A fragmentary story: episcopal culture in Milan during Lothar I's reign?

by Miriam Rita Tessera

Dealing with episcopal culture in Milan during Lothar I's age (822-855), that is the age of Archbishop Angilbert II (824-859), is a difficult task, because of the lack of sources and uncertain origin of many extant manuscripts. As a matter of fact, Angilbert II shared a common cultural background with his transalpine colleagues, but he had to face the loss of the schools in Milan and to rebuild a cultural system which could also improve the political role of his see to the detriment of Pavia. This paper analyses some main features of his cultural policy: the activity of masters accustomed to the new ideas of Carolingian schools, in particular the role played by Hildemar and his library in Civate; the renewal of St. Ambrose's cult and Angilbert's iconographical choices on the golden altar of Sant'Ambrogio, in connection with literary activity in Milan (as for the case of bishop Mansuetus' letter copied in Montpellier, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire, Faculté de medicine, H 233).

Middle Ages; 9th century; Milan; Sant'Ambrogio Basilica; Angilbert II; Hildemar of Corbie

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Abbreviations

CDL = *Codex diplomaticus Langobardiae*, ed. G. Porro Lambertenghi, Augustae Taurinorum 1873 (Historiae patriae monumenta, 13).

ChLA², XCIV = *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores. Facsimile-edition of the Latin Charters*, 2nd series, ed. G. Cavallo – G. Nicolaj, part XCIV, Italy LXVI, Milano I, publ. M. Modesti, Dietikon-Zürich 2015.

ChLA², XCV = *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores. Facsimile-edition of the Latin Charters*, 2nd series, ed. G. Cavallo – G. Nicolaj, part XCV, Italy LXVII, Milano II, publ. A. Zuffrano, Dietikon-Zürich 2016.

MD = *Il Museo Diplomatico dell'Archivio di Stato di Milano*, ed. A.R. Natale, I/1-2, Milano 1970.

MGH, Andrew of Bergamo, *Historia* = Andrew of Bergamo, *Historia*, ed. G. Waitz, in MGH, SS rer. Lang., Hannover 1878, pp. 220-231.

MGH, *Annales Mediolanenses minores* = *Annales Mediolanenses minores*, ed. P. Jaffé, in MGH, SS, 18, Hannover 1863, pp. 383-402.

MGH, Gregory the Great, *Registrum* = MGH, *Epistolae*, 2, Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistolarum*, II: *Libri VIII-XIV*, ed. L.M. Hartmann, Berlin 1890.

MGH, Capit. II = MGH, *Capitularia regum Francorum*, II, ed. A. Boretius – V. Krause, Hannover 1897 (Legum sectio, II/2).

MGH, Conc. II = *Concilia aevi Karolini*, ed. A. Werminghoff, Hannover-Leipzig 1906-1908.

MGH, Conc. III = *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche*, ed. W. Hartmann, Hannover 1984.

MGH, DD Lo I / Lo II = *Die Urkunden Lothars I. und Lothars II.*, ed. Th. Schieffer, München 1979 (DD Karolinorum, 3).

MGH, Epp. V = MGH, *Epistolarum Tomus V*, ed. E. Dümmler *et al.*, Berlin 1899 (Epistolae Karolini aevi, 3).

MGH, Epp. VI = MGH, *Epistolarum Tomus VI*, ed. E. Dümmler, Berlin 1925 (Epistolae Karolini aevi, 4).

MGH, Necr. Suppl. *Libri confraternitatum* = MGH, Necr. Suppl. *Libri confraternitatum Sancti Galli Augiensis Fabariensis*, ed. P. Piper, Berlin 1884.

MGH, HL = Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, ed. L. Bethmann – G.Waitz, in MGH, SS rer. Lang., Hannover 1878, pp. 12-187.

MGH, Poetae I = MGH, *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini*, I, ed. E. Dümmler, Berlin 1881.

Placiti I = *I placiti del Regnum Italiae. 776-945*, I, ed. C. Manaresi, Roma 1955 (FSI, 92).

1. *Episcopal culture during the age of Angilbert II: an open question*

«Aegregius quod praesul opus sub honore beati / inclitus Ambrosii templo recubantis in isto / optulit Angilbertus ovans Dominoque dicavit / tempore quo nitidae servabat culmina sedis»[1].

These often quoted hexameters were engraved on the silver side of the main altar in Sant'Ambrogio in Milan by the will of Archbishop Angilbert II, who aimed to glorify the treasure of saints – his holy forerunner Ambrose and the two martyrs Protasius and Gervasius – hidden in the glittering ark, and to claim for himself the reward of eternal life. *Angilbertus ovans* was aware of his high duty, the charge of archbishop of Milan, a city which he ruled for more than thirty years (824-859), when the whole body of bishops of Northern Italy was renewed during the age of Louis the Pious[2]. His metropolitan see was a difficult one: the Milanese Church was proud of its own rite, deeply influenced by the memory of its most revered patron saint Ambrose, and had a strong local identity which Angilbert had to integrate into the broader framework of the Carolingian empire[3].

Thus, dealing with episcopal culture in Milan during Lothar I's age (822-855) – that is, from a Milanese point of view, the age of Archbishop Angilbert II (824-859) – is a very difficult task which, too often, has been made to coincide with the sole significance of the golden altar, a true Carolingian masterpiece[4]. The idea of "Milanese episcopal culture" is as yet an open question, which has been discussed by – among others – Mirella Ferrari, Silvia Lusuardi Siena, Paolo Tomea, Simona Gavinelli and Marco Petoletti[5]. These studies have thrown light on some critical points of the Milanese Carolingian age[6]: in fact, few manuscripts that can be ascribed for certain to the Milanese

[1] Petoletti, *"Urbs nostra"*, p. 31; see also Ferrari, *Le iscrizioni*, p. 150.
[2] Tabacco, *Il volto ecclesiastico*, pp. 29-33; for a wide survey: Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 21-36.
[3] Cattaneo, *Terra di Sant'Ambrogio*, pp. 149-220; Rossetti, *Società e istituzioni*; Castagnetti, *La società milanese*, and Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose* (see also the discussion in «Reti Medievali Rivista», 22 [2021], 1).
[4] See *Liber notitiae sanctorum Mediolani*, coll. 86A, 290D, 397A: «Ipso tempore erat Mediolano archiepiscopus Angelbertus secundus qui fecit deaurare altare sancti Ambrosii». For the golden altar see par. 3.
[5] Ferrari, *Centri di trasmissione*; Ferrari, *Manoscritti e cultura*; Lusuardi Siena, *Tracce archeologiche della "depositio"*; Tomea, *Ambrogio e i suoi fratelli*; Gavinelli, *Irlandesi, libri biblici greco-latini*; Petoletti, *Le migrazioni dei testi classici.*
[6] Political context: Jarnut, *Ludwig der Fromme, Lothar I.*; Bougard, *"Italia infirma est"* (in particular pp. 162-163).

area have survived, and there are no *scriptoria* with a distinctive script, as in monastic centres north of the Alps such as Corbie, Lorsch, Reichenau, Fulda or Tours[7]. Few hagiographical writings were produced, and none of them can be ascribed with certainty to episcopal patronage; liturgical manuscripts preserving the Ambrosian rite do not exist (except for a few fragments) before the Carolingian rule[8]. Moreover, most of the surviving Milanese Carolingian charters come from the archive of the monastery of S. Ambrose, where we find interpolations in many copies of the charters at the time of the trials between monks and canons in the twelfth-thirteenth century[9]. Lastly, the Caroline minuscule took a very long time to be adopted by local notaries[10].

1.1 *Episcopal culture and episcopal network: Angilbert II and Carolingian culture*

In spite of these difficulties, the age of Angilbert II could be labelled as an age of transition and renewal, starting with the appointment of this "new" man to the Milanese see in June 824[11]. His origins and education are unknown, and his only surviving autograph signature (17 May 859, just seven months before his death on 13 December) was written in a rough Caroline minuscule, which does not help to identify his cultural background[12]. Previous historiography ascribed to him a Frankish origin, possibly within the same family as that of his predecessor Angilbert I (822-823), whose origins are also unknown[13]. He was obviously associated with Lothar's ascent in Italy and had a strong bond with Lothar's wife Ermengard, Hugh of Tours' daughter who, in January 835 asked her husband to assign the rich *curtis* of Limonta to the monastery of S. Ambrose to provide *luminaria* for her brother Hugh's tomb[14]. As the city of Tours (*Turonica*) played an outstanding role in the apse mosaic of S. Ambrose, side by side with Milan (*Mediolanium*), in representing

[7] Similar views in Bougard, *Was There a Carolingian Italy?*, pp. 64-81, but some of his conclusions can be challenged: Petoletti, *Le migrazioni dei testi classici*.
[8] Ferrari, *Libri liturgici e diffusione della scrittura carolina*, p. 277.
[9] Biscaro, *Note e documenti*; Natale, *Falsificazioni e cultura diplomatistica* (his conclusions need reconsidering). See also Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, pp. 49-69.
[10] Valsecchi, *La scrittura carolina nei documenti*.
[11] Savio, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia*, pp. 318-326; Bertolini, *Angilberto*, pp. 318-326; Ambrosioni, *Gli arcivescovi nella vita di Milano*, p. 98.
[12] MD, I/2, n. 101, new edition in ChLA^2, XCV, n. 16, pp. 63-69.
[13] In his last charter (17 May 859), Angilbert remembered that he heard more than once the monks of S. Ambrose complaining about his predecessor Angilbert I (MD I/2, n. 101), thus suggesting his presence in Angilbert I's entourage in 822-823.
[14] MD I/1, n. 57, other editions in MGH, DD Lo I / Lo II., n. 23, pp. 93-95, and ChLA^2, XCIV, n. 20, pp. 80-83 (24 January 835); Lothar renewed this privilege on 8 May 835 (MD I/1, n. 60; MGH, DD Lo I / Lo II, n. 27, pp. 101-102), three days after the confirmation of property grant issued for S. Ambrose at the request of archbishop Angilbert (5 May 835, MD I/1, n. 59, ChLA^2, XCIV, n. 22, pp. 88-91). For the queen's role see La Rocca, *La reine et ses liens*, p. 279; La Rocca, *Monachesimo femminile e poteri delle regine*, pp. 130-131.

Ambrose's miracle mass at the burial of saint Martin, one may wonder if Ermengard's patronage towards the basilica was in fact greater than surviving charters record, and if Angilbert himself was a kinsman of the outstanding family of the Etichonids[15].

Be that as may be, Angilbert pursued a shrewd policy of autonomy and balance towards the royal power, judging by the well-known (even if the only one) episode which occurred after the revolt against Louis the Pious in 833-834, recorded in Andrew of Bergamo's chronicle. King Lothar and Angilbert had a lively clash when the latter refused to bow to the king as court ceremonial prescribed. Lothar rashly rebuked the archbishop («You behave as though you are St Ambrose!») who, in turn, proudly answered that of course he was not Ambrose, but neither was the king God[16]. This dialogue recalled the one between saint Ambrose and the Emperor Theodosius outlined by Cassiodorus in chapter IX, 30 of his *Historia tripartita*, which had been adopted as a model for the relationship between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* by Frankish bishops during Louis the Pious' reign[17]. Notwithstanding his fierce reply, in the end Angilbert acted as a go-between Lothar and his father Louis. He travelled North of the Alps to reach the imperial court and pleaded with the emperor to obtain his pardon on behalf of Lothar.

The archbishop's role grew during the reign of Louis II: he was appointed *missus regius* from April 844[18], he regularly attended the general councils summoned by the new king in Pavia and took part in Louis II's coronations in Rome in 844 and 850[19], thus being actively involved in the plan that Louis II was setting out for the *regnum Italiae*. On the other hand, he carefully reformed the Milanese Church according to Benedict of Aniane's ideas, by appointing the abbots of the monastery of S. Ambrose (Gaudentius, Rachimpertus, and possibly Peter II) and by introducing his cathedral clergy within the monastic milieu[20].

[15] Hugh of Tours: Vollmer, *Die Etichonen*, pp. 163-174; Hlawitschka, *Franken, Alamannen, Bayern*, pp. 221-226; see also Veronese, *Un franco (anzi due) in Brianza*.

[16] MGH, Andrew of Bergamo, *Historia*, pp. 225-226.

[17] For the use of Cassiodorus' excerpt during Louis the Pious' troubles see Werner, *Hlodovicus Augustus*, pp. 57-60; Ganz, *The Epitaphium Arsenii*; see also Depreux, *The Penance of Attigny*. On the Paris/episcopal model see Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 135-184.

[18] MD I/1, n. 74; ChLA^2, XCIV, n. 33, pp. 129-135; Bougard, *La cour et le gouvernement de Louis II*.

[19] Council of Mantua (827): MGH, Conc. II/2, pp. 583-598. Councils in Pavia: MGH, Conc. III, n. 21, pp. 207-215 (Pavia 845-850); n. 23, pp. 217-229 (Pavia 850); bishops' decisions ratified by Louis II (Pavia 865): MGH, Capit. II, n. 216, pp. 91-93; see also Padoa Schioppa, *La giustizia ecclesiastica nei sinodi lombardi*. Angilbert in Rome: MGH, Conc. III, n. 5, pp. 24-26; Placiti, I, pp. 176-187, n. 50 (the authenticity has been questioned by Polock – Schneider, *Anhang. Die gefälschte Synodalurkunde von Rom 850(?)*, pp. 495-502); MGH, Conc. III, n. 24, pp. 230-231.

[20] Gaudentius (835-842?): MD I/1, n. 58; Tagliabue, *Cronotassi degli abati*, p. 292 and pp. 280-281; Zagni, *Gli atti arcivescovili*, pp. 12-13. Rachimpertus/Rachibertus (843-844): MD, I/1, n. 73 (Rossetti, *Società e istituzioni*, pp. 92-93; Zagni, *Gli atti arcivescovili*, pp. 12-13); Tagliabue, *Cronotassi degli abati*, p. 293. For Peter II's appointment: Petoletti, *La produzione epigrafica a Milano*, pp. 20-21. For Angilbert's patronage of the monastery of S. Ambrose: Rossetti, *Società e istituzioni*, pp. 88-95.

In 856 the name of *Angilbert(u)s archiepiscopus* headed the list of bishops and clerks recorded in the *Liber vitae* of S. Giulia/S. Salvatore in Brescia (now Brescia, Biblioteca Queriniana, G VI 7, f. 16*r* [20*r*])[21]. The Milanese archbishop was registered together with his suffragans – most of them of Frankish origin – Notting of Brescia, Dodo of Novara, Hagano of Bergamo, Benedict of Cremona, and the bishop of Como Amalric – a list which offers a good example of the new "geography of power" established by Carolingian rulers in Italy[22]. This network mirrored that sketched nearly fifteen years earlier, in the *praeceptum synodale* of 842, when Archbishop Angilbert II authorized the foundation of Ss. Faustinus and Jovita in Brescia, a monastery promoted by the local bishop Rampert[23]. Together with the archbishop, there were Adalgisus of Novara, Hagano of Bergamo, Pancoardus of Cremona, Ercambertus of Lodi, Verendarius of Chur[24], Ermenfredus of Tortona and a Walfericus whose see has not yet been identified.

Many sources witness the great role Brescia played during the pontificate of Rampert (827-844 ca.), both from a cultural and from a political perspective. Cultural exchanges between Verona, Brescia and Reichenau were well attested; masters coming from the best schools of the Empire – i.e. Hildemar and Maginarius of Reichenau – taught there; Frankish monks were well established at S. Salvatore and at the abbey of Leno; lists of manuscripts and books made for the new foundations have survived (i.e. Ss. Faustinus and Jovita), and hagiographical texts ordered by bishops – and written by Rampert himself, like the *Translatio sancti Filastrii* – too[25]. In Rampert's words, all these achievements were accomplished under the inspiration of Angilbert of Milan, but evidence for similar activities in Milan is scanty[26]. Moreover, even if these sources are a testimonial of a close spiritual and institutional bond between Milan and Brescia, there is no proof that exchanges of books and the circulation of cultural models will consequently follow.

In May 825 – when Angilbert II had been in office for just over a year – the capitulary of Corteolona ordered every student coming from Milan and its diocese to go to Pavia and to study there under the guidance of the Irish master Dungal. This means that there was no longer a functioning school in Milan,

[21] Brescia, Biblioteca Queriniana, G VI 7, *Liber vitae*, f. 16*r* (20*r*); MGH, *Der Memorial- und Liturgiecodex*; Ludwig, *Das Gedenkbuch*.
[22] Select bibliography: Gavinelli, *Il gallo di Ramperto*; Gavinelli, *Il vescovo Giuseppe di Ivrea*; Gavinelli, *Dodone di Novara*; Lo Monaco, *Aganone di Bergamo*; De Angelis, *Poteri cittadini e intellettuali di potere*, pp. 39-56; see also Bullogh, *Leo, «qui apud Hlotarium magni loci habebatur»*.
[23] *Concilium Angelberti archiepiscopi Mediolanensis a. 842*, in MGH, Conc. II, pp. 814-815; Zagni, *Gli atti arcivescovili*, n. 8, pp. 26-28.
[24] For cross-cultural exchange between Milan and Rhaetia: Petoletti, *Un frammento del sec. IX*.
[25] Violante, *La Chiesa bresciana*, pp. 1001-1124; see also Bischoff, *Das Güterverzeichnis des Klosters SS. Faustino*; Bettelli Bergamaschi, *Ramperto vescovo di Brescia*; Gavinelli, *Il gallo di Ramperto*; Vocino, *Triginta autem Brixienses*; Ludwig, *I libri memoriales e i rapporti di fratellanza*.
[26] CDL, n. 140, coll. 245-248, 31 May 841. See also *Rampertus Brixiensis ep.* in *Clavis scriptorum latinorum Medii Aevi*, pp. 239-240.

despite important remains of late-antique libraries still survived there[27]. That is why the *Liber glossarum* was introduced in Milan, where the famous Ambr. B 36 inf., copied during Angilbert's pontificate (in the first half of the ninth century) in Caroline minuscule (with some pre-Caroline features) overcoming the regional features of local contemporary scripts, still survives[28]. Over a century, this manuscript was used as an exemplar for many copies written in several episcopal sees of northern Italy, thus spreading out the programme Angilbert took up from the more advanced cultural centres of the Empire, a topic which deserves closer examination.

2. *Re-building Milanese culture during the age of Lothar I*

2.1 *The library of master Hildemar "of Corbie"*

In Angilbert II's thought, re-building a school and a cultural background able to support the new political role which Milan was undertaking, was a primary goal. The strategy that the archbishop employed connected the translation of relics and the diffusion of Carolingian culture to the assertion of Milanese authority on the borders of his diocese[29]. This is the case of the chapel of S. Syrus/Ss. Primus and Felicianus of Leggiuno, a family church in the countryside of Lake Maggiore, whose dedication to the bishop of Pavia Syrus was changed in June 846 by his founder, the *vassus Erembertus*, after the arrival of the Roman relics of Primus and Felicianus[30]. The dedicatory epigraph, whose content otherwise emphasizes the role played by Archbishop Angilbert himself («ordinante domno Angilberto archiepiscopo»), took up Roman models to establish a parallel between the dignity of the Apostolic See and that the Milanese Church and its archbishop had gained[31]. In the skilled hands of Angilbert II, the renewal of epigraphy became a powerful tool to promote the power of his Church, starting from the inscription on the golden altar of S. Ambrose which later on was followed by the outstanding examples of the Milanese archbishops and Louis II's epitaphs[32].

[27] Ferrari, *In Papiam conveniant*; Ferrari, *Dungal*; Gavinelli, *Dungal e l'organizzazione scolastica*; Petoletti, *Le migrazioni dei testi classici*.

[28] Ferrari, *Manoscritti e cultura*, pp. 247-252; Ferrari, *Libri liturgici*. A related manuscript of Ambr. B 36 inf. is Vat. Pal. lat. 1773, IX[1] century, belonging to Lorsch: Bischoff, *Lorsch im Spiegel*, p. 51. For the *Liber glossarum* see also < http://liber-glossarum.huma-num.fr/ >.

[29] Tomea, *"Nunc in monastero prefato Clavadis"*; Tessera, *Ambroise et Martin*, pp. 8-10. For the translation of saint Aurelius, whose body was given by Angilbert to bishop Notting in about 830: Schmidt, *Kloster Hirsau*, pp. 30-53; Picard, *Le souvenir*, pp. 630-631.

[30] Castagnetti, *Una famiglia di immigrati*; Tomea,*"Nunc in monasterio prefato Clavadis"*, pp. 159-160, 170-171.

[31] Petoletti, *Contributo all'epigrafia lombarda*.

[32] Petoletti, *"Urbs nostra"*; Petoletti, *La produzione epigrafica a Milano*. For the ninth-century burials of the Milanese archbishops in S. Ambrose (with the notable exceptions of Angilbert I and Angilbert II): Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques*, pp. 92-98.

This policy is also clearly shown by the introduction of the monastic reform that Angilbert II promoted: in the decade 833-845 the archbishop moved the monastic community of S. Peter in Mandello Lario, which since its foundation had been subject to the monastery of S. Pietro in Ciel d'Oro in Pavia, to a new location at S. Peter in Civate, thus placing it under Milanese influence[33]. Then he strengthened its religious and cultural power by translating there the relics of saint Calogerus from Albenga and by sending there from Brescia his advisers, the Frankish monks Leodegarius and Hildemar[34].

In the case of Civate Angilbert's goals and tools were clear: to compete against Pavia, through the promoting of new cults and the re-shaping of the presence of monks in border areas, submitting these new communities to S. Ambrose, was at the core of his programme. He then placed these foundations in the midst of spiritual and cultural networks extending from one side of the Alps to the other (Hildemar and Leodegarius are mentioned as monks in the *Liber vitae* of S. Salvatore/S. Giulia, and the whole monastic community of S. Peter in Civate in the *Liber vitae* of Pfäfers)[35]. Finally, he encouraged throughout the whole diocese of Milan the scholarly activities of Hildemar, a master coming from an important centre of the Carolingian reform (perhaps Corbie?) who was able to build a strong relationship between Milan and other outstanding cultural areas of the empire of Charlemagne[36].

I cannot examine here in detail the *Commentary on the Rule of Benedict* attributed to Hildemar, or dwell upon all the related questions about its origins and its multiple stages of composition[37]. This text circulated rapidly during the ninth century between Reichenau, Engelberg and Einsiedeln, and its manuscript transmission by 875 can be in part ascribed to northern Italy[38]. Nevertheless, it is significant to remember that the three letters which are copied only in Hildemar's work – Hildemar to Ursus, bishop of Benevento, on *De ratione bene legendi*[39]; Hagano of Bergamo to Rampert about the arrival of the scholar Maginarius in Brescia (c. 844); and Wolfhoz bishop of

[33] Spinelli, *L'origine desideriana*; Bognetti – Marcora, *L'abbazia benedettina di Civate*.
[34] See Vat. Reg. lat. 540, f. 29*r*, quoted by Tomea, *"Nunc in prefato monasterio Clavadis"*, pp. 171-172, note 4.
[35] Gavinelli, *Per un'enciclopedia carolingia*, pp. 22-23. As for Pfäfers and Civate: MGH, Necr. Suppl. *Libri confraternitatum*, p. 384.
[36] Hildemar: *Hildemarus Corbeiensis*, in *Clavis Scriptorum Latinorum Medii Aevi*, pp. 132-137; see also De Jong, *Growing up in a Carolingian Monastery*. There is no conclusive evidence that Hildemar came from the abbey of Corbie.
[37] Mittermüller, *Vita et regula ss. p. Benedicti*; Hafner, *Der Basilius-Kommentar*; Zelzer, *Überlegungen zu einer Gesamtedition des frühnachkarolingischen Kommentars*; Engelbert, *Status quaestionis circa la tradizione del commento di Ildemaro*.
[38] Two copies at Reichenau (IX$^{3/4}$ century: Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. 179 and Aug. 203; the first one written at Reichenau and northern Italy); one at Engelberg, Stiftsbibliothek 143 (olim 6/23), IX$^{2/2}$ century, possibly coming from Reichenau; one at Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, 253, ff. 79r-106*r* (IX$^{2/2}$ century, northern Italy).
[39] *Ursus Beneventanus, ep.*, in *Clavis Scriptorum Latinorum Medii Aevi*, pp. 275-276.

Constance to the same Rampert about a young clerk to educate and perhaps ordain priest in Brescia – deal only with literary education and cultural training required for the clergy and religious people[40]. Even if Hildemar's legacy was not received in a systematic way, his influence can be perceived through a catalogue of books in the library of Civate, copied on the last folio of a twelfth-century manuscript containing Remigius of Auxerre's *Expositio in Matthaeum* (now Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Theol. Lat. Fol. 564, f. 199*v*)[41]. This list shows many entries belonging to the original nucleus of texts, in all probability Carolingian ones, sometimes badly damaged as was the third part of Gregory the Great's collection of *Moralia in Job,* which «inutilis est quia legi non potest».

Next to Alcuin's widespread *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, two exegetical works by Bishop Claudius of Turin stand out: the *Commentary on Leviticus*, dedicated to Abbot Theodemirus of Psalmodi (c. 823), whose text survives only thanks to a single copy coming from Rheims (Reims, Bibliothèque Municipale, 123, beginning of the ninth century), and the now lost *Commentary on Numbers* («Expositio Taurensis *(sic)* episcopi super leviticum unum volumen. / Expositio eiusdem super numeri aliud volumen»)[42]. Another rarity kept in the library of Civate was the *Commentary on Ecclesiasticus* in three books, written by Hrabanus Maurus and dedicated to the archbishop of Mainz Otgar, whose transmission during the Carolingian age is somewhat fragmentary. As for ninth century copies, only two fragments survived, one from Fulda (Sankt Petersburg, Historical Archiv, ms. 625/14) and one written in South Germany (IX$^{4/4}$ century, Basel, Stadtarchiv Basel-Stadt, II 12 UU I Fragmente Tasche); the tradition of this text would spread in France later, during the eleventh-twelfth century[43].

The catalogue of Civate also shows an entry referring to a *psalterium ignote translationis*, that is a version difficult to recognize for a twelfth-century reader used to the widespread Gallican Psalter. The presence of an "unknown" version of the Psalter in Civate could mirror the polemics which flourished in the ninth century about the translation of the Psalms, which involved Florus of Lyon, Eldrad of Novalesa and, indirectly, also impacted the production of the Milanese revised version of Psalms[44]. This Milanese version, indeed, was produced by an anonymous author who was not well acquainted with Ambrosian liturgy – perhaps an Irish master dwelling in S. Ambrose during

[40] See Villa, *"Denique Terentii dultia legimus acta…"*.
[41] Ziesche, *Ein Bibliothekskatalog*.
[42] *Claudius Taurinensis ep.*, in *Clavis Scriptorum Latinorum Medii Aevi*, pp. 75-88 (pp. 85-86 for the *Commentary on Leviticus*); Fravventura – Ricci, *Claudius Taurinensis ep.*; Ferrari, *Note su Claudio di Torino*, and Bouhlol, *Claude de Turin*.
[43] Kottje – Ziegler, *Verzeichnis der Handschriften*, pp. 9-10; Guglielmetti, *Rabano Mauro*, pp. 315-316.
[44] MGH, Epp. VI, pp. 201-205, n. 33; see also Bogaert, *Florus et le Psautier*.

Angilbert's age[45] – as he himself declared in the prologue (*inc. Ut reprobare superflua*). It was subsequently copied in the famous series of three Milanese Psalters whose dating (from the end of the ninth to the tenth century?) raised a great deal of scholarly debate not yet resolved[46].

Certainly, the library that Hildemar left in Civate was rich in fundamental texts aiming to teach grammar and to encourage a good practice of monastic life, but it was also provided with contemporary rare works which witnessed the liveliest, and sometimes most discussed, cultural tendencies of Lothar's age. If the mysterious priest Todo, mentioned together with his fellow brothers of Civate in the *Liber viventium* written in Pfäfers, can be identified with the *Tado subdiaconus* who, on 15 March 848, signed two charters issued by order of Abbot Andrew of S. Ambrose in favour of the Aleman Gunzo[47], this would be suggestive of a need to reconsider the role played by S. Peter of Civate in training the high Milanese clergy. Hildemar's teaching would have influenced Tado's subsequent career as one of the most cultivated archbishops of Milan, the *Tado pater patriae* praised by the Irish master of Bern 363, who became Angilbert's successor on Ambrose's chair (860-868) and a key figure during the debates on the divorce of Lothar II[48].

2.2 *Hildemar's legacy: the miscellany Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXIII (61)*

The cultural strategy that Angilbert built thanks to the writings of Hildemar met with success, at least judging by the spreading of other works ascribed to the Carolingian master. Such were the introductory letter written by a *pater spiritualis*, that Benedetta Valtorta has identified with Hildemar himself, to an unnamed abbess (Par. lat. 3226, ff. 154*v*-157*r*), which is mentioned in a catalogue of the library of Gorze, and the well-known letter to Archdeacon Pacificus about the eternal destiny of Adam[49]. Moreover, not long ago, Valtorta found a new witness of Pacificus' letter to Hildemar, unfortunately badly damaged, copied amongst other *excerpta* of Hildemar's *Com-*

[45] For the scholarly debate about Irish masters and their knowledge of Greek language during Angilbert's pontificate: Gavinelli, *Irlandesi, libri biblici*; Petoletti, *Iscrizione greca di Ambrogio*. For the possible presence of Sedulius Scottus in Milan or Pavia: Traube, *O Roma nobilis*; Staubach, *Sedulius Scottus*; Herren, *Sedulius Scottus and the knowledge*; Petoletti, *La mano di Sedulio Scoto*.

[46] Paredi, *Nota storica sui Salteri*; Ferrari, *Manoscritti e cultura*, pp. 261-264; Gavinelli, *Irlandesi, libri biblici*, pp. 354-357; Crivello, *Die Buchmalerei in Oberitalien*; Demarchi, *Milanese Early Medieval Psalters*. See also the Greek-Latin Psalter dedicated to Abbot Peter II of S. Ambrose (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Hamilton 552): Paredi, *Nota storica sui Salteri*, pp. 163-164; Ferrari, *Manoscritti e cultura*, pp. 260-261; Gavinelli, *Irlandesi, libri biblici*, pp. 357-358.

[47] ChLA^{2}, XCIV, nn. 39-40, pp. 149-155.

[48] Tessera, *Tadone*; Tessera, *Milano, gli irlandesi e l'impero carolingio*.

[49] Campana, *Il carteggio di Vitale e Pacifico*; Valtorta, *Anecdota Veronensia*, pp. 250-253. For Pacificus see *Pacificus Veronensis archidiac.*, in *Clavis Scriptorum Latinorum*, pp. 177-181, with extensive bibliography (to which must be added the review of M.G. Di Pasquale discussing La Rocca, *Pacifico di Verona*, in «Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia», 51 [1997], pp. 549-555).

mentary on the rule of Benedict in an interesting manuscript kept in Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXIII (61), ff. 1*r*-2*r*[50]. This manuscript has been dated to the beginning of the tenth century, but can perhaps be ascribed to the end of ninth century on the basis of palaeographical data: the hands of the scribes who copied the text belong to a cultural milieu spreading from Western Lombardy (Vercelli, perhaps?) to Pavia, but this aspect deserves further inquiries[51]. Next to Hildemar's works and short patristic passages, the miscellaneous manuscript of Verona contains canons and penitential texts (the first five books of Halitgar's *Penitential*, among others) focusing on the role and duties of the clergy, and on questions about marriage and church law, which became of paramount importance just slightly later, during the controversy about Lothar II's divorce. In any case, Verona LXIII (61) could mirror an older exemplar, perhaps a collection prepared in Milan to support Angilbert's pastoral care, as the presence of some texts spreading from the city of Ambrose suggests. These are: a fragmentary passage from Ambrose's *De poenitentia*, ch. I, 14 (f. 11*r*); the chapter on the clash between Ambrose and Theodosius in Cassiodorus' *Historia tripartita* (ff. 13*r*-15*r*); and a short collection of canons (ff. 72*r*-78*r*) opening with the canon *Si quis nefandum crimen* (f. 72*r*), which was promulgated in Milan by Archbishop Letus (751-755) during a synod[52]. This canon is otherwise copied only in Ambr. I 145 inf., a manuscript written for the canonical community of S. Ambrose during the lifetime of the active provost Martinus Corbus (1134-1154 c.)[53].

But, surprisingly, Verona LXIII (61) also preserves another canonical collection (ff. 16*r*-38*v*), which once again has been transmitted only through a second Milanese manuscript, the twelfth-century book of canon law Ambr. Trotti 440[54], a collection which could have been used during Angilbert's rule. If this were proved, it would make a good indirect argument – through the renewal of Carolingian legacy during the age of Commune – of how important it was for Carolingian bishops to have at their disposal legal and normative texts to reform the local clergy and to perform pastoral duties[55], a task Angilbert fulfilled at his best even if traces are now scanty.

[50] Valtorta, *Manoscritti agiografici*, pp. 79-97; Valtorta, *Un dossier ildemariano*. I would like to express my gratitude to Francesca Carnazzi who generously supplied me with photos of this manuscript.

[51] Bischoff, *Katalog*, 3, n. 7049, p. 468 (IX^2 century, *Oberitalien*?). I am deeply indebted to Mirella Ferrari who kindly discussed with me some preliminary remarks about the dating and origin of Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXIII (61). For Pavia as a possible origin of the short canonical collection at ff. 72*r*-78*r* see Pokorny, *Eine zweite Zacharias-Dekretale*.

[52] Ratti, *Un vescovo di Milano*; Picasso, *Si quis nefandum crimen*.

[53] Picasso, *Si quis nefandum crimen*, pp. 151-152; see also Picasso, *Collezioni canoniche milanesi*, pp. 17-18.

[54] I am grateful to Marco Petoletti who shared with me some of the first results of his current research on Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXIII (61). For Trotti 440: Pokorny, *Eine zweite Zacharias-Dekretale*, p. 305, n. 32.

[55] See Gavinelli, *Modelli librari*; for the general frame about episcopal statutes: Van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord*.

3. *Networks of texts and images around the golden altar: Angilbert II and the portrait of Mansuetus, bishop of Milan*

The lavish inscription on the silver front of the new altar Angilbert ordered, possibly around 835 (though the dating is debated) for S. Ambrose[56], where he moved the precious relics of Ambrose himself and of the two martyrs Protasius and Gervasius, summarizes the whole programme of the archbishop. Angilbert's altar displayed echoes from Pope Paschal I's inscriptions in S. Praxedes and S. Maria in Domnica, and from king Liutprand's in the royal church of S. Anastasius of Corteolona (survived only in the epigraphic syllogae Vat. Pal. lat. 833), thus mixing allusions to Roman papal models, Lombard kingship and the memory of the Emperor Constantine (recalled by quotations from Optatianus Porphyrius' poems)[57]. All these literary and iconographic models were interlaced in order to honour the patron saint of Milan in a figurative scheme taken from the contemporary Hrabanus Maurus' *De laudibus sanctae Crucis*[58], thus answering with the materiality of gold and silver the contemporary fierce polemics against the cult of the Cross[59]. According to Marco Petoletti's fascinating hypothesis concerning the role of the *magister phaber* Volvinus (portrayed as the Biblical artisan Bezalel)[60], Angilbert conceived the golden altar – and the internal porphyry late-antique sarcophagus which contained the treasure of relics – like a new Ark of Covenant, which connected Ambrose, his Church, and his bishop[61]. This idea could suggest a similarity with Hrabanus Maurus' writings on the symbolic mes-

[56] MD, I/1, n. 58 (interpolated charter, dated 1 March 835); Tessera, *Ambroise et Martin*, pp. 13-15. According to the so-called *Annales Mediolanenses minores*, Angilbert ordered the golden altar in 840: MGH, *Annales Mediolanenses minores*, p. 392. Scholarly debate about the dating: Ambrosioni, *L'altare e le due comunità*, pp. 59-64 (after 844); Gavinelli, *Il gallo di Ramperto*, pp. 416-421 (830-835).

[57] Ferrari, *Le iscrizioni*, pp. 150-154; Gavinelli, *Il gallo segnavento*, pp. 30-31; Petoletti, *"Urbs nostra"*, pp. 21-22. For Vat. Pal. lat. 833: Vircillo Franklin, *The epigraphic syllogae*; Ferrari, *Manoscritti e cultura*, pp. 257-258; Petoletti, *Poesia epigrafica pavese*. Selected bibliography about the golden altar: Elbern, *Der karolingische Goldaltar*; Hahn, *Narrative on the Golden Altar* (needing some corrections); *L'altare d'oro*, in particular Ambrosioni, *L'altare e le due comunità santambrosiane*, pp. 57-71; Thunø, *The Golden Altar of Sant'Ambrogio*; Foletti, *Oggetti, reliquie, migranti*, pp. 107-160 (sometimes misleading).

[58] The transmission of Hrabanus' *De laudibus Sanctae Crucis* in northern Italy during Lothar's age needs further study: see Perrin, *Le De laudibus Sanctae Crucis*.

[59] Ferrari, *Le iscrizioni*, pp. 150-154; Petoletti, *"Urbs nostra"*, pp. 21-22; see also Thunø, *The Golden Altar*.

[60] Volvinus: Elbern, *Der karolingische Goldaltar*, pp. 99-103; Elbern, *Vuolvinio*; see the hypothetical relationship between Volvinus and the Aleman family of Wolvene of Rheinau: Hlawitschka, *Franken, Alamannen,* pp. 292-293, n. 178; Von Büren, *Vulfinus et le manuscrit*, pp. 325-326.

[61] Petoletti, *"Urbs nostra"*, pp. 22-23; for Angilbert of Saint-Riquier's golden altar: Tessera, *"Angilbertus ovans"*, p. 219; for the sarcophagus: Cupperi, *"Regia purpureo marmore"*. For possible Roman models, in particular the *confessio sancti Petri*, see Elbern, *Rom und die karolingische Goldschmiedekunst*; De Blauuw, *Cultus et decor*, pp. 539-547.

sage conveyed by the reliquaries of saints which were paraded in procession at Fulda, like the Ark of Covenant for the Hebrew people[62].

Cultural exchanges and spiritual brotherhood between Fulda and Milan are well known precisely during Angilbert's career: a lost letter from Abbot Thioto of Fulda to Tado, archbishop of Milan – summarised by Matthias Flaccius Illyricus – spoke about the great friendship their predecessors Hatto and Angilbert had enjoyed, and the pious veneration that they had towards their patron saints, Boniface and Ambrose[63]. Fulda could also have been an artistic model for the Milanese archbishop in creating his new altar-reliquary-tomb: in 819 Abbot Eigil of Fulda moved Boniface's body to a new precious golden and silver shrine, but other influences (including the lost golden altar of Saint-Riquier ordered by Abbot Angilbert some time before) cannot be excluded[64].

Certainly Angilbert used his "new" ark to assert the strong Milanese identity in a wider Carolingian framework, thanks to a shared patronage between Ambrose and the Frankish Martin of Tours. Such a strategy of legitimation had already been used by the Frankish bishops of Verona and Brescia, re-using local saints without interruption with the Lombard past of their sees[65]. In two central scenes on the back of the altar (and in the related apse mosaic)[66], Ambrose, falling asleep while celebrating mass in Milan, was also able to celebrate a "miracle mass" during Martin's burial in Tours: this episode (BHL 5622) was taken from Gregory of Tours' *De virtutibus sancti Martini* or, more likely, from an excerpt of the so-called *Martinellus*, a precis of Martin's miracles compiled and amplified at Tours at the behest of Abbot Fridugise (804-834)[67]. In this specific case, Angilbert and his cultural counsellors picked up a textual tradition that was widely spread beyond the Alps but unknown in northern Italy before the eleventh century; moreover, some ninth-century copies of BHL 5622 coming from Lotharingia assigned the authorship to Ambrose himself (though none of those were manuscripts from Tours)[68]. What is certain is that BHL 5622 was also reworked in the Carolingian version of Ambrose's life, *De vita et meritis sancti Ambrosii* (BHL 377d), a difficult text whose uncertain dating oscillates between the pontificates of Angilbert, Tado and Anspert. This Carolingian life survived in one copy only, written in Milan at the end of the ninth/beginning of the tenth century, but soon moved to

[62] Appleby, *Rudof, Abbot Hrabanus*; Gavinelli, *Il gallo di Ramperto*, pp. 419-420.
[63] MGH, Epp. V, *Appendix ad Hrabanum. Epistolarum Fuldensium fragmenta*, p. 532.
[64] *Gesta abbatum*, pp. 211-212.
[65] For Verona: Veronese, *Foreign bishops*. For Angilbert II's policy of integration between Frankish and Milanese clergy: Tessera, *Ambroise et Martin*, pp. 22-24.
[66] Overview of the scholarly debate about the apse mosaic: *Il mosaico di Sant'Ambrogio*; Petoletti, *Testimoni d'arte*, pp. 305-309; Foletti, *Oggetti, reliquie, migranti*, pp. 168-174, and Tessera, *Ambroise et Martin*, pp. 24-26.
[67] Tomea, *L'immagine e l'ombra di Ambrogio*, p. 30 and note 30.
[68] Lanéry, *Ambroise hagiographe*, pp. 507-509; Tessera, *"Angilbertus ovans"*, p. 222.

Saint Gall (Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 569, pp. 3-97)[69]. More than once carefully analysed, the hagiographical production in Milan during Angilbert's pontificate is a *vexata quaestio* which shows just a few fixed points in the correct chronological sequence of the lives of Satyrus, Ambrose and Marcellina (the latter ascribed by Petoletti to the tenth century), their cross-references and their certain relationship with the monastery and the basilica of S. Ambrose[70].

However tempting it may be to ascribe to Angilbert the idea of an episcopal character able to face imperial power as his own equal, like Ambrose does in *De vita et meritis* (where Cassiodorus' *Historia tripartita* IX, 30-31 has been quoted in full), the current state of research makes it impossible to say more, unless or until one can take up a patient and careful analysis of the sources, and above all of the textual traditions that the anonymous writer had at his disposal in rebuilding Ambrose's portrait in Carolingian garb[71]. In this perspective, a complete survey of Carolingian transmission of Ambrose's works, following Mirella Ferrari's remarkable studies, could add some important pieces to the picture, as Camille Gerzaguet has shown when dealing with the main routes of transmission and circulation of Ambrose's writings during the ninth century[72].

Notwithstanding these difficulties, it is evident that the mutual interaction between Milanese and Frankish saints was a fundamental tool in Angilbert's programme. Thus, it is not surprising that Ambrose and Martin are both portrayed on the side ends of the golden altar, which are devoted to the adoration of Christ's cross and to Milanese saints. On the southern end, Ambrose, Protasius, Gervasius and Simplicianus stand out; in parallel, at the northern end, there is Martin of Tours, together with the martyrs Nazarus and Nabor, and a bishop whose inscription is *MANV*, usually identified with the holy bishop Maternus. One of Ambrose's predecessors, Maternus was remembered for having transferred the bodies of Nabor and Felix to the homonymous basilica, as depicted in the wall mosaic of the chapel of S. Vittore in Ciel d'Oro/S. Satyrus (V-VI century)[73].

In 2008, Mirella Ferrari challenged this hypothesis with an insightful proposal: the bishop portrayed on the southern end would be Mansuetus,

[69] Bischoff, *Katalog*, 3, n. 5795 (IX$^{3/4}$ century). Critical edition: Courcelle, *Recherches sur saint Ambroise*, pp. 49-153.
[70] Tomea, *Ambrogio e i suoi fratelli*; Petoletti, *La vie de sainte Marcelline*. For Abbot Gaudentius' possible involvement in the production of *De vita et meritis*: Gavinelli, *Per una edizione*, pp. 41-44.
[71] I checked the copy of Cassiodorus' *Historia tripartita* (IX$^{4/4}$ century, according to Bischoff, *Katalog*, 2, n. 2661), now Milano, Archivio capitolare della Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio, M 7, to confront the text of Cassiodorus' excerpta quoted in the *Vita et meritis* with the corresponding *loci* in this manuscript, but there is no decisive proof that M 7 belonged to the same textual family of the lost Cassiodorus' copy used by *De vita et meritis*.
[72] Ferrari, *"Recensiones" milanesi*; Gerzaguet, *La mémoire textuelle d'Ambroise*, pp. 218-221, 226-229. For Lorsch and the Milanese area: Petoletti, *Le migrazioni*, pp. 554-555.
[73] Maternus: Savio, *Gli antichi vescovi d'Italia*, pp. 98-102; Picard, *Le souvenir*, pp. 39-41.

archbishop of Milan in the second half of the seventh century (†681), the first one buried in S. Ambrose after the high Milanese clergy came back from the exile in Genoa following the Lombard invasion[74]. In 679 Mansuetus wrote to the Emperor Constantine IV a letter about the synod celebrated in the city to answer some questions related to the next council of Constantinople (680) – including an *Expositio fidei* on the Creed – whose purpose was to condemn the Monothelist heresy[75]. Mansuetus' letter could be a fundamental clue for discovering the models that Angilbert reworked and reused in creating the iconography and the narrative cycle of the golden altar, to underline the role of the Milanese archbishop – Ambrose's successor – as a shepherd and a legislator (along the lines of the portrait of Moses in Carolingian exegesis), able to dialogue with emperors in defending the true faith.

In the age of Charlemagne this letter was widely spread, usually by means of an appendix of Cresconius' *Concordia canonum* containing Mansuetus' text, the related *Expositio fidei* on the Creed, and a small canonical collection (inc. *Pro causa iniustae excommunications*) written, according to Zechiel-Eckes' analysis, at the end of the seventh century in Lombardy[76]. Mansuetus' letter was already known by Paul the Deacon who, however, had ascribed it to Damianus, bishop of Pavia (690/697 ca.-710/711) in his *Historia langobardorum* (VI, 4), even if, to do so, he had to force the chronology somewhat[77]. On the contrary, the whole surviving manuscript transmission testifies that Mansuetus was the only author of the letter to the emperor[78]. In this case, we can suppose that Angilbert deliberately used the example of Mansuetus to strengthen the political claims of Milan against Pavia: it should not be forgotten that during Damianus's rule, Pavia was removed from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Milan and subjected directly to the pope[79].

The oldest copy of Mansuetus' letter to Constantine IV can be assigned to the cultural milieu of the basilica of S. Ambrose: the manuscript Montpellier, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire, Faculté de Medicine, H 233 was written in the first third of the ninth century in a northern Italian hand with strong Rhaetian influences[80]. It is a miscellany of texts from Church councils and canons, including the *Concordia canonum* of Cresconius (full of marginal notes in a north-Italian hand on grammatical issues), the *Breviatio canonum* of Ferrandus of Carthago, the "Lombard" collection identified by Zechiel-Eckes and, at ff. 128*v*-133*r*, Mansuetus' letter and the *Expositio fidei* on the Creed. But that is not all. The Montpellier manuscript adds to the above-mentioned texts some excerpta from the Church Fathers (Augustine, Leo the Great, Gregory

[74] Ferrari, *Il nome di Mansueto*.
[75] Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova collectio*, 11, coll. 173-174, 203-206 (letter); 206-208 (Creed).
[76] Zechiel-Eckes, *Die Concordia canonum*, pp. 88-96; Ferrari, *Il nome di Mansueto*, p. 285.
[77] MGH, HL, VI 4.
[78] See Ferrari, *Il nome di Mansueto*, pp. 283-284, who returns the authorship of this letter to Mansuetus himself.
[79] Hoff, *Pavia und seiner Bischöfe*, pp. 56-72.
[80] Ferrari, *Il nome di Mansueto*, p. 286; Petoletti, *L'epitaffio di santa Marcellina*, pp. 176-177.

the Great) and, above all, at f. 128*rv* without any interruptions, the epitaph for Ambrose's sister Marcellina (inc. *Marcellina tuos cum vita resolveret artus*).

The cult of Marcellina flourished in Milan between the tenth and the eleventh century, when Archbishop Aribert of Intimiano revitalized the veneration for Ambrose's holy family[81]. The devotion for Marcellina, whose strong relationship with her brothers was emphasized by her burial in the same church of S. Ambrose, was already known at the end of the ninth century, as Archbishops Anselm II and Landulf I wanted to be buried «iuxta altare sancte Marcelline». According to Marco Petoletti, Marcellina's funerary inscription, now lost, was copied on the parchment of the exemplar of Montpellier H 233 from the epitaph itself[82], a scheme which fits perfectly with the programme promoted by Angilbert and by his learned circles of S. Ambrose, possibly were engaged in the archbishop's cultural and liturgical activity[83].

The same careful attention paid to Milanese epigraphy was also witnessed by the Irish master Dungal, who copied in his *Responsa contra Claudium* the epitaph Ambrose composed for his brother Satyrus (inc. *Uranio Satyro supremum frater honorem*), buried nearby the martyr Victor in the chapel of S. Vittore in Ciel d'Oro[84]. Dungal used this inscription, which now survives only in two manuscript copies, to disparage the iconoclastic theories spread by Claudius, bishop of Turin, and re-worked on his *Responsa* (whose first version was finished around 827) until the end of his life. In defending the possibility of venerating the holy images and the memories of martyrs, he made use of the epitaphs and the *tituli* he could easily trace around him but also in a broader cultural network whose borders need further investigation. The second witness of Satyrus' funerary inscription is the so-called *Sylloge circumpadana*, a section of the famous epigraphic sylloge copied in Vat. Pal. lat. 833 at Lorsch during the first third of the ninth century[85].

The collection assembled in Montpellier H 233 is an echo of the controversy over the cult of holy images, which had arisen amongst the bishops of northern Italy, and which would also reach the cultural melting pot of the basilica of S. Ambrose, so that in the same manuscript, at ff. 125*v*-128*r*, just before Marcellina's epitaph, two letters of Gregory the Great were added, in which he explained the importance of the cult of holy images for the edification of the faithfuls. Gregory's letters were addressed to Bishop Serenus of Marseille (*Reg.* XI, 10) and to a monk named Secondinus (*Reg.* IX, 148

[81] Petoletti, *Il patrimonio epigrafico*, pp. 535-536.
[82] Petoletti, *L'epitaffio di santa Marcellina*, pp. 171-172, 177.
[83] Literary activity by Irish masters in the shadow of S. Ambrose is well-attested during the pontificate of Tado (860-868). See the famous and somehow still controversial manuscript Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 363: Gavinelli, *Per un'enciclopedia*; Staubach, *Sedulius Scottus*; Tessera, *Milano, gli irlandesi*; Vocino, *A Peregrinus' vademecum*.
[84] Dungal, *Responsa contra Claudium*, p. 242.
[85] Tomea, *Ambrogio e i suoi fratelli*, pp. 201-210, and Petoletti, *L'epitaffio di santa Marcellina*, p. 173 on the manuscript transmission of the *Vita Satyri* (BHL 7510).

[147])[86], but the version copied in Montpellier H 233 was interpolated at the end of the eight century, and then reused in the *florilegium Hadrianeum*, compiled by order of Pope Hadrian I against the polemical thesis of Charlemagne's theologian about the council of Nicaea[87]. In 825, during the council of Paris, Louis the Pious agreed with the proposal of the pope, and the bishops who attended the assembly quoted Gregory's interpolated letters in their *Libellus synodalis*, so that these texts gained a certain renown in ecclesiastical circles[88]: for example, Dungal knew at least the interpolated letter to Secondinus, which he copied in his *Responsa*[89].

Thus, the transmission of texts copied in Montpellier H 233 in the learned milieu of S. Ambrose brings to light both the main themes and the main tools of episcopal culture in Milan in the age of Lothar I, which Angilbert and his scholars – perhaps Hildemar or some Irish master studying in the library of S. Ambrose – developed. This involved a keen interest for the tradition of council canons, even those of local importance (Cresconius, Ferrandus and the "Lombard" collection), the programmatic renewal of the cult of Ambrose and of his family (epitaphs of Marcellina and Satyrus), the theological controversies about the holy images (Gregory the Great's letters) and the memory of the ancient Milanese bishops as models for the defence of the orthodox faith (Mansuetus' letter). Angilbert II summarized all these aspects in the iconography and the inscriptions of the golden altar. Because of its hidden treasure of saints, the altar was both a valuable and a concrete answer to contemporary polemics on the cult of holy images, and a definitive assertion of the power gained by Milan and its Church thanks to Ambrose's legacy in the broader framework of the *regnum Italiae*.

In rebuilding and enhancing Milan, Angilbert's constant aim was to promote and integrate the strong local identity of Ambrose and his city within the new trends brought by scholars beyond the Alps, thanks to texts and tools coming from Pavia – but to the detriment of the latter. An interesting example is the miscellaneous manuscript Milan, Archivio del Capitolo della Basilica di S. Ambrogio, M 15, written in an excellent Caroline minuscule at Pavia in the second third of the ninth century, possibly by the same scribe who also compiled the well-known copy of *Historia Augusta*, Vat. Pal. lat. 899[90]. Very soon M 15 migrated to the monastery of S. Ambrose: while there, immediately after, a Milanese hand added to the martyrology of Bede the *obit* of Archbishop Peter, the founder of S. Ambrose monastery (f. 143*v*), and all the feast days of Milanese saints which were absent. At f. 140*v*, the addition explained that on

[86] MGH, Gregory the Great, *Registrum*, IX, 10, pp. 269-272; IX, 147, pp. 142-149; see Ricciardi, *Gli inganni della tradizione*.
[87] Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm*, pp. 42-44; Ballardini, *Fare immagini*, pp. 205-208.
[88] Council of Paris, 825: MGH, Conc. II/2, n. 44, pp. 473-551; Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm*, pp. 263-285.
[89] Ferrari, *"In Papia conveniant ad Dungalum"*, pp. 16-32; Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm*, pp. 288-294, 306-313.
[90] Ferrari, *La biblioteca del monastero*, pp. 84-107; Ferrari, *Libri strumentali*, p. 570, note 35.

25 March the *exaltatio* of Ambrose, Protasius and Gervasius was celebrated in the basilica of S. Ambrose («et in Mediolano exaltatio corpora *(sic)* sanctorum Protasii et Gervasii martirum et confessoris Ambrosii»)[91].

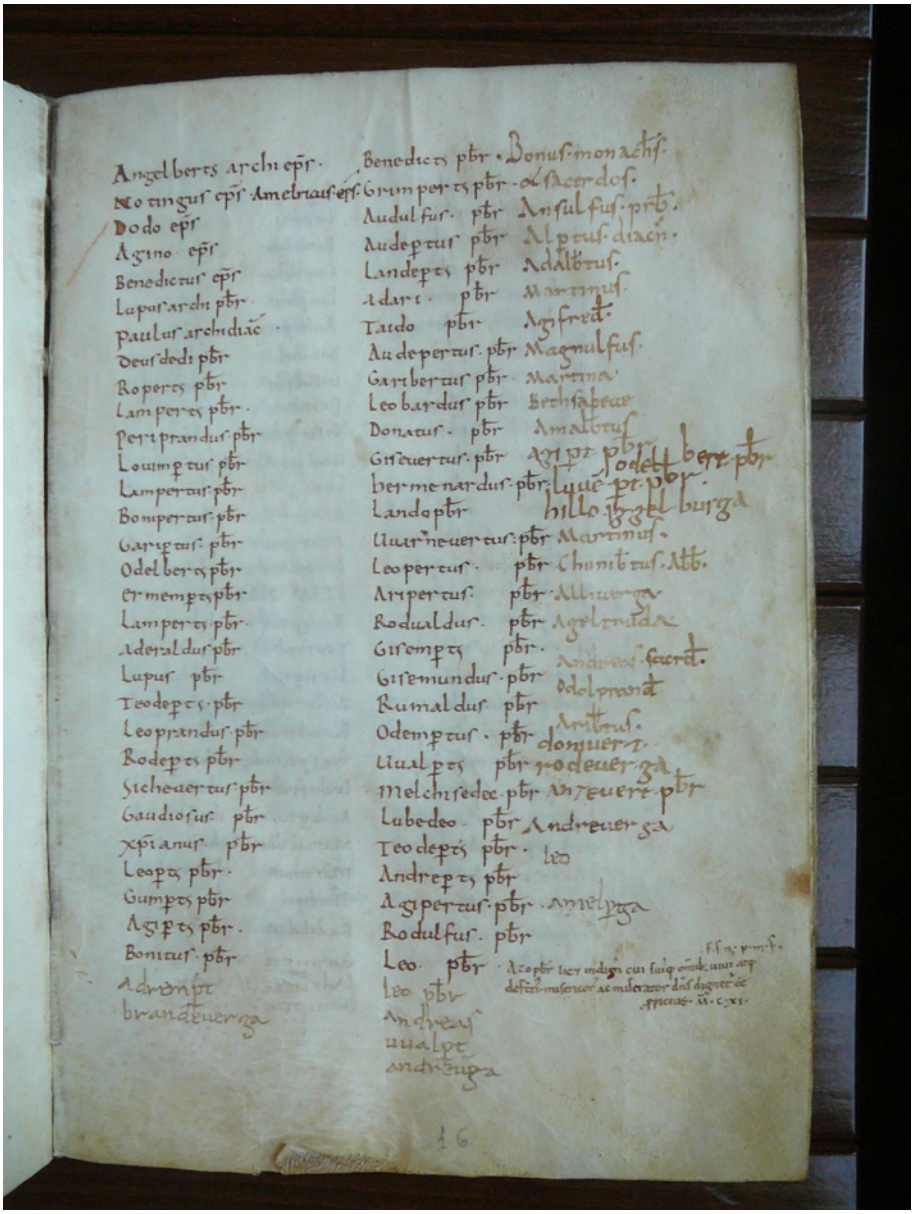
Yet, even if much remains to be studied with regard to Angilbert II's cultural strategies, some of the ideas and tools that he used to rebuild Milanese culture in Lothar's age can be detected from a close analysis of north-Italian surviving manuscripts, sometimes misdated or wrongly located – as in the case of Montpellier H 233 and Verona LXIII (61) – and their entanglements with contemporary testimonies, like Carolingian Milanese epigraphy or the golden altar in S. Ambrose. Otherwise, nothing can be said about the literary education of this clever man, who wanted to leave his name on the back of the golden altar – and on the holy vessels used for the liturgy in S. Ambrose, as attested by the Irish master of Bern 363 about a restored golden cup with Angilbert's name[92] – but had no epitaph at all in the church of S. Nazarus. A man who was able to call himself *humilis* and *indignus* in the *intitulatio* of his episcopal charters, but also *insignis*, *aegregius* and *inclitus* when he was openly honouring the patron saint Ambrose[93]. We have just a glimpse of his complex personality in an enigmatic marginal note added at f. 52*v* of the well-known Greek-Latin manuscript of Pauline epistles (Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, A 145b), where the Irish principal annotator close to the passage of 2 Cor 11,15-16 («autem ego autem non gravavi vos, sed cum essem astutus dolo vos accipi») wrote the lonely comment «Angelberti»[94]. Perhaps, this is only a slight hint that Angilbert II himself and Milanese episcopal culture could reveal many surprising perspectives in the future through a rigorous methodological re-examination of both the existing and possibly new evidence.

[91] Marco Petoletti suggests to me that the word *exaltatio* at f. 140*v* could have been rewritten on an erased previous *elevatio*. M 15 came from the monastic library to the canons' one, as the twelfth-century mark of ownership at f. 4*r* shows: «Liber canonicorum sancti Ambrosii» (Ferrari, *La biblioteca del monastero*, p. 86).

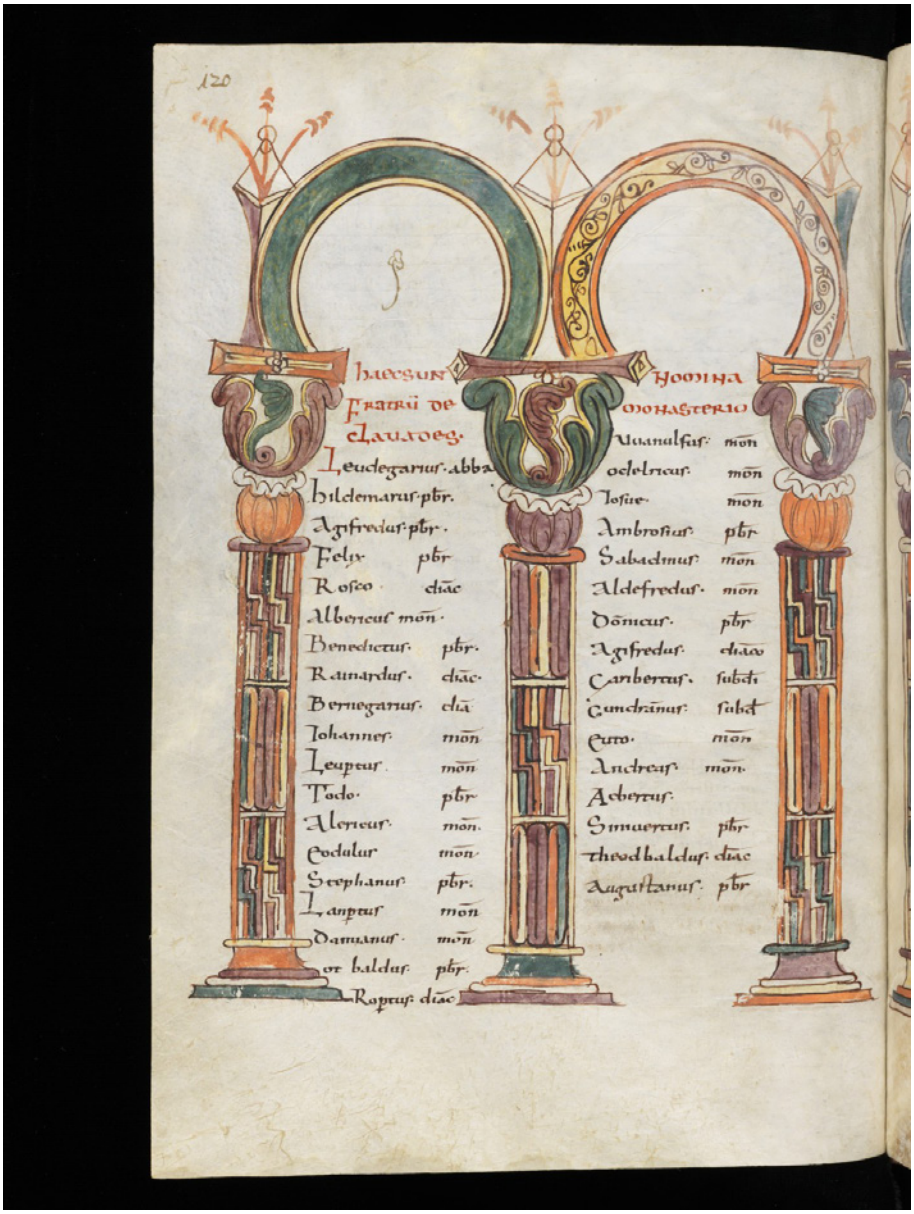
[92] Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 363, f. 197*r* (edition MGH, Poetae, 3, p. 236, and Petoletti, *Urbs nostra*, p. 31, see also here at p. 24); see also Tessera, *Milano, gli irlandesi*, p. 250.

[93] See i.e. MD I/1, nn. 58, 61, 73; CDL, n. 148; Zagni, *Gli atti arcivescovili*, pp. 11, 13, 26, 32.

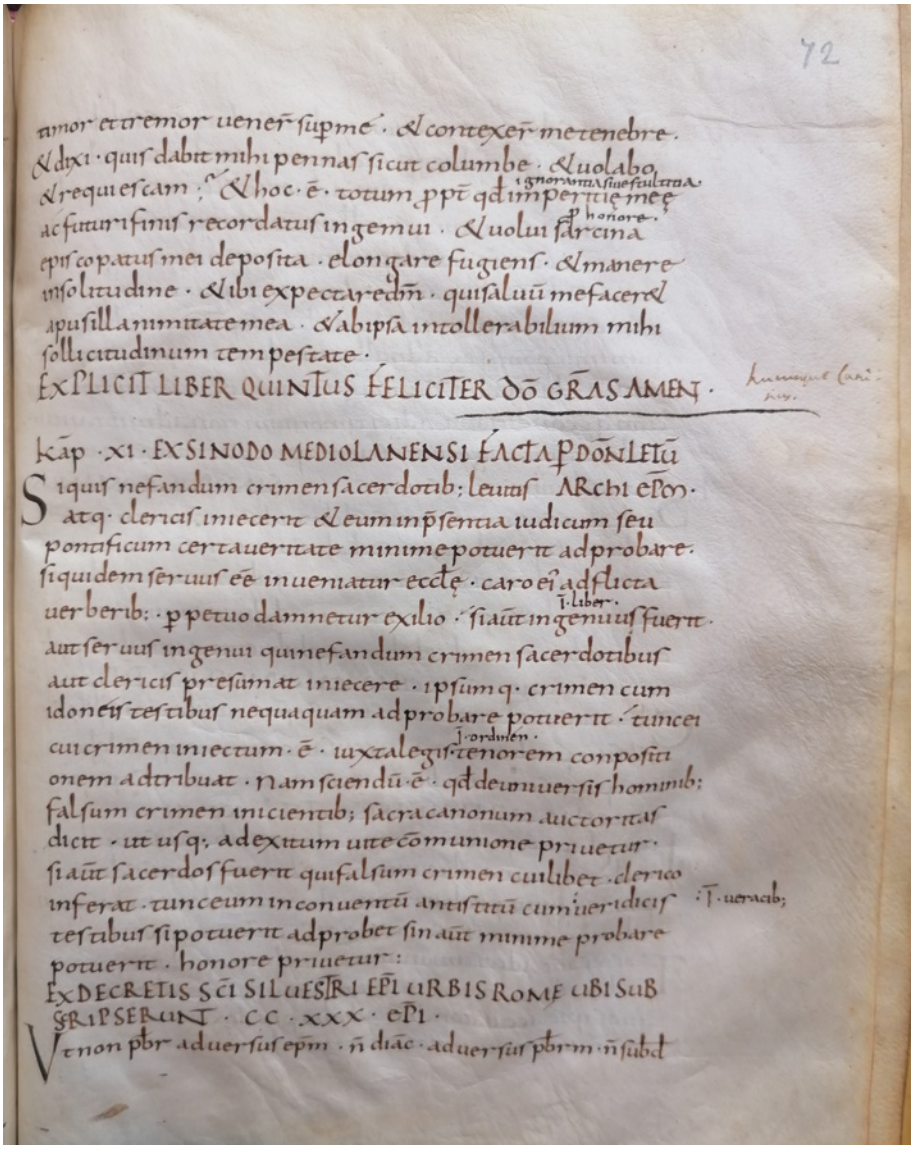
[94] Zimmer, *Glossae hibernicae*, p. XXXIV; Ferrari, *Manoscritti e cultura*, p. 261; Tessera, *Milano, gli irlandesi*, p. 252. Another marginal note at f. 107*r* of Bern 363 (*Angel*) has often been explained as a reference to a lost commentary on Paul's works written by Angilbert II, but Traube, *O Roma nobilis*, p. 351, had already proved that it refers to a lost commentary on Paul by Angelomus of Luxeuil.



1. Brescia, Biblioteca Queriniana, G VI 7, *Liber vitae* of S. Giulia/S. Salvatore, f. 16*r* (20*r*): the name of *Angilbert(u)s archiepiscopus* headed the list of bishops and clerks recorded in the memorial book.



2. St. Gallen, Stiftsarchiv (Abtei Pfäfers), Cod. Fab. 1, p. 120: *Liber viventium Fabariensis* naming the *confratres* of S. Peter of Civate. The priest *Todo* maybe can be identified with the Milanese Archbishop *Tado*, successor of Angilbertus.

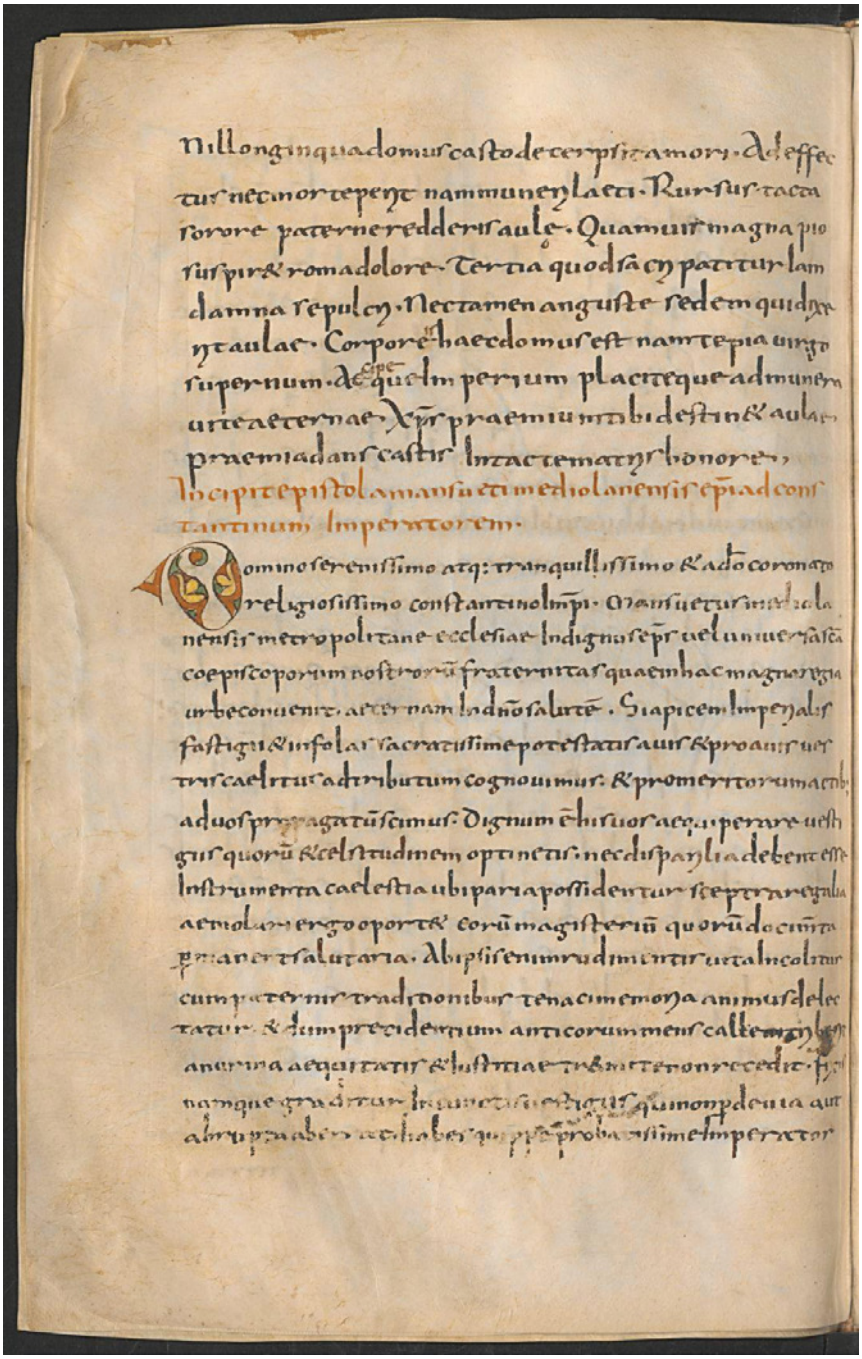


3. Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXIII (61), f. 72*r*: canonistic miscellany (IXex. century) with a conciliar canon of Archbishop Letus (751-755).

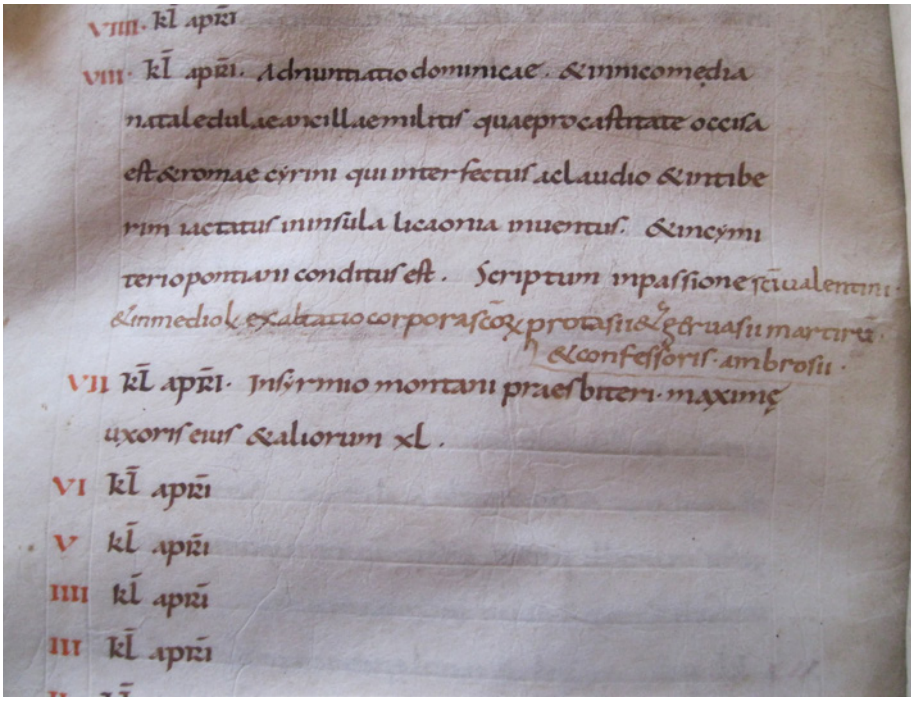
4. Leggiuno, church of Ss. Primus and Felicianus: dedicatory inscription by Erembertus mentioning the chief role played by Archbishop Angilbertus («ordinante domno Angilberto archiepiscopo»).

5. Milano, church of S. Ambrose, golden altar, back side: detail with Archbishop Angilbertus offering the altar to the patron saint Ambrose.

6. Milano, church of S. Ambrose, golden altar, Southern side: Bishop MANV (Mansuetus) portrayed amongst the saints Nazarus, Nabor and Martin of Tours.



7. Montpellier, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire, Faculté de Medicine, H 233, f. 128*v* (IX1/3century): epithaph of Santa Marcellina and *incipit* of Mansuetus' letter. SCDI Montpellier - Service photographique.



8. Milano, Archivio e Biblioteca Capitolare della Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio, M 15, f. 140*v* (IX2/3century): addition to the martyrology of Bede in Milanese hand mentioning the *exaltatio* of Ambrose, Protasius and Gervasius on 25 March («et in Mediolano exaltatio corpora *(sic)* sanctorum Protasii et Gervasii martirum et confessoris Ambrosii»).

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