

The politics of property in ninth-century Milan. Familial motives and monastic strategies in the village of Inzago

Ross Balzaretti

Abstract

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This paper takes a microhistorical approach to the history of the Anselmi, a family who lived in the village of Inzago (near Milan) in the latter part of the ninth century. The investigation is based on the evidence of a series of charters, preserved by the monastery of Sant'Ambrogio in Milan. These documents, in particular a testamentum drawn up for bishop Garibald of Bergamo in 870, allow us to make connections between the world of «high» politics - the activities of the Carolingians and their followers in Milan - and «low» politics - the activities of Anselm of Inzago in and around his village. For all of the people involved in making these documents the control for property, most especially land, could be a highly political issue. The second part of the paper attempts to explain why Anselm, Garibald and others acted as they did, both from the perspective of the family and that of the monks. However, there are severe limits to this reconstructive type of historical investigation, and the paper finishes with the observation that the nature of power in village societies remains obscure because the charters, while they hint that undercurrents of force may have been at work with the result that a castle was built in Inzago in the tenth century, can only ever present a very partial picture of a complex reality.

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ROSS BALZARETTI

THE POLITICS OF PROPERTY IN NINTH-CENTURY MILAN

FAMILIAL MOTIVES AND MONASTIC STRATEGIES IN THE VILLAGE OF INZAGO

Dedicated to the memory of Edoardo Grendi,
who died in Nottingham on 3 May 1999.

The context of politics

Milan has a special place in Carolingian history. As a metropolitan see, Charlemagne included it in the *testamentum* of 812 which Einhard preserved in the emperor's *vita*¹. Charles had first visited the city some thirty one years earlier in 781 on his way back from a visit to Rome, where Charles' young son Pippin had been baptised by Pope Hadrian². When the king and his queen Hildegard reached Milan they had their newborn daughter Gisla baptised by Archbishop Thomas³. The ceremony most probably took place in S. Giovanni alle Fonti, the great font of S. Tecla (*basilica Nova*) which can still be viewed under the present Duomo, which was the very font where Ambrose himself had baptised Augustine (and which he may have built)⁴. We cannot know what impression Milan made

¹ Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, ch. 33, ed. G. Waitz, Hannover, 1911 (*M.G.H., Scriptores rer. Germ. in us. schol.*, [25]), ch. 33; English translation and commentary by P. Dutton in *Charlemagne's Courtier. The Complete Einhard*, Peterborough (Ontario), 1998, p. 38; M. Innes, *Charlemagne's Will : Piety, Politics and the Imperial Succession*, in *English Historical Review*, 112, 1997, p. 833-855.

² *Annales regni Francorum*, ed. F. Kurze, Hannover, 1895 (*M.G.H., Scriptores rer. Germ. in us. schol.*, [10]), ad a. 781. The Revised Annals refer to this font as «sacred» (probably a formulaic usage).

³ J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques. Sépultures, listes épiscopales et culte des évêques en Italie du Nord des origines au X^e siècle*, Rome, 1988 (*BEFAR*, 268), p. 90.

⁴ Augustine, *Confessions*, IX. 6; R. Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals*, Berkeley, 1983, p. 74-77 and N. B. McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan. Church and Court in a Christian Capital*, Berkeley, 1994, p. 28-29. For a new interpretation based on recent

on the king but the associations which it may well have conjured up are obvious. However, the new spiritual relationship between the royal couple and Archbishop Thomas, which Gisla's baptism had brought into being, did not last long, as both he and Hildegard died in 783⁵.

Charlemagne did not forget Milan even though he never went there again. Over the next few years he and the new archbishop, a Frank called Peter, founded a new monastery alongside the old basilica in which Ambrose himself was buried⁶. It was the first Carolingian monastic foundation south of the Alps. By 789 the new community was firmly established under its new abbot, significantly named Benedict⁷. In April of the following year Charles issued his only diploma in favour of the new *monasterium sancti Ambrosii* in which he confirmed the fact of its establishment and stressed the need to follow the Rule of Benedict, particularly with regard to the election of a new abbot⁸. Archbishop Peter was a loyal Carolingian servant, who seems to have played a significant part in Charlemagne's monastic reforms. Alcuin praised his special piety in

excavations see S. Lusuardi Siena, *Il complesso episcopale. Il gruppo cattedrale*, in M. Rizzi (ed.), *La città e la sua memoria. Milano e la tradizione di sant'Ambrogio*, Milan, 1997, p. 36-39, especially Fig. 8 on p. 38-39.

⁵ For Thomas' career see J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques...*, p. 89-92. For Hildegard see J. L. Nelson, *Women at the Court of Charlemagne: A Case of Monstrous Regiment?*, in J. Carmi Parsons (ed.), *Medieval Queenship*, Stroud, 1993, p. 43-61 at p. 52-53.

⁶ J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques...*, p. 93; R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose: the acquisition, organization and exploitation of landed property in north-western Lombardy by the monastery of Sant'Ambrogio Milan, c. 780-1000*, University of London unpublished PhD thesis, 1989 [henceforth Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*], p. 130-132. A revised version of the thesis is forthcoming as *The Lands of Saint Ambrose. Monks and Society in Early Medieval Milan*, Turnhout, 2000. All references in this article are to the thesis.

⁷ *Il Museo diplomatico dell'Archivio di Stato di Milano* [henceforth MDM], ed. A. R. Natale, Milan, 1970, document 30, October 789. This controversial charter of foundation is discussed more fully by A. M. Ambrosioni, *Per una storia del monastero di Sant'Ambrogio*, in *Archivio ambrosiano*, 30, 1980 and more recently by the same author *L'altare e le due comunità santambrosiane*, in C. Capponi (ed.), *L'altare d'oro di Sant'Ambrogio*, Milan, 1996, p. 57-71 at p. 58 (with full references); G. Rossetti, *Il monastero di S. Ambrogio nei primi due secoli di vita: I fondamenti patrimoniali e politici della sua fortuna*, in G. Picasso (ed.), *Il monastero di S. Ambrogio nel Medioevo*, Milan, 1988, p. 20-34; and R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 49-53.

⁸ MDM 31, April 790 (and M.G.H., *Diplomata Karolini Aevi*, I, n. 164). R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 132, 306.

three letters written in the 790s and Peter duly attended the great Council of Frankfurt in 794⁹.

Neither Peter nor Charles was particularly generous with grants of property to the new abbot and his monks, and as a result their community seems to have been very small and probably fairly poor at this time. Peter died in 806. The new archbishop, Odelbert, began his episcopate with a grant to a new abbot of Sant'Ambrogio, Gaudentius (Benedict had died between 790 and 806)¹⁰. In his *praeceptum* the bishop gave Abbot Gaudentius the oratory of San Vincenzo in Prata, about 1km south-west of the basilica church of Sant'Ambrogio, together with his own estate there. Although it was a lifetime grant to the abbot personally, Odelbert nonetheless required that Gaudentius should make sure that the monks of *monasterium nostri* sang the divine office (*versi*) day and night¹¹. At this period the Sant'Ambrogio monks must have gained what status they had in local society from their community's association with Charlemagne and Ambrose rather than from their more mundane property interests, which were as yet hardly developed. This status could only have been enhanced further when Charlemagne's son Pippin, King of Italy, was buried in the basilica in 810¹².

The fortunes of the community soon wavered once Louis the Pious took over the empire upon Charles' death in January 814. In March of that year the monks received a gift from a man called Rotfred in the Valtellina¹³. The timing of this gift may be significant for the news of Charlemagne's death had probably only recently reached Milan and it may well be that the man making this grant, about whom we know very little, had decided to throw in his lot with Charles' grandson Bernard by patronising the church where Bernard's father Pippin was buried. Milan quickly became a centre of support for Bernard and when he revolted against Louis it was with the

⁹ M.G.H., *Epist. Karol. Aevi*, II, n^o 126, 312 and 317.

¹⁰ MDM 38, January 806, an original.

¹¹ Odelbert has usually been seen as very favourable to Carolingian reforms by virtue of his supposed authorship of a letter which he sent in reply to Charlemagne's circular letter about baptism. In this he supported the Roman style of baptism rather than the Ambrosian. However, S. A. Keefe, *The claim of authorship in Carolingian Baptismal expositions: the case of Odilbert of Milan*, in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter. Internationaler Kongreß der Monumenta Germaniae historica, München, 16.-19. September 1986*, V, Hannover, 1988 (M.G.H., *Schriften*, 33-v), p. 385-402, has shown that he was not the author.

¹² J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques...*, p. 93.

¹³ MDM 45.

help of Archbishop Anselm I¹⁴. Bernard died of his injuries in 817 and he too may have been buried in the Ambrosian basilica¹⁵. The fact that this church was becoming the mausoleum for the Carolingian Kings of Italy cannot have been lost on the monks and the collapse of Bernard's rebellion and the brutal manner of its suppression may well have plunged Sant'Ambrogio into some sort of crisis. It may be no coincidence that Rotfred's grant was the last the monks were to see for a full twenty years.

The precarious political situation of the 820s may well explain why we know so very little about the monastic community at that time. In 822 its first recorded *prepositus* took its first recorded dispute to court¹⁶. This case, which deals with the personal status of some monastic dependents in a village far away in the Valtellina, suggests that the monastery already had land in the Valtellina. How it got this land is unknown (perhaps it came from Rotfred?) but the strategic significance of this Alpine valley should be borne in mind at this point in time. In 826 the first purchase by the community is recorded (land in Biandronno near Lago di Varese)¹⁷. In 830 we have the first document for the village of Cologno Monzese in which the monastery appears already owning land there¹⁸. The number of charters for Sant'Ambrogio in this decade is thus very small (two). It is quite possible that it became politically dangerous to endow this community in the light of Bernard's rebellion and Archbishop Anselm's involvement in it.

¹⁴ Andrea Bergomatis *Historia*, ed. G. Waitz, Berlin, 1879 (*M.G.H., Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum saec. VI-IX*), chs 5-6; R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 146; T. F. X. Noble, *The revolt of King Bernard of Italy in 817 : its causes and consequences*, in *Studi medievali*, 3^d s., 15, 1974, p. 315-324; J. Jarnut, *Kaiser Ludwig der Fromme und König Bernhards von Italien. Der Versuch einer Rehabilitierung*, *ibid.*, 30, 1989, p. 637-648; Id., *Ludwig der Fromme, Lothar I. und das Regnum Italiae*, in P. Godman and R. Collins (ed.), *Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious*, Oxford, 1990, p. 349-362 at 350; P. Depreux, *Das königtum Bernhards von Italien und sein Verhältnis zum Kaisertum*, in *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 72, 1992, p. 1-24; J. L. Nelson, *The Frankish Kingdoms, 814-898 : the West*, in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, II, Cambridge, 1995 [henceforth *NCMH II*], p. 110-141 at p. 112-115.

¹⁵ J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques...*, p. 94 n. 268 is rightly suspicious of the transmission of the tradition of Bernard's burial. However, the fact of it is quite plausible given the wider political context.

¹⁶ *MDM* 47.

¹⁷ *MDM* 50.

¹⁸ *MDM* 52. G. Rossetti, *Società e istituzioni nel contado lombardo durante il Medioevo. Cologno Monzese. Secoli VIII-X*, Milan, 1968, p. 77. Cologno is briefly discussed by C. J. Wickham, *Rural society in Carolingian Europe*, in *NCMH II*, p. 510-537 at p. 523-526 and more fully in R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 164-173.

Lothar's activities in this area provide the political context for the next couple of decades, when Sant'Ambrogio began to acquire very much more land¹⁹. He was in Italy continuously between 822 and 824 (along with Wala)²⁰. He issued his famous reforming Olonna capitulary in 825 and two other similar capitularies in 832²¹. These highlight the extent of violent disorder in northern Italy at this time. By this time Archbishop Anselm had been succeeded by Angilbert I (822-823), who may have rented out monastic lands for his own benefit²². It is perfectly plausible that the activities of Archbishops Anselm and Angilbert I helped to provide the immediate context for Lothar's reforming capitularies, as these included explicit instructions to the kings' *missi* to investigate the state of monastic properties. After a vacancy between October 823 and June 824, Angilbert II became archbishop. He lasted until 859. Angilbert II was clearly a major player in Lothar's government and it would seem that Lothar's substantial grant made to the monastery in 835 and the subsequent benefactions by aristocratic followers of Lothar may well be due to Angilbert's patronage²³. He commissioned and donated the famous golden altar with its scenes from the lives of Christ and Ambrose in or around 835²⁴. The 830s saw considerable efforts to reform monastic life within the archdiocese in which Angilbert was certainly a prime mover²⁵. However, we should note that for the first ten years of his pontificate, between 824 and 835, Angilbert seems to have been hardly involved at all with Sant'Ambrogio. Why this should be requires further research.

As is well known some significant pieces of legislation were produced early in the reign of Louis II (850-875) with the help of Angilbert (the proceedings of the synod of Pavia in 850 and various capitularies)²⁶. After

¹⁹ R. Balzaretto, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 147-150.

²⁰ J. Jarnut, *Ludwig der Fromme, Lothar I. und das Regnum Italiae...*, p. 353-355.

²¹ C. J. Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy. Central Power and Local Society 400-1000*, Basingstoke, 1981, p. 53-54.

²² G. Rossetti, *Società e istituzioni nel contado lombardo...*, p. 81f.

²³ A. M. Ambrosioni, *Gli arcivescovi nella vita di Milano*, in *Milano e I Milanesi prima del Mille. X Congresso internazionale di studi sull'alto medioevo*, I, Spoleto, 1986, p. 85-118.

²⁴ *L'altare d'oro di Sant'Ambrogio...* cit. n. 7, produced after a major restoration of the altar supersedes all earlier publications on the subject.

²⁵ F. Lo Monaco, *Aganone di Bergamo e la Lombardia lotaringia*, in *Archivio storico bergamasco*, 1, 1981, p. 9-24.

²⁶ *Capitularia regum francorum*, II, ed. A. Boretius and V. Krause, Hannover, 1897 (*M.G.H., Legum sectio*, 2), n^o 208-219, p. 78-98; C. J. Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy...*, p. 60-62; G. Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy*, Cambridge,

Angilbert died in 859 the see of Milan was vacant until November 860 when Tado took over. It is worth noting that there are no charters in the Sant Ambrogio archive for this period. Tado died in 868 and was succeeded by Anspert, who himself died in 881. Of these men, Anspert was the one most associated with Louis. In 857 Louis had effectively pardoned Anspert's murderous brother Ansprand at Anspert's request²⁷. In 873 the Sant'Ambrogio monks received grants of immunity and protection from Louis at the request of his wife Angilberga²⁸. In August 875 Anspert engineered the burial of Louis in the basilica of Sant'Ambrogio, as recorded in a striking passage in Andrew of Bergamo's history :

Moreover it followed that in the month of August Emperor Louis died, on the day before the Ides of August [12th], in the territory of Brescia [875]²⁹. Indeed Antonius bishop of Brescia took his body and placed it in a tomb in the church of Holy Mary, where the body of Saint Filastrus lies³⁰. Archbishop Anspert of Milan sent him his archdeacon so that the body should be returned; this he refused to do. Then he sent Bishop Garibald of Bergamo and Bishop Benedict of Cremona with their priests and all the clergy so that the archbishop's will be done. Indeed the bishops did it and they carried him away. They dragged him across the land and took him to Milan where, after a five day journey, they interred him magnificently in a sarcophagus, with every honour, [singing] hymns and psalms to God. I speak the truth in Christ : for I was there and I took some part and I walked with the bearers from the river Oglio to the River Adda. Therefore his body was taken into the city with great honour and much weeping, and they buried him in the church of the blessed confessor Ambrose on the seventh day. He ruled 26 years [that is 6 while his father was alive, and 20 after his death]³¹.

One of the bishops who brought Louis II's body to rest near that of

1989 (original Italian edn. 1979), p. 133-134; P. Delogu, *Lombard and Carolingian Italy*, in *NCMH* II, p. 290-319 at p. 310-314.

²⁷ *Ludovici II Diplomata*, ed. K. Wanner, Rome, 1994 (*Fonti per la storia dell'Italia medievale. Antiquitates*, 3), n. 25.

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, n. 60.

²⁹ *Annales Bertiniani*, ed. G. Waitz, Hannover, 1883 (*M.G.H., Scriptores rer. Germ. in us. schol.*, [5]), sub anno 875 (English translation and commentary by J.-L. Nelson, *The Annals of St. Bertin*, Manchester, 1991, p. 187); *Annales Fuldenses* ed. F. Kurze, Hannover, 1891 (*M.G.H., Scriptores rer. Germ. in us. schol.*, [7]), ad a. 875 (English translation and commentary by T. Reuter, *The Annals of Fulda*, Manchester, 1992, p. 76).

³⁰ Bishop from 863-898 (J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques...*, p. 244-46).

³¹ Andrea Bergomatis *Historia*, ch. 18, my translation; R. Balzaretti, *Charlemagne in Italy*, in *History Today*, 46-2, 1996, p. 28-34, at p. 33-34.

Ambrose in the church of Sant'Ambrogio was Bishop Garibald of Bergamo. As we shall see Garibald provides a vital link with the history of the village of Inzago, ostensibly far removed from the world of high politics described so far. To understand how and why he was important we have to retrace our steps back to the 840s, when the Inzago dossier begins.

Anselm of Inzago

This paper takes as its real starting point the activities of a single man, Anselm of Inzago³². Anselm is recorded in (at most) seven surviving charters, and at least three others which we know to have been lost³³. In these documents we can trace only the barest threads of Anselm's life history. He first appears on 27th April 840, witnessing a document of gift drawn up in Ghisalba, in the territory of the *civitas* of Bergamo³⁴. If we presume he was then at least 20 years old, he would have been born around 820. Subsequent charters indicate that he died sometime between March 870 and March 874 probably in his early fifties³⁵. Thus he was a near contemporary of Louis II. Anselm married a woman called Gottenia in or before 855 and they had at least two children, Gundelasius and Gariberga. As part of their marital arrangement Anselm had received property from Gottenia's father Garibald as dotal gift but he also bought some houses and land in Inzago from Garibald (and his son Anselm), which Garibald had obtained from Wago of Gessate and the heirs of Wago's dead brother Rahunbert. Anselm paid 6 pounds of coined silver for this, suggesting that he was a fairly rich man. All these events are recorded in a charter which is particularly interesting because the wives of both Garibald and his son Anselm, Tadeltruda and Wadelberga witnessed it («*per consensu et largietate conjugii noster*»), a rarity in this and most other charter collections³⁶. In 856 he probably witnessed an exchange of property between the abbot of Sant'Ambrogio and the abbess of San Vittore in

³² «Microhistory», as proposed by E. Grendi, *Micro-analisi e storia sociale*, in *Quaderni storici*, 35, 1977, p. 506-520, and taken up by Carlo Ginzburg and many others, is a difficult study for the early medieval period but not, I feel, impossible. What follows is an attempt.

³³ R. Balzaretto, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 173-183.

³⁴ MDM 66. Our man «signed» as «*Anselmo de Andiciago in hanc donatione rogatus Siciperga testis subscripsi*». However, because the surviving version of this charter is an authenticated contemporary copy, his actual signature is not preserved on this occasion.

³⁵ He may have been considerably older.

³⁶ MDM 93. Some parallels in P. Skinner, *Women, wills and wealth in medieval southern Italy*, in *Early Medieval Europe*, 2, 1993, p. 133-152.

Meda³⁷. In January 858 he bought property in Gessate from Wago, for 40 solidi³⁸. The boundary clauses in this charter record that he already had land in this village. In December 859 he bought more land, in Comazzo, from Ermempert of Ello³⁹. In February 865 he may have witnessed a gift of land made by Sigeratus, a vassal of Louis II, to Sant'Ambrogio⁴⁰. Sometime before March 870 he had sold his property to Garibald, bishop of Bergamo⁴¹, and Garibald used it to institute a *xenodochium* in Inzago over which Anselm was to be *rector*. Anselm died between March 870 and April 874⁴².

Certain facts are worth stressing at this point. Anselm existed in a world where he came into contact with charters and it is for this reason alone that he has a history. But this contact is all that we know about him and we have to write this history on these documents' «terms»⁴³. Anselm witnessed the transactions the charters record and he was able to endorse the record by signing his own name (definitely in 840, 855 and 858, and possibly in 856 and 865). Being a witness was a result of status within his world and helped him to maintain that status⁴⁴. He established himself further in local society by travelling around. His family home was in Inzago, within the jurisdiction of Milan, and as we might expect he witnessed charters in nearby Gorgonzola, which was the centre of the parish (*pieve*). However, he witnessed charters further afield, in Ghisalba *finibus Bergomense* and (perhaps) in Milan and Pavia. As witness to property transactions he came into contact with many other people : other witnesses and the men whose transactions he witnessed. I have reproduced here all the witness lists of the ninth-century charters for Inzago and Gessate (see Appendix 1). What do these lists tell us about Anselm's friends and acquaintances? The honest answer is : very little, because in none of

³⁷ MDM 95. The signature is simply *Autelmo*. The identification of Anselm's signature in the witness list of this charter is therefore speculative.

³⁸ MDM 99.

³⁹ MDM 103.

⁴⁰ MDM 115. The signature is simply *Anselmo*.

⁴¹ MDM 120.

⁴² MDM 125 records that Gottenia was widowed.

⁴³ This issue is considered further by A. Petrucci, *The Illusion of Authentic History : Documentary Evidence*, in his *Writers and Readers in Medieval Italy. Studies in the History of Written Culture*, trans. into English by C. Radding, Yale, 1995, p. 236-250. I take a less negative view of the historical value of charters than Petrucci does.

⁴⁴ P. Skinner, *Family Power in Southern Italy. The Duchy of Gaeta and its Neighbours, 850-1139*, Cambridge, 1995, is very sensitive to the social meaning of witnessing (e.g. at p. 120-125).

these charters was Anselm the actor. His purchases of 855 and 859 were conceived as sales made by Garibald and Ermempert to Anselm and the witnesses are likely to be the associates of these two men rather than Anselm. This very brief analysis of the witness lists tells us that we will not get very far if we consider Anselm as an individual agent. Another more productive approach is to see him in the context of his kin group.

Anselm's family

Even less is known about those related to Anselm than about the man himself. All we know of his father Agemund is that he passed property to his son Anselm by inheritance : we cannot even be sure that he lived in Inzago as Anselm did. Anselm's mother is completely anonymous. His wife Gottenia fairs rather better, appearing in three charters. She is first recorded in 855, as we have seen, receiving property from her father on her marriage. In 870 Bishop Garibald arranged for her to continue to live in the *sala* in Inzago (the marital home) if it was not convenient for her to live with her son, Gundelasius⁴⁵. All the property which Anselm had received on their marriage now passed to her on his death. All this was a lifetime interest only. In March 874 she sold property in *Scosse et Villa* to Gundelasius. On her death her lifetime property passed to Gundelasius by inheritance. We do not know when she died.

Anselm and Gottenia had at least two children. Their daughter Gariberga entered the church as *monacha* at the nunnery of Santa Maria Wigilinda in Milan⁴⁶. Nevertheless, she retained a lifetime interest in various farms. She appears for the last time as abbess of Santa Maria Wigilinda, in a charter of 903 with which Archbishop Andreas of Milan endowed her community. We do not know when she died but it is clear that upon her death her lifetime interest passed to Gundelasius as rector of

⁴⁵ MDM 120 : «*usufructuario nomine ad inhabitandum et resedendum, si ei cum filio suo non convenerit habitare*».

⁴⁶ This church, now no longer standing, was adjacent to the Duomo *infra civitatem* (in the modern via S. Radegonda). It was ostensibly named after Vigelinda, daughter of King Perctarit and wife of Grimoald (662-671) [Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, VI, 2], but this association is merely traditional (J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques...*, p. 93, G. Vigotti, *La diocesi di Milano alla fine del secolo XIII*, Rome, 1974, p. 84). In 870 Alcharda was abbess (MDM 120). In 903 Gariberga was abbess (*Codex diplomaticus Langobardiae* [henceforth CDL], ed. G. Porro Lambertenghi, Turin, 1873, n. 403, 11 January 903. This text survived in the archive of Santa Radegonda – as Santa Maria Wigilinda became – only as a copy, although probably a contemporary one : L. Zagni, *Note sulla documentazione arcivescovile milanese nel secolo X*, in *Studi di storia medioevale e di diplomatica*, 3, 1978, p. 5-71.

the Inzago *xenodochium*. Gundelasius was also in the church : he is recorded as cleric in 870, subdeacon in 874 and rector of the Inzago *xenodochium* thereafter⁴⁷. As rector he was custodian for various properties which he received from other members of the family. In 870 Bishop Garibald of Bergamo gave to the *xenodochium* land in *Scosse et Villa* and Ello, which he had obtained from Anselm. Gundelasius' clerical status was specifically highlighted by the bishop in the following carefully worded sanction directed at the Milanese church and its main monastery :

*Nam si, quod non credo, numquam tempore pontifex sancte mediolanensis ecclesie aut abbas eiusdem monasterii adversus eundem Gundelasium clericum egerit, dicendum quod ipse Gundelassius in eodem monasterio sancti Ambrosii monachice videndum traditus, aut ibi monachus fuisset, et ibi per vim replicatus fuerit, tunc senedochium ipsum cum omni integritate sua, quod in eodem contuli monasterium, deveniat in iura et potestate monasterii omnium apostolorum et confessoris Silvestri situm Nonantolas, faciatque inde abbas ipsius monasterii, si hec contigerint, canonice quod voluerit, et iam dicta elimosina, luminaria et officium eiusdem basilice ut supra adimpleat*⁴⁸.

In March 874, after Anselm had died, Gundelasius bought, from his mother Gottenia, further land in *Scosse et Villa*. He may have obtained Gariberger's property sometime after 903. Upon his death (the date of which is once again unknown) all these properties were to pass to Milanese monasteries : Santi Protasio and Gervasio, San Vincenzo and Sant'Ambrogio. Thus it is the two children Gariberger and Gundelasius, even though the latter a *clericus* rather than a *monachus*, who were the key figures in the transmission of the property of the *Anselmi* family to the main monasteries of the Milanese church.

⁴⁷ A man called Gundelasio witnessed both charters drawn up in 848 at the monastery of Sant'Ambrogio (see p. 764 below and Appendix 1). Given that the property involved was in Gessate and Inzago this might well be Anselm's son. The case in favour of this identification may appear strong because the name Gundelasio is rare in charters from either Milan or Bergamo. However, our Gundelasio would not have been old enough to witness charters in 848 if his father had been born around 820.

⁴⁸ *MDM* 120 : «For if, which I do not believe, the pontiff of the holy Milanese church or the abbot of that same monastery should at any time act against the same Gundelasius, saying that Gundelasius transferred himself to live as a monk into the same monastery of Sant'Ambrogio, or that he had been a monk there, and was reduced [to that position] by force, then that hostel with all its property, which that same monastery was to have, should pass into the jurisdiction and power of the monastery of all the Apostles and the confessor Silvester at Nonantola, and that the abbot of that monastery, if this they agree, should do as he wishes according to the canons and arrange the alms, lighting and offices at that basilica as above.»

These events were overseen by Bishop Garibald and his brother Autprand. We know quite a bit about Garibald from a run of charters preserved in the archives of Bergamo⁴⁹. He first appeared as bishop of Bergamo in a charter of 867 and died sometime after February 888, and before April 896. His brother Autprand was a royal vassal, who received property from Charles the Fat⁵⁰. Garibald and Autprand were in fact related to Anselm of Inzago. In Garibald's *testamentum* of March 870 the bishop makes a gift «*pro remedio anime meae et iam dicto Antelmi et parentibus nostris*», the first and only time we are told of this kin relationship. We do not know how they were related but with this link established we can now begin to understand these charters as family history.

The Inzago dossier

Before commenting on whether I think the evidence presented so far tells us anything much about familial motives there is of course one other crucial point to consider : the form and language of the charters themselves⁵¹. How a particular charter was produced and has survived is certainly very important in establishing its status as historical evidence. Of the twenty six Inzago charters all but four (or perhaps five), survive as originals. By this term I mean simply that the surviving artefact, the writing on it and the events recorded are all contemporaneous or very nearly contemporaneous. I make no presumption as is very often done that the information recorded is necessarily true because the charter is an

⁴⁹ M. Cortesi (dir.), *Le pergamene degli archivi di Bergamo a. 740-1000*, Bergamo, 1988, n^o 21-23, 25, 27-29, 31-32, 197.

⁵⁰ *Le pergamene... di Bergamo*, n^o 196-197 (both July 883). In these two charters Charles the Fat granted the small monastery of S. Michele in Cerreto to Autprand for his lifetime. Upon his death it was to pass to the church of Bergamo. If Autprand did not administer it properly it was to pass to the church of Milan. The grant was made «*qui cottidie pro nobis nostrisque progenitoribus ac propinquis et pro iam memoratuo [?] Autprando fideli nostro*». In the second charter Charles donated the monastery to the church of Bergamo on the petition of Bishop Garibald («*fidelissimus noster*»). The two brothers were clearly operating together for the sake of their souls in this instance.

⁵¹ The language of these charters is worth only brief comment here because it is hardly distinctive. There is some language of friendship («*dilectissimus atque amantissimus*» in 840, «*dilectus*» in 870) and of familial endorsement («*per consensu et largietate conjungi [sic] noster*» in 855 and again in 870) in several of the charters. There are also some interesting statements made by individuals which may suggest that the monastery was entering into a relationship with the individuals as much as with his or her family (see note 76 below).

original. As in many other charter collections, the documents in the Sant'Ambrogio corpus which are most commonly preserved in later copies are wills (*testamenta*), diplomas (*precepta*) and investitures (*vestiturae*), and these often reveal themselves to have been interpolated at some later date. Indeed the Inzago charters which survive as copies are not those which record simple sales or exchanges of properties in a single place but rather the documents which deal with the transfer of many properties, often in a *post mortem* context. But, although the diplomatic credentials of the will of Bishop Garibald of Bergamo and, to a lesser extent, the *vestitura* presided over by Abbot Peter seem presentable, these texts do pose significant problems of interpretation.

Recent work has been telling us that charters are not exactly the transparent texts they may once have seemed⁵². We have always known that they only report selected events at best and that compiling a historical narrative from them involves much inference which may easily misconstrue what really happened. But if this narrative creation is done without explicit consideration of the charters' form and language the pitfalls of reconstruction are all the greater. As we should expect in this region at this date each charter takes a fairly standardised form⁵³. In this instance the range of such forms is limited to two main types of charter: the *cartola vinditionis* in the ninth century and the *commutatio* in the tenth (see Appendix II). These two forms are standard ones, characteristic of Lombard law and long in use in this area⁵⁴. In the Inzago dossier these two types are separated by Garibald's long *testamentum* and an investiture (*breve vestitura*) in the 870s, and a (fake) archiepiscopal *preceptum* of 893⁵⁵. When these various types of text are placed in chronological sequence they readily suggest a simple developmental pattern of events: acquisition of

⁵² B. H. Rosenwein, *The Family Politics of Berengar I, King of Italy (888-924)*, in *Speculum*, 71, 1996, p. 247-289 and W. Davies and P. Fouracre (ed.), *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1995.

⁵³ C. Violante, *Atti privati e storia medioevale. Problemi di metodo*, Rome, 1982, is the classic Italian discussion; R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 20-63 deals with the Sant'Ambrogio charters; Id., *The monastery of Sant'Ambrogio and dispute settlement in early medieval Milan*, in *Early Medieval Europe*, 3, 1994, p. 1-18 considers court cases.

⁵⁴ The *cartola commutationis aut vinditionis* is discussed by Liutprand (*Liutprandi leges* 116 issued in 729) and Ratchis (*Ratchis leges* 8 issued in 746); respectively *Le leggi dei Longobardi. Storia, memoria e diritto di un popolo germanico*, ed. and trans. C. Azzara and S. Gasparri, Milan, 1992, p. 184-186, 240.

⁵⁵ *MDM* 157.

property by the monastery (by purchase), formal «possession-taking» of it (by «investiture»), followed by consolidation and a certain amount of reorganization (by exchange). It is a logically consistent pattern and one which scholars have found all over Europe in this period in similar charter collections⁵⁶. It is plausible as historical explanation. However, the structural form of these charters is but one of their characteristics and the formal diplomatic analysis of charters will take us only so far. Recent detailed work on similar documents has told us repeatedly that charters which have the form of sales and exchanges can really be gifts and vice versa⁵⁷. In the rest of this paper I want to concentrate on a single issue of interpretation, the motivations of those recorded in these charters.

Familial motives

In my view these charters cast only dim light on any of the activities of the family I have dubbed the *Anselmi*. Is it possible to attribute motivation to any of them? Or is this indeed desirable? At least three explanations for their behaviour deserve consideration: «economic rationalisation»⁵⁸; social competition; and personal piety. Can we now detect some sort of «economic rationalisation» at work in the mind's of Anselm and his family? Conventionally, one method of writing history from charters would examine the nature of the properties recorded in these documents with a view to making deductions about economic motivation⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ It is found in the famous charters relating to Campione (d'Italia), discussed by R. Balzaretto, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 205-219 and G. Rossetti, *I ceti proprietari e professionali: status sociale funzioni e prestigio a Milano nei secoli VIII-X. I. L'età longobarda*, in *Milano e I Milanesi...* cit. n. 23, p. 165-207.

⁵⁷ A brilliant case study is provided by T. Reuter, *Property transactions and social relations between rulers, bishops and nobles in early eleventh-century Saxony: the evidence of the Vita Meinwerki*, in *Property and Power...* cit. n. 52, p. 165-199 especially at p. 176-178. Barbara Rosenwein (see note 52) reached similar conclusions, notably in *To be a Neighbor of St. Peter. The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909-1049*, Ithaca-London, 1989.

⁵⁸ J. A. Raftis, *Western monasticism and economic organization*, in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 3, 1961, p. 452-469 and A. Kieser, *From asceticism to administration of wealth. Medieval monasteries and the pitfalls of rationalization*, in *Organization Studies*, 8, 1987, p. 103-123.

⁵⁹ Essentially the approach I took in my doctoral thesis *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*. Other typical examples (to confine the selection to works in English) are K. Fisher Drew, *The Italian monasteries of Nonantola, San Salvatore and Santa Maria Theodota in the eighth and ninth centuries*, in *Manuscripta*, 9, 1965, p. 131-154; R. R. Ring, *The Lands of Farfa: Studies in Lombard and Carolingian Italy*, PhD Wisconsin University, 1972; and S. F. Wemple, *San Salvatore/Santa Giulia: a case study*

Unfortunately in this case we have only a little information to go on because these particular charters do not contain many detailed descriptions of the properties being transferred. This is something which ought to have puzzled historians more than it has, who usually see this merely as a matter of scribal habit. Does this absence of detail suggest that owners of land were not in fact very interested in its exploitation? In the case of Inzago only the following information is recorded. The charters of 848 and 855 provide no detailed descriptions of land just standard formulae (*casis, edificiiis, areis, curteficiis, ortis, usum puteis, clausuris, campis, pratis, pascuis, vineis et silvis; casis et omnibus rebus; and casis et rebus illis masariciis*). The 870 *testamentum* is very much more detailed and includes the precise location of vines (at *Rasperto*) and coppiced woodland (*silva stallaria* at Casteneto de Franci). This type of phrase recurs in tenth-century documents : vines, *campi* (at Trastrada) and *arbores castanos* (*De casa Gisenulfi*) in 913 and a *sedimen prope Puteo de Castro* and *campo* (at Aredario) in 941. This is not much from which to reconstruct the early medieval landscape of Inzago!⁶⁰ It appears to have been a mixed landscape of some open fields and some managed woodland, perfectly in line with Massimo Montanari's conclusions arising from his reading of many thousands of charters from the Po Valley as a whole⁶¹. From this slim record we cannot tell if Anselm was trying to make money from exploiting his property, although the fact that he appears to have had access to considerable sums may suggest that he was⁶². It is, incidentally, interesting that the level of detail in the texts appears to increase once the monastery has taken over.

Were Anselm and his family competing socially with other families or institutions? Again, we have little explicit evidence. We know almost nothing about the men Anselm bought property from. If we know considerably more about those ecclesiastical institutions which also owned land in the village (the episcopal church of Bergamo, Sant'Ambrogio Milan, the nunnery of S. Victor at Meda⁶³, another *xenodochium* associated

of the endowment and patronage of a major female monastery in northern Italy, in J. Kirschner and S. F. Wemple (ed.), *Women of the Medieval World*, Oxford, 1985, p. 85-102.

⁶⁰ Especially as the landscape has been greatly altered since early medieval times and Inzago is now a small town (current population 8698).

⁶¹ M. Montanari, *L'alimentazione contadina nell'alto Medioevo*, Naples, 1979, especially at p. 65-70.

⁶² C. Violante, *La società milanese nell'età precomunale*, 2nd edn Bari 1974, p. 123 f.

⁶³ The abbess is in *MDM* 95, which Anselm of Inzago may have witnessed.

with the basilica of Sant'Apollinare, S. Maria Wigilinda, S. Protasius and Gervasius⁶⁴, and S. Vincenzo in Prato), these churches, whose ownership is recorded mostly by Garibald's will were probably part of Garibald's networks, rather than Anselm's.

There is nothing particularly personal about most of the Inzago charters : the formulae used are found in many other contemporary charters. In most of our texts there is no explicit statement about what the people involved thought about the events recorded (and we would not expect there to be one in such legal contracts). Anselm of Inzago does not tell us why he is buying land and other property in the 850s. We have to guess. But there is something personal about Bishop Garibald's *testamentum*⁶⁵. He does tell us what he is doing because he had to make it clear to his executors. At the start of a long text he launches into his reasoning :

*Ego in Dei nomine Garibaldus licet indignus sancte bergomate ecclesie episcopus, et filius bone memorie Isonis, qui vixit legibus langobardorum, presens presentibus dixi : Sacerdotali dignitas convenit, ut de suis propriis rebus ad exemplum aliorum Deo omnipotenti et Domino nostro Jesu Christo filio eius et redemcionem animarum muneram offerre procuret; et ideo ego qui supra Garibaldus episcopus per hanc paginam ordinacionis meae prevedi pro remedio anime meae per consensum et largitatem Auprandi dilecto germano meo de rebus meis juste et legaliter adquisitis ordinare, quatenus in eternam beatitudinem salutem et gaudium sempiternum*⁶⁶.

These may not be entirely conventional pieties. If the charter implies at the start that what is to follow is for the sake of *Garibald's* soul, it soon transpires that the *pagina testamenti mei*⁶⁷ is actually a collection of separate pious acts by which the souls of Garibald, Anselm and their

⁶⁴ G. Vigotti, *La diocesi di Milano...* cit. n. 46, p. 84.

⁶⁵ As there is in the much-better documented example of Erkanfrida studied by J. L. Nelson, *The wary widow*, in *Property and Power...*, p. 82-113.

⁶⁶ *MDM* 120 : «In God's name Garibald, unworthy bishop of the holy church of Bergamo, and son of Isonis of good memory who lived according to the laws of the Lombards, being present say to those present : the sacerdotal dignity requires that [the priest] should offer gifts to the all-powerful God and his son the Lord Jesus Christ from his own property as an example to others and for the redemption of souls; and so I the above Garibald bishop, by this page of my ordination provide for the sake of my soul with the consent and permission of Auprand my dear brother from my property justly and legally acquired and order this for the sake of eternally blessed health and everlasting glory.»

⁶⁷ Although two copies of the document were produced, only the one kept at Milan by the monks has survived. Garibald probably kept his copy himself.

mutual kin are to be saved⁶⁸. The pious phraseology recurs throughout the document whenever a new provision is introduced : «*ob amore Dei*» (once), «*remedium animae meae*» (three times), «*pro remedio animae meae et eidem Antelmi viri sui*» (eight times with minor variations), «*pro remedio anime meae et iam dicto Antelmi et parentibus nostris*» (once), «*ad mercedem et remedium animabus nostris*» (twice with minor variation). The extent of the repetition may indicate that the sentiment was genuine. Nevertheless, it is possible that Garibald may have had reasons other than the pious for his actions, reasons which the text is more reluctant to reveal.

In my view Garibald's actions may be best explained by considering his relationship with his brother Autprand, who was clearly an important man. What Garibald does has the «consent and permission of my dear brother Auprand», a phrase repeated (once) later in the document. In many charters of this sort men refer simply to their brothers without any implication of affection, so the use of *dilecto* probably does indicate a close relationship⁶⁹. Furthermore, Autprand actually signed the document : «*Ego Autprand vassus domni imperatoris in hoc emisso ab Garibaldo episcopo germano meo, ut supra, in omnibus consensi et subscripsi*». Autprand, a vassal of Louis II at this time, may have sensed that he and his brother might have something to gain from his brother's pious generosity to churches in Milan, ruled over by the formidable Archbishop Anspert. Did such giving enhance the brothers' social position in the metropolis as well as cement their fraternal loyalty? The document was, after all, written in Milan rather than Bergamo.

It is of course impossible to understand the brothers' actions from a single charter. We have to turn to other charters and to make various inferences. In June 873, before Abbot Peter oversaw the final ritual which constituted the actual transfer of Garibald's lands to the monastery in April 874, Louis II granted, at the request of his wife Angilberga, immunity and protection to the Sant'Ambrogio monks⁷⁰. Abbot Peter and his monks now had the highest favour in the kingdom, a fact which Garibald and Autprand may have anticipated. The significance of their interest in Milan at this point in time is reinforced if we consider the other charters in which Garibald figures, preserved by the church of Bergamo. Of the nine charters

⁶⁸ Of course, this charter is wholly typical of many others in its concern for prayer and memory.

⁶⁹ Note how Barbara Rosenwein uses *dilecto* to plot such relationships in her article on Berengar I (see note 52 above).

⁷⁰ *MDM* 124 (see note 29 above).

in question, covering the years 867 to 888, seven are charters of exchange, one is a precarial text and the other a *libellus*. The important point is that all the property concerned is within the diocese of Bergamo, in complete contrast to the bishop's will where all the bishop's private property (as recorded) was *outside* his own diocese. Whatever his real motivations were Garibald's *xenodochium* was quite deliberately sited at Inzago⁷¹.

In my reading, Garibald's *testamentum* has been a rudimentary sort of historical writing because it supplies within itself a coherent narrative record of the stages by which Garibald had arrived at the point where he was able to endow a *xenodochium*. He had bought *per cartulam vinditionis* a suitable estate complete with a large house and an estate at some unspecified date before March 870 from his relative Anselm of Inzago. This charter of sale is now lost but may well have been available to early readers, allowing them to check the record. This sale was not what we might term a simple sale, between two parties otherwise unknown to each other for an agreed price, but rather an arrangement between kin. The fact of Garibald and Anselm's kin relationship is important because it gives rise to a statement in the charter about motive. Predictably, Garibald presents his deals as piously motivated: «*pro remedio anime meae et iam dicto Antelmi et parentibus nostris*». The *xenodochium* is to be perpetually lit and prayers are to be said for the family. In this sense Garibald may have had a carefully worked out plan of purchase which we might feel constitutes a family strategy. If he did, it proved to be a paradoxical strategy which apparently led both to the earthly extinction of the family and to its perpetual salvation. The *Anselmi* disappear from the record as suddenly as they appeared. Gariberga and Gundelasius entered the church, she as *monacha* and he as *clericus* and then *subdiaconus*. Gariberga was abbess of the community of Santa Maria Wigilinda in 903 but what happened to Gundelasius we do not know. We may suppose that neither had any children. But, as brother and sister, they both served the church *in Milan* rather than Bergamo.

Monastic strategies

I want now to look at the charters from the perspective of the recipients. We know that the monastery of Sant'Ambrogio got the Inzago property in the end because of the survival of these ninth-century charters

⁷¹ Garibald's archbishop, Anspert, set up his own *xenodochium* in Milan in 879 to which he donated family land in Cavernago which he had collected over the previous few years (R. Balzaretto, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 200).

(and subsequent history)⁷². If the events recorded in these charters had this outcome, was this also the result of a deliberate strategy? Did successive abbots develop a policy towards Inzago? Historians have long tacitly assumed that this was the case, even though not one document in the archive explicitly records the thoughts of any abbot⁷³. Abbot Andreas (844-851) certainly intervened at the start of the sequence in 848 and Abbot Peter II (854-899) brought it to an end in 874. Two charters of 848 are important in this regard because they do not deal directly with the *Anselmi*⁷⁴. Abbot Andreas paid the considerable sum of 30 pounds of coined silver for land in Inzago and Gessate from Gunzo son of Isoni but leased the land back on a lifetime basis for a small annual rent. Both the charters concerned were written at the monastery itself and have witness lists naming local worthies, including several vassals of the count of Milan, Alberic. The formulae used to describe the property transfer are certainly comprehensive. Gunzo hands over property «*quod mihi ex parentorum meorum successione obvenit vel pertinit aut pertinere debet, sibe de qualicumque meo aquisto aut quoque genium mihi pertenuit*⁷⁵». The abbot and his successors got total ownership rights from him : «*trado, confirmo, offero, vindo et dono potestatem abendum et possidendum*» (overkill one might think). Apparently Gunzo had previously dealt with the property in a testament, which this new arrangement revoked⁷⁶. Why did he do this? Was some sort of pressure put on him? Most probably he needed the money. Whatever the case, the property involved was not yet (apparently) a consolidated holding, a *curtis*.

Abbot Peter II presided over the final act in the protracted process of property transfer which this paper has been investigating. The interesting *notitia* of 874 which records these events is mainly concerned with

⁷² R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 180-183.

⁷³ Most of these remain obscure figures. M. Tagliabue, *Cronotassi degli abati di S. Ambrogio nel Medioevo (784-1497)*, in *Il monastero di S. Ambrogio...*, cit. n. 7, p. 274-345, collects everything known about each abbot.

⁷⁴ *MDM* 82 and 83.

⁷⁵ Gunzo's father was Isoni and Garibald's was Isoni, which at least raises the possibility that the two men were related. Other evidence suggests not (see *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 199).

⁷⁶ «*Manifestum sum ego qui supra Gunzium, quam ante hos annos rebus meis per scripta cartula hordinationis meae in ipso contuli monasterio abendum post meum discessum pro anima mea; sed modo confirmo, ut presenti diae omnia in ipso permanent monasterio, et ipsa hordinationis etiam vobis a parte ipsius monasterii dedi pro vestra securitatem abendum et faciendum quod volueritis a meo jure firmatum, tam per ipsum iudicatum et per presente cartula*».

properties in another village, Gnignano⁷⁷. Anselm of Inzago had control of several properties there which he had sold to bishop Garibald in March 870 along with his Inzago lands. The bishop, having made no reference to them in his will, had given them back to Anselm's son Gundelasius in October of the same year, together with another property in Castello di Liscate (which he had obtained from his father). By March 874 Anselm was dead and his widow Gottenia had sold her property in Gnignano to Gundelasius. A month later Gundelasius, in a *monimen convenienciae*, had promised his property to Sant'Ambrogio for his soul. In return he received lifetime leases on properties in Gessate, Inzago, Noviculta and Nesso. In doing this Gundelasius had the consent of Bishop Garibald and his brother Auprand, indicating that the bishop's interest in his *xenodochium* and its *dominus* had not waned. The final act in the process was the ritual «taking possession»: «*Petrus abbas per columnas de ipsas casas seu per terra comprehensit...*», and the drafting of a *notitia* which took the place of the five charters recorded in it which no longer survive. It is possible that this *notitia* was fabricated to claim rights to more property than the community had actually been given by the *Anselmi*. Everything in it is very well sewn up. However, later, quite clearly genuine documents, do show that Sant'Ambrogio did actually acquire the Inzago land.

After the Anselmi

The end result of all the dealing was the transfer of a consolidated estate, of some value, in Inzago and numerous properties in Gessate and neighbouring villages to the monastic community of Sant'Ambrogio. The ninth-century charters suggest that there were already few other «outside» owners of property in the village⁷⁸. The tenth-century texts reinforce this picture. In February 913 Abbot Sigefred exchanged property within Inzago with Andelbertus, *presbiter* and his son Gisenuf who resided in the village⁷⁹. The monastery acquired a vineyard and some single chestnut

⁷⁷ R. Balzaretti, *The Lands of Saint Ambrose*, p. 183-193 (Gnignano) and 200 (the 874 *notitia*).

⁷⁸ In this respect they are similar to those for Cologno Monzese, Campione and Limonta (but not Gnignano). Wickham's work on the Gundualdi of Campori in the Garfagnana (*The Mountains and the City. The Tuscan Appennines in the Early Middle Ages*, Oxford, 1988, p. 40-67) evidences much the same thing.

⁷⁹ CDL 451, February 913, an original drafted at the monastery. The abbot was represented by Reginaldus, *presbiter, praepositus, monachos et missus*. The largely local witness list (but none from Inzago itself) included three of the abbot's *vassi*. The Gisenuf from Inzago who witnessed an exchange between Abbot Peter II and

trees in exchange for arable land. Besides Sant'Ambrogio only one other owner is mentioned in the boundary clauses : another *presbiter*, Rachibert. These two priests could have been attached to the Inzago *xenodochium*, but we will never know for certain. Other men from Inzago are evidenced in charters over the next few years. In July 917 a charter detailing an exchange between Abbot Ragibert and a local man in Gessate of land in Gessate was drafted in Inzago⁸⁰. Two men from Inzago, Leoprandus and Aunemundus, witnessed it. In a court case heard in Milan in April 918 the monastery was represented by its advocate, Giselbertus, *iudex* from Inzago⁸¹. In May 931 Ambrosianus from Inzago witnessed an exchange between Abbot Anselbertus and a Gessate man of land in Gessate⁸². The charter was written in Gessate by Gisenulf *notarius*. In 941 Abbot Aupald exchanged land (a farm «*prope puteo de suprascripto castro*») in Inzago with Lupus of Gessate⁸³. This charter, which was written at the monastery by Angelbertus *notarius*, is the first record we have of a *castrum* in Inzago. Sant'Ambrogio is the owner of all land listed in the boundary clauses except for the nunnery of San Vittore in Meda. One other text is worth comment, a *promissio* of March 985 (drawn up in Imbersago) in which Wilielmus of Bergamo, son of Aupo who had been count of Bergamo, agreed that neither he nor his relations should molest Abbot Gaidoald nor any of his servants in Inzago⁸⁴. From this point on the abbots of Sant'Ambrogio seem to have had a monopoly here⁸⁵.

A limited survey of a small dossier of charters will only get us so far in thinking about the linkage of property, politics and power in this period. It is certainly worth stressing that these texts sometimes link cultivators on the ground with those at the highest levels of political society because most historians of Sant'Ambrogio continue to measure its historical importance in terms of its royal and imperial connections. Dossiers such as that for Inzago show just how distanced kings and emperors were from real local

the archpriest of San Giovanni, Monza, of property in Concorezzo, in May 892 may be the same man (*MDM* 155, an original, drafted at the monastery).

⁸⁰ *CDL* 473, an original, written by Ropaldus *notarius*.

⁸¹ *CDL* 475, an original.

⁸² *CDL* 539, an original.

⁸³ *CDL* 559, an original.

⁸⁴ *CDL* 826, an original.

⁸⁵ C. J. Wickham, *Justice in the Kingdom of Italy in the Eleventh Century*, in *La giustizia nell'alto medioevo (secoli IX-XI)*, I, Spoleto, 1997 (*Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, 44), p. 179-250, at p. 217 discussing a charter of 1015.

power. Tracking property deals in some detail has revealed that family relationships were indeed very important in determining who got what property and that in this village there was never a true market in land in this period, despite its proximity to one of the largest towns in ninth-century Europe. These charters, as texts and as artefacts, were certainly important in the construction of relationships of power and I hope to have shown that we can understand something of the motives and strategies of those involved from them. But the nature of power in the village societies they document remains obscure. It seems much more than simple coincidence that when a *castrum* appears in Inzago the charters fall silent⁸⁶.

ROSS BALZARETTI

⁸⁶ I was unable to attend *Les transferts patrimoniaux* at short notice because of the sudden, tragic, death of Professor Edoardo Grendi in Nottingham. I remain very grateful to Barbara Rosenwein for her comments on an early draft of the text.

APPENDIX

I. WITNESSES TO INZAGO AND GESSATE CHARTERS (MDM) IN THE NINTH CENTURY¹

66 Ghisalba 840	82 MSA 848	83 MSA 848
Sigiberga [s] Magnifred, consents	Gunzio Teoderico, sculd fk vs ct Alberic	Gunzio Tado, subdc [s]
Oto, consents [?her father] Ambrosioni, count's scab. Alfre Romald Willibald, archdc [s] Inghebert Andreas Cunibert Sichiperga	Hunengi, fk. Milan Teotcari, alm vs ct Alberic Roingus [s] Tado, subdc [s] Aredeo [s] Gundelasio [s] Ambrose, fq Agebert of Magiorni	Roingus [s] Teotcari, alm vs. Alberic Autecari, alm vs. Alberic. Nithard, fk Milan Gundelasio [s] Paul, cl [s]
Anselm of Inzago [s] Gauseramio of Raodona		
12 wts, 3 sign	8 wts, 4 sign	8 wts, 4 sign
93 Gorgonzola 855	95 MSA 856	99 Gorgonzola 858
Garibald [s] Anselm [s]	Tagiberga [s] Walcauso of Lomazzo	Wago of Gessate Gumpert, vs., Roingus & Sihevert of Cambiagio, alm
Tadeltruda, consents	Thomade & Angilbert, brothers of Banaruco Autelmo [s] Agevert of Tenebiaco Ariprand of Silvanasi	Antelm of Cropello Andreas of Burnago Gisenulf of Inzago Eldevert of Pontesaurioli Ursus of Gessate Ado [s]
Wadelberga, consents Odlebald and Andevert, nephews of Garibald Walderic, gastald Eliard, vs of Walderic & Dahinulf, both living in Milan, fk. Evengar, also from MI. Fk. Anduald, vs Walderic. Fk		

¹ *Abbreviations* :

alm = alaman

archd = archdeacon

cl = clericus

ct = count

fk = frankish

[s] = signature

scab = scabinus

sculd = sculdasius

vs = vassus

vdi = vassus domni imperatoris

Baderic from Lemode, alm.
Ironi, Odelbert, brothers
from Corneliano.
Odo [s]
Anselm [s]

16 wts, 4 sign. 2 women

7 wts, 2 signs.

10 wt, 1 sign.

103 Inzago 859

Ermempert of Ello
Magoni of Bornago
Ariprand of Selva
Deodadi of Inzago
Latzaro [s]
Andevert of Dongo
Arifred [s]
Ariprand of Silva
Audoaldus of Cumaciano

115 Pavia 865

Sigeratus [s]
Boniprand [s]
Marcus [s]
Odelbertus [s]
Natale du Cugino [s]
Leoprand of Cugingo
Anselmo [s]

120 Milan 870

Garibaldus [s]
Autprand, vdi, bth of G [s]
Walcarius [s]
Brandolfus [s]
Thomas [s]
Ugo [s]
Arimund of Lusade

7 wts, 2 sign

7 wt, 6 sign

8 wts, 6 wts

125 Gnignano 874

Lampert of Carpiano
Odelfret of Concorezzo
Leoprand of Cugingo
Bonus of Pariana
Arimund of Treciano
Natalis
Reginbald, cl. of Pariana

7 wts, 0 sign [copied]

II. THE INZAGO AND GESSATE CHARTERS²

Doc.	Date	Charter type	Status*	Scribe	Place of redaction
MDM					
66	840	<i>cartola</i>	cc	Ursepert/Giselbert	Ghisalba
82	848	<i>cartola vinditionis</i>	o	Ambrosius [^]	MSA
83	848	<i>convenientia</i>	o	Ambrosius [^]	MSA
93	855	<i>cartola vinditionis</i>	o	Garibald [^]	Gorgonzola
99	858	<i>cartola vinditionis</i>	o	Garibald [^]	Gorgonzola
Doc.	Date	Charter type	Status*	Scribe	Place of redaction

² MDM = *Il Museo Diplomatico dell'Archivio di Stato di Milano*, ed. A. R. Natale, 2 vols, Milan, 1968.

CDL = *Codex Diplomaticus Langobardiae*, ed. G. Porro-Lambertenghi, Turin, 1873.

* cc = contemporary copy, o = original, 12 = twelfth century copy, fk = fake.

[^] indicates that these names refer to the same person.

MSA = *monasterium sancti Ambrosii*

103	859	<i>cartola vinditionis</i>	o	Garibald [^]	Inzago
120	870	<i>pagina testamentum</i>	o?	Ragifred	Milan
125	874	<i>breve vestitura</i>	cc	Gervasius	«Scosse et Villa»
[155	892	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Adelricus	MSA]
156	892	<i>notitia</i>	o	Adegisus	Milan
157	893	<i>preceptum</i>	12 fk	Audoald	MSA
CDL					
402	903	<i>testamentum</i>	12/cc	Agapitus	Milan
451	913	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Natzarius	MSA
473	917	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Ropald	Inzago
[475	918	<i>placitum</i>	o	Ingelbert	Milan]
538	931	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Gisenulf [^]	Gessate
539	931	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Gisenulf [^]	Gessate
559	941	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Angelbert	MSA
602	953	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Petribert	Milan
609	955	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Heberardus [^]	MSA
621	957	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Heberardus [^]	Milan
624	957	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Angelbert [^]	MSA
670	963	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Angelbert [^]	MSA
671	963	<i>commutatio</i>	o	Grasebert	MSA
826	985	<i>promissio</i>	o	Anselm [^]	Imbersago
828	985	<i>cartola vinditionis</i>	o	Anselm [^]	MSA