince embarked on the Hajj while al-Tijani returned to Tunis for medical (and potentially political) reasons. The course of this campaign and al-Tijani's return to Tunis, which lasted for over two years, became the heart of al-Tijani's *Rihla*, which is his most well

[102] Information on al-Tijani's life is from *EI2*, "al-Tiḏ̲jānī."

known work.[103] When Abu Yahya Zakariyya al-Lihyani returned from his pilgrimage, he made al-Tijani the head of his chancery. This is the last known event in al-Tijani's life. Plessner speculates that he might have been killed at a battle near Siliana in 718H (1318), although he admits that there is no evidence to confirm this.[104]

The *Rihla* traces al-Tijani's journey from Tunis to Tripoli (Libya) and then back to Tunis from Jumada I 706 to Safar 708 (December 1306 to July/August 1308). During his journey, al-Tijani describes the world around him and provides information about many of the places through which he passes. Unlike the chronological chronicle of Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani arranges his work geographically, explaining relevant information about places as he travels through them. His extensive quotations of now-lost poetry and chronicles, particularly those of Ibn Shaddad and Abu al-Salt, further adds to its value as a historical source.

The genre of al-Tijani's work, the *riḥla* ("journey" or "travelogue"), developed in the Islamicate world during the Middle Ages. Broadly speaking, the *riḥla* is a form of travel literature in which the author recounts his experiences while away from home. Although made famous by Ibn Battuta in the mid-late fourteenth century, the *riḥla* as a genre had its roots in an increased desire for knowledge (specifically knowledge of Islam) through travel, often to Mecca for the hajj.[105] The genre was particularly popular in the Maghreb and al-Andalus, for it gave audiences in these regions a glimpse of the

[103] Although we know that al-Tijani wrote a number of works during his life including commentaries, poetry, and letters, his only surviving work besides the *riḥla* is his *Tuhfat al-ʿarūs wa-nuzhat al-nufūs*. This work focuses on love, marriage, and the nature of beauty. *EI2*, "al-Tid̲jānī."
[104] *EI2*, "al-Tid̲jānī."
[105] *EI2*, "Riḥla."

faraway religious sites associated with the rise of Islam. The *riḥla* of Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Battuta are two of the most famous works to emerge from this genre.[106]

Like the *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* of Ibn al-Athir, the *Rihla* of al-Tijani contains a certain set of assumptions and objectives that ought to inform our reading of it. In the introduction to his work, al-Tijani gives thanks to God and explains the superiority of Islam over all other religions.[107] He also states his interest in the history of the places he visited and the events that brought them to their present circumstances. Following his invocation to God, al-Tijani outlines the content of his *Rihla*, in which he "observes this blessed journey over the lands, including an account of their situations and their qualities, and information on their roads and their distances, and the description of their conquests and misfortunes, and the situations which engulfed them from the edges of the world. This work highlights all the lands which hold ruins and monuments and it yearns for the examination of them."[108] The history of the cities through which al-Tijani passes is of the utmost importance. Al-Tijani spends much of his *Rihla* recounting the histories of cities, including at times how Christian involvement in Ifriqiya affected them.

In this way, the *Rihla* of al-Tijani draws on much of the methodology found in the genre of *tārikh*. Al-Tijani emphasizes historical narratives, albeit organized

[106] Unlike the genre of *tārikh*, wherein authors like Ibn al-Athir explicitly state their desire for the careful reporting and recording of past events, the content of a *riḥla* can be much harder to piece together from the perspective of a modern historian. Authors of *riḥla* often report that their writings contain their own personal experiences, stories from travelers, and marvels from exotic places. Alex Metcalfe warns scholars to tread carefully when working with this genre of sources. He argues that Ibn Jubayr was not a historian; he was a writer who sought to record his journey to Mecca and the marvels that happened on it. Ibn Jubayr's work is embedded in the dichotomy of the "house of Islam" and the "house of war," one that manifests in marvels that even he admits may not have been true. Metcalfe, *Muslims and Christians in Norman Italy: Arabic Speakers and the End of Islam*, 38–41.
[107] Al-Tijani, 1-2.
[108] Al-Tijani, 2.

geographically instead of chronologically. He quotes extensively from chronicles and mixes those narratives with his own travel experiences. The trope of the marvel, which is found in many other *Rihla*, is minimal or nonexistent in this chronicle.[109] Perhaps this is because al-Tijani did not write his travelogue while on pilgrimate to Mecca but instead while on a military campaign with his lord. We can thus characterize the *Rihla* of al-Tijani as a hybrid history-travelogue.

Bearing this in mind, we can turn to the content of al-Tijani's *Rihla*. When writing about Ifriqiyan cities, al-Tijani considers events during or following the Muslim conquests of the seventh and eighth centuries. The focus of these histories is on political and military conflict, including the initial Muslim conquests, the Kharijite rebellion of Abu Yazid, and more recent disputes between the Almohads and Almoravids (Banu Ghaniya). These narratives necessitate at times the discussion of non-Muslim groups that we today identify as Christians, which al-Tijani tends to separate into the *rūm* (Byzantines/Greeks) and *niṣāra* (Christians).[110] His discussion of *rūm* most often considers the years during and immediately following the initial Islamic conquests across North Africa. *Niṣāra*, meanwhile, is a blanket term used for the Normans and any other Christian person or polity in the history of Ifriqiya. As such, a reader of al-Tijani's *Riḥla* is unable to tell whether the Normans under Roger II were distinct from Christians currently living in Sicily or other Christians states that existed in the fourteenth century. This homogenization of Christian people, which is also seen in Ibn al-Athir with the use of the word *franj* (Frank), reinforces the idea of monolithic interreligious conflict.

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[109] *EI2,* "Riḥla."
[110] For an example of the use of *rūm*, see al-Tijani, 6-7.

Most of al-Tijani's discussion of *niṣāra* refers to the group that we today call the Normans. He mentions Norman involvement in Ifriqiya in six cities: Sousse, Sfax, Gabès, Djerba, Tripoli, and Mahdia. In these descriptions, the emphasis is on Norman conflict with the Zirids and is painted in terms of religious animosity.[111] When al-Tijani arrives at Sousse near the beginning of his *riḥla*, he relates how Christians took the city of Mahdia "from the hand of al-Hasan" when they took possession of the cities along the coast of Ifriqiya.[112] He then narrates how the people of Sousse stood up against the Christians and urged their shayks to join the Almohads. Al-Tijani then describes a second Christian attack at an unspecified date in which a fleet of Christians took possession of the city, massacred many of the people in it, and took prisoners including the governor of the city. Although the governor was later ransomed, the city remained devastated for some time due to the Christians' attacks.

Similar rhetoric is also seen in al-Tijani's visit to the city of Sfax, which follows his journey through Monastir and several small towns. In his description of the city, al-Tijani once again evokes the idea of a city conquered by Christians. He relates in detail Roger II's 543H (1148-49) conquest of the city and explains how Roger's settlement of Christians there laid the seeds for later dissent. He quotes ʿUmar ibn Abi al-Hasan, the son of the captive sheikh Abu al-Hasan al-Furriyani, as saying that his departure "strengthens you against the Christians."[113] Further rhetoric directed at Christians is seen

[111] Readers are first introduced to the Christians briefly as al-Tijani travels through the town of *Mornāq*, which he mentions was named by one of the Christian lords that ruled the city during the time of the initial Muslim conquests. Al-Tijani, 10.
[112] The chronicle is Ibn Shaddad is also mentioned in these initial descriptions. Al-Tijani, 25.
[113] Al-Tijani, 75. Ibn al-Athir does not evoke the "Christians" in his recounting of this speech, instead referring to an unnamed "enemy." Ibn al-Athir, 11:203.

in al-Tijani's description of the mobilization of the people of Sfax against Norman rule. When ʿUmar ibn Abi al-Hasan revolted, he did so "against Christianity" and the *ṭāghiyya* ("tyrant") of Sicily. The death of ʿUmar's father in Sicily is further presented as one of martyrdom in which he breathes his last breath "for God."[114] This narrative, in which the martyrdom of Abu al-Hasan and the successful revolt of his son are central, again relies heavily on animosity between Muslims and Christians. Religious differences drive the conflict in Sfax, which causes the later Almohad conquest of the city to be regarded as one of liberation from Christian oppressors.[115]

Other descriptions of the Christians (Normans) in the *Rihla* echo the themes described in Sousse and Sfax. At Djerba, al-Tijani records the destruction brought about when "the Christians triumphed over [the island]" both in 529H (1134-35) and again several years later. At Tripoli, the Christians "triumphed" due to internal divisions within the city.[116] Al-Tijani's lengthy description of Mahdia contains numerous instances of conflict between Christians and Muslims, including the direct quotation of the letter of Abu al-Salt that speaks of a jihad against the tyrant of Sicily.[117] This overall narrative about the presence of the Normans in Ifriqiya is thus embedded in the notion of a clash of religions. Although Roger II and George of Antioch are mentioned on occasion, more often than not it is a faceless Christian enemy that aggresses on the territory of Muslims. This narrative does not have the global scope of Ibn al-Athir's chronicle but the *Rihla*

[114] Al-Tijani, 75.
[115] Al-Tijani, 75-76.
[116] Al-Tijani, 242.
[117] Al-Tijani, 333-349.

nonetheless narrates a clash of Muslim and Christian rulers in which the group we today call the Normans play a crucial role.

The *Rihla* also contains many of the same linguistic choices as discussed above in the chronicle of Ibn al-Athir. Nowhere are the Normans called "kings of Africa." They are most often called the lords or tyrants of Sicily.[118] Their presence in Ifriqiya is one overwhelmingly associated with conquest and slaughter, not governance. While the Zirid emirs are characterized as "governing" cities in Ifriqiya, the Normans instead are conquering and suppressing.[119] This language echoes that of Ibn al-Athir. Given that both authors were basing their works on the same now-lost chronicle of Ibn Shaddad, these similarities are not surprising.

What is more surprising is the ambiguous mentality that al-Tijani has toward Christians during portions of the chronicle not associated with the writings of Ibn Shaddad. At times, his description of unnamed Christian lords is negative. While passing through the city of Mornag, for example, al-Tijani recounts how during the time of the initial Muslim conquests of Africa, a Christian ruled there "with trickery."[120] Likewise, when discussing the islands of Kerkennah, he mentions how Christians currently govern its people, who live in decrepit huts and are left without walls for protection.[121] The island of Djerba similarly suffered at the hands of the Christians, who destroyed many of the apple orchards that once made the island famous.[122] Although al-Tijani recognizes

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[118] Al-Tijani refers to Roger II and William I most frequently as *ṭāghiyya* ("tyrant") or *ṣāḥib* ("lord"). See, for example, al-Tijani, 75, 98.
[119] This is particularly pronounced in al-Tijani's description of the conflict between the Christians and Muslims at Sfax. Al-Tijani, 133-135.
[120] Al-Tijani, 10.
[121] Al-Tijani, 67.
[122] Al-Tijani, 122.

that the Christians on a 1087 expedition to Mahdia came from Pisa and Genoa, he still homogenizes them as Christians for the entirety of this violent narrative, presaging the fate of the city when the Normans later attacked it.[123]

In these descriptions of the history of cities and regions in Ifriqiya, Christian rulers are not painted in a positive light. Al-Tijani associates their presence with conflict and desolation. This is not the case, though, when al-Tijani encounters individual Christians on his travels. True to his introduction, al-Tijani is curious about the ruins and monuments that dot the landscape of Ifriqiya. This requires him to seek the help of people, Christians specifically, who might be able to read these (likely) Latin and Greek inscriptions. While traveling to the city of Gabès, al-Tijani describes a brief stop in a location called *Tajjaght*, in which he describes remarkable ancient ruins.[124] Wanting to know the content of the inscriptions on these ruins, he "summoned many from among the Christians" to see if they could read the inscription.[125] None of the Christians were able to read it, though, and al-Tijani moves on with his story. A similar encounter occurs near Tripoli, between a madrasa called *al-Mantaṣariyya* and a gate leading to the city proper. Here, al-Tijani finds ruins written in the "Roman script."[126] One of al-Tijani's companions, a man named Abu al-Barakat, then finds a Christian who knows that script and can translate the inscription for them.[127]

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[123] Al-Tijani, 331.
[124] I have been unable to find a modern place name for this location. The French scholar Rousseau does not mention a modern equivalent either. al-Tijani, *Voyage du scheikh et-Tidjani dans la régence de Tunis pendant les années 706, 707 et 708 de l'hégire (1306-1309)*, 126.
[125] Given al-Tijani's knowledge of "Roman script" in a later encounter with Christian peoples in Ifriqiya, the language in question might have been Greek.
[126] Al-Tijani, 253.
[127] The inscription is from a Roman temple or "church," as al-Tijani calls it. Al-Tijani, 253.

The encounters between al-Tijani and Christians as described above bear none of the animosity that we see in his descriptions of the history of cities in Ifriqiya. Unless al-Tijani is omitting details about coercing the Christians into helping him, it appears there were amicable relations between Muslims and Christians during his journey, one that contrasts sharply with much of the history that al-Tijani wrote. What is the cause of this discrepancy? We can infer that the animosity present in much of al-Tijani's chronicle toward Christians reflects the sources on which he based his narrative. In the case of the Norman conqusts of Ifriqiya, this means that the chronicle of Ibn Shaddad portrays Christians – specifically the group we today call the Normans – in an overwhelmingly negative light. While al-Tijani transposes this perspective onto his history, the personal encounters he has with Christians do not bear evidence of this animosity.

When comparing the *Rihla* of al-Tijani with the chronicle of Ibn al-Athir, we thus see chronicles operating with a similar narrative derived from the work of Ibn Shaddad but with different authorial agendas. Both use the Norman conquests of Ifriqiya as an example of conflict between Christians and Muslims. But while Ibn al-Athir enfolds them into a larger narrative about Christian incursions into the house of Islam, such a perspective is not found in the *Rihla*. The personal interactions that al-Tijani has with Christians on his journey undermines the trans-Mediterranean conflict of Christians against Muslims found in the work of Ibn al-Athir.

Ibn Khaldun's *Kitab al-ʿIbar*

The *Kitab al-ʿIbar* and its *Muqaddima* ("Introduction") have been the subject of more scholastic inquiry than perhaps any text written in North Africa during the Middle Ages. As discussed in the introduction, it was fashionable for scholars of the early-mid twentieth century to use the contents of Ibn Khaldun's chronicle at face value.[128] Scholars have since pointed out the problems with this perspective, particularly with regard to the invasion of the Banu Hilal in the eleventh century, for it disregards the theoretical model of cyclical history that Ibn Khaldun espouses in his *Muqaddima*. While this revisionist school has done much to contextualize the Hilalian invasions, scholars have not yet explored how this new model of North African history affects Ibn Khaldun's narrative of the Norman conquest of Ifriqiya. It is therefore useful to examine the *Kitab al-ʿIbar*'s description of Norman-Zirid conflict in order to better understand how Ibn Khaldun sought to mobilize this episode in the greater scope of history.

Ibn Khaldun used the writings of both Ibn al-Athir and al-Tijani as sources for his chronicle. Ibn Khaldun's work, though, differs from these previous authors in its emphasis on cyclical dynastic conflict within Ifriqiya that weakened its dynasties and permitted Norman expansion in the region. This expansion proved short-lived, as the strength of the nomadic Almohad armies displaced the Normans from Ifriqiya and led to the establishment of a much more powerful dynasty. To Ibn Khaldun, Norman rule in Ifriqiya is thus a small footnote in the larger history of the region, one that is dominated by nomadic peoples displacing lethargic sedentary populations.

[128] A useful historiographical summary of scholarship on Ibn Khalun's methods is found in Brett, "The Way of the Nomad," 250–54.

Although Ibn Khaldun does not provide citations for his sources, it is clear that his narrative about the clash of Normans and Zirids was constructed from the *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* of Ibn al-Athir and the *Rihla* of al-Tijani, which in turn had been derived from the chronicle of the Zirid prince Ibn Shaddad. All three of these works thus provide similar narratives concerning Norman involvement in Ifriqiya and emphasize the same parts of these conquests. For example, they consider the internal divisions within Tripoli that permitted the Normans to conquer the city.[129] They detail the political chaos in Gabès involving Yusuf, Muhammad, and Muʿammar that preceded the Norman invasion.[130] And they recount the Norman capture of Mahdia under George of Antioch and the fate of al-Hasan ibn ʿAli in the aftermath of this defeat.[131]

Circumstantial information in the *Kitab al-ʿIbar* shows that Ibn Khaldun used the works of Ibn al-Athir and al-Tijani as the basis for his own. In his first description of the Normans' attack on Mahdia, Ibn Khaldun writes that Roger II assembled a fleet of 250 ships with which to assault the city.[132] In a different section of the book, though, he writes of the same attack but mentions that Roger launched a fleet of 300 ships.[133] This discrepancy can be credited to his use of multiple sources, for Ibn al-Athir wrote that Roger had a fleet of 250 ships and al-Tijani wrote that Roger had a fleet of 300 ships.[134] Ibn Khaldun's naming of George of Antioch similarly indicates that he used the *Rihla* as a source. On several occasions, Ibn Khaldun introduces George as "George ibn Mikhael"

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[129] Ibn al-Athir, 11:108. Al-Tijani, 197. Ibn Khaldun, 5:232.
[130] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120-121. Al-Tijani, 100-101. Ibn Khaldun, 5:232-233.
[131] Ibn al-Athir, 11:125-126. Al-Tijani, 340-342. Ibn Khaldun, 5:233-234.
[132] Ibn Khaldun, 5:233.
[133] Ibn Khaldun, 6:214.
[134] Ibn al-Athir, 11:125. Al-Tijani, 340. Idris mistakenly writes that Ibn Khaldun reported a navy of 350 ships. Idris, *La Berbérie orientale sous les Zīrīdes: Xe-XIIe siècles*, 1962, 1:355.

and "George ibn Mikhael the Antiochene," titles that are also found in the *Rihla* of al-Tijani.[135] These titles are not found in the work of Ibn al-Athir, who usually refers to him as simply "George" but also calls him "George the Frank"[136] and "George, the vizier of the Sicilian lord."[137] Discrepancies like this reveal that Ibn Khaldun relied on both the works of al-Tijani and Ibn al-Athir to construct his own history, although beyond details like the one discussed above, it is difficult to decipher from which chronicle he is drawing for any given event.[138]

The similar narrative arcs in the writings of Ibn Khaldun, Ibn al-Athir, and al-Tijani complement their shared goals in writing history. These authors were preoccupied with the notion of truth in historical writing and sought to compile their works to give (in their eyes) a balanced and accurate history. Ibn al-Athir did this through a synthesis of available sources, one that considered the whole of history, not just of the West or the East. Al-Tijani, despite writing a *riḥla*, drew more heavily on historical works than other writers in this genre. Ibn Khaldun took a similar approach but went a step further with regard to critical source analysis. At the beginning of the *Muqqadima*, he explains how "untruth naturally afflicts historical information" and gives several examples of untruth from the writings of al-Masʿudi and al-Bakri.[139] He criticizes previous scholars for

[135] Al-Tijani, 241. Ibn Khaldun, 5:233, 234; VI:214. Ibn Khaldun also puzzlingly refers to him as "George ibn Munasil," which is found in no other chronicles and could be a scribal error. Ibn Khaldun, 6:215.
[136] Ibn al-Athir, 11:128.
[137] Ibn al-Athir, 11:145.
[138] There are pieces of information related to tribal affiliation found in Ibn Khaldun's chronicle that are not found in the works of al-Tijani and Ibn al-Athir. This is probably due to Ibn Khaldun's interest in relationships between tribes, which he probably could have parsed together from other sources he used for the study of North Africa in the years after the Normans were ejected from Mahdia.
[139] Ibn Khaldun, 1:46. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, ed. Franz Rosenthal, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 35.

simply copying these works without casting a critical eye toward their contents. In order to improve these shoddily constructed histories, Ibn Khaldun states that he has omitted and corrected the contents of previous works so as to present an accurate history of civilization.[140] Unfortunately, in the course of his book, he rarely states the work of those before him or when he is actively amending them.

Ibn Khaldun's theoretical approach to history further departs from the works of Ibn al-Athir and al-Tijani through its emphasis on history as a tool for studying social organization. His *Muqaddima* sets forth the necessity for history to consider the dynasties of men, the ways in which they live, and how certain groups achieve superiority over others.[141] Ibn Khaldun lays out the conflict between nomadic and sedentary people as the heart of this philosophy and one that informs his theory of world history. He argues that the ability of nomadic peoples to maintain a strong sense of *ʻaṣabiyya* ("group feeling") gives them power over the sedentary groups they fight. Over the course of several generations, though, the re-settled nomadic peoples lose their *ʿaṣabiyya* until another nomadic group conquers them. This cycle repeats itself indefinitely and is a central component of not only the *Muqaddima*, but also the main text of the *Kitab al-ʿIbar*.

How, then, do the Normans factor into this cyclical theory of history? Norman expansion into Ifriqiya is found in two sections of the *Kitab al-ʿIbar*. In the first section, Ibn Khaldun frames it as one of many Frankish assaults on the Levant and North Africa, much like the narrative of Ibn al-Athir. In this narrative, Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the tribal divisions that existed within Ifriqiya that permitted the Christian conquests. When

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[140] Ibn Khaldun, 1:47-54. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 1980, 1:36–44.
[141] Ibn Khaldun, 1:54-56. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 1980, 1:45–48.

the Normans were driven out of Ifriqiya, it was due to the unified uprising of the Muslims in Ifriqiya followed by the Almohad conquests, both of which have echoes of *ʿaṣabiyya* in them. In the second section of the *Kitab al-ʿIbar* to consider the Normans, Ibn Khaldun treats them as minor players in the histories of individual dynasties in Ifriqiya. Here, Norman rule in Ifriqiya is a brief gap between the rule of the more legitimate Ifriqiyan Muslim dynasties and the Almohads.

The first of these narratives focuses on the incursions of the Franks into Islamic lands across the Mediterranean. Following his description of the Seljuq dynasty, Ibn Khaldun switches to an account of Frankish aggression against Muslims, which he calls "an account of the Franks, who captured the coasts of Syria and its ports, and how they subdued them, and the beginning of their authority there and their fate."[142] The subsequent sections, beginning with the Franks' conquest of Jerusalem in 1099 and ending with their seizure of Constantinople in 1204, consider the regions of the Islamic world under Frankish control and how Frankish expansion included conquests in Sicily, Ifriqiya, and Syria. These conquests were not to last, though, as "thousands of Muslims witnessed" the Franks being driven out of Muslims lands. Al-Andalus, which Ibn Khaldun considers in different sections, is absent from this narrative and thus represents a departure from the format of the chronicle of Ibn al-Athir. Nonetheless, Ibn Khaldun advocates the notion of a Frankish assault on Islam, one in which Ifriqiya plays a prominent part.[143] This is seen in both the narrative he tells and the vocabulary he uses to

[142] Ibn Khaldun, 5:209.
[143] Following his consideration of Frankish aggression in the Muslim world, Ibn Khaldun considers the course of the Artuqid dynasty, which ruled in eastern Anatolia and northern Syria/Iraq. Ibn Khaldun, 5:246.

tell it. The section headings of the *Kitab al-ʿIbar* show the weaving of the Normans' campaigns in Ifriqiya (bolded) with roughly chronological happenings in the Levant:[144]

> The lord of Damascus conquers Banias
> Shamas al-Malik seizes Beaufort
> **The Franks seize the island of Djerba in Ifriqiya**
> The lord of Damascus conquers some of the forts of the Franks
> **The Franks seize Tripoli of the West**
> **The Franks seize Mahdia**
> **The Franks seize Annaba and the death of Roger, lord of Sicily, and reign of his son William**
> The Franks seize Ascalon
> **The uprising of the Muslims on the coast of Ifriqiya against the Franks, who had been triumphing there**
> **ʿAbd al-Muʿmin takes back Mahdia from the hand of the Franks**
> The Franks siege Asad al-Din Shirkuh at Bilbeis
> The Franks siege Cairo

Ibn Khaldun's narrative thus alternates between events in the Mashriq and Ifriqiya. The core of the Norman conquests is told in the sections on the Franks conquering Tripoli, Mahdia, and Annaba but these are separated from the other events that involve their presence in Ifriqiya – the conquest of Djerba and the Almohad reconquest. The intertwining of these events with those in the Mashriq, combined with the use of the term "Franks" to refer to these people as a collective, shows the interrelated perception of these military campaigns. This narrative and vocabulary is reminiscent of Ibn al-Athir, who also cultivated the image of a homogenous assault of Franks on the lands of Islam.

At the same time, though, Ibn Khaldun's preoccupation with tribal identity and conflict that stems from tribal differences downplays the religiously divisive rhetoric found in the writings of Ibn al-Athir. Take, for example, the accounts that Ibn al-Athir

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[144] Ibn Khaldun, 5:230-243.

and Ibn Khaldun provide for Norman involvement in Tripoli. Ibn al-Athir begins his section about the Frankish assault on Tripoli in 541H (1146-47) as follows:

> In this year, the Franks - God curse them! - conquered Tripoli of the West. The reason for this was that Roger, the king of Sicily, prepared a large fleet and he sent it to Tripoli. They [the ships] circled it by land and by sea on the third of Muharram. [The city's] people fled from them lest fighting should entangle them."[145]

The subsequent account of the conquest combines internal struggles within Tripoli with Frankish aggression that ultimately led to their conquest of it. Although Ibn al-Athir mentions conflict between the Banu Matruh and the recently appointed Almoravid leader in Tripoli, the emphasis is on the Franks' capture of the city. Alternatively, Ibn Khaldun writes about the Norman seizure of Tripoli by highlighting tribal divisions within the city. The beginning of this section reads:

> When the order of the Sanhajan dynasty was dissolved in Ifriqiya and its shadow receded, the people of Tripoli became independent for themselves. In Mahdia was the last of the kings from the Banu Badis, al-Hasan ibn ʿAli ibn Yahya ibn Tamim ibn al-Muʿizz. At Tripoli, Abu Yahya ibn Matruh became independent from his pledge to [al-Hasan]... The people of the city had a difference of opinion [about who ought to govern Tripoli] before the arrival of the Franks. They abandoned the Banu Matruh and a man of theirs from the emirs of the Lamtuna governed.[146]

Ibn Khaldun's subsequent narrative tells of Frankish involvement in Tripoli but places more emphasis on the divisions between the tribes of Matruh and Lamtuna within the city that made the conquest possible. The accounts of Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun do not contradict each other, but their respective emphases paint varied pictures about how Norman involvement in Ifriqiya fits into their larger historical narratives. These emphases

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[145] Ibn al-Athir, 11:108.
[146] Ibn Khaldun, 5:232.

are further found in Ibn al-Athir's and Ibn Khaldun's description of the city of Gabès on the eve of the Norman conquests. Ibn al-Athir emphasizes the conflict between individuals within the city:

> Before this year, there was the lord of the city of Gabès, a man named Rushayd. He died and left behind sons. A companion of his named Yusuf approached his young son, named Muḥammad, in order to put him in power as the emir. Yusuf expelled [Rushayd's] old son, named Muʿammar. Yūsuf took possession of the city and he governed for Muhammad because of his young age.[147]

Ibn Khaldun, on the other hand, paints conflict within the city in terms of dynastic origins and loyalties:

> When the order of the Sanhajan dynasty was dissolved… There was the city of Gabès and [its ruler was] Ibn Kamil ibn Jaʿma from the tribes of the Riyah, one of the groups of the Hilal that al-Jarjara, the minister of al-Mustansir of Egypt, dispatched onto al-Muʿizz ibn Badis. He ordered that they despoil the dynasty and they devastated its order. Some of its leaders conquered [there] and others from among the people of the lands became independent in their positions. In Gabès, there was a division of the Banu Dahman. In this time, [it was ruled by] Rashid, an emir as we remembered in the news of the Sanhajan dynasty.[148]

The differences between the narratives of Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun are highlighted in the above passages. While Ibn al-Athir frames the political situation in Gabès between individuals, Ibn Khaldun expands it to a broader, dynastic level. The narrative to emerge from Ibn Khaldun's approach presents Norman involvement in Ifriqiya in a slightly different light. The Normans are able to impose themselves on the local dynasties of Ifriqiya due to their infighting. These once-nomadic dynasties, now living a sedentary lifestyle, have lost their *aṣabiyya* and have consequently become weaker without it.

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[147] Ibn al-Athir, 11:120.
[148] Ibn Khaldun, 5:232-233.

As a result of Ibn Khaldun's preoccupation with tribal conflict, the idea of a clash of Christianity and Islam is somewhat undermined. But it is not entirely forgotten. During his description of the revolts that spelt an end to Norman rule in Ifriqiya, Ibn Khaldun evokes the notion of a unified Muslim front against the Franks. He describes the "revolt of the Muslims on the coast of Ifriqiya against the Franks," one that began with the uprising in Sfax and spread quickly to neighboring cities.[149] Christian rule in Ifriqiya comes to an end several years later when ʿAbd al-Muʿmin conquered the city of Mahdia and appointed al-Hasan as his governor.

In his description of the 551H (1156-57) revolts against Norman rule, Ibn Khaldun makes explicit the religious nature of this conflict. He quotes Abu al-Hasan saying to his son ʿUmar, "When the opportunity is granted to you in saving Muslims from the pull of unbelief, do it!"[150] This quote foreshadows ʿUmar ibn Abi al-Hasan's defeat of the Normans at Sfax and much of Ifriqiya, one that is presented as an undertaking of Muslims against unbelievers. Ibn Khaldun's rhetoric when describing the Almohad conquest of Mahdia is also evocative. He writes that "ʿAbd al-Muʿmin retook Mahdia" from the Franks, despite him never holding the city in the first place.[151] Such language implies that the Almohads retook Mahdia on behalf of all Muslims from the Christians that ruled it. The dynastic focus that dominated the earlier part of his narrative – in which the Normans were conquering Ifriqiya – thus fades into the language of Christians against Muslims when the Muslim Almohads are victorious.

[149] Ibn Khaldun, 5:237-238.
[150] Ibn Khaldun, 5:238.
[151] Ibn Khaldun, 5:238.

The second section of Ibn Khaldun's chronicle comes in the portion of the *Kitab al-ʿIbar* devoted to the examination of the dynasties of Ifriqiya. Here, the narrative format is more reminiscent of al-Tijani, for the Normans appear piecemeal in Ibn Khaldun's descriptions of various dynasties, many of which are based in individual cities.[152] Nonetheless, the narrative in this second section of the *Kitab al-ʿIbar* is similar to the one presented in the section devoted to the dynasties of the Franks, except that there is an emphasis on the efforts that each dynasty made to overthrow the Normans. Ibn Khaldun considers not only the Zirid dynasty, but also the Banu Khurasan at Tunis, the Banu Jamʿa at Gabès, and the Banu Matruh at Tripoli.[153] It is here that Ibn Khaldun provides some details about the Norman conquest that are unconsidered in the first account. For example, he mentions in his account of the Banu Khurasan at Tunis the internal chaos that the city underwent around the time of the Norman conquests but, at the same time, how the city prepared itself to deflect Norman aggression.[154] The sections about other dynasties conform to the narrative told in Ibn Khaldun's first about Frankish aggression, except here they are framed not as part of a broader Frankish assault upon Islam, but rather as one part of a dynastic history. This narrative style fits with the overall structure of Ibn Khaldun's chronicle and reinforces the importance of dynastic alignment to political conflict.

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[152] One of Ibn Khaldun's linguistic choices even mirrors al-Tijani. In this second section, the people that today we call the Normans are referred to as "Christians" instead of "Franks." It is likely that Ibn Khaldun based his first narrative of Norman involvement in Ifriqiya on the writings of Ibn al-Athir and the second on the writings of al-Tijani.
[153] Ibn Khaldun, 6: 214-224
[154] Ibn Khaldun, 6:217-218.

Conclusion

This analysis of the major Arabic sources serves as justification for my use of them in earlier chapters of this dissertation. Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun wrote their chronicles with a clear agenda that involved the perpetuation of a larger historical theory into which they inserted their source materials. In both of these chronicles, earlier texts pertaining to the Zirids are rarely cited, so it is difficult to determine the line between the authorial voices of these later chronicles and that of Ibn Shaddad. Al-Tijani, on the other hand, provides extensive quotations in his chronicle and does not have the same theoretical framework that might have caused him to distort his sources. It is for these reasons that I have favored the narrative provided by al-Tijani over that of Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun when contradictory information arises in their narratives. This is seen, for example, in their accounts of naval conflict outside the city of Gabes in 511H (1117-18) and of Tripoli's revolt against Norman rule in 553H (1158-59).

Despite these occasional differences in narrative structure within the writings of Ibn al-Athir, al-Tijani, and Ibn Khaldun, the overarching story they tell about Norman Africa is still remarkably similar. They incorporate the Norman conquests of Ifriqiya into larger narratives about conflict between Christianity and Islam in which religious difference and conflict are at the forefront. The conquests of Roger II and George of Antioch in Ifriqiya are framed as one part of a massive assault on the lands of Islam by a faceless "Frankish" or "Christian" enemy. Norman governance in the region is downplayed and the rule of the Norman kings is viewed as illegitimate. It is this narrative structure that led Ibn Khaldun to frame the Almohad subjugation of Ifriqiya as a

reconquest on behalf of Islam. It is this narrative structure that also led Ibn al-Athir to see a direct line between the governance of the Zirids and Almohads despite the twelve-year rule of the Normans. Even though the Almohads encountered resistance across Ifriqiya during their campaigns, as these chronicles explicitly detailed, their eventual victory is interpreted as a restoration of Muslim order to Ifriqiya.

The disconnect in how these chroniclers frame the Almohad conquest of Ifriqiya shows the influence of Ibn Shaddad on later writers. The Zirid prince undoubtedly held a high opinion of the Almohads, whose conquests installed his cousin al-Hasan ibn ʿAli to the throne of Mahdia. Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun transposed the content of Ibn Shaddad's chronicle into their own works, praising the reconquest of the Almohads even when other entries in their writings show the Muslim-Muslim violence that characterized these conquests. The tension between these two interpretations of history reveals the need for the careful examination of both the individual events described in chronicles and the narrative framework that these authors are espousing. Previous studies on the Norman Kingdom of Africa have considered only the individual chronicle entries that detail events in Sicily and Ifriqiya with little attention given to the adjacent entries. Such a strategy has inhibited the study of how Ifriqiya as a region factors into larger narrative histories in Arabic texts.

Conclusion

Of Colonies and Crusading

This disseration has analyzed the cause, course, and consequences of the formation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa. Throughout this narrative, I have used varied vocabulary to refer to the lands that the Normans conquered – bases, cities, territories, possessions, and holdings. I have similarly referred to the Normans as exercising authority, overlordship, power, and governance over their lands in Ifriqiya. One word that I have avoided, though, is "colonies." This is intentional. To call Norman territories in Ifriqiya colonies is to automatically put them in dialogue with other instances of European expansion into Africa and to invite potentially fraught comparisons over a broad chronological and geographic scope. To use the word haphazardly in the narrative I have created would distract from the story I sought to tell. The conclusion of this study, though, is an apt time to consider whether it is appropriate to consider the establishment of the Norman Kingdom of Africa as an instance of colonialism. Such an examination allows me to summarize my findings about Norman Africa by juxtaposing it with both the Crusader states and modern colonial enterprises.

Scholars have argued that colonialism has many faces, including settler colonialism, exploitation colonialism, and surrogate colonialism, which in turn can be analyzed through different methodological lenses like Marxism.[155] As a result of these

[155] Useful overviews are found in Jürgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005). Robert Van Niel, "Colonialism Revisited: Recent Historiography," *Journal of World History* 1, no. 1 (1990): 109–24.

varied and wide-ranging categories, it is virtually impossible to create an entirely satisfactory definition of the phenomenon of colonialism.[156] The definition provided by Jürgen Osterhammel in *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, though, provides a convenient summation of the troublesome word:

> Colonialism is a relationship between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule.[157]

To Osterhammel, colonialism is about power dynamics in which a state unapologetically imposes its will over a subjugated population. French colonial rule in Tunisia and Algeria is a textbook example of this and one that is particularly apt to consider because of its geographical proximity to the Norman Kingdom of Africa. Scholars of French colonialism have highlighted the oppressiveness of the French regime. Fanon noted that it was a “world cut in two,” in which settlers lived a life of comfort in towns that are brightly lit and populated by well-to-do white people. Conversely, the town of colonized people is one of hunger, oppression, and suffering. It is a town “wallowing in the mire.”[158] Scholars since Fanon have highlighted the atrocities that the French colonial regime committed and the methods of suppression it used to maintain rule in North Africa for the better part of a century.[159]

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[156] Alternative definitions to that of Osterhammel are discussed in Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 19–39.
[157] Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, 15–18.
[158] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, Inc, 1963), 38–39.
[159] The historiography of French expansion into North Africa is too expansive and complex to consider in any detail here. An overview of competing historiographies on this topic are found in Prochaska, *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920*, 1–6.

Some historians have also interpreted medieval conquests, particularly the Crusades, as colonial ventures. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, historians of the Middle Ages saw the Crusader states (particularly the Kingdom of Jerusalem) as European colonies.[160] French historians of the nineteenth century like Emmanuel Rey viewed the Crusader states as colonies of France in which there was a harmonious mixing of western and eastern institutions, an argument connected to contemporary colonial aspirations.[161] With the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, many scholars saw meaningful similarities between the nascent state and the Kingdom of Jerusalem that preceded it. Joshua Prawer, for example, viewed the Kingdom of Jerusalem as an instance of medieval colonialism. Unlike Rey, though, he saw its society as one defined by segregation between the conquerors and the conquered.[162] He found "continuity between the Crusades and the discovery of the Canaries and that of the Western hemisphere." Thus, the Crusades "foreshadow all later colonial movements."[163]

In the historiographical tradition of Prawer, there is a neat line that can be drawn from the Crusades to the colonial enterprises of the New World to the French conquest of

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[160] This historiographical overview is based on the following syntheses: Ann Zimo, "Muslims in the Landscape: A Social Map of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Thirteenth Century" (University of Minnesota, 2016). Christopher Tyerman, *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 190–233. Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 99–126.
[161] Emmanuel Rey, *Les Colonies franques de Syrie aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1883). See also M Michaud, *Histoire des croisades*, 2 vols. (Paris: Michaud Frères, 1814).
[162] Prawer boldly argued that "it is justified to regard the Crusader kingdom as the first European colonial society." Joshua Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972), ix. R.C. Smail's analysis includes a systematic analysis of crusader castles, through which he argued that their sizeable fortifications were proof that the crusaders did not seek to live outside of towns. R.C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare, 1097-1193*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 204–44. This idea is challenged in Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[163] Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages*, 469–70.

Algeria. These arguments rely upon a definition of colonialism that is embedded in the conquest of a strong polity over a weaker polity, which in turns leads to governance that is segregated and exploitative.[164] The crusaders holed themselves into fortified castles and did not mix with local rural populations. Colonization of these areas existed but was limited to Italian merchant communities that traded in crusader ports. The similarities between this kind of society and those of modern European colonies constitutes enough evidence, in Prawer's view, to characterize it as an instance of medieval colonialism.

The colonial model of the Kingdom of Jerusalem came under increased scrutiny near the end of the twentieth century. Archaeologists Adrian Boas and Ronnie Ellenblum argued that Latin Christians were not simply confined to cities. Ellenblum in particular showed that Franks lived in rural areas, especially those that were already home to Eastern Christians.[165] Recent research has largely confirmed and expanded Ellenblum's thesis to show the frequent interactions between conquerors and conquered in the Kingdom of Jerusalem and other Crusader states.[166] The broadening of source materials to include material-culture evidence and non-Latin texts has been essential to this revisionism. With this change in perception of the Kingdom of Jerusalem has come criticism of the idea that it and the other Crusader states were examples of medieval colonialism. In the twenty-first century, scholars have argued that the political landscape

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[164] The following analysis of medieval colonialism is derived from Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages*, 469–533.
[165] Ronnie Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[166] MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance*. Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, C. 1050-1614*. Zimo, "Muslims in the Landscape: A Social Map of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Thirteenth Century."

of the Crusader states was demonstrably different than that of European colonies during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Calling the Crusader states "colonies" thus invites unfair chronological comparisons that mischaracterize the society of these polities and draw problematic connections between medieval and modern. Tyerman's summation of the issue is perhaps the most fitting, which is that the Crusades "can only be understood on their own terms, in their own time."[167]

It is within this substantial historiographical debate that we can consider the Norman Kingdom of Africa. Is it possible to situate the Norman Kingdom of Africa in a larger colonial trajectory of European expansion, as Prawer did with the Kingdom of Jerusalem? Are there relevant connections between Norman Africa and French Africa that warrant them being placed on the same colonial continuum?

I argue that the Norman Kingdom of Africa ought to be seen on its own terms and through the eyes of those who experienced it, rather than attempting to connect its foundation to other European expeditions to North Africa that happened centuries later. The comparisons that Prawer made between the Kingdom of Jerusalem and later colonial enterprises downplayed the complexity of both. The same is true for Norman Africa. Although it would be easy to highlight some very broad similarities between the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa and later colonial enterprises – both involved Christian European polities invading Muslim North Africa, both saw the institution of laws that advantaged the conquerors – these sweeping comparisons belie a much more complex medieval encounter.

[167] Tyerman, *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades*, 208.

The foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa came in the wake of nearly a century of sustained diplomatic relations between the Normans of Sicily and local lords in Ifriqiya. These dynamic relationships were sometimes peaceful and sometimes violent. For much of the early-twelfth century, the Zirid emirs of Ifriqiya effectively exerted pressure on a young Roger II through their military might and the strength of their alliances with other Muslim powers. The ascent of George of Antioch in the mid-1120s, who had once been employed by the Zirids, proved instrumental for the Normans in asserting their strength across the Mediterranean. George maintained a positive relationship with the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt, which benefited from the Normans' initial campaigns against the islands between Sicily and Ifriqiya because it eliminated disruptive pirates. He also helped navigate the ever-shifting diplomatic landscape of Ifriqiya, which saw both local lords requesting aid from the Normans against the Zirids and the Zirids requesting aid from the Normans against local lords. The dynamic relationship between these competing and cooperating powers drew in polities from all sides of the Mediterranean.

The relationship between the Normans and local lords in Ifriqiya changed in the 1140s when a crippling drought shook Ifriqiya for the better part of a decade. This drought came at an ideal time for Roger II, who had recently secured his territories in mainland Italy and now looked for ways to expand his authority. His conquests in Ifriqiya were an opportunistic way for him to assert economic and political control over the central Mediterranean while simultaneously expanding his regnal authority. Unlike other campaigns happening simultaneously in the Mediterranean, medieval sources do not

advocate religious fervor as an underlying cause for these conquests.[168] Instead, these conquests are presented as part of the Normans' larger plans for economic and imperial expansion in the central Mediterranean.

Norman rule in Ifriqiya varied from city to city. In Mahdia and the islands of the central Mediterranean, the Normans appointed their own government officials to manage quotidian affairs. Norman governors levied new taxes, most of which were imposed on non-Christians, although in Malta Roger II levied a tax on Christians for the slaying of a Muslim. Beyond this, there is little evidence for systematic changes to the quotidian operations of cities. For other cities in the Norman Kingdom of Africa, the Norman kings appointed proxy governors who already possessed significant political clout in their respective cities. The right of these governors to rule was made explicit in a contract that detailed the terms of the relationship between the Normans and their governors. Although none of these contracts survive, contextual details from the Arabic chronicles indicate that Norman governors in Ifriqiya exercised demonstrable authority. They could form military alliances with other polities independent of the Normans, as Jabbara ibn Kamil did at Sousse. Muslim judges had jurisdiction over other Muslims, as was shown in Tripoli with the qadi Abu al-Hajaj. The Norman presence in cities like Sousse and Tripoli was restricted to a garrison of soldiers and visiting merchants.

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[168] Constable, "The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries." Oldfield and Drell have recently noted that even though Roger II and William I did not physically go on crusade, they were nonetheless complicit in crusading ventures and used some of its rhetoric. Paul Oldfield, "The Use and Abuse of Pilgrims in Norman Italy," in *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World* (New York: The Boydell Press, 2015), 139–56. Joanna Drell, "Norman Italy and the Crusades: Thoughts on the 'Homefront,'" in *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World* (New York: The Boydell Press, 2015), 51–64.

Even though Norman rule in Ifriqiya was relatively laissez faire, it nonetheless was distinct from previous regimes. Norman rule flipped established hierarchies by putting Christians in positions of privilege over Muslims. Christian merchants frequented the ports of Ifriqiya as Jewish and Muslim traders sought other markets. Norman garrisons patrolled the streets of cities. The church received an influx of wealth that made its presence more visible. Such changes to Ifriqiyan society were disadvantageous for Muslims living in Ifriqiya and contributed to the widespread revolts against Norman rule in the 1150s that brought an end to Norman rule in most of Ifriqiya. William I of Sicily, who suffered from a divided court and was busy fighting internal dissenters in mainland Italy, was unable to bring these revolting cities back under his control. The Almohad conquest of Mahdia in 1160 destroyed the last outpost of the Norman Kingdom of Africa, a campaign that later chroniclers framed as one of reconquest for Islam.

While the Normans controlled the Ifriqiyan littoral, individuals within the Kingdom of Sicily had varied perceptions about these territories. Roger II and William I boasted about their subjugation of Ifriqiya, as evident from descriptions of engraved swords and seals, and occasionally incorporated it into their royal title as *rex Africe*. Some members of the upper nobility with demonstrable ties to the Norman monarchy also saw their kings as *rex Africe* and translated the title into Arabic and Judeo-Arabic as *malik Ifriqiya*. Nonetheless, this title did not circulate widely. The vast majority of diplomatic correspondence from the time of Roger II and William I limits the geographic bounds of their kingdom to Sicily, Apulia, and Capua – the boundaries put in place by the Papacy during Roger II's second coronation in 1139. Africa was a point of pride for the

Norman monarchy as part of their larger imperial aspirations but held an ambiguous place within the Norman imperial imagination.

Despite these varied attitudes within the Kingdom of Sicily, Muslim authors outside of Norman territory sought to downplay Norman involvement in Ifriqiya. Arabic chroniclers presented Norman rule as an occupation that was characterized by conquest and not governance. They saw Norman rule as an interregnum between the rule of the more legitimate Zirid dynasty and Almohad dynasty. Finally, they used Norman aggression against the Zirids and local lords in Ifriqiya to support their larger narratives about history, one in which Ifriqiya was one theater of a larger war between Christians and Muslims that spanned the entire Mediterranean. This attitude, which belies the complexity of Christian-Muslim relationships as described in these writings, can be attributed to these authors' reliance on the now-lost chronicle of the Zirid prince Ibn Shaddad. The competing authorial voices in these chronicles shows the necessity of examining individual historical episodes in the overarching context in which authors were writing them.

My findings shine a much-needed light on the history of Ifriqiya during the central Middle Ages. They show that the popular narrative of the region as an anarchic backwater in the wake of the Hilalian invasions is outdated and not in line with the primary source evidence. The Zirid dynasty had demonstrable strength in the Mediterranean for much of the twelfth century and could bully the nascent Normans. Environmental trauma, not inter-tribal conflicts or political anarchy, was the primary reason that the Normans were able to conquer the Ifriqiyan littoral so swiftly in the

1140s. My findings also indicate that Norman rule in Ifriqiya caused changes that fundamentally altered the society of the region and laid the foundation for later unrest. The synthesis of recently discovered and underused medieval sources has permitted this analysis and allowed for a more holistic understanding of the dynamic relationships that formed in the medieval Mediterranean.

My dissertation shows the fruits of putting environmental data in dialogue with traditional written sources. The Old World Drought Atlas provides scholars of the Middle Ages with an unprecedented glimpse of annual climate patterns, data that previously was unavailable due to the nature of the surviving medieval sources. When put in dialogue with written sources, the OWDA helps to quantify the scope and scale of environmental phenomena in the Middle Ages. I hope that the continued analysis of this invaluable resource will allow scholars to reconstruct the climate of the medieval Mediterranean in relation to migrations of people, the movement of trade goods, and instances of conflict across climate zones.

The narrative produced in this dissertation also complements recent work about interfaith conflict and coexistence in the field of Mediterranean Studies. Over the past decade, scholars have conducted research that shows the importance of cultural and religious divisions in the realm of Mediterranean politics. Of particular relevance is Brian Catlos' term *conveniencia* (or "The Convenience Principle"), which he coined in reference to the interactions between Christians, Muslims, and Jews in medieval al-Andalus and the Mediterranean. Catlos broadly argues that:

> The glue that held Muslim and Christian society was interest – the self-interest of Christians and of Muslims, and the mutual interest generated by an

> interdependence that emerged as a consequence of [a] broad range of economic and political relationships… This is not to say that Christian-Muslim relations were simply shaped by a conscious utilitarianism on the part of the majority society – although this was clearly a factor at certain times and places.[169]

When applied to interactions between the Normans and Muslim lords of Ifriqiya, this generalization holds true. Interactions between these groups before the foundation of the Norman Kingdom of Africa were largely dictated by individual self-interest, whether in the case of the Muslim governor of Gabes reaching out to Roger II to help keep his merchant ship at sea, or in the case of the Zirid emir al-Hasan ibn ʿAli allying with Roger II against the Hammadids in 529H (1134-35). When the Normans seized the Ifriqiyan littoral in the 1140s, it was in the best interests of local Muslim lords to submit to their Christian overlords. Several years later, when the downsides of Norman rule outweighed the benefits, these lords revolted against their Christian overlords. Catlos' principle of *conveniencia*, when applied to Ifriqiya, is therefore a useful way through which to consider these interfaith interactions.

This narrative also highlights the need for the further study of medieval Ifriqiya in dialogue with other parts of the Mediterranean. Scholars of the medieval Mediterranean have understudied Ifriqiya in comparison to other areas, particularly al-Andalus and the Levant. As this dissertation has shown, though, the Normans and Zirids developed meaningful relationships with polities on all sides of the Mediterranean, including the Almoravids, Almohads, Hammadids, Fatimids, Crusader states, Byzantine Empire, Holy Roman Empire, and France. Future research on the history of the medieval Mediterranean

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[169] Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, C. 1050-1614*, 524.

should recognize the agency that groups like the Zirids had and should not approach this dynasty as one that was exclusively defined by decline and eventual conquest. Furthermore, in the minds of medieval chroniclers, these Mediterranean theaters were inextricably interrelated. As such, it is imperative to bring Ifriqiya into conversations about larger movements in the Mediterranean so that the complexity and interrelatedness of these exchanges can be properly explored.

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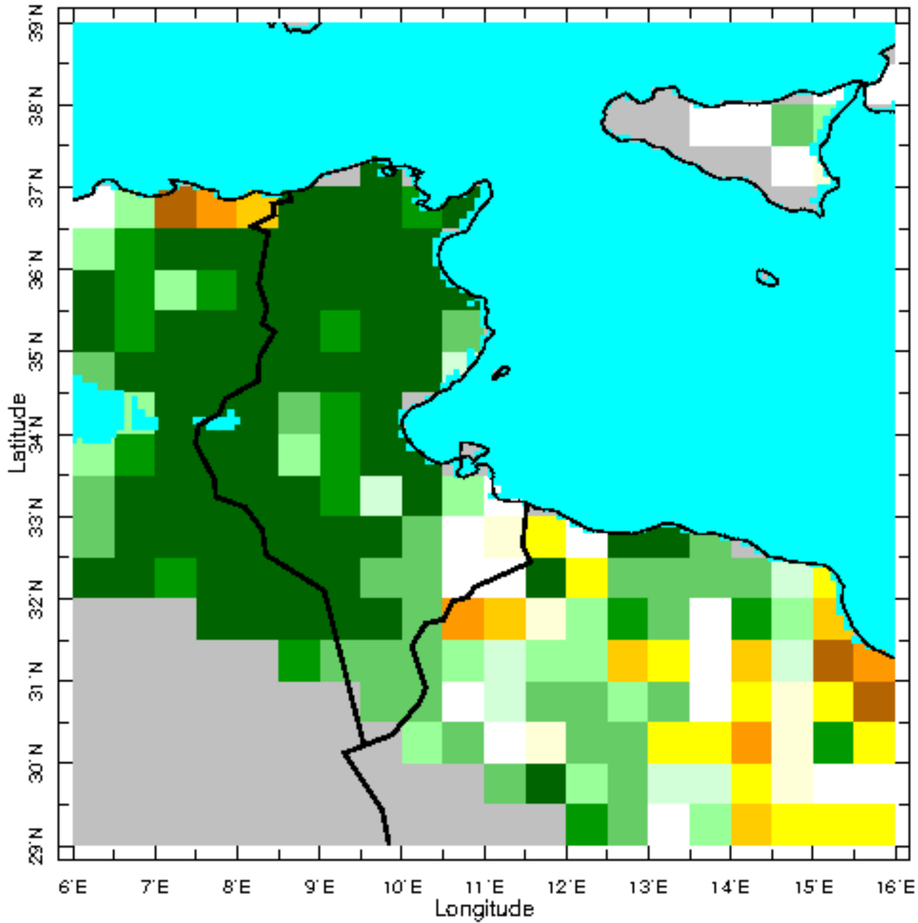
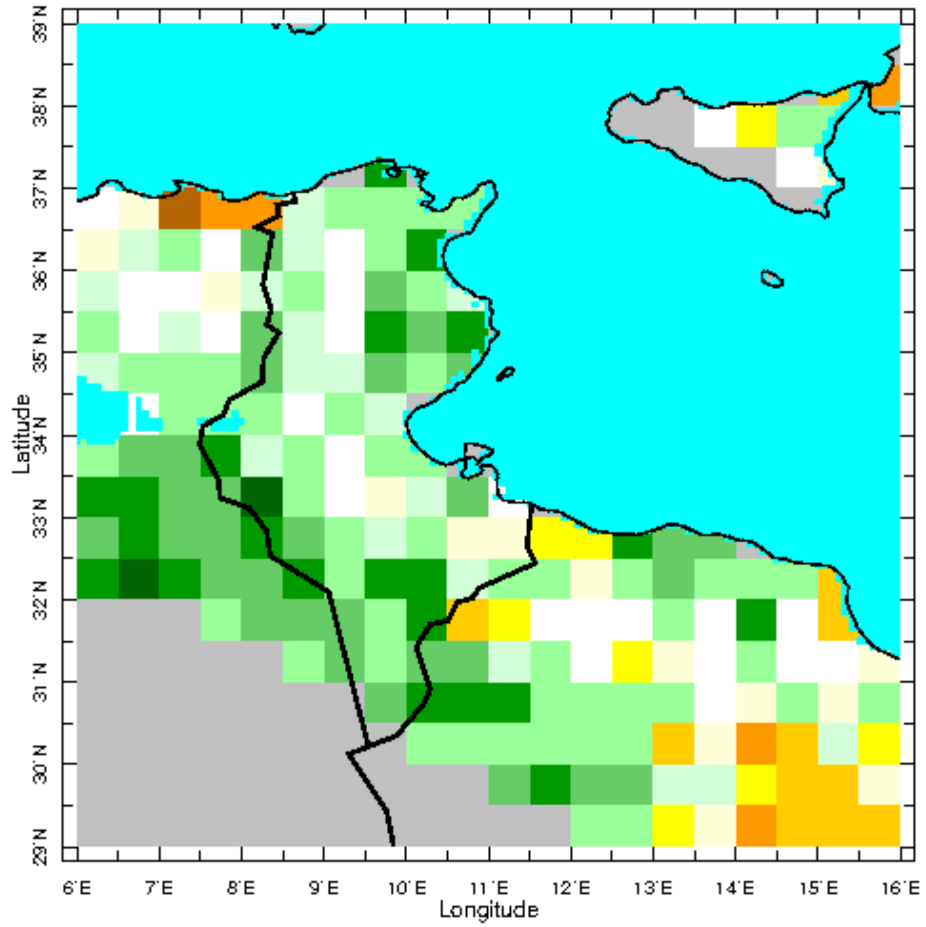
Appendix One: Old World Drought Atlas Data, 1140-1151

Data with the settings found in this appendix (beginning at the year 1140) can be found at this URL: http://tinyurl.com/NormanAfrica1140

Year - 1140

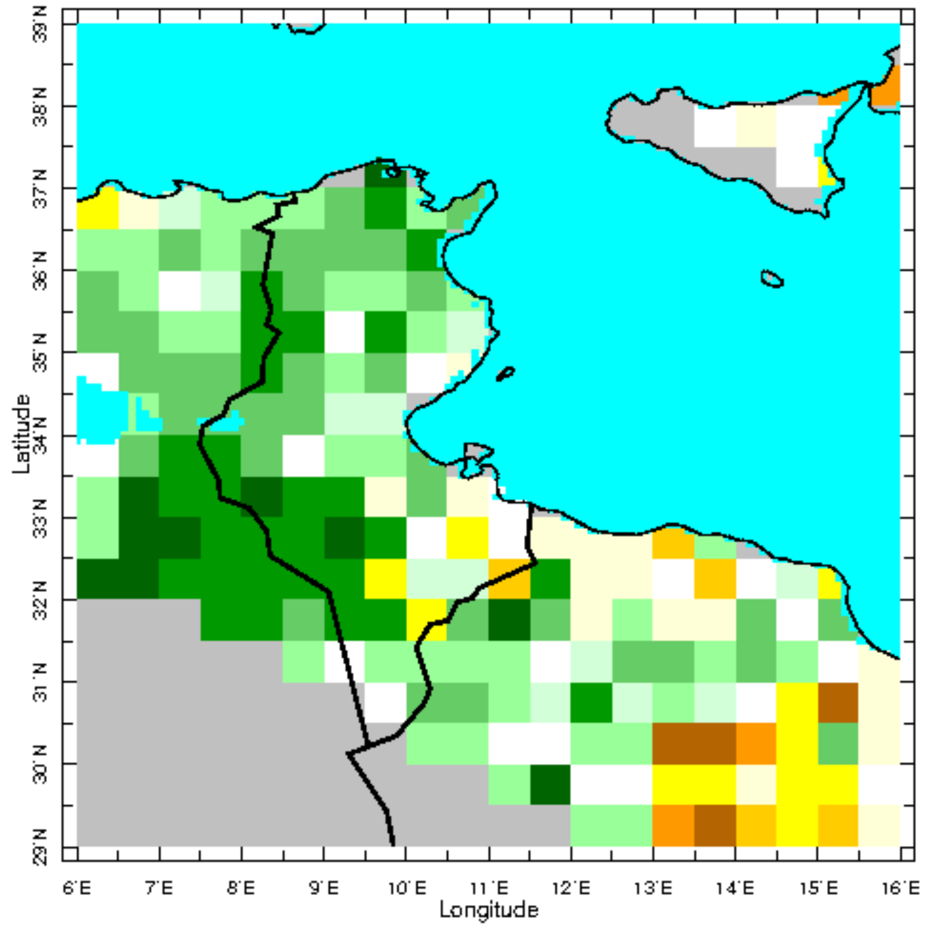


Year – 1141



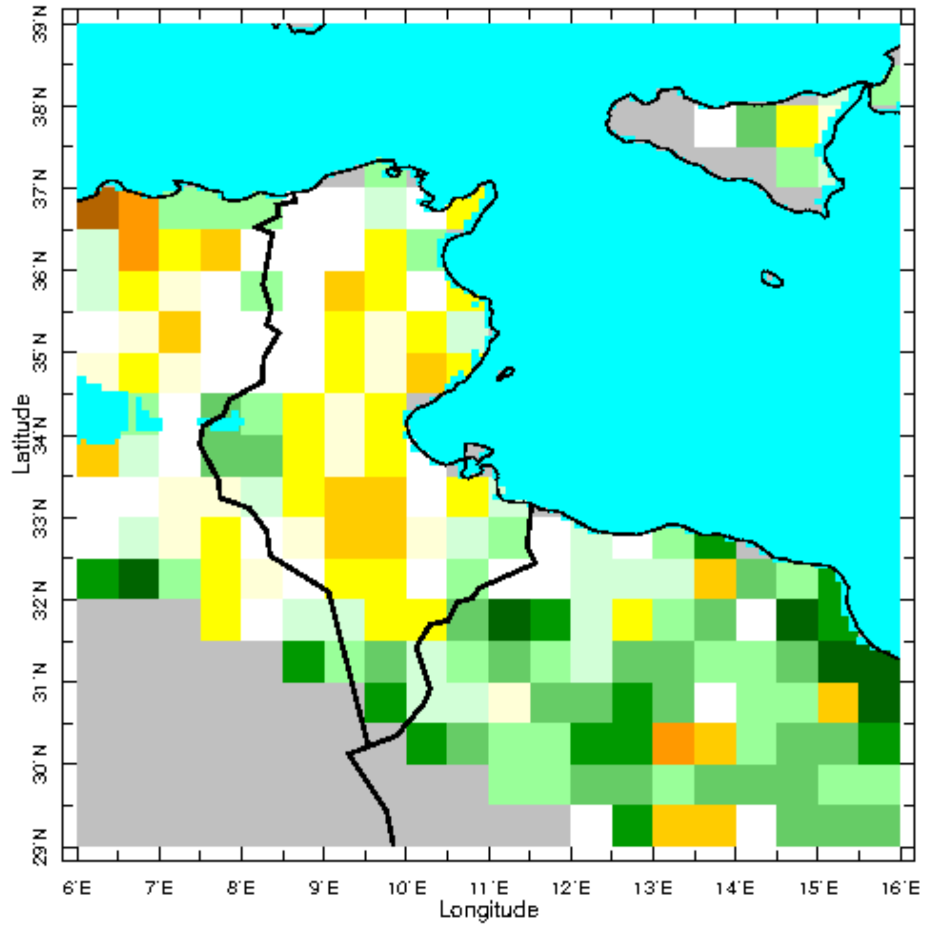
1141

Year – 1142



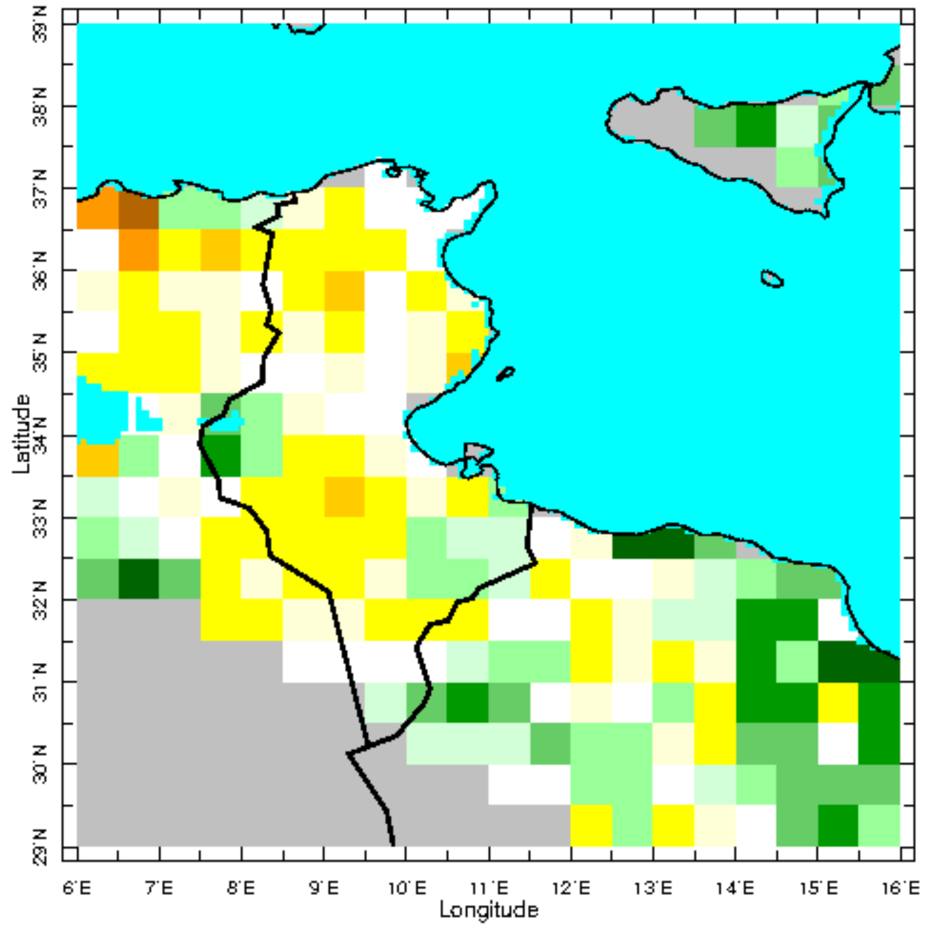
1142

Year – 1143



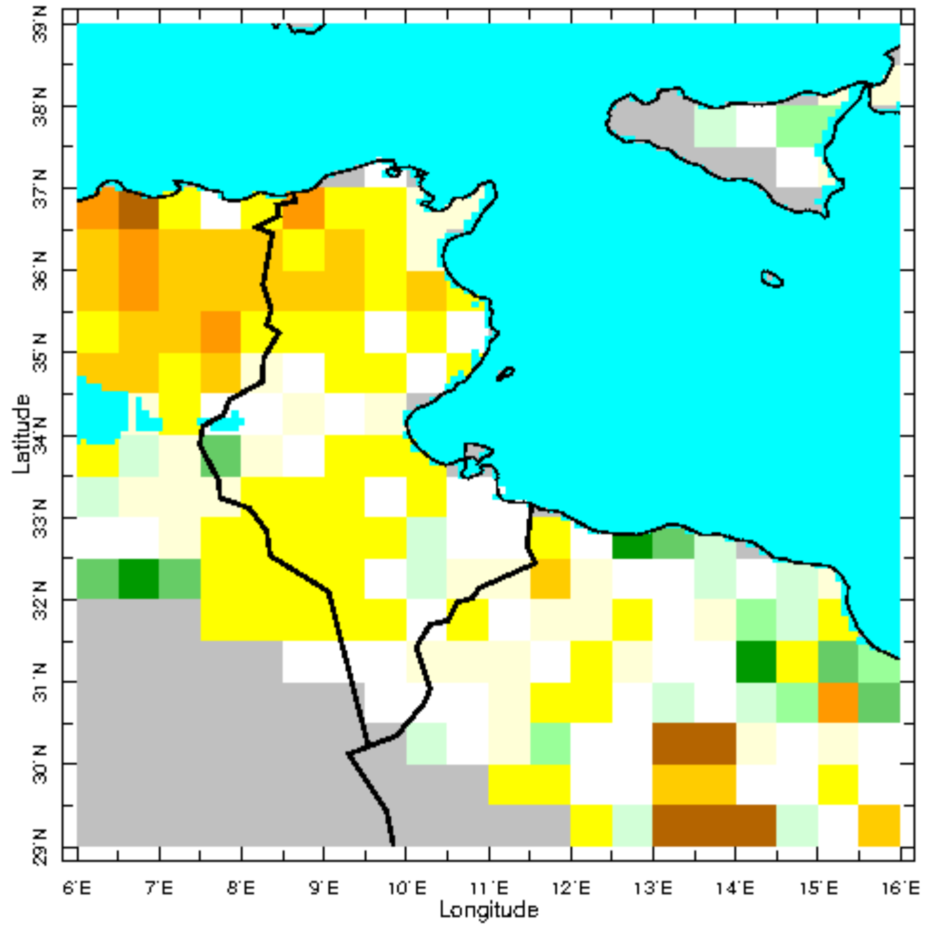
1143

Year – 1144



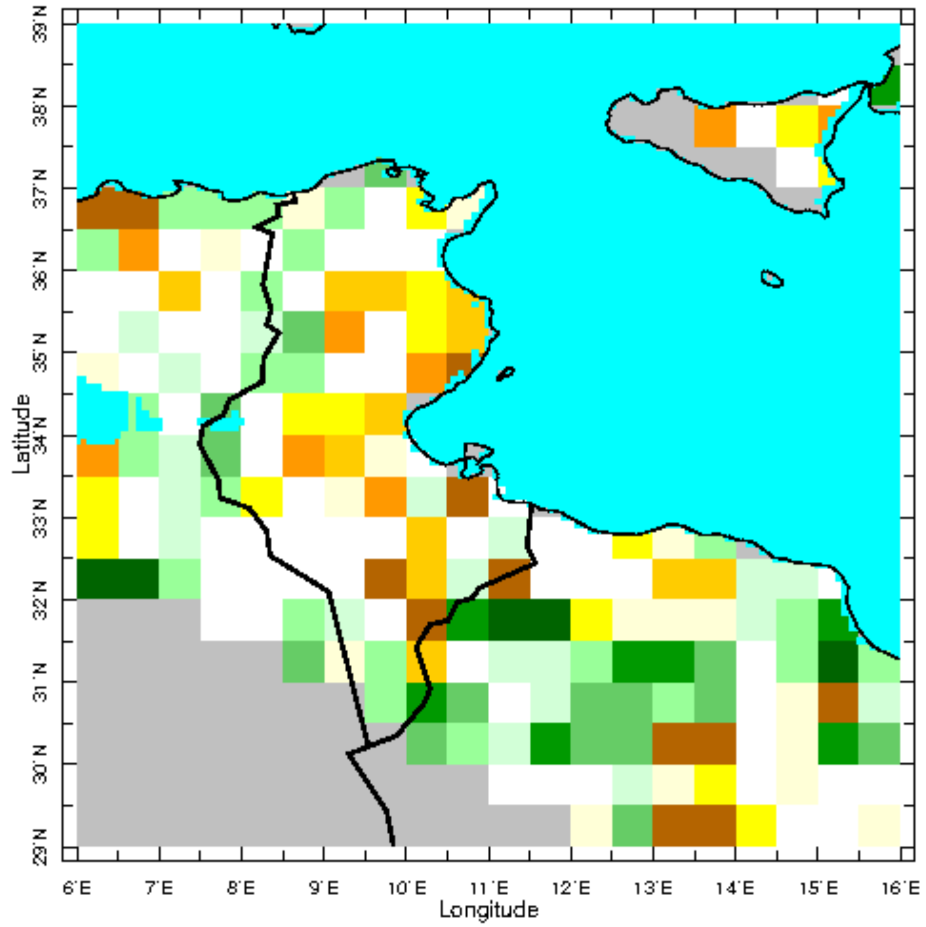
1144

Year – 1145



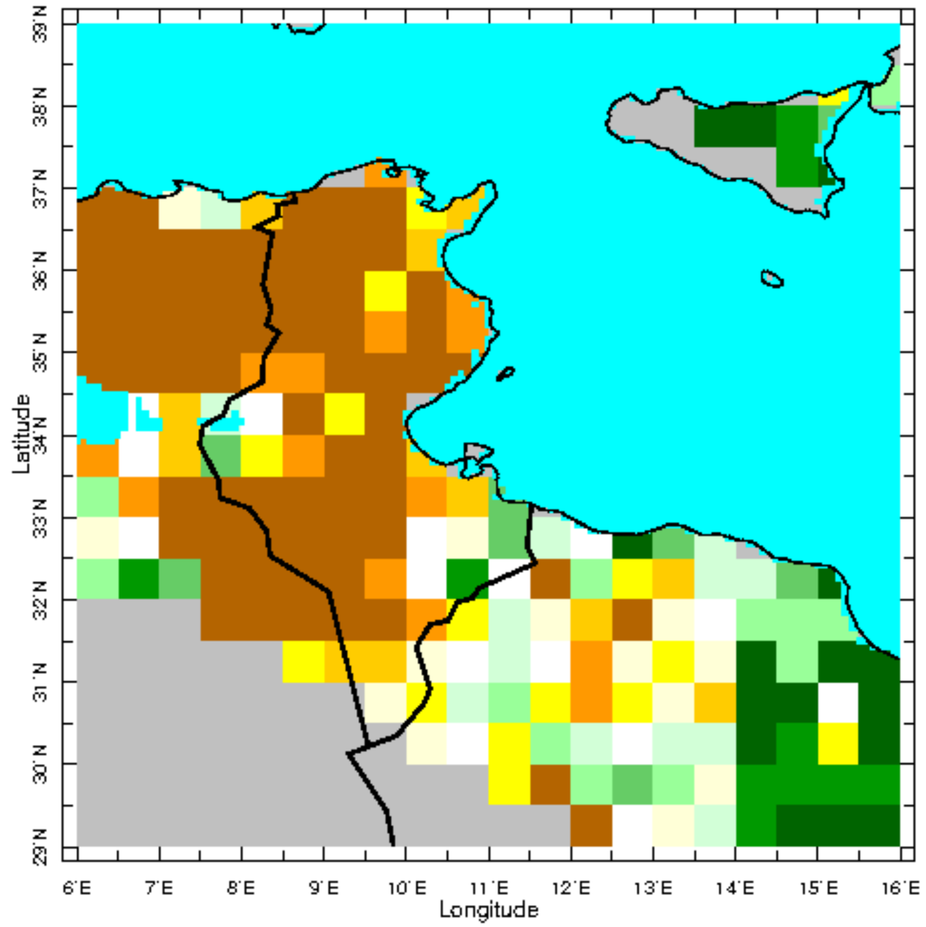
1145

Year – 1146



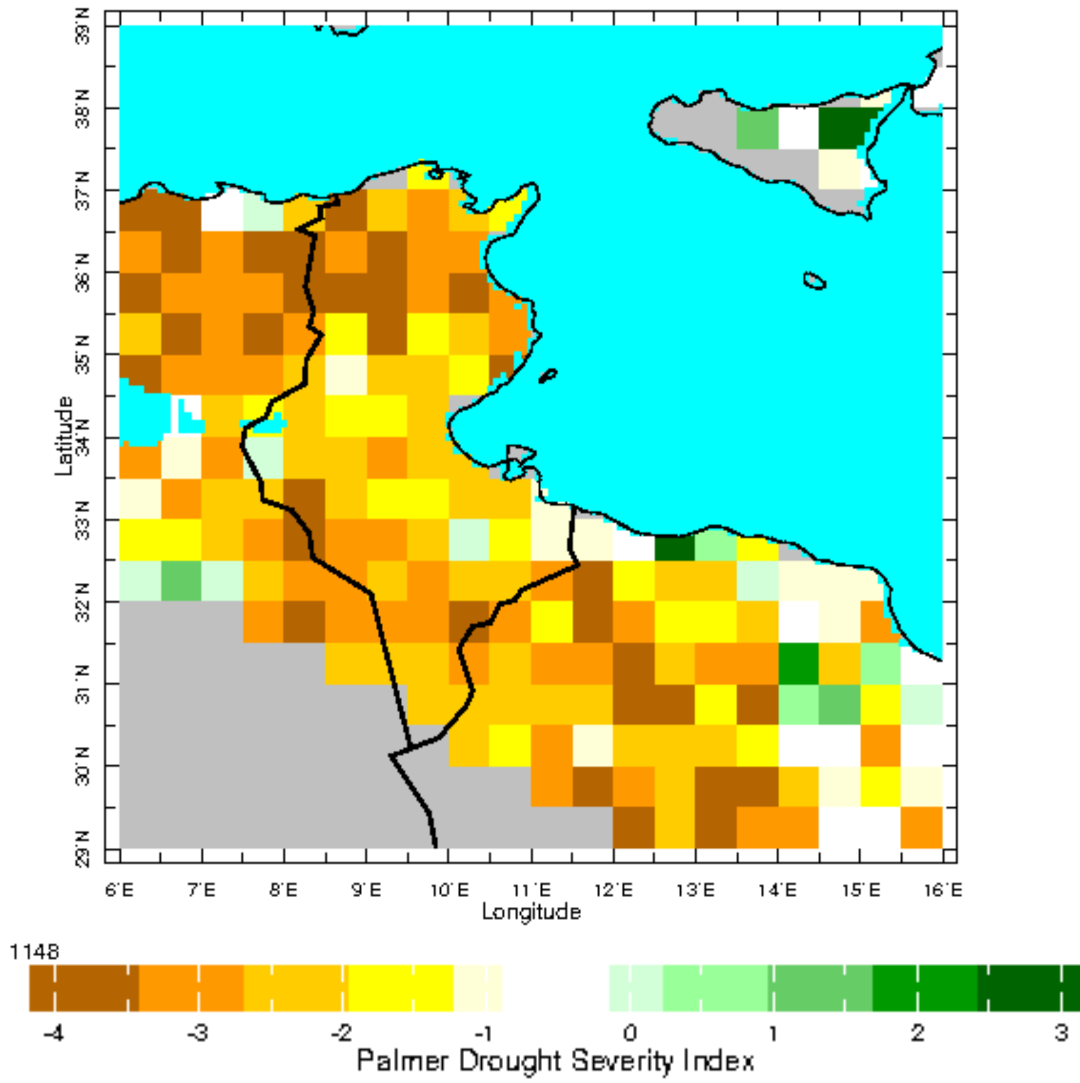
1146

Year – 1147

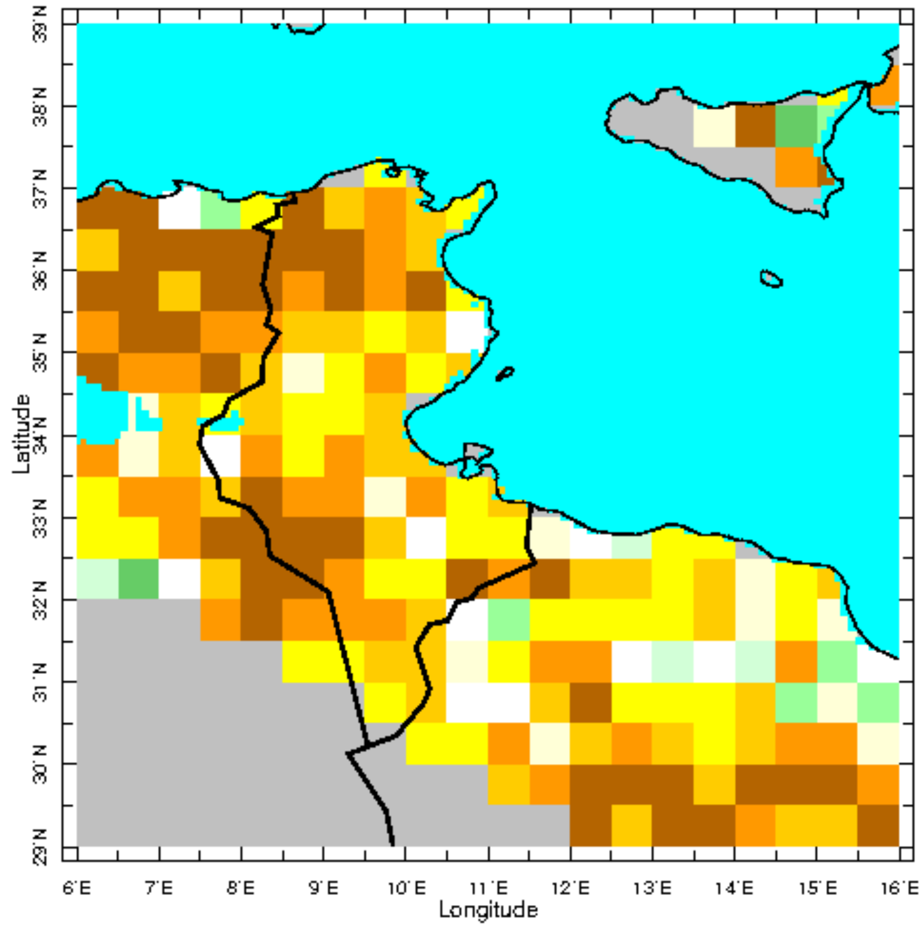


1147

Year – 1148

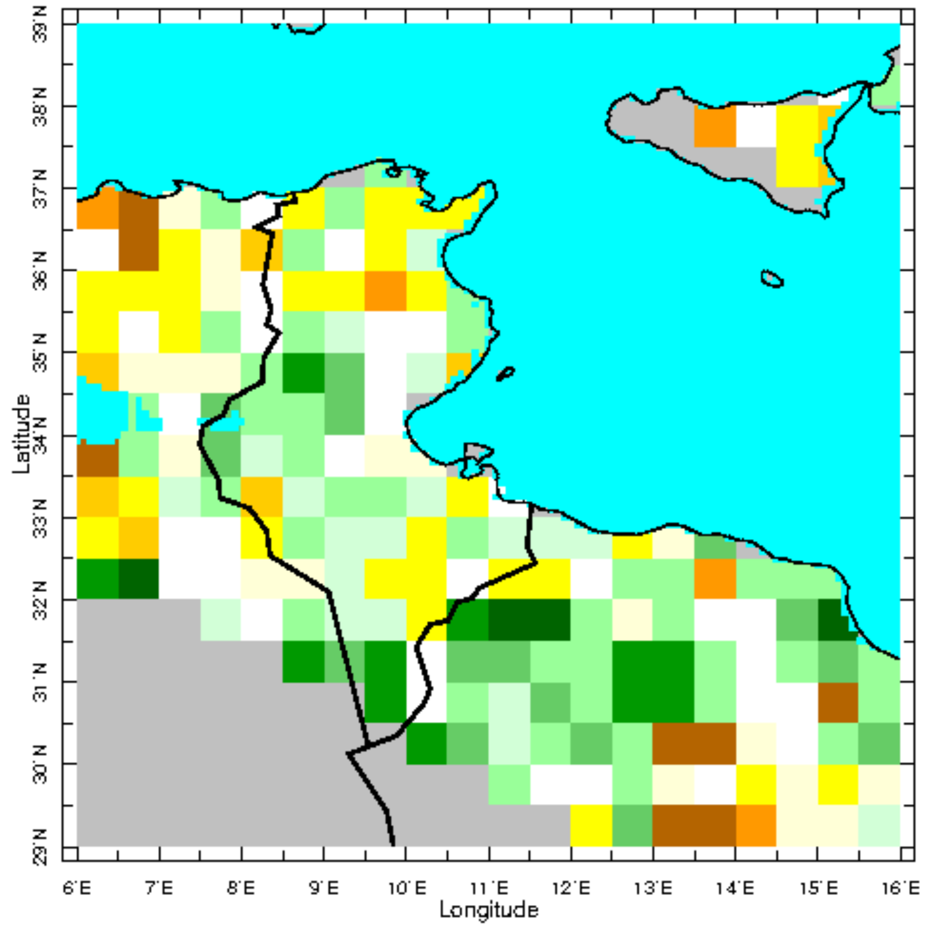


Year – 1149



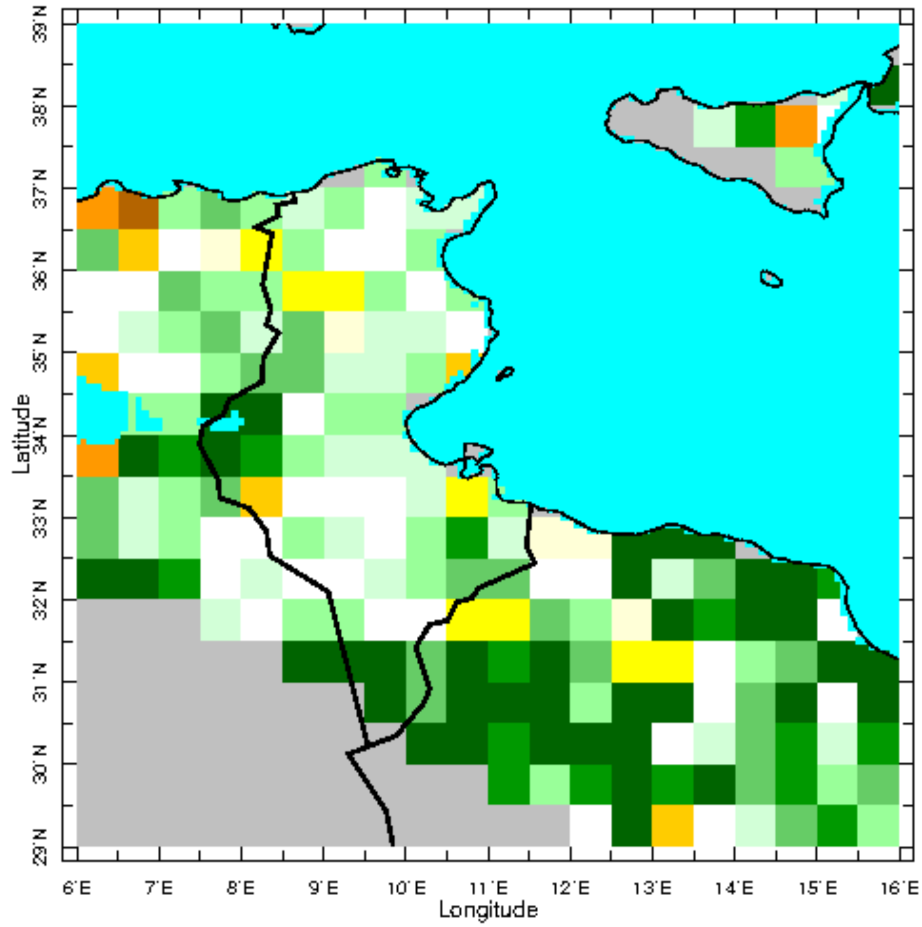
1149

Year – 1150



1150

Year – 1151



1151

Appendix Two – Relevant Latin Charters of Roger II and William I

Doc#	Date	Location	Title	Notary/Notaries
Brühl, Carlrichard, ed. *Rogerii II. regis diplomata Latina*. Vol. ii. Codex Diplomaticus Regni siciliae, I. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1987.				
14	December 1129	Palermo	R(ogerius) D(e)i gr(ati)a dux Apulię, Christianor(um) adiutor et clipeu(s), Rogerii magnifici com(it)i(s) here(s) et fili(us)	p(er) man(um) Guarnerii
15	October 1130	Messina	ROGERIUS DEI GRATIA SICILIE ET ITALIE REX, | Christianor(um) adiutor et clippeus, Rogerii p(r)imi comitis heres et filius	p(er) manus Wuidonis, n(ost)ri not(arii)… p(er) manu(m) Wuidonis p(ro)tonot(arii)
16	February 1131	Palermo	Rogeriu(s) D(e)i gr(ati)a Sicilię, Apulię et Calabrię rex, adiutor Christianor(um) et clipeu(s), Rogerii magni comitis heres et filiu(s)	p(er) manu(m) Michaeli(s), n(ost)ri notarii
17	Summer 1131		Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie, Apulie et Calabrie rex	
18	[September] 1131	Troia	Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilię et Italię rex, Cristianorum adiutor et clipeus, Rogerii magnifici comitis hęres et filius	*per manus Widonis, nostri notarii*
19	[March] 1132	Palermo	Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie et Ytalie rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius.	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manus magistri Guarini, nostri cancellarii
20	June 1132	Bari	domini nostri Rogerii, Sicilie et Italie regis magnifici	PER MANUM PHILIPPI LOGOTHETE
21	July 1132	Salerno	ROGERIUS DEI GRATIA | *Sicilie et Italie rex, Christianor(um) adiutor et clippeus, Rogerii P(r)imi comitis heres et filius*	*p(er) man(us) Widonis, n(ost)ri notarii…* P(ER) MANU(M) GUARINI, N(OST)RI CANCELLARII
22	September or October 1132	Melfi	ROGERIUS DEI GRATIA SICILIE ET ITALIE REX, Christianor(um) adiutor et clippeus, Rogerii p(r)imi comitis heres et filus	p(er) man(us) Widonis, n(ost)ri notar(ii)… p(er) manu(m) Widonis p(ro)tonot(arii)
23	January 1133	Messina	ROGERIUS DEI GRATIA SICILIE ET | Italię rex, Rogerii p(r)imi comitis heres et filius	p(er) man(us) Widonis, n(ost)ri not(arii)
24	February 1133	Messina	ROGERIUS DEI GRATIA SICILIE ET ITALIE REX | Rogerii p(r)imi comitis heres et filius	p(er) mạ[nus Widonis], n(ost)ri notarii, P(ER) MANUS GARINI, N(OST)RI CANCELLARII

25	July 1133	Salerno	ROGERIUS DEI GRATIA SICILIE ET ITALIE REX, CHRISTIANORUM ADIUTOR ET CLIPPEUS, ROGERII PRIMI COMITIS HERES ET FILIUS	p(er) man(us) Widonis, nostri notarii… P(ER) MANU(M) GUARINI - R.II - N(OST)RI CANCELLARII
26	August 1133	Palermo	ROGERIUS DEI GRACIA SICILIE ET YTALIE REX, CRISTIANORUM ADIUTOR ET CLIPPEUS, | Rogerii p(r)imi co(m)itis heres (et) filius	p(er) ṃạnus Pet(r)i, n(ost)ri notarii… p(er) man(us) Guaṛị[ni], n(ost)ri cancellarii
27	September 1133	Gravina	ROGERIUS DEI GRATIA SICILIE ET ITALIE REX, CRISTIANORUM ADIUTOR ET | *et clippeus, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius*	*per manus* Gu*idonis, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii*
28	September 1133	Castellum Novum	Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Nicolai, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
29	September 1133	Rapolla	Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rex, Cristianorum adiutor et clippeus, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
30	September 1133	Gravina	Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Nicolai, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
31A	October 1133	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
31B	October 1133	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
32	October 1133	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex, Cristianorum adiutor et clippeus, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
33	November 1133	Palermo	ROGERIUS DEI | gr(ati)a Sicilie et Italie rex, Cristianor(um) adiutor (et) clippeus, Rogerii primi co(m)itis heres (et) fili(us)	p(er) man(us) Guido(n)is, n(ost)ri notar(ii)… p(er) man(us) Guarini, n(ost)ri cancellarii
34	November 1133	Neapel	Rogerius II. Dei gratia Siciliae et Italiae rex, Rogerii I. [comitis] haeres et filius	per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
35	January 1134	Palermo	R(ogerius) Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex	per manus H(enrici), Panor|mitani archidiaconi et capellani nostri
36A	April 1134	Palermo	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini, nostri cancellarii
37	July 1134	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… p(er) manu(m) Guarini, n(ost)ri cancellarii

38	July 1134	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gr(ati)a Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex, Rogerii p(r)imi comitis heres et filius	p(er) manus Widonis, n(ost)ri notarii… p(er) manu(m) Guarini, n(ost)ri cancellarii
39	February 1135	Palermo	Rogerius Dei gratia...	
40	August 1135	Melfi	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex, Rogerii primi comitis hȩres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manum Guarini, nostri cancellarii
41	October 1135	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manus Adenulfi * notarii… per manus Guarini cancellarii
42	January 1136		Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rex, Cristianorum adiutor et clippeus, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii
43	October 1136	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et princupatus Capuȩ	per manus Widonis, nostri notarii… per manus Guarini cancellarii
44	Pre-May 1137	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Guidonis, nostri notarii
45	August 1137	Palermo	R(ogerius) divina favente clem(en)tia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principat(us) Capue	p(er) man(um) magistri Thome
46	November 1137	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rex, Rogerii primi comitis heres et filius	per manus Gregorii, nostri notarii… per manum Henrici
47	November 1137	Salerno	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ [et] Italiȩ rex, Christianorum adiutor et clipeus, Rogerii primi comitis [hȩres et] filius	per manus Henrici, nostri notarii
48	April 1140	Palermo	ROGERIUS DIVINA FAVENTE | CLEMENTIA REX SICILIE, DUCATUS APULIE ET PRINCIPATUS CAPUE	
49	August 1140	Im Gebiet von Chieti	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manum Roberti cancellarii
50	August 1140	Im Gebiet von Chieti	ROGERIUS DIVINA FAVENTE CLEMENTIA REX SICILIE, DUCATUS APULIE ET PRINCIPATUS CAPUE	per manus Roberti cancellarii
52	November 1140	Palermo	R(ogerius) divina favente clem(en)tia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie (et) p(r)incipat(us) Capue	p(er) man(us) magistri Thome
53	July 1142	Ariano	Rog(erius) divina favente clem(en)tia rex Sicilie, ducat(us) Apulie et p(r)incipat(us) Capue	p(er) manu(m) Rob(erti) cancell(arii)

54	Pre-September 1142	Ariano	Rogerius Dei gratia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie, principatus Capue	
55	April 1143	Palermo	Rogerius divina fave(n)te clem(en)tia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et pri(n)cipatus Capu[e]	p(er) manus Robb(erti) cancellarii
56	May 1143	Messina	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ	per manus magistri Thomȩ
57	July 1143	Messina	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manum magistri Thome
58	July 1143	Messina	*Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie (et) p(r)incipatus Capue*	p(er) manum magistri Thome
59	November 1143	Capua	Rog(erius) divina favente cle(en)tia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principat(us) Capuȩ	
60	November 1143	Salerno	*Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue*	
61A	March 1144	Palermo	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ, Calabriȩ et Apuliȩ rex	per manus Roberti, cancellarii
61B	March 1144	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia Siciliȩ, Calabriȩ et Apuliȩ rex	per manus Roberti, magistri cancellarii
62	May 1144	Palermo	Rogerius Dei gratia Siciliȩ, Calabriȩ et Apuliȩ rex	
63	October 1144	Messina	ROGERIUS DIVINA | favente clem(en)tia rex Sicil(ie), ducatus Apul(ie) (et) principatus Capue	p(er) man(us) Maionis, n(ost)ri sc(r)in*arii
64A	October 1144	Messina	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	*Data in urbe Messana, eo q(uod) Robb(ertus), n(oste)r cancell(arius),* absens *erat, p(er) manu(m) Maionis, n(ost)ri | scriniarii*
65	October 1144	Messina	ROGERIUS DIVINA | favente cleṃ(en)[tia rex Sici]ḷ(ie), ducat(us) Apul(ie) et p(r)incip(atus) Capue	*Data in urbe Messana, [e]ọ q(uo)d Robb(er)t(us), n(oste)r cancell(arius), aberat, p(er) manu(m) Maionis, n(ost)ri scriniarii*
66	November 1144	Messina	ROGERIUS | divina favente clem(en)tia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apulie (et) p(r)incipat(us) Capuȩ	*Data i(n) urbe Messana, eo q(uod) Robb(ertus), n(oste)r cancell(arius), aberat, p(er) manu(m) Maionis, n(ost)ri sc(r)iniarii*

67	November 1144	Messina	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ, et principatus Capuȩ	*Data in urbe Messana, eo quod Robertus, noster cancellarius, aberat, per manum Maionis, nostri scriniarii*
68	July 1145	Palermo	Rogerius divina [favente] clementia Siciliȩ et Ytaliȩ rex	per manus Petri, nostri notarii… per manum Roberti, cancellarii nostri
69	July 1145	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ	per manus Petri, nostri notarii… per manum Roberti, regni nostri Sicilie cancellarii
70	August 1146	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ, et principatus Capuȩ	per manus Petri, nostri notarii… per manum Maionis, scriniarii nostri, quia Robertus cancellarius absens erat
71	September 1146	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ, et principatus Capuȩ	Petrus, noster notarius. Data in urbe Panormi, quia Robertus cancellarius absens erat, per manum Maionis, scriniarii [nostri]
72	November 1147	Terracina bei Salerno	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie, et principatus Capue	per manus Roberti, notarii nostri… per manum Roberti cancellarii
73	November 1147	Terracina bei Salerno	Rogeri(us) divina favente clem(en)tia rex Sicil(ie), ducat(us) Apul(ie) et p(r)incip(atus) Capue	Rob(er)t(e), n(oste)r notar(ie)
74	December 1147		Rogg(erius) divina favente clementia rex Sicile, ducatus Apulie p(r)incipatus Capue	Robberto, n(ost)ro cancellario… p(er) manu(m) Robberti cancellarii
75	February 1148	Palermo	Rogȩrius divina favȩntȩ clemȩntia rex Sicil(iȩ), ducat(us) Apul(iȩ) ȩt p(r)incipat(us) Cap(uȩ)… …Rogerii D(e)I gr(ati)a magnifici (et) gl(ori)osissimi rȩgis Sicil(iȩ), ducat(us) Apul(iȩ) (et) p(r)incipat(us) Cap(uȩ)	pȩr manum Gisolfi, n(ost)ri scriniarii, quia Rob(er)t(us) cancell(arius) absȩns ȩrat… ...p(er) manum Maionis, n(ost)ri scriniarii, quia Rob(er)t(us) canell(arius) absȩns ȩrat
76	July 1148	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ, et principatus Capuȩ… …Rogerii Dei gratia magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ	*per manum Gisolfi, nostri notarii, scribi fecimus… …per manum Roberti cancellarii*
77	August 1149	Potenza	Rogerius Dei gratia rec Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	

78	[September?] 1149	Salerno	*Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie, et principat(us) Capue… …Roger(ii) D(e)I gr(ati)a glor(ios)issimi reg(is) S[i]cilie, ducat(us) Apul(ie) et principat(us) Capue*	*p(er) man(us) Gregorii, n(ost)r*e regal(is) curie *notarii*, manda|vim(us) *scribi et n(ost)ra bulla plumbea insigniri* tibiq(ue) iamdicto veneraṇdọ abbati largiri… *...per manu(m) Maionis, nostri vicecancellarii*
79	October 1151	Palermo	Rogerius divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ… …Rogerii Dei gratia gloriosissimi regis Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capue	*per manus Roberti, nostre* curie publici *notarii, et bulla aurea regio typario impressa insigniri… ...per manum Maionis, nostri vicecancellarii*
80	June 1155	Messina	Rogerius divina [favente] clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ, principatus Capuȩ… …Rogerii Dei gratia magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ	per manus Matthei, nostri notarii, scribi et bulla plumbea nostro tipario impressa iussimus insignarii… ...per manus [sic] Maionis, magni admirati admiratorum

Doc#	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**	**Notary/Notaries**
Enzensberger, Horst, ed. *Guillelmi I. regis diplomata.* Vol. iii. Codex Diplomaticus Regni siciliae, I. Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1996.				
1	April 1154	Palermo	W(illelmus) divina favente | clemencia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principat(us) Capuȩ… ...W(illelmi) D(e)I gr(ati)a gloriosissimi reg(is) Sicil(iȩ), ducat(us) Apulie et p(r)incipat(us) Capue	p(er) manu(m) Gisolfi, n(ost)ri notarii… ...per manus Maionis cancell(arii)
2	October 1154	Palermo	Gulielmus, divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ… …Gulielmi dei gratia magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ principatus Capuȩ	per manum Sauli, nostri notarii… ...per manum Maionis, magni ammirati ammiratorum
3	December 1154	Messina	W(illelmus) D(e)i gr(ati)a rex Sicil(ie), ducat(us) Apul(ie) et p(r)incipat(us) Cap(ue), iustitiariis et universis baiulis Calabrie fidelib(us)	
4	December 1154	Unknown	maiestate altissima Guillelmi, regis sancti, gloriosi et pacifici iussu omnipotentis Dei, qui victoriosus est per Dei potenciam	
5	January 1155	Messina	Gulielmus, divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manum Ioannis, regalis clerici, scribi et propria manu nostri ammiratorum ammirati confirmari iussimus

6	Salerno 1155	Salerno	W(illelmo) magnifico rege Siciliae, ducatus Apuliae et principatus Capuae… …W(illelmi) Dei gratia magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Sicilae, ducatus Apuliae et principatus Capuae	per manum Roberti, regalis notarii, scribi et manu Maionis, magni ammiratorum ammirati
7	March 1155	Salerno	W(illelmus), divina favente xxx | clementia rex Sicilie, ducat(us) Apul(ie) et p(ri)ncipat(us) Capue… …W(illelmi), D(e)I gr(ati)a gl(ori)osissimi reg(is) Sicil(ie), ducat(us) Apul(ie) et principat(us)| Capue	p(er) manum Sanctori, n(ost)ri notarii… ...p(er) manu(m) Maionis, magni a(m)mirati a(m)mirator(um)
8	May 1155	Palermo	W(illelmus) divina favente clementia rex Siciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principat(us) Capuȩ… …W(i)ll(el)mi Dei gr(ati)a magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Siciliȩ, ducat(us) Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ	p(er) manu(m) Maionis, magni a(m)mirati a(m)mirator(um)
10	September 1155	Palermo	Gulielmus, divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manus Roberti, regni Sicilie cancellarii
11	1155	Unknown	Gulielmus divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manum Iohannis, nostri notarii, scribi et bulla plumbea nostro tipario impressa roborari iussimus
12	1156	Benevento	k(arissi)mo d(omi)no et pat(ri) suo reverendo eiusq(ue) successorib(us) W(illelmus) eadem gr(ati)a rex Sicilie, ducat(us) Apuli(e) et p(r)incipat(us) Cap(ue)… …regni d(omi)ni W(illelmi) D(e)i gr(ati)a magnifici et gl(ori)osissimi regis Sicili(e), ducat(us) Apuli(e) et p(ri)ncipatus Capue	p(er) manu(m) Mathei, n(ost)ri not(arii), sc(ri)bi et bulla aurea n(ost)ro tipario i(m)p(re)ssa i(n)signiri ac n(ost)ro signaculo decorari iussimus… p(er) man(us) Maio(n)is, magni a(m)mirati a(m)mirator(um)
13	July 1156	Capua	dominus noster Guillelmus, Sicilie et Italie necnon et tocius regni Africe serenissimus et invictissimus rex, a Deo coronatus, pius, felix, triumphator semper augustus… …Guillelmo, Sicilie et Italie magnifico rege…	ego, Cesarius tabolarius
14	July 1156	Salerno	Guillelmus divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue… …Guillelmi Dei gratia gloriosissimi regis Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manus Rogerii, nostri notarii… ...per Maionis manum, magni ammirati ammiratorum
15	August 1156	Palermo	Guillelmus divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue… …Guillelmi Dei gratia gloriosissimi regis Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manus Roberti, nostri notarii… ...per manum Maionis, magni ammirati ammiratorum

16	September 1156	Palermo	W(illelmus) divina favente clem(en)tia rex Sicili(e), ducat(us) Apuli(e) (et) p(ri)ncipat(us) Cap(ue)… …W(illelm)I D(e)I gr(ati)a magnifici (et) gl(ori)ossissimi [sic] regis Sicilie, | ducat(us) Apuli(e) (et) p(ri)ncipat(us) Cap(ue)	p(er) manu(m) Mathei n(ost)ri not(arii)… ...p(er) man(us) Maionis magni a(m)mirati [ammi]rator(um)
17	November 1156	Palermo	Dominus rex Guillelmus… …domini Guillelmi Dei gratia magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manus eiusdem Mathei, regii notarii… ...per manus Maionis, magni ammirati ammiratorum
18	November 1156	Palermo	W(illelmus divina fave(n)te clem(en)tia rex Sicili(e), ducat(us) Apuli(e) et p(r)incip(atus) Cap(ue)… …W(illelmi) D(e)I gr(ati)a magnifici | et gl(ori)osissimi reg(is) Sicil(ie), ducat(us) Apul(ie) et p(r)incip(atus) Cap(ue)	p(er) man(us) Sanctori, n(ost)ri not(arii)… …p(er) man(us) Maio(n)is, magni a(m)mirati a(m)miratorum
19	May 1157	Palermo	Guillelmus Dei gratia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	
20	May 1157	Palermo	Guillelmus Dei gratia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue… …Guilielmi Dei gratia magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	per manus Maionis, magni ammirati ammiratorum
21	June 1157	Messina	Willelmus in Christo Deo…	
22	December 1157	Palermo	W(illelmus) divina favente clementia rex Sicili(e), ducatus Apuli(e) (et) p(ri)ncipat(us) Capue… …W(illelm)I D(e)I g(ratia) magnifici et gl(ori)osissimi regis Sicili(e), ducat(us) Apuli(e) (et) p(ri)ncipat(us) Cap(ue)	p(er) manu(m) Mathei, nostri notarii… …p(er) man(us) Maionis, magni a(m)mirati a(m)mirator(um)
23	June 1158	Unknown	Guilielmo rege… …Gulielmus in Christo Deo pius rex	
24	Pre-September 1158	Palermo	W(illelmus) divina favente clem(en)tia xxx| rex Syciliȩ, ducatus Apuliȩ et principatus Capuȩ… …W(illelmi) D(e)I gr(ati)a gl(ori)o|sissimi regis Sicil(ie), ducatus Apul(ie) et p(ri)ncipatus Capuȩ	p(er) manus Rob(er)ti, n(ost)ri not(arii)… …p(er) manus Maionis, magni amirator(um) amirati
25	January 1159	Palermo	W(illelmus) divina favente clem(en)tia rex Syciliȩ, ducatus Apulie (et) p(ri)incipatus Capuȩ… …W(illelmi) D(e)I gr(ati)a magnifici (et) gl(ori)osissimi regis Syciliȩ, ducat(us) Apul(ie) (et) p(ri)ncipat(us) Capuȩ	p(er) manum Rob(e)rti, nost(ri) notarii… …p(er) manus XXX Maionis XXX magni amirati amirator(um)

<table>
<tr><td>26</td><td>March 1159</td><td>Palermo</td><td>Willelmus divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>27</td><td>June 1159</td><td>Palermo</td><td>W(illelmus) divina favente clem(en)tia rex Sicili(e), ducat(us) Apuli(e) (et) p(ri)incipat(us) Capue… …W(illelmi) D(e)I gr(ati)a magnifici et gl(ori)osissimi regis Sicili(e), ducat(us) Apuli(e) (et) p(ri)ncipat(us) Cap(ue)</td><td>p(er) manu(m) Mathei, n(ost)ri notarii… …p(er) man(us) Maionis, magni a(m)mirati a(m)mirator(um)</td></tr>
<tr><td>28</td><td>May 1160</td><td>Palermo</td><td>W(illelmus) divina favente clementia rex Sicili(e), ducat(us) Apulie (et) p(ri)incipat(us) Capue… …W(illelmi) D(e)I gr(ati)a magnifici (et) gl(ori)osissimi regis Sicilie, ducat(us) | Apulie (et) p(ri)ncipat(us) Capue</td><td>p(er) manu(m) Math(e)i, n(ost)ri nota|rii… …p(er) man(us) Ricc(ardi), Syracusani electi</td></tr>
<tr><td>29</td><td>May 1160</td><td>Palermo</td><td>W(illelmus) divina xxx| favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et priincipatus Capue… ...W(illelmi), D(e)I gr(ati)a gl(ori)osimi regis Sicil(ie), ducat(us) Apul(ie) et p(rin)cipat(us) Cap(ue)</td><td>per manus Saulis, n(ost)ri notarii… …p(er) manus Maionis, magni a(m)mirati a(m)miratorum</td></tr>
<tr><td>30</td><td>August 1160</td><td>Messina</td><td>Willelmus divina favente clementia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue… …Willelmi, Dei gratia magnifici et gloriosissimi regis Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue</td><td>per manus Riccardi, Syracusani electi</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Doc#</th><th>Date</th><th>Location</th><th>Title</th><th>Notary/Notaries</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Carabellese, Francesco. Le carte di Molfetta (1076-1309). Codice diplomatico Barese. Bari: Commissione provinciale di archeologia e storia patria, 1912.</td></tr>
<tr><td>22</td><td>August 1154</td><td>Molfetta</td><td>Guidelmi serenissimi | 2) Regis Sicilie et Italye ac Africe</td><td>hoc brebe scripsit Alfanus notarius qui interfuit</td></tr>
<tr><td>26</td><td>January 1157</td><td>Molfetta</td><td>Guilielmi serenissimi… [DELETO] (regis) | Sicilye et Italye ac Africe... ... Guilielmo..... | 20) ..... Sicilie et Italie ac Africe</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>32</td><td>1159</td><td>Molfetta</td><td>Guilielmi regis excellentissimi</td><td>memorie causa hoc scriptum nostro iudicio scripsit notarius LAURENTIUS Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit</td></tr>
<tr><td>33</td><td>1160</td><td>Molfetta</td><td>Guilielmi regis excellentissimi</td><td>hoc scriptum scripsit notarius Laurentius Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit</td></tr>
</table>

Doc#	Date	Location	Title	Notary/Notaries
Filangieri, Riccardo. *Codice diplomatico amalfitano*. Vol. 1. 2 vols. Naples: S. Morano, 1917.				
152	May 1148	Amalfi	Roggerii Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus Capue principatus	complevi per manu Sergii clerici scriba
153	August 1150	Ravello	Roggerii Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus Capueque principatus	ego Sergius presb. scriba Riccardi Boc[c]assi filius scripsi quia ipsum iudicatum verace unde hoc exemplum est vidi et exemplavi
154	March 1151	Amalfi	Roggerii Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus Capue principatus	complevi per manu Sergii clerici scriba
156	July 1153	Sorrento	Rocerio invictissimo rege	scripta per manus Iohannis clerici et notarii ac primarii per ss. ind. primam
157	August 1154	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus Capue prin[ci]patus	ego Sergius clericus et curialis scriba scripsi
158	December 1155	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus Capue principatus	ego Iohannes curialis scriba f. Sergii Ferula scripsi
159	March 1156	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus Capue principatus	ego Iohannes curialis scriba f. Sergii Ferula scripsi
160	April 1156	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia regis Sicilie Apulie ducatus principatus Capue	complevi per manu Lupini clerici scriba
161	July 1156	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia regis Sicilie Apulie ducatus principatus Capue	comple(vi) per manu Lupini clerici scriba
162	March 1157	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia regis Sicilie Apulie ducatus principatus Capue	ego Sergius clericus et curialis scriba scripsi
163	June (1157)	Atrani	[Guilielmi dei gratia regis] Sicilie ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	ego Iohannes presb. hanc chartulam per manus Mansonis curialis scriptam confirmavi
164	March 1158	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia regis Sicilie Apulie ducatus principatus Capue	complevi per manu Lupini clerici scriba
165	April 1158	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus principatus Capue	ego Iohannes curialis scriba f. Sergii Ferula scripsi
166	March 1159	Amalfi	Guilielmi dei gratia Sicilie regis Apulie ducatus p[rincipatus] Capue	com[plevi per manu Lupini] clerici scriba

167	March 1159	Atrani	Guilielmi dei gratia regis Sicilie ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	ego Iohannes presb. hanc chartulam per manus Mansonis curialis scriptam confirmavi
168	July 1160	Atrani	Guilielmi dei gratia regis Sicilie duca[tus] Apulie et principatus Capue	ego Manso protonot. f. dom. Iohannis curialis f. dom. Ursi imperialis dissipati scripsi

Doc#	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**	**Notary/Notaries**
Kehr, K.A. *Die urkunden der normannisch-sicilischen könige: Eine diplomatische untersuchung*. Innsbruck: Wagner, 1902.				
N/A (pg 246)			dominus noster [Roger?] Sycilie et Ytalie nec non et tocius regni Africe serenissimus et invictissimus rex a deo coronatus pius felix triumphator semper augustus	

Doc#	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**	**Notary/Notaries**
Tropeano, Mario, ed. *Codice diplomatico Verginiano*. Vol. 4. 13 vols. Montevergine, 1980.				
320	January 1154	Capua	Roggerii Dei gratia magnifici regis… domino Guilielmo eius filio glorioso rege	te Iohannem notarium qui interfuisti scribere rogavi
321	January 1154	Ascoli Satriano	Rogerio rex Sicilie ducatus Apulie principatus Capue	te Simeon notarie taliter scribere rogavimus
324	May 1154	Ascoli Satriano	Guilielmo rex Sicilie ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	Simeon notarius iussione predictorum iudicum hoc scriptum scripsi
326	July 1154	Ascoli Satriano	Guilielmo rege Sicilie ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	te Simeon notarie taliter scribere rogavi
327	September 1154	Castelcicala	Guililemus Dei gratia Sicilie et Ytalie magnifico regem	te Iohannes clericus et notarius scribere iussimus
329	December 1154	Benevento	Adriani quarti summi pontificis et universalis pape	his dictus Landulfus clericus et notarius interfui
330	January 1155	Ascoli Satriano	Guilielmo rege Sicilie ducat[us Apu]lie et principatus Capue	Simeon notarius iusse predicti domini Eustasii catepani hoc scriptum scripsi
337	June 1155	Avella	Guilielmo Sicilie et Ytalie rege magnifico	
338	August 1155	Ascoli Satriano	Guilielmo rege	

342	February 1156	Ascoli Satriano	[Guilielmo] rege Sicilie ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	Ego Lupo notarius hoc scriptum [scripsi] et interfui
343	March 1156	Avella	Guilielmo rege magnifico	Teque Magistrum Stephanum notarium, Avelle actum, scribere taliter rogavimus et precepimus
346	April 1156	San Severo	Adriani pape	Hanc cartulam tibi Benedicto notario taliter scribere precepimus
348	May 1156	Aversa	secundi Roberti Dei gratia gloriosi principis Capue et comitis Averse	Scriptum manu Wilielmi notarii Averse rogatu predicti Iohannis Francisii et domini sui Aymonis de Molinis baronis Averse
349	June 1156	Avella	[Guilielmo Sicilie et Ytalie Dei] gratia rege magnifico	Teque Stephanum gramaticum et notarium, Avelle actum, scribere taliter rogavimus et precepimus
350	December 1156	Padula	Guilielmi gloriosissimi regis	te Hectorem de Padule notarium scribere [rogavimus]
353	February 1157	Benevento	Adriani quarti summi pontificis et universalis pape	Hanc cartulam scripsi ego qui supra Trasemundus notarius quia interfui
354	May 1157	Avella	Guilielmo Sicilie et Ytalie rege magnifico	Teque Magistrum Stefanus notarium, Avelle actum, scribere rogavimus et precepimus
355	May 1157	Avella	Guilielmo Sicilie et Ytalie rege magnifico	Teque Magistrum Stefanus notarium, Avelle actum, [scribere rogavimus et pre]cepimus
356	May 1157	Avella	Guilielmo Sicilie et Ytalie rege magnifico	Teque Magistrum Stefanus notarium, Avelle actum, scribere rogavimus et precepimus
357	May 1157	Castelcicala	Guilielmo Dei gratia Sicilie et Ytalie [gloriosus et vi]ctoriosus rex	domine Luce scripsit ego Iohannes clericus et notarius Castro Cikale
358	July 1157	Benevento	Adriany [sic] summi pontificis et universalis pape	Hanc cartulam iussu predicti iudicis scripsi ego Palmerius notarius
361	September 1157	Nocera	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi

362	September 1157	Palo del Colle	Guilielmo gratia Dei Sicilie atque Italie invictissimo rege	hoc breve Iohannes notarius scripsit eo quod interfuit

Doc#	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**	**Notary/Notaries**
Martin, Jean, ed. *Les chartes de Troia: édition et étude critique des plus anciens documents conservés à l’Archivio Capitolare*. Vol. 1. 21 vols. Troia, 1976.				
68	July 1146	Troia	Rogger(io) gratia Dei Siciliȩ et | Italiȩ rege magnifico	hanc te cartam Guidonem notarium | Riccardi Bonȩ Parabolȩ fi(li)um taliter scribere rogavimus
69	January 1150	Troia	Rogger(io) gratia Dei Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rege magnifico	hanc te car(ta)m Guidonem notarium Riccardi Bonȩ Parabolȩ fi(li)um taliter scribere rogavimus
70	February 1154	Troia	Rogerio Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rege piissimo… Guillelmo rege	Quam te Iulianum quondam Barisancii notarium taliter scribere rogavimus quia interfuisti
71	February 1154	Troia	Roggerio, Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rege piissimo… Guil|lelmo rege	
72	September 1154	Troia	Guill(elmo) Dei gratia Sicilie et Italie rege magnifico	hanc cart(am) te Ursonem not(arium) Ursonis Troiani filium taliter scribere | rogavimus
73	March 1156	Troia	Guill(el)mo Dei gratia Siciliȩ et Italiȩ rege gloriosissimo	hanc car(tam) | [I]oh(ann)em notar(ium) Serg[ii de Lama] filium taliter scribere rogavi qui interfuisti
75	July 1156	Salerno	Guillelmus divina favente clemencia rex Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue… …Guillelmi Dei gratia gloriosissimi regis Sicilie, ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue… Rogerii gloriosi ducis Apulie carissimi filii sui primo	presens scriptum per manus Roggerii nostri notarii scribi et bulla aurea nostro tipario inpressi roborari et nostro signaculo volumus insigniri
76	March 1159	Troia	W(illelm)I Siciłȩ | et Italiȩ regis victoriosissimi	hoc scriptum te Ioh(ann)em notar(ium) Pinzardi filium taliter scibere rogavi
77	April 1160	Troia	Glo(rio)|sissimi d(omi)ni regis Guill(el)mi	hoc scriptum | inde a Rogerio nostro no[tario…]

Doc#	Date	Location	Title	Notary/Notaries
Mazzoleni, Jole. *Le carte del monastero di S. Leonardo della Matina in Siponto: 1090-1771*. Bari: Società di storia patria per la Puglia, 1991.				
7	February 1155		Guillelmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosi	Quam cartulam ego Gaiderisius notarius scripsi, quod interfui
8	May 1155	Casalnuovo	excellentissimo rege nostro Guillemo	Ego Primianus notarius rogatus denotavi
11	November 1158		Guillelmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosi regis	Quam cartulam ego Gaiderisius notarius scripsi iussu predicti iudicis
12	May 1159		Guillelmo, Sicilie et Italie glorioso rege	Quam cartulam ego Gaiderisius notarius scripsi qui interfui
13	August 1159	Casalnuovo	serenissimo rege nostro Guilelmo	Libellum igitur huius contractus ego Priamus notarius rogatus denotavi

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Nitti de Vito, Francesco. *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Bari. Periodo normanno (1075-1194)*. Vol. 5. 19 vols. Bari, 1902.				
102	November 1149	Giovanazzo	Roggerii magnifici regis Italie Sicilie	causa memorie ego Maragdus protonotarius scripsi hoc testimoniale scriptum eo quod affui
103	October 1151	Bari	regni felicissimi domini nostri Roggerii [magnifici regis] Sicilie et Italie [vicesimo] ducatus autem ducis nostri Guidelmi gloriosissimi ducis Apulie	hoc scriptum venditionis et emtionis scripsit Iohannoccarus notarius qui interfuit
104	April 1151	Bitonto	Rogerio dei gratia Sicilie atque Italie rege inclito	hoc brebe Urso notarius scripsit qui interfuit
105	February 1153	Bari	Rogerii Sicilie et Italie Regis invictissimi… domino nostro Guidelmo eiusdem regni rege invictissimo	hoc brebe scripsit Maior…
106	July 1153	Bari	felicissimi domini nostri Roggerii invictissimi Sicilie et Italie regis… feliciter regnante gloriosissimo domino nostro Guilielmo eiusdem regni rege invictissimo	Hoc autem brebe scripsit Maio qui ibi fuit presens notarius
107	October 1154	Palermo	excellentissimi domini nostri Rogerii. Regis Sicilie. Ducatus Apulie. Et principatus Capue… regni serenissimi filii eius regis Guilielmi	hoc scriptum scripsit Petrus protonotarius f. domni Pizzinaci notarii qui interfuit

108	May 1154	Bari	Guilielmo excellentissimo rege Sicilie et Italie	hoc brebe scripsit Iohannes notarius Petracce Calokurii f. qui interfuit
109	August 1154	Palermo	excellentissimi domini nostri guilielmi regis Sicilie ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue	hoc scriptum scripsit Petrus protonotarius f. domni Pizzinaci notarii qui interfuit
110	December 1155	Bari	felicissimi domini nostri Guilielmi regis victoriosissimi Sicilie et Italie	hoc scriptum scripsit Nicolaus comitisse curialis protonotarius qui subscriptos testes interfuit
111	March 1155		felicissimi domini nostri Guidelmi Sicilie ducatus Apulie et principatus Capue regis [invictissimi]	hoc brebe appignationis scripsit…
112	April 1155	Bari	felicissimi domini nostri Guilielmi regis victoriosissimi Sicilie et Italie	Hoc scriptum per manum Paschalis barensis notarii scribere iussimus
113	May 1155	Bari	felicissimi domini nostri Guidelmi Sicilie Italie regis invictissimi	hoc brebe scripsit Ravellensis notarius qui interfuit
114	January 1157	Giovanazzo	Guillelmi invictissimi et excellentissimi regis Sicilie et Italie filii et heredis domini Rogerii serenissimi regis felicissime	hoc scriptum scripsit Iohannes protonotarius nam in his astiterat testis
115	June 1157	Ceglie	felicissimi domini nostri Guilielmi [regis glorio]sissimi Sicilie et Italie	hoc presens scriptum manibus meis et subscriptum testium subtestatum ei scribi fecimus quod scripsit Petrus notarius Nicolay de Basilio [qui interfuit]
116	June 1158		felicissimi domini nostri Guilielmi regis victoriosissimi Sicilie et Italie	hoc brebe scripsit Iohannes protonotarius qui interfuit
117	February 1159	Bari	Guilielmo excellentissimo rege Sicilie et Italie… Rogerii f. eius invictissimi ducis Apulie	hoc brebe scripsit Iohannes notarius Petracce calokurii f. qui interfuit
118	December 1160	Bari	Guilielmo excellentissimo [rege Sicilie et Italie]… Rogerii f. eius invictissimi ducis Apulie	… Iohannes curialis protonotarius Petracce calokuri f. qui interfuit

Doc#	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**	**Notary/Notaries**
Codex diplomaticus Cajetanus. Vol. 2.2. Tabularium Casinense. Montecassino: Typis Archicœnobii Montis Casini, 1891.				
339	January 1148	Caietae	Rogerii, Dei gratia Sicilie Rex, Apulie, et Caiete Ducatus et Capue Principatus	
340	October 1149	Caietae	Roggerij Dei gratia Sicilie Rex. Apulie et Gaiete ducatus. Ac Capue Principatus	

343	October 1153	Caietae	Roggerii Dei gratia Siciliae Regis, Apuliae et Gaietae Ducatus, ac Capuae Principatus	Ego Richardus Dei gratia Subdiaconus et Notarius dictae Civitatis complevi
344	December 1157	Caietae	Guilihelmi dei gratia Sicilie Regis, Apulie et Gaiete ducatus, ac Capue principatus	ego qui supra mediator sicut inde iudicatum fuit, sic a Iohanne diacono et notario scribere feci

Doc#	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**	**Notary/Notaries**
Conigilio, Giuseppe. “Le pergamene di Conversano: 901 - 1265.” Bari, 1975.				
98	July 1148	Polignano	Rog(gerii) magnifici regis civitatis Polin(iani)	[Mario]
101	February 1151	Monopoli	Rog(gerii) invict(issimi) regis [Sicilie] ducatus Apulie prudentissimi ducis	Quod scripsit Iohannes [notarius qui] / interfuit
105	October 1158	Polignano	Guill(elm)o rege Sicilie invictissimo Apul(ie) ducatus Capue	Quod scripsit Alexandriczius not(arius) qui interfuit
106	July 1159	Conversano	Guidelmi Sicilie et Ita/[lie regis invictiss]imi	hec cartula vicariatjonis scripsit Romano not(arius) qui et interfuit

Doc#	**Date**	**Location**	**Title**	**Notary/Notaries**
Carabellese, Francesco. *Le pergamene della Cattedrale di Terlizzi: (971 - 1300)*. Vol. 3. Codice diplomatico Barese. Bari, 1899.				
60	October 1148	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, [inter] enim fuit
61	April 1148	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
62	September 1149	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege	hoc breve testamenti Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
63	November 1149	Molfetta	Rogerii Sicilie et Italie regis magnifici	hoc scriptum scripsit Petrus notarius, inter enim fuit
64	April 1149	Giovinazzo	Rogerii magnifici regis augusti Sicilie atque Italie	hoc scriptum scripsit Mando notarius eoque affuit
65	1150	Terlizzi	R[ogerio m]agnifico rege… Wilielmi serenissimi ducis filii eius	cause memorie hoc scriptum Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit

66	October 1151	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege… Wilielmi serenissimi ducis filii eius	[hoc] breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
67	June 1151	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege… Wilielmi invictissimi regis filii eius	hoc breve Grisolitus [notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit]
68	July 1152	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege… Wilielmi invictissimi regis filii eius	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
69	October 1153	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege… Wilielmi invictissimi regis filii eius	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
69(2)	October 1153	Terlizzi	Rogerio invictissimo rege… Wilielmi invictissimi regis filii eius	hoc morgincap Grisolitus notarius scripsit per obsecrationem
70	June 1153	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege… Wilielmi invictissimi regis filii eius	[causa me]morie hoc scriptum notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
71	November 1154	Terlizzi	Rogerio magnifico rege… Wilielmi invictissimi regis filii eius	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
72	June 1154	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
73	January 1155	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
74	February 1156	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
76	February 1156	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
77	March 1156	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
78	September 1157	Terlizzi	Guilielmi regis invictissimi	hoc scriptum scripsit Quiricus notarius, nam affuit
79	February 1158	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
80	August 1158	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit

81	August 1159	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
82	August 1159	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
83	September 1160	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
84	December 1160	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc breve Grisolitus notarius scripsit, inter enim fuit
85	March 1160	Terlizzi	Wilielmo invictissimo rege	que Grisolitus notarius scripsit qui interfuit
86	May 1160	Terlizzi	W. regis invictissimi	Bisantius veraciter scripsit notarius
87	May 1160		Guilielmi magnifici regis augusti Sicilie atque Italie	que scripsit Bisantius notarius qui ibi fuit

Badia di Cava, Arca XXVII, 97				
97	January 1151	Molfetta	Rogerii regis excellentissimi... Guilielmi filii eius gloriosissimi ducis	hoc scriptum scripsit notarius Laurentius Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit

Badia di Cava, Arca XXVIII, 13, 29, 87-119 (beginning in January 1154, excluding entries not mentioning William)				
13	October 1151	Molfetta	Rogerii regis excellentissimi... Guilielmi filii eius gloriosissimi ducis	hoc scriptum scripsit notarius Laurentius Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit
29	February 1152	Molfetta	Rogerii regis excellentissimi... Guilielmi filii eius gloriosissimi	hoc scriptum scripsit notarius Laurentius Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit
87	January 1154	S. Archangeli (Cilento)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
88	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
89	March 1154	Salerno	Rogerii Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis... et domini Guilielmi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi

91	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
92	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
93	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
94	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato qui interfuit scribere precepi
95	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
96	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
97	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
98	March 1154	Salerno	Rogerii Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis... et domini Guilielmi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
99	March 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
100	March 1154	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Robberto notario scribere precepi
101	June 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
102	July 1154	Unknown	Guillelmo dei gratia magnifico rege	
103	July 1154	Unknown	Giulielmo magnifico rege	
104	August 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	tibi Truppoaldo notario scribere precepi
105	September 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
106	September 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi

107	October 1154	Sarno	Guilielmi [S]icilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter hanc cartulam scribere rogavimus tibi Guilielmo notario de Sarno
108	November 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
109	November 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
110	November 1154	Unknown	regnanto Wilielmi rege Sicilie, ducate Apulie, principate Capue	
111	December 1154	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	
112	December 1154	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
113	December 1154	Caputaquis	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Pinnino notario scribere precepi
114	January 1155	Flongano	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Guilielmo notario scribere precepi
115	January 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	Ademarius notarius et advocatus (?)
117	1155	Salerno	Guilielmi SIcilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
118	February 1155	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
119	March 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi

Badia di Cava, Arca XXIX, 1-120 (excluding entries not mentioning William)				
1	March 1155	Sarni	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter hanc cartulam scribere rogavimus tibi Guilielmo notario de Sarno
2	March 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi

3	April 1155	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
4	April 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi suprascripto Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
5	April 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
6	May 1155	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
7	May 1155	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
8	May 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
10	May 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
11	June 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi suprascripto Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
12	June 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
13	July 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
14	July 1155	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	quem te Robbertum notarium 376criber iussi
15	July 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
16	July 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
17	July 1155	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
18	August 1155	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi… (corrupted)	taliter vero te (corrupted)

19	August 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi suprascripto Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
20	September 1155	Ebuli	W(ilielmi) Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter hanc cartulam scribere precepi tibi Iohanni notario
21	September 1155	Nuceriae	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
22	October 1155	Trintinara (Caputaquis)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Guilielmo notario qui interfuisti scribere precepi
23	October 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Truppoaldo notario et advocato scribere precepi
24	October 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
25	October 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
26	October 1155	Caputaquis	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Guilielmo notario scribere precepi
27	October 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Truppoaldo notario scribere precepi
28	October 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
29	October 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
30	November 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Grimoaldo notario scribere precepi
31	December 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
32	December 1155	Tusciani (Ebuli)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosi regis	ego Rao iudex hoc exemplum ita scribere ti Alfano notario precepi et signo crucis nostre auctoritatis subscribendo corroboravi
33	December 1155	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi

34	January 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
36	January 1156	Salerno	W(ilielmi) Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	que omnia taliter scribere precepi tibi Iohanni notario et signo crucis nostre proprie manus subscribendo corroboravi
37	January 1156	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
38	January 1156	Batollae	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepimus
39	January 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
40	January 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
41	January 1156	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi (Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis)	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
42	January 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi suprascripto Truppoaldo notario et advocato scribere precepi
43	January 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
44	January 1156	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	quem (?) te Robbertum notarium 378criber precepi
45	February 1156	Tusciani (Ebuli)	Wilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	que omnia predicta qualiter superius scripta sunt scribere precepi tibi Iohanni notario et signo crucis nostre proprie manus subscribendo corroboravi
46	February 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
47	February 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
49	February 1156	Molfetta		hoc brebe scripsit Alfanus notarius qui interfuit

50	February 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
51	February 1156	Pallariae (Cilenti)	Guilielmi… gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
52	February 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
53	February 1156	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
54	March 1156	Sancti Mauri (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem clericum et notarium 379criber precepi
55	March 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
56	April 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
57	May 1156	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie (et Italie) gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
58	April 1156	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
59	April 1156	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
60	May 1156	S. Archangeli (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
61	May 1156	Eboli	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosi regis	que omnia tibi Alfano notario scribere precepi et signo crucis nostre auctoritatis subscribendo corroboravi
62	June 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
63	July 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
64	July 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
65	July 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Matheo notario scribere precepi

66	July 1157	Campania	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	te Daniel notarium scribere precepimus
67	August 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
68	September 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Matheo notario scribere precepi
69	September 1156	Cilenti	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
70	September 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
71	September 1156	Unknown	W(ilielmi) Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	hec omnia qualiter superius scripta sunt scribere precepi tibi Iohanni notario et signo crucis nostre proprie manus subscribendo corroboravi
72	September 1156	Cilentus	Wuilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter te Marcu notarium 380criber iussi
73	September 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
74	September 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi (Sicilie et Italie) gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
75	October 1156	Montorii	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
76	October 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
78	November 1156	Pallariae (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
79	November 1156	Lustra (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
80	December 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario (et) advocato scribere precepi
81A	December 1156	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Pinnino notario scribere precepi

81B	December 1156	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	quod vero firmum scriptum morgincap te Pinninum notarium 381criber rogavi
82	December 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
83	December 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
84	December 1156	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
86	1157	Molfetta	Guilielmo invictissimo rege	hoc brebe scripsit Alexius filius Domnoli iudicis qui interfuit Nathanahel testis est
87	January 1157	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosi regis	que omnia predicta tibi Alfano notario scribere precepi et signo crucis nostre auctoritatis subscribendo corroboravi
88	January 1157	Montorii	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
89	January 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
90	February 1157	Unknown	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	te Roggerium notarium 381criber precepi
91	September 1157	Castellucii (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
92	March 1157	Sancti Severini	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
93	March 1157	Muntorii	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
94	March 1157	Muntorii	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter ego Roggerius clericus et notarius iussu suprascripti iudicis scribsi
95	March 1157	Gifoni	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni clerico et notario scribere precepi
96	March 1157	Sancta Lucia	Wuilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Marcu notarium scribere iussi

97	April 1157	Caputaquis	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Pinnino notario scribere precepi
98	April 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Matheo notario scribere precepi
99	May 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
100	May 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
101	May 1157	Ebuli	(Guilielmi) Sicilie et Italie gloriosi regis	que omnia tibi Alfano notario scribere precepi et signo crucis nostre auctoritatis subscribendo corroboravi
102	May 1157	Nuceriae	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
103	May 1157	Nuceriae	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
104	May 1157	Cicalae (Castro Cikale)	Guilielmo Dei gratia Sicilie et Ytalie mangificus et pervictoriosus rex	te Iohannes clericus et notarius scribere rogavimus
105	May 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
106	June 1157	Molfetta	Guilielmi serenissimi ac invictissimi regis Sicilie et Italie ac Africe	hoc brebe scripsit Alfanus notarius inter enim fuit
107	July 1157	Sancti Mauri (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
108	August 1157	Caputaquis	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosi regis	taliter tibi Pinnino notario scribere precepimus
109	August 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
110	August 1157	Unknown	W(ilielmi) Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	hoc firmum scriptum morgincap sicut in cartula ista legiture scribere precepi tibi Iohanni notario et signo crucis nostre proprie manus subscribendo corroboravi
111	August 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
112	August 1157	Caputaquis	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Pinnino notario scribere precepimus

113	September 1157	Nuceriae	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
114	September 1157	Petrafocaria	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
115	September 1157	Castelluczu (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
116	September 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Ytalie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Ademario notario et advocato scribere precepi
117	October 1157	Tusciani	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosi regis	que omnia predicta tibi Alfano notario scribere precepi et signo crucis nostre auctoritatis subscribendo corroboravi
118	October 1157	Mosoreccla (Cilenta)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
119	October 1157	Castelluczi (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi
120	October 1157	Castelluczi (Cilenti)	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter vero te Iohannem notarium scribere precepi

Badia di Cava, Arca XXX, 1-6 (end of January 1158), 35, 48, 54, 68				
1	October 1157	Molfetta	Guidelmi Serenissimi ac Invictissimi Regis Sicilie et Italie ac Africe	hoc brebe scripsit Alfanus notarius qui interfuit
2	November 1157	Salerno	Guilielmi Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Matheo notario scribere precepi
3	December 1157	Molfetta	Guidelmi serenissimi ac invictissimi regis Sicilie et Italie ac Africe	hoc brebe scripsit Alfanus notarius qui interfuit
4	1158	Molfetta	Guidelmo invictissimo Rege Sicilie et Italie ac Africe	hoc scriptum scripsit Alexius notarius filius Domnoli iudicis qui interfuit
5	January 1158	Salerno	Guilielmo Sicilie et Italie gloriosissimi regis	taliter tibi Iohanni notario scribere precepi
6	January 1158	Molfetta	Guilielmi serenissimi ac invictissimi regis Sicilie et Italie ac Africe	Alfanus (based on script)

35	April 1159	Molfetta	Guilielmi regis excellentissimi	hoc scriptum scripsit notarius Laurentius Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit
48	December 1159	Molfetta	Guilielmi regis excellentissimi	hoc scriptum scripsit notarius Laurentius Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit
54	February 1160	Molfetta	felicissimi Guilielmi regis invictissimi Sicilie Italie et Africe	cuius scripti continentiam scripsit Sabinus notarius quia presens astitit
68	January 1161	Molfetta	Guilielmi regis gloriosissimi	huius scripti seriem scripsit Petrus Paulus notarius qui huic negotio interfuit

Badia di Cava, Arca XXXI, 64, 76, 104, 112				
64	January 1164	Molfetta	Guidielmi magnifici regis	hoc tibi scriptus Iacobi sandus? notarius Jacobi hidicis? filii eaquem? interfuit
76	March 1164	Molfetta	Guillelmi regis gloriosissimi	huius scripti seriem scripsit Petrus Paulus notarius qui huic negotio interfuit
104	February 1165	Molfetta	W(ilielmi) regis serenissimi	hoc scriptum scripsit Urso notarius qui interfuit
112	March 1165	Molfetta	W(ilielmi) regis serenissimi	

Badia di Cava, Arca XXXII, 50				
50	October 1166	Molfetta	Guilielmi regis excellentissimi	hoc scriptum scripsit notarius Laurentius Iaquinti notarii filius eo quod interfuit