

**Matilda of Canossa's Material Patronage in Relation to the Eleventh-Century Papal
Reform**

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Abstract

Started in the year of the 900th anniversary of Matilda of Canossa's death, the author noticed the absence of current scholarship regarding female patronage and agency with reference to Matilda. Matilda's material patronage has generally been ascribed to pious devotion, a relic of outdated concepts of how women expressed agency via patronage in the middle ages. This thesis aims to evaluate objects and structures of Matilda's material patronage using updated notions of material patronage and agency for women in the Middle Ages. This thesis repositions Matilda in relation to the socio-political shifts of the Investiture Controversy and examines how objects of her material patronage were used to perpetuate pro-papal sentiments for reasons beyond piety. This thesis addresses how Matilda conceived of her authority as an oppositional force to the king, and how this related to her support for papal supremacy. Additionally, this thesis aims to fill a gap in the study of Matilda's afterlife, particularly the seventeenth-century reburial of her in Saint Peter's by Pope Urban VIII. This thesis examines how Matilda was framed by the pope and how this revival had an impact on future patronage studies.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Introduction

From Dante Alighieri to Pope Urban VIII to Luigi Pirandello, the figure of Matilda of Canossa (b. 1046 – d. 1115) has been appropriated for at least nine centuries. Her persona and power have been invoked as a tool by those looking to assert themselves, their reputations and regimes, consequently substituting Matilda's agency and motivations with their own. This process has reduced Matilda to a supporter, and objects associated with her patronage are simply ascribed to her piety rather than as expressions of the complex intentions allowed her male peers. Alfred Gell has aptly stated that agency is 'attributable to those persons who/which are seen as initiating causal sequences of a particular type, that is, events caused by acts of mind or will or intention, rather than the mere concatenation of physical events. An agent is one who "causes events to happen" in their vicinity.'¹ Though Matilda acted within the larger socio-political and religious developments of the eleventh-century papal reform, she also had her own goals. This thesis asserts that Matilda's lifelong loyalty to the papacy was not just due to religious devotion but was part of a conscious rejection of imperial authority, and that her patronage was an extension of this effort. Though her efforts have begun to be explored in Matildine studies, there has not been a rigorous examination of Matilda's agency as manifested in her material patronage. This thesis will first ascribe objects and structures to Matilda's material patronage by using a period-appropriate understanding of female patronage. Then, it will argue that these objects and structures constituted strategic manoeuvres to demonstrate her—or in some cases, induce in others—allegiance to the papacy and the papal reform, and thus, disloyalty to the heretical *regnum*. This thesis will also examine the transformation of Matilda's living agency into a posthumous legacy, and how its subsequent manipulation possibly led to distortions in her reception as a patron.

Three aims underpin this thesis. The first objective is to assess the extent to which Matilda was involved in the creation of objects and structures as a patron within her domain. In many of the case studies within this thesis, primary documentation does not exist to tie Matilda directly to objects commonly associated with her. However, by utilizing contemporary documents and through iconographic analyses, this thesis will argue that the commissioning of specific objects and buildings can most likely be situated within Matilda's material patronage.

The second aim of this thesis is to contextualize these acts of patronage and the resultant objects and structures within the larger social, political, and religious shifts occurring during

¹ Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1998), 16.

the eleventh century, including the Gregorian papal reforms, the development of the First Crusade, and the rise of *romanitas* within the Italian peninsula. Analyses of Matilda's existing documents and those of her peers, alongside close iconographic readings of the objects and buildings in question will show that these objects were used strategically to express or in some cases, build, relationships.

The third goal of the thesis is to examine to what extent Matilda used these objects to craft her reputation, including how Matilda used objects for others—people, cities, institutions—to make statements about herself and the Canossan dynasty. Within this larger aim is an investigation as to how Matilda's efforts affected her posthumous legacy, how it was subsequently interpreted and changed by external individuals.

This thesis builds on previous scholarship concerning the visual culture within Matilda's territories, and her impact on it. Though there is an extensive body of literature focused on Matilda, relatively few works address her impact on material culture. Christine Verzár's work considers the interpretative differences between historians and art historians based on the types of source used, both textual and visual, and notes the lack of attention paid to Matilda by art historians in the 'anglosphere.'² She explores Matilda's various configurations, including as a patron and benefactress, though her research does not examine motivation, and provides a survey rather than in-depth analysis of individual case studies.³ Dorothy Glass has considered the possibility that Matilda acted as a patron of monumental art such as sculpture and architecture of the period, particularly through the lens of the Gregorian reform.⁴ While Glass has acknowledged the influence and interconnectedness of the countess

² Christine Verzár, 'Picturing Matilda of Canossa: Medieval Strategies of Representation', in *Representing History, 900-1300: Art, Music, History*, ed. Robert A. Maxwell (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 74–5.

³ Verzár, 'Picturing Matilda of Canossa: Medieval Strategies of Representation'; Christine Verzár, 'Legacy and Memory of Matilda: The Semiotics of Power and Reform', ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Medioevo: immagini e ideologie: atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, 23-27 settembre 2002, Electa, 2005), 432–47; Christine Verzár, 'Matilda of Canossa, Papal Rome, and the Earliest Italian Porch Portals', ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Romanico Padano, Romanico Europeo: atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma: Università degli Studi di Parma, 1982), 143–58; Christine Verzár Bornstein, 'Visualizing Politics and Authority of Countess Matilda of Canossa and Tuscany; Ideology and Myth', in *Pictorial Languages and Their Meanings: Liber Amicorum in Honor of Nurith Kenaan-Kedar*, ed. Christine Verzár Bornstein and Gil Fishhof (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Yolanda and David Katz Faculty of the Arts, 2006), 253–64.

⁴ Dorothy F. Glass, 'The Bishops of Piacenza, Their Cathedral, and the Reform of the Church', in *The Bishop Reformed: Studies of Episcopal Power and Culture in the Central Middle Ages*, ed. John S. Ott and Anna Trumbore Jones, Church, Faith, and Culture in the Medieval West (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 219–36; Dorothy F. Glass, *Italian Romanesque Sculpture: An Annotated Bibliography*, A Reference Publication in Art History (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1983); Dorothy F. Glass, *Portals, Pilgrimage, and Crusade in Western Tuscany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Dorothy F. Glass, 'Prophecy and Priesthood at Modena', *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 63, no. 3 (2000): 326–38; Glass, 'The Bishops of Piacenza, Their Cathedral, and the Reform of the Church'; Dorothy F. Glass, 'Leggendo il Genesi nelle sculture della cattedrale

in her most recent publication, she remains unconvinced that there is enough evidence to describe Matilda's involvement as patronage.⁵

Arturo Carlo Quintavalle and Arturo Calzona's catalogue *Wiligelmo e Matilda* gave a wide-ranging account of the material culture within Matilda's domain and is crucial for its exploration of the various aesthetic influences.⁶ Similarly, Adriano Peroni and Francesca Piccinini's catalogue *Romanica*, further drew comparisons between objects from Matilda's domain.⁷ In both texts, the Cathedral of Modena serves as the springboard for the avenues of inquiry and casts Matilda as a force operating in the background. Arturo Calzona's wider work on Matilda's potential patronage and status as a facilitator is also critical, especially his work on San Lorenzo in Mantua.⁸ In 2009, Calzona edited an accompanying volume for a series of exhibitions at San Benedetto Po, the original burial location of Matilda, examining multifarious objects from within Matilda's territory. The volume aimed to connect various aspects of the material culture within the rural areas of her terrain.⁹ Giuseppa Z. Zanichelli, Dorothy Glass, and Peter Cornelius Claussen all contributed essays to the volume describing the material implications of Matilda's presence, including a study of her manuscript patronage and a close reading of the reform's effect on the decoration of Modena cathedral, and on architecture and sculpture in Rome.¹⁰

Further research of the field focuses on specific objects associated with Matilda. Robert Rough has written on the reformist implications of the Gospels of Matilda; it remains one of

di Modena', in *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa: tra castelli, monasteri e città*, ed. Arturo Calzona, Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia, Italy), and Civici musei di Reggio Emilia (Italy) (Milan: Silvana, 2008), 176–87; Dorothy F. Glass, 'Revisiting the "Gregorian Reform"', in *Romanesque Art and Thought in the Twelfth Century: Essays in Honor of Walter Cahn*, ed. Colum Hourihane, The Index of Christian Art Occasional Papers 10 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 200–18; Dorothy F. Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130: History and Patronage of Romanesque Façades* (Farnham Surrey: Ashgate, 2017).

⁵ Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130*, 26–32.

⁶ Arturo Carlo Quintavalle and Arturo Calzona, eds., *Wiligelmo e Lanfranco nell'Europa romanica: [atti del convegno, Modena, 24-27 ottobre 1985]*, *Civiltà medievale* (Modena: Panini, 1989).

⁷ Adriano Peroni and Francesca Piccinini, eds., *Romanica: arte e liturgia nelle terre di San Geminiano e Matilde di Canossa* (Modena: F.C. Panini, 2006).

⁸ Arturo Calzona, 'Gli affreschi dell'XI secolo alla Rotonda di Mantova', in *Studi di storia dell'arte sul Medioevo e il Rinascimento nel centenario della nascita di Mario Salmi: atti del convegno internazionale, Arezzo-Firenze, 16-19 novembre 1989* (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 1992), 275–94; Calzona; Arturo Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde* (Parma: Università degli studi, Istituto di storia dell'arte: Centro di studi medievale, 1991).

⁹ Arturo Calzona, Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia, Italy), and Civici musei di Reggio Emilia (Italy), eds., *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa: tra castelli, monasteri e città* (Milan: Silvana, 2008).

¹⁰ Giuseppa Z. Zanichelli, 'Biblioteche e scriptoria a Reggio Emilia in età medievale: la strategia della memoria', in *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa: tra castelli, monasteri e città*, ed. Arturo Calzona, Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia, Italy), and Civici musei di Reggio Emilia (Italy) (Milan: Silvana, 2008), 68–83; Glass, 'Leggendo il Genesi nelle sculture della cattedrale di Modena'; Peter Cornelius Claussen, 'Sculptura e splendori del marmo a Roma nell'età della riforma ecclesiastica nell'XI e XII secolo', in *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa: tra castelli, monasteri e città*, ed. Arturo Calzona, Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia, Italy), and Civici musei di Reggio Emilia (Italy) (Milan: Silvana, 2008), 202–15.

the only works to focus specifically on the manuscript.¹¹ Tiziana Lazzari has analysed both the tomb of Beatrice as a donation by Matilda to Pisa as well as the visualizations of power within illuminations of the *Vita Mathildis*.¹² There has been some research on Matilda's burial site at San Benedetto, most notably Paolo Golinelli's catalogue *L'Abbazia di Matilde*, though the catalogue primarily deals with the larger history of the abbey.¹³ Existing scholarship has generally failed to discuss objects of Matilda's material patronage in relation to one another and in regards to Matilda's own motivations. This has had an isolating effect on objects within her domain: they are treated individually, rather than as examples of a larger pattern. This thesis aims to fill this scholarly gap by examining objects and structures actively supported by Matilda which collectively speak to a common motivation.

Considerations for Matilda's political role within the period appear to follow the lead of Demetrius B. Zema who termed Matilda the 'centre of resistance to the imperial adversary of the papacy,' a sentiment often echoed but rarely expanded upon by other scholars.¹⁴ Valerie Eads has also written about Matilda's political role within the Investiture controversy, often blending a military-focused approach with the political repercussions of Matilda's actions, an approach also shared by David Hay.¹⁵ However, it appears that within larger-scope political histories of the Investiture controversy such as that of Uta-Renate Blumenthal, Matilda's role is often deemphasized in favour of a central narrative between the King and the Pope.¹⁶ Of recent increasing interest among Matildine scholars is her political relationship to the cities, particularly given the communal period which followed Matilda's lifetime. Indeed, Matilda's relation to the rise of individual cities has been of interest, including Emilio Nasalli Rocca with

¹¹ Robert H Rough, *The Reformist of Illuminations in the Gospels of Matilda, Countess of Tuscany: A Study in the Art of the Age of Gregory VII* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973).

¹² Tiziana Lazzari, 'Matilda of Tuscany: New Perspectives about Her Family Ties', *Storicamente* 13 (2017); Tiziana Lazzari, 'Miniature e versi: mimesi della regalità in Donizone', in *Forme di potere nel pieno medioevo (secc. VIII–XII). Dinamiche e rappresentazioni*, ed. Giovanni Isabella (Bologna, 2006), 57–92.

¹³ Paolo Golinelli, ed., *L'Abbazia di Matilde: Arte e storia in un grande monastero dell'Europa Benedettina [1007-2007]. San Benedetto Po, 31 agosto 2008 - 11 gennaio 2009* (Bologna: Patron Editore, 2008).

¹⁴ Demetrius B. Zema, 'The Issue of Property: Difficulties within the Roman See', in *The Investiture Controversy: Issues, Ideals, and Results*, ed. Karl Frederick Morrison, European Problem Studies (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 24–37; Demetrius B. Zema, 'The Houses of Tuscany and of Pierleone in the Crisis of Rome in the Eleventh Century', *Traditio* 2 (1944): 155–75.

¹⁵ Valerie Eads, 'Mighty in War: The Role of Matilda of Tuscany in the War between Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV' (PhD, New York, City University of New York, 2000).

¹⁶ Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988); Gerd Tellenbach, *Church, State, and Christian Society at the Time of the Investiture Contest*, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 27 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1991).

Parma,¹⁷ and Vito Fumagalli with Mantua and Modena.¹⁸ Arturo Carlo Quintavalle has recently written about Matilda's complex political role in relation to the cities of her domain, particularly as an intermediary force for the Gregorian reform.¹⁹ Eugenio Riversi recently put forward a 'figurational' approach to Matilda's involvement in the cities within her domain which eschews the 'Matilda versus the Cities/Pre-Communes' model popular in modern studies of the countess.²⁰ In a discussion more broadly focused on the construction of cathedrals in bishop-less cities of Northern Italy, Bruno Klein suggests that Matilda acted as a stabilizing political force.²¹ This stabilization, he writes, was necessary to mediate between the waning power of the bishopric and rising power of the fledgling city.

There has been some work regarding the afterlife of Matilda. Golinelli has done much historiographic work regarding Matilda's reception.²² More commonly, however, Matilda is invoked as a comparative example to elucidate other historic figures. This includes Beth Holman's work on Lucrezia della Mirandola, and Penelope Nash's work on Empress Adelheid.²³ Additionally, there is an entire subset of Dantean scholarship which has posited

¹⁷ Emilio Nasalli Rocca, 'Parma e la Contessa Matilde', in *Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963* (Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1964), 53–68.

¹⁸ Vito Fumagalli, 'Mantova al tempo di Matilde di Canossa', in *Sant'Anselmo, Mantova e la lotta per le Investiture: convegno internazionale di studi (Mantova, 23-24-25 maggio 1986)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli (Bologna: Patron Editore, 1987), 159–67; Vito Fumagalli, 'Economia, Società e istituzioni nei secoli XI-XII nel territorio modenese', in *Lanfranco e Wiligelmo: Il Duomo di Modena*, ed. Marina Armandi Barbolini (Modena: Panini, 1984), 37–116.

¹⁹ Arturo Carlo Quintavalle, 'Matilda and the Cities of the Gregorian Reform', in *Romanesque: Patrons and Processes*, ed. Jordi Camps i Sòria et al., The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions (New York: Routledge, 2018), 79–106.

²⁰ Eugenio Riversi, 'Matilda and the Cities: Testing a "Figurational" Approach', *Storicamente* 13 (2017).

²¹ Bruno Klein, 'Romanesque Cathedral in Northern Italy - Building Processes between Bishop and Commune', in *Romanesque: Patrons and Processes*, ed. Jordi Camps i Sòria et al., The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions (New York: Routledge, 2018), 107–17.

²² Paolo Golinelli, 'Matilde dopo matilde (1115-2015)', in *Matilda di Canossa (1046-1115): la donna che mutò il corso della storia = Matilda of Canossa (1046-1115): the woman who changed the course of history*, ed. Michèle K. Spike, trans. Viviana Tonon (Firenze: Centro Di, 2016), 41–7; Paolo Golinelli, 'Matilde: La Donna e il Potere', in *Matilde di Canossa e il suo tempo: atti del XXI Congresso internazionale di studio sull'alto Medioevo in occasione del IX centenario della morte (1115-2015): San Benedetto Po - Revere - Mantova - Quattro Castella, 20-24 ottobre 2015*, Atti dei congressi, XXI (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2016), 1–34; Paolo Golinelli, 'The Afterlife of Matilda of Canossa (1115-2015)', in *Matilda of Canossa & the Origins of the Renaissance: An Exhibition in Honor of the 900th Anniversary of Her Death*, ed. Michèle K. Spike (Williamsburg, VA: The Muscarelle Museum of Art, The College of William and Mary, 2015), 31–6; Paolo Golinelli, *Matilde di Canossa nelle culture europee del secondo millennio: dalla storia al mito: atti del convegno internazionale di studi (Reggio Emilia, Canossa, Quattro Castella, 25-27 settembre 1997)*, 1. ed, Il mondo medievale 8 (Bologna: Pàtron, 1999).

²³ Beth L. Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone', *The Art Bulletin* 81, no. 4 (1999): 637–64; Penelope Nash, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda: Medieval Female Rulership and the Foundations of European Society* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018).

that Matilda was Dante's inspiration for his character 'Matelda.'²⁴ While Golinelli's work on Matilda's afterlife is invaluable, it seamlessly strings together each iteration of Matilda and does not pause to reflect on the various motivations of any one revival in relation to another. Golinelli remains one of the few scholars working on the attention Matilda has received posthumously, and while his work provides an invaluable foundation, there remains much work to be done concerning Matilda's later transformation into a symbol. Furthermore, to my knowledge, there has been no academic work done on the '100 churches' myth which has been attached to Matilda's legacy. Michèle K. Spike, a law professor, has begun to investigate the scope of the myth, but this was hampered by her taking the myth literally and attempting to locate all 100 churches.²⁵ Though tracing the entirety of Matilda's afterlife is beyond the scope of this thesis, it will scrutinize the seventeenth-century revival by Pope Urban VIII, Urban's impact on the resultant biography of the countess by Francesco Maria Fiorentini, and how the text may have fuelled the propagation of the '100 churches' myth.

Beyond Matilda, there has been research on female patronage that has not included her, but which is still useful in constructing a framework for understanding Matilda's actions and influence.²⁶ Such is the case with June Hall McCash's edited volume *The Cultural Patronage*

²⁴ Dante Bianchi, 'Matilde di Canossa e la Matelda Dantesca', in *Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963* (Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1964), 156–69; Jerome Mazzaro, 'The Vernal Paradox: Dante's Matelda', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, no. 110 (1992): 107–20; Patrizia Grimaldi Pizzorno, 'Matelda's Dance and the Smile of the Poets', *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, no. 112 (1994): 115–32; Barbara Reynolds, 'Who Is Matilda?', in *Dante: The Poet, the Political Thinker, the Man* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 317–23; Charles Williams, *Figure of Beatrice: A Study in Dante* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943); Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: The Vision of Dante*, ed. Ralph Pite, trans. Henry Francis Cary (London: Dent, 1994).

²⁵ Michèle K. Spike and Elaine Poggi, *An Illustrated Guide to the 'One Hundred Churches' of Matilda of Canossa, Countess of Tuscany* (Florence: Centro Di, 2015).

²⁶ June Hall McCash, 'The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women: An Overview', in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 1–49; Erin L Jordan, *Women, Power, and Religious Patronage in the Middle Ages*, 2006; Marios Costambeys, *Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy: Local Society, Italian Politics and the Abbey of Farfa, c.700-900*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series 70 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Joan M Ferrante, 'Women's Role in Latin Letters from the Fourth to the Early Twelfth Century', in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 73–104; Alexandra Gajewski, 'Building Christendom: Patrons, Architects and Centres of Innovation in Medieval Europe', in *The Routledge History of Medieval Christianity 1050-1500*, ed. Robert N. Swanson, The Routledge Histories (London: Routledge, 2015), 217–34; Klein, 'Romanesque Cathedral in Northern Italy - Building Processes between Bishop and Commune'; Cynthia Miller Lawrence, ed., *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: Patrons, Collectors, and Connoisseurs* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997); John Levi Martin, 'The Short Cut to Structure with Patronage Pyramids', in *Social Structures* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 189–231; Kirstin Noreen, 'Lay Patronage and the Creation of Papal Sanctity during the Gregorian Reform: The Case of Sant'Urbano Alla Caffarella, Rome', *Gesta* 40, no. 1 (2001): 39–59; David G. Wilkins and Rebecca L. Wilkins, eds., *The Search for a Patron in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, v. 12 (Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1996); Jill Caskey, 'Whodunnit? Patronage, the Canon, and the Problematics of Agency in Romanesque and Gothic Art', in *A Companion to Medieval Art*, ed. Conrad Rudolph

of *Medieval Women*, which set out to contextualize medieval women's roles within the creation of objects and structures. McCash's conceptualization of patronage by medieval women as it appears in the introduction to the edited volume is also useful in assessing Matilda's level of involvement as a patron:

At its most essential level patronage can be defined as the support or backing of a prosperous or powerful benefactor for an artist, an artefact, or an institution in the form of gifts, money, political influence, personal encouragement, or assistance in helping to gain currency for a particular work, idea, or project.²⁷

McCash suggests that scholars must consider multiple variables such as 'dedications, praise of the patron, record of payment' among other, non-financial means when deducing the degree of a person's influence on an object or building.²⁸ In the same text, Madeline H. Caviness expands on this concept, pointing to a subgroup of 'brokers' who served an 'ideological rather than financial role' and also acted as patrons.²⁹ Caviness's research provides a useful framework for analysing medieval women who indirectly participated in patronage acts. She considers medieval women to be 'sponsors' who facilitated the creation of iconographic programs by artists, sculptors, and builders, who in turn conveyed the ideologies of their patrons or supporters without having been directly commissioned to do so, as is the case with 'direct' patronage.³⁰ Furthermore she notes that generally speaking, a patron's control was less absolute during the Middle Ages: rather than having the ultimate decision on imagery or iconography, they were often overruled by the clerics who produced the objects.³¹

Though Caviness does not apply her concept to Matilda specifically, this reasoning provides a useful structure for the thesis. It cannot be pure coincidence that the religious and political principles which Matilda advocated and defended were communicated by objects and buildings within her domain. These objects typically came from institutions generously

(Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2019), 287–307; Jill Caskey, 'Medieval Patronage and Its Potentialities', in *Patronage: Power & Agency in Medieval Art*, ed. Colum Hourihane, The Index of Christian Art Occasional Papers 15 (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, Department of Art & Archæology, Princeton University [u.a.], 2013), 3–30; Therese Martin, 'Exceptions and Assumptions: Women in Medieval Art History', in *Reassessing the Roles of Women as 'Makers' of Medieval Art and Architecture*, ed. Therese Martin (Brill, 2012), 1–33.

²⁷ McCash, 'The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women: An Overview', 4.

²⁸ McCash, 2–4.

²⁹ Suzanne F. Wemple, 'S. Salvatore/S. Guilia: A Case Study in the Endowment and Patronage of a Major Female Monastery in Northern Italy', in *Women of the Medieval World: Essays in Honor of John H. Mundy*, ed. John Hine Mundy, Julius Kirshner, and Suzanne F. Wemple (Oxford; New York: B. Blackwell, 1985), 85–102; Madeline H. Caviness, 'Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons', in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 105–54.

³⁰ Caviness, 'Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons.'

³¹ Caviness, 105.

supported by Matilda while the structures were often built within key cities of her domain. While there are no surviving documents which record acts of direct material patronage where Matilda explicitly directed the use of iconography or other material aspects, according to Caviness's conceptualization of female patronage during this period, we can look at less direct forms of influence. This thesis posits that Matilda's support for these institutions and cities yielded objects which bear evidence of her ideological influence. Although this support was largely documented by her contemporaries as moral, this thesis will argue that it was accompanied by material support which led to the development of these objects and structures. Matilda's remaining *diplomata* are crucial sources which demonstrate her involvement in various cities and institutions via land or financial donations, among other non-material types of support such as physical and administrative protection.

It is impossible to discuss the role of medieval women without discussing the model established by Jo Ann McNamara and Suzanne Wemple.³² This model asserted that as the rise of centralized royal authority grew in Europe, opportunities for women to assert their own authority declined; this conceptualization made women such as Matilda appear rare. McNamara offered an updated view, acknowledging that class and status affected whether or not medieval women could continue to access avenues of authority, such as land inheritance.³³ Still, McNamara and Wemple excluded Matilda, categorizing her as a 'forceful' woman who deviated from their model.³⁴

Heather J. Tanner's edited volume *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power, 1100-1400* has advanced the scholarship beyond this 'exceptional' model altogether by examining higher-born women and how they exercised their authority.³⁵ In the introduction, Tanner, Laura L. Gathagan, and Lois H. Huneycutt suggest that we should look beyond gender as the sole classification of a person's access to and use of authority, and instead focus on women's actions and political context to draw conclusions.³⁶ This model, which gathered

³² Jo Ann McNamara and Suzanne Wemple, 'The Power of Women through the Family in Medieval Europe: 500-1100', *Feminist Studies* 1, no. 3/4 (1973): 126-41.

³³ Jo Ann McNamara, 'Woman and Power through the Family Revisited', in *Gendering the Master Narrative: Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary Carpenter Eler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 17-30.

³⁴ McNamara and Wemple, 'The Power of Women through the Family in Medieval Europe: 500-1100', 134.

³⁵ Heather J. Tanner, ed., *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power, 1100-1400: Moving beyond the Exceptionalist Debate*, The New Middle Ages (New York: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2019).

³⁶ Heather J. Tanner, Laura L. Gathagan, and Lois L. Huneycutt, 'Introduction', in *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power, 1100-1400: Moving beyond the Exceptionalist Debate*, ed. Heather J. Tanner, The New Middle Ages (New York: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2019), 6-7.

information from a wider range of sources, is more tailored to the historic individual and thus more suited for this thesis than McNamara and Wemple's.

Both McCash's and Tanner's edited volumes address the various roles typically afforded to women, and how patronage was utilized by women in these roles.³⁷ Queenship was probably the most visible form of female patronage during the Middle Ages.³⁸ While this role does not exactly apply to Matilda, it came with a level of financial and authoritative autonomy from their husbands not seen in lower-class roles, which was also characteristic of the countess's status. Therefore, queenship is a useful reference point for assessing how Matilda may have used her patronage. This thesis will demonstrate that Matilda used her patronage as a political tool and did so to challenge the authority of the king. This use of patronage was typically reserved for queens or empresses rather than the wives of the middling classes, who were not afforded such patronage autonomy.³⁹

Jill Caskey has advanced an integrated approach to medieval patronage studies, one which includes both the ante- and post-natal stages of the creation of an object or building to address questions of a patron's intent and motivation, and how the subsequent object was received.⁴⁰ With this framework in mind, this thesis will examine both how Matilda influenced the creation of objects, and how, after they were created, she used them to influence others. Examining objects of Matilda's patronage will render evident a consistent employment of papal imagery within the objects and structures of Matilda's material patronage. Furthermore, this thesis identifies a pattern in Matilda's patronage that functioned to unite individuals and institutions within her domain under her authority and papal loyalty, in opposition to the king.

³⁷ Lois L. Huneycutt, "Proclaiming Her Dignity Abroad": The Literary and Artistic Network of Scotland, Queen of England 1100-1118', in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 155-74; Caviness, 'Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons'; McCash, 'The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women: An Overview'; Kristen L. Geaman, 'Beyond Good Queen Anne: Anne of Bohemia, Patronage, and Politics', in *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power, 1100-1400: Moving beyond the Exceptionalist Debate*, ed. Heather J. Tanner (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 67-89; Kathy M. Krause, 'From Mothers to Daughters: Literary Patronage as Political Work in Ponthieu', in *Medieval Elite Women and the Exercise of Power, 1100-1400: Moving beyond the Exceptionalist Debate*, ed. Heather J. Tanner (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 113-33; Tanner, Gathagan, and Huneycutt, 'Introduction.'

³⁸ Lois L. Huneycutt, 'Power: Medieval Women's Power through Authority, Autonomy, and Influence', in *A Cultural History of Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Kim M. Phillips, vol. 2 (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 153-78; Anne Duggan, ed., *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe: Proceedings of a Conference Held at King's College London, April 1995* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY, USA: Boydell Press, 1997); Michael R. Evans, *Inventing Eleanor: The Medieval and Post-Medieval Image of Eleanor of Aquitaine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); Therese Martin, ed., *Reassessing the Roles of Women as 'makers' of Medieval Art and Architecture*, Visualising the Middle Ages, volume 7 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012); Therese Martin, 'The Art of a Reigning Queen as Dynastic Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain', *Speculum* 80, no. 4 (2005): 1134-71; Lawrence, *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe*; Costambeys, *Power and Patronage in Early Medieval Italy*.

³⁹ McCash, 'The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women: An Overview', 16-8, 33.

⁴⁰ Caskey, 'Medieval Patronage and Its Potentialities', 28-30.

As Therese Martin has noted, art history as a discipline has struggled to allow medieval female subjects agency, and while this has improved recently, it still largely centres on expressions of devotion.⁴¹ This thesis proposes that beyond a statement of devotion, Matilda utilized objects which contained pro-papal iconography as gifts to induce loyalty within her territories. Additionally in certain instances, Matilda used her patronage to make statements about herself and to define the Canossan legacy.

Chapter One explores images of power and authority within Matilda's life and how her relationships to existing power structures were described in her biography, the *Vita Mathildis* (Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922). The author Donizo emphasized Matilda's ancestral ties and her allegiance to the Church to create distance between Matilda and the king. The chapter also unpacks how Matilda was perceived among her reforming peers and how these perceptions were reflected and amplified in the *Vita*, both textually and visually. It finally examines her extant documents to understand how Matilda conceived of her own authority, and how this was linked to the larger socio-political changes happening within her domain due to the papal/*regnum* power dispute.

Chapter Two examines Matilda's relationship to the eleventh-century papal reform, and how her allegiance to the papacy manifested itself within her patronage. This chapter focuses on three case studies: the *Vita Mathildis*, the *Relatio de Innovatione Ecclesie Sancti Geminiani* (Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11, fols. 1r-9v), and the *Gospels of Matilda* (New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492). These case studies demonstrate how Matilda both encouraged reform-minded iconography and how the objects themselves documented the culture of gift-giving practiced by her. The deployment of pro-papal iconography was intended to demonstrate Matilda's allegiance as well as encourage and reward the same sentiments in others. Within the *Vita Mathildis* visual allegories of papal primacy represent the earthly realm as subservient to the heavens, and thus the king to the pope. In the *Gospels of Matilda*, exegetical adaptations of the *Cleansing of the Temple* and the *Betrayal and Arrest of Christ* establish biblical precedents for the use of justified Christian force to punish heretics, both within and without the Church. The *Relatio* documented Matilda's gift of *pallia* to the body of Modena's patron saint in an attempt to cultivate pro-papal feelings within the city.

Chapter Three delves into how Matilda's support for papal supremacy extended to her support of justified Christian violence and the First Crusade. Though Matilda was listed by

⁴¹ Martin, 'Exceptions and Assumptions: Women in Medieval Art History', 6–7.

Pope Gregory VII as a key supporter in his 1074 call-to-arms in defence of the Church, the plan fell through and she never travelled to the Holy Land. Chapter Three argues that this crusading endeavour manifested itself instead through patronage, namely in San Lorenzo in Mantua, a centrally planned church probably constructed by Matilda. The chapter examines the overlap of crusading and armed pilgrimage in relation to the design and construction of this round church which may have drawn inspiration from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. This chapter also examines the relationship between the Holy Blood relic at Sant'Andrea and the bones of Longinus, housed at San Lorenzo. Alongside San Lorenzo's invocation of the Holy Sepulchre, the interplay of the two relics may have emulated an experience-based recreation of Jerusalem in Mantua. San Lorenzo's construction seems to have fulfilled Matilda's desire to experience a 'virtual' pilgrimage when she was unable to undertake an 'actual' pilgrimage, armed or otherwise, to the Holy Land.

Finally, Chapter Four investigates the burial monuments likely commissioned by Matilda for her mother, Beatrice, in Pisa, and her close advisor, Anselm II of Lucca, in Mantua. This chapter demonstrates that Matilda used these burials to assert specific ideas about herself and the values she championed during her life: piety, papal supremacy, the ideals of the eleventh-century papal reform, and the revival of *romanitas*. The chapter then turns to Matilda's afterlife and examines how it was initially shaped by the legacy Matilda crafted for herself. Combined with the nascent dispute regarding the ownership of the *terra Mathildis*, the reburial and mosaic pavement in the Santa Maria Chapel of San Benedetto constituted an effort by the Church to honour the countess while also asserting ownership of her lands. When Pope Urban VIII reburied Matilda at Saint Peter's five hundred years later, his own goals were paramount. The ownership of the *terra Mathildis* had become relevant to the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*, and with this in mind, Urban appropriated Matilda's body and legacy for his own goals.

The chapter ends by interrogating Francesco Maria Fiorentini's biography of the countess which was directly inspired by Urban VIII's narrow conceptualization of Matilda. Fiorentini's exaggerated description of Matilda's architectural contribution may have led to the mythologization of her material impact, the development of the '100 churches' myth, and as a result of this hyperbole, her dismissal as a serious patron by historians.

Broadly speaking, given the advancements of our understanding of female patronage, agency, and authority during the Middle Ages, a reassessment of one of the period's most important women is much needed. This thesis represents a novel approach to Matilda by unifying and applying these advancements in scholarship. This new presupposition views

Matilda as a player rather than a pawn. Thus, her patronage is now framed as a tool with which she attempted to execute certain goals. By combining an expanded knowledge of how women enacted patronage during the period, with a more individually tailored view of female authority during the Middle Ages, Matilda's impact as a patron can be reassessed. Though Matilda's defence of the papacy and papal reform has been observed by other scholars, this thesis will newly consider these actions through the lens of Matilda's personal agency. As such, Matilda's actions will be demonstrated to be a part of a programme of inculcation which included the sponsorship of objects and buildings to advocate these ideals. She provided administrative and physical protection to the localities which adhered to her ideals, prompting compliance in return for support. This compliance often manifested itself visually as a testament to the ideals, illustrating their perceived importance and desired longevity within her domain. Through the novel use of visual analysis of these objects combined with a close reading of contemporary documents, connections between Matilda, these objects, and the larger social and religious movements can be deduced. This thesis posits that Matilda used papally aligned objects as a form of diplomacy with which she could cultivate positive feelings towards the papacy rather than the king. Furthermore, Matilda used objects reflexively to make statements about herself, the Canossan Legacy, and her obedience to the Church. Thus, armed with an expanded concept of medieval female patronage, the connections between Matilda and the selected objects and buildings within her territory can be more accurately described as the result of strategic patronage intended to assert support of the papacy and submission to papal authority.

Chapter 1: Donizo's *Vita Mathildis* (Vat. Lat. 4922): Fashioning Matilda's Image

In order to explore Matilda's motivations for her patronage, contextualizing her within the major socio-political shifts of the eleventh-century papal reform is necessary. This chapter will use her biography, the *Vita Mathildis*, to draw out her relationships to Henry IV's *regnum*, and Gregory VII's papacy to unpack the multidimensionality of Matilda's behaviour beyond piety. The *Vita* strategically highlighted ancestral ties and Matilda's allegiance to the Church to create distance between her and the king. The chapter will also examine how Matilda was perceived among her reforming peers, as well as how Matilda conceived of her own authority within her documents and how she consciously detached from the *regnum's* authority, instead upholding and defending the papacy as the singular earthly power.

The earliest known manuscript of the *Vita Mathildis* (Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922) includes seven images of the countess. They are the only known contemporary visual representations of the countess, making the manuscript a crucial case study in how she fashioned her image during her lifetime. Begun during the last years of Matilda's life, the *Vita* is a three thousand-line epic poem set in leonine hexameters divided into two books, each comprised of twenty chapters. The first focuses on the ancestors of Matilda while the second discusses her life and accomplishments, emphasizing her acts of piety and defence of papal values. The completion of the main text can be fixed sometime before Matilda's death in July 1115, as the first addendum describes the death of the countess as having occurred during the book's binding, suggesting the main text of the *Vita* had been finished.⁴²

Vat. Lat. 4922 is likely the manuscript that was intended to be presented to Matilda.⁴³ While it is unclear whether the text was ever seen by the countess before her death, the text and images within the manuscript may represent the closest approximation to how Matilda intended her legacy to be presented and how it appeared to her contemporaries. Three other manuscripts are known which include later copies of the *Vita*. The earliest, now in the Biblioteca Statale di Lucca (MS. 2508), was made in the abbey of Frassinoro in 1234 at the instigation of the abbot Hugo and executed by the scribe Guido.⁴⁴ The abbey at Frassinoro was originally founded by Beatrice and Matilda in 1071 which may explain why they had an interest in having a copy

⁴² Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ed. Paolo Golinelli and Vito Fumagalli (Milan: Jaca Book, 2008), Book 2, ll. 1401–535.

⁴³ Golinelli, *L'Abbazia di Matilde: Arte e storia in un grande monastero dell'Europa Benedettina [1007-2007]*. *San Benedetto Po*, 31 agosto 2008 - 11 gennaio 2009, 111.

⁴⁴ Christoph Stiegemann et al., eds., *Canossa 1077: Erschütterung Der Welt: Geschichte, Kunst Und Kultur Am Aufgang Der Romanik* (München: Hirmer, 2006), 54.

there, though there is no obvious reason as to why it was copied at that date. The manuscript has been extensively damaged and only four illuminations remain, compared to the seven which appear in the Vatican manuscript. The extant illuminations do not differ greatly from their source in terms of figural arrangement.⁴⁵ There is also a fourteenth-century copy at the Biblioteca Panizzi (MS. Turri E52), a fifteenth-century copy held at the Biblioteca Civica in Modena (MS. B. IV.17), and one from the sixteenth century at the Biblioteca Comunale di Reggio Emilia (MS. E.52).⁴⁶

The author of the *Vita* was a Benedictine monk at the church of Sant'Apollonio at Canossa named Donizo (ca. 1070 – after 1136) who may have known the countess personally, though the extent of their relationship is unclear. By Donizo's own words, it is clear that the author intended to craft a legacy for the countess: 'Posteritas nostras tantam dominam volo noscat.'⁴⁷

Donizo drew inspiration from Virgil, Plato, and Horace, as well as Donatus's *Vita* of Virgil. Ian Stuart Robinson suggests that in addition to directly quoting and referencing these works, the text has syntactical parallels with various antique sources.⁴⁸ Donizo's dedicatory letter directly quotes Horace's *Epistolae*: 'Utpote Horacius Octaviano Augusto scribit: "Presenti tibi maturos largimur honores," id est, "te vivente, scribimus de te carmina."⁴⁹ By drawing upon this passage, Donizo likens his own authorial undertaking to that of Horace, saying he too shall give the appropriate honours to the still-living countess. In this construction, Donizo likens Matilda to Augustus, Roman emperor at the time of Christ's birth. Donizo then quotes a passage from Virgil's *Eclogues*, claiming that he could never forget the countess:

Ante leves ergo pascentur in ethere cervi, / Et freta destituent nudos in littore pisces, /
Ante pererratis amborum finibus exul / Aut Ararim Parthus bibet aut Germania Tigrim, /
/ Quam nostro illius labatur pectore vultus.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ For more information on this copy see: Federica Formiga, 'Le incisioni librerie raccontano Matilde di Canossa', *Paratesto: rivista internazionale*: 13, 2016, no. 13 (2016).

⁴⁶ Donizo, 'Vita Mathildis Comitissae', in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ed. Ludovico Antonio Muratori, vol. 5, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (Bologna: A. Forni, 1724), VI–XVIII.

⁴⁷ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, l. Book 1, 57. 'Because I want posterity to know of such a great lord.'

⁴⁸ I. S. Robinson, 'The Metrical Commentary on Genesis of Donizo of Canossa: Bible and Gregorian Reform', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 41 (1974): 8–9.

⁴⁹ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, 2–3; Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Horace, Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, ed. Henry Rushton Fairclough, Reprinted, The Loeb Classical Library 194 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 76. 'As Horace wrote for Octavius Augustus, "We offer you the honours that are due to you while you are still present with us" that is, we shall write songs about you while you live.'

⁵⁰ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, 2–3; Gregson Davis and Len Krisak, *Virgil's Eclogues* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 60–1, ll. 59–63. 'Sooner will the swift deer feed on air, and the seas leave the fish naked on shore, or the exiled Parthians drink the Arar, or the Germans the Tigris, than will his face and heart fade from my mind.'

These references offer some insight into Donizo's motives and his perception of Matilda. He implies that her important status compels him to write the *Vita*, both to honour Matilda within her lifetime and to preserve her memory. The dedicatory letter was written in 1114 or 1115, probably after Matilda had fallen ill and was possibly close to death, as the letter closes with a reference to her illness: 'Vita salusque vestra nostra est securitas et leticia, infirmitas autem debilitas et tristitia. Det vobis vitam, salutemque continuam, Salvatoris omnium misericordia. Amen.'⁵¹ The source of this quote, Virgil's *Eclogues I*, was composed as a dialogue between two men, Maliboeus and Tityrus, in the days after Julius Caesar's death. The men are grappling with the effects of the power vacuum and the displacement from their lands, though Tityrus, the speaker of the lines Donizo quoted, has been allowed to remain. Perhaps Donizo intentionally framed himself as Tityrus: though Matilda was gravely ill, Donizo hoped to remain in Canossa though there would be no heir to further her line, and likely great uncertainty after her death. By referencing both works, Donizo may have intended to demonstrate his eternal loyalty to Matilda. Donizo also references Virgil's *Aeneid* in Book II, Chapter Nineteen: 'Urbs avibus dives, degit sed gens ibi triplex' to convey the diversity of Mantua.⁵² He again refers to the *Aeneid* later in the chapter: 'Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat.'⁵³ These references contextualize and describe Mantua's realignment with the countess after earlier abandoning her for the Emperor Henry IV. Donizo casts Matilda in the role of the betrayed Dido, Queen of Carthage, and Mantua in the role of the repentant Aeneas. Donizo uses the parallel to suggest that the city's shift in allegiance was against their will. Robinson suggests that Donizo would have been familiar with these texts, arguing that Virgil and Horace would have been part of the *doctissimus poetarum*, a common source of grammatical education for monks during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁵⁴ The effect of citing these classical sources is that they lend legitimacy to Donizo's text while simultaneously associating Matilda with the glory of Roman rulers. In the case of Horace and Virgil, Donizo may have drawn on them to subvert Henry IV's imperial authority by instead inserting Matilda into the role. Thus, within

⁵¹ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Incipit Epistola. 'Your life and health are the reason for our happiness and security; your sickness and weakness the cause for our sadness. May the mercy of our saviour grant you continuous life and health. Amen.'

⁵² Donizo, Book 2, l. 1327; Virgil, *Aeneid*, ed. Frederick Ahl and Elaine Fantham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), X, ll. 201–2. The whole quote is: 'Mantua, dives avis; sed non genus omnibus unum: / gens illi triplex, populi sub gente quaterni' (Mantua, rich in ancestors, but not all of one race: there were three races there, under each race four tribes.)

⁵³ Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, l. 469; Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, l. 1343. 'She turned from him and kept her eyes fixed on the ground.'

⁵⁴ Robinson, 'The Metrical Commentary on Genesis of Donizo of Canossa: Bible and Gregorian Reform', 8–9; Karsten Friis-Jensen, 'The Reception of Horace in the Middle Ages', in *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*, ed. Stephen Harrison, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 393–4.

Donizo's writings she was not just Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, Duchess of Lorraine but infused with the greatness of Rome's first emperor and the enterprising Queen of Carthage.

1.1 Assessing Donizo's Authorial Intentions

While it is unclear whether Matilda herself commissioned the biography, there are aspects that suggest this to be the case, such as the dedication to her at the outset of the text. In the introduction to her edited volume on the cultural patronage of medieval women, June Hall McCash summarises the usefulness of manuscript dedications in explorations of patronage: 'At best we can say that dedication is an important clue, sometimes perhaps the only one, and probably stronger for women than for men, for writers would have little else to gain from most female dedicatees than their patronage.'⁵⁵ She further cautions against an overdependence on dedications as proof of patronage, but insists that the clarity modern historians often wish to see—a written or visual statement of who had commissioned the work—may have been redundant in a patron-poet relationship.⁵⁶ In the current case, the dedication and donation portrait which immediately follows it on folio 7v strongly suggest that Matilda may have been involved as a patron. However, the existence of a biography for a living, non-royal, non-sanctified individual is highly unusual; I have been unable to locate a similar text during this period. This uncommon nature might suggest that something prompted the text and that perhaps Donizo had his own motivations.

Donizo writes that his efforts were motivated by the recently restored ancestral tombs at Canossa: 'ut ea quae ex eis a senibus et veracioribus nostris temporibus viris nostra audierat parvitas.'⁵⁷ He mentions in the dedicatory letter that the ancestral tombs had been renovated just a few years earlier:

Cum ad clarorum principum mausoleum jam per quinque lustra nostra resideret humilitas, nullamque ex eis videret memoria quod apicum commendaret perpetuitas, accidit quando nuper vestri honoris sublimitas canossam deduci arcas iussit marmoreas ad tumulandum dignius eorum corpora.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ McCash, 'The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women: An Overview', 2–3.

⁵⁶ McCash, 3.

⁵⁷ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Incipit Epistola, 2–3. 'Of this same event came the age-old desire, inspired by the ardent zeal for our ancestors, to try and write, albeit inexperiencedly, poetry for our heroes so they would be paid attention.'

⁵⁸ Donizo, Incipit Epistola. 'When it comes to our most famous Canossan rulers, they have already laid in a humble state for twenty-five years, their state of longevity came to mind. Recommendations were made that when the illustrious tombs of Canossa were ordered to be refreshed, that the marble coffins be made worthy for their bodies to be reburied in them.'

In Paolo Golinelli's recent translation of the *Vita*, he gives 1111 as the commencement of the work.⁵⁹ Golinelli references Claudio Franzoni's analysis of the remaining sarcophagi remnants from Canossa as the basis.⁶⁰ Though in agreement with Golinelli's assessment, Michèle Spike, indicates that the start date of the text coincided with the countess's retreat to the mountains, fleeing from the incoming troops of Henry V.⁶¹ While this reading is not substantiated in Matilda's remaining documents, it is corroborated in a brief passage in the *Vita* which mentions a meeting with Henry V upon his first visit to the peninsula in 1111, though it does not describe the meeting's purpose.⁶²

Though this may explain what spurred the work's initial creation, what did Donizo hope to achieve by writing the biography? It is possible that Donizo produced this text to gain future patronage from the countess. Because the monk resided at the monastery of Sant'Apollonio, the patrimonial church of Canossa, he was likely a part of a long-standing patronage relationship between the monastery and the Canossan heirs. Given the laudatory nature of the text, Eugenio Riversi has concluded that it was intended to secure additional patronage from the countess, though he does not specify what type of patronage this might have been.⁶³ This idea has been widely accepted among scholars.⁶⁴ It seems likely that Donizo was inspired by the refurbishment of the burial sites at Canossa and was attempting to persuade the countess to be buried at her ancestral church, Sant'Apollonio at Canossa, rather than at her chosen burial site at the abbey at San Benedetto al Polirone near Mantua. Sant'Apollonio was the church and

⁵⁹ Donizo, IX–X.

⁶⁰ Claudio Franzoni, *Il 'Portico Dei Marmi' Le prime collezioni a Reggio Emilia e la nascita del Museo Civico* (Reggio Emilia: Documenti per La Storia Delle Arti, Dell'archeologia E Delle Scienze a Reggio Emilia, 1999), 18–22.

⁶¹ Michèle K. Spike, ed., *Matilda di Canossa (1046-1115): la donna che mutò il corso della storia = Matilda of Canossa (1046-1115): the woman who changed the course of history*, trans. Viviana Tonon (Firenze: Centro Di, 2016), 98.

⁶² Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, ll. 1257–9.

⁶³ Eugenio Riversi, *La memoria di Canossa: saggi di contestualizzazione della Vita Mathildis di Donizone*, Studi medioevali, N.S. / ETS 2 (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2013), 260–4.

⁶⁴ Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone'; Giuseppe Vecchi, 'Temi e momenti di scuola nella Vita Matildis di Donizone', in *Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963* (Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1964), 210–8; Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*; Paolo Golinelli, 'Donizone', in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, ed. Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana and Alberto Maria Ghisalberti (Rome: Treccani, 1992); Donizo, *Matilda e Canossa: il poema di Donizone*, ed. Ugo Bellochi and Giovanni Marzi (Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1970); Pericle Di Pietro, 'Leggendo Donizone: Malattia e morte di Matilde di Canossa', in *Studi matildici II: Atti e memorie del II Convegno di studi matildici, Modena – Reggio Emilia, 1-2-3 maggio 1970* (Studi matildici II: Atti e memorie del II Convegno di studi matildici, Modena – Reggio Emilia, 1-2-3 maggio 1970, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1971), 137–42; Robert Houghton, 'Reconsidering Donizone's Vita Mathildis (Again): Boniface of Canossa and the Emperor Conrad II', *Storicamente* 13 (2017); Robert Houghton, 'Reconsidering Donizone's Vita Mathildis: Boniface of Canossa and Emperor Henry II', *Journal of Medieval History* 41, no. 4 (October 2015): 388–408.

monastery founded by Matilda's great-grandfather, Adalbert Atto, as part of the Canossan castle complex built around 961, rendering it a place of ancestral importance. Evidence for this theory can be found throughout the text. Donizo praises Canossa and vilifies other cities, particularly those which rivalled Canossa in terms of personal importance to the countess. This seems to indicate that Donizo meant to change Matilda's own opinions regarding these cities. Among those cities are both Mantua (presumably including San Benedetto al Polirone, located just outside the city), and Pisa, the burial cities of Boniface and Beatrice, respectively.

Donizo personifies the Castle of Canossa and describes how she (the castle) need not fear any king, while praising the ancestors who had brought relics and donations to the church, an act which is illustrated within the manuscript.⁶⁵ This personification plays out in an extended allegory where the castle converses with a personified Mantua. Mantua is verbally defeated and intellectually humiliated by the superior Canossa.⁶⁶ Though Boniface was buried in Mantua and the city had long been faithful to the Canossan dynasty, this was not the case during all of Matilda's lifetime, as the city slipped out of her control for over a decade after Henry IV lured the city away with financial and protectionary incentives. Donizo constructed the conversation with a strong sense of 'good' and 'evil': all who opposed Matilda were evil (here, the Mantuans) and all who were allied with her were good (Canossa). This morally didactic, quasi 'it-narrative'⁶⁷ may have served to remind Matilda of the city's recent treachery, when, upon hearing the (false) news of her death, the Mantuans rioted to expel any of her supporters and allies.⁶⁸ It is possible that within this allegorical construct Donizo also meant to include the nearby San Benedetto al Polirone which is located about 16 kilometres from the centre of Mantua, though there is no evidence that the monastery was ever considered unfaithful to Canossa. The abbey was founded by her grandfather Tedald and enjoyed life-long patronage from the countess; though these connections rendered the site a spot of ancestral importance, Donizo makes no mention of it. Matilda made many grants to the abbey and Donizo may have known that she favoured it for her burial patronage, something Donizo may have wished to change.⁶⁹ Following a description of her mother Beatrice's death and burial in the last chapter

⁶⁵ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 1, ll. 986–1137; 397–429.

⁶⁶ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 986–1138.

⁶⁷ In studies of literature, it-narratives use an inanimate object to tell a story, typically in a moralizing or didactic fashion. Many thanks to Professor Mark Blackwell for introducing me to this term.

⁶⁸ Joan M Ferrante, American Council of Learned Societies, and ACLS Humanities E-Book (Organization), *To the Glory of Her Sex: Women's Roles in the Composition of Medieval Texts* (New York: American Council of Learned Societies, 2009).

⁶⁹ Matilde, Elke Goetz, and Werner Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica 2 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1998), 67: 200–3; 101: 276–7; 135: 344–6; Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone', 637–9.

of Book I, Donizo similarly disparages the city where Beatrice was buried, Pisa. Donizo describes the city as being unworthy of her remains, having been defiled by the pagan Turks and Libyans:

Dolor hic me funditus urit / Cum tenet urbs illam quae non est tam bene digna. / Qui
pergit Pisas, videt illic monstra marina. / Haec urbs paganis, Turclis, Libicis quoque
Parthis, / Sordida! Chaldei sua lustrant litora tetri. / Sordibus a cunctis sum munda
Canossa! Sepulcri / Atque locus pulcher mecum! Non expedit urbes / Quaerere periuras,
patrantes crimina plura.⁷⁰

The disparaging of these cities in the *Vita* may indicate that Donizo intended the text to persuade Matilda to choose a Canossan burial. Donizo disparaged the cities where her parents were buried (Mantua and Pisa) to elevate the comparative standing of Canossa. In the posthumous dedicatory letter Donizo addresses Matilda's choice to be buried at San Benedetto rather than at Canossa. It acknowledges that she did not entirely forget Canossa and bequeathed to it an important property at Felina which would generate future income.⁷¹ Donizo also asks Canossa's patron-saint Apollonius to forgive Matilda's rejection:

Pastor Apolloni Mathildim spernere noli, / Sit licet iniustum quod respuit ipsa
sepulcrum / Quod tua fert aedes, quo patres eius inherent, / Ast altare tuum tamen haec
coluit quia multum, / Ante pium regem veniam sibi posce libenter.⁷²

Donizo's framing of Matilda's decision as a rejection of Sant'Apollonio suggests a deeper concern than that of an objective documentarian. This aside suggests Donizo's emphasis on the ancestral tombs at Canossa in the *Vita* was ineffective at changing Matilda's mind regarding her burial patronage, as Donizo had been working on the *Vita* for several years in advance of her death. Matilda's choice, however, was not actually unusual or deviating from any established burial pattern as both her mother and father were buried outside Canossa, Beatrice in Pisa and Boniface in Mantua, suggesting that the tradition to which Donizo referred was not as strong as he implied.

⁷⁰ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book I, ll. 1368–75. 'It is painful to see a city that is unworthy of her. Those who go to Pisa can see the monsters that come from the sea: this pagan city is filthy and even Turks and Libyans and the Chaldeans circle its shores. I, Canossa, am clean from all filth and have a beautiful burial place in me [for her]. It is not advisable to seek out such unreliable cities, where so many crimes are committed.'

⁷¹ Donizo, ll. 1482–6. *Amplificare studens tunc aecclesias bene plures, / Non est oblita quin aecclesiam Canusiam, / Semper cara sibi fuit, illius atque propinquis: / Eius quo circa tribuit sub iure Filinam, / Egregiam curtem, dantem fruges sat habunde.* 'Seeking to strengthen, much as she could not forget the church of our Canossa, which was always dear to her and to her ancestors, she granted to them the Felina property, an important country estate, which yields abundant revenue.'

⁷² Donizo, Book 2, ll. 1525–9. 'Shepherd Apollonius, do not scorn Matilda, even though it is unjust for her to reject the tomb which resides in your home, where her ancestors lie, but because she has greatly venerated your altar, she calls for her forgiveness before the pious King.'

Robert Houghton has argued that Donizo's concern was more pressing than patronage and that he wrote to legitimize the countess' authority against citizen uprisings in the 1110s.⁷³ He posits that this extends to Donizo's description of her ancestry; by portraying Boniface as a lawful benefactor of Henry III, Donizo aimed to ward off potential claims from Henry V, the heir to the Henry IV who had stripped Matilda of her titles and land.⁷⁴ Because the relationship between Matilda and the *regnum* was newly mended, Donizo may have written to reinforce her family's historic claim to her titles, and thus legitimize Matilda's own claim to power. This reading is particularly persuasive when considered in conjunction with the legal and military pressure on Matilda exerted by both Emperor Henry IV, and to a lesser extent his son Henry V, to forfeit her lands due to her unwavering support for the papacy. By emphasizing her patrimonial inheritance, Donizo could claim that Matilda's authority (and thus her right to her lands) stemmed not from the illegitimate Henry IV but from his father Henry III who had given control to Boniface.

This construct, as Houghton suggests, would have been useful in dissuading Henry V from supporting the imperial claim to her land.⁷⁵ Without this justification to invalidate Henry's revocation, all of Matilda's donations after 1081 would have been perceived as legally invalid. The *Vita* may have been a way to legitimize and emphasize the dynastic transference of power and land, from Boniface to Matilda and thus, make illegitimate the claims made by the *regnum* on her lands. A patrimonially motivated argument such as the one employed in the *Vita* solved the potential inheritance issues for those to whom she had made dedications. Furthermore, this argument theoretically protected Canossa from legal seizure by the emperor, who would have certainly cast out its residents due to their pro-papal leanings. This motivation does not exclude Donizo's intention to seek further patronage. Rather, the two may have been closely intertwined. If Donizo intended to attract Matilda's patronage, he needed to make sure any donation made to Sant' Apollonio would be valid after Matilda's death. Thus, though the larger goal of the text was likely to encourage patronage from the countess, it also needed to make sure any future patronage could be defended from imperial claims.

1.2 Accumulating and Consolidating Power through Inheritance

⁷³ Houghton, 'Reconsidering Donizone's *Vita Mathildis*', 390–7.

⁷⁴ Houghton, 392.

⁷⁵ Houghton, 394; Houghton, 'Reconsidering Donizone's *Vita Mathildis* (Again)', 7.

Though Donizo does not address the uniqueness of her authority, Matilda existed in a space inhabited by few women in the Italian peninsula in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries. To understand the distinctive character of her rule, one must inspect the social mechanisms of inheritance and marriage intersected by the complicating factor of her gender. Matilda did not marry into her landownership as many of her counterparts did; rather, she rose to power as the sole surviving heir to her father's territory.⁷⁶ Matilda was born in 1046 to Margrave Boniface III of Tuscany (c. 985 – d. 1052) and Beatrice of Lorraine (c. 1020 – d. 1076). Though the exact date and location remain unknown, she was likely born in Northern Italy, near Lucca, within the territory controlled by her father. Her father was part of the aristocratic landed class; he was Margrave of Tuscany, as well as the Count of Reggio, Modena, Mantua, Brescia, and Ferrara, titles Matilda would later inherit.⁷⁷ Her mother Beatrice of Lorraine was also of the landed gentry and shared common ancestors with the German imperial family—her mother's sister was Empress Gisela—making Henry III and Henry IV her matrilineal cousins.⁷⁸

Though Matilda was descended from other well-off landowners on her mother's side, it was Boniface who was largely responsible for expanding the family holdings that Matilda would eventually inherit. Boniface received his Tuscan office from Conrad II (1024-1039) in late 1027/early 1028 in exchange for Boniface's support in Conrad's bid for the imperial crown.⁷⁹ In the decade after his ascension to the margraveship, Boniface expanded his land holdings throughout the Apennines and married Beatrice in 1037/8 after his first wife Richilda of Bergamo died childless in 1034.⁸⁰

1.2.1 How Matilda Inherited Her Titles

When Boniface died in May 1052, his patrimony passed to his son Frederick, Matilda's older brother. Frederick was too young to rule so Beatrice assumed control of the lands as regent to

⁷⁶ For a more nuanced discussion of property and inheritance rights afforded to women during this period see: McNamara and Wemple, 'The Power of Women through the Family in Medieval Europe: 500-1100'; McNamara, 'Woman and Power through the Family Revisited.'

⁷⁷ Alfred Overmann, *La contessa Matilde di Canossa: sue proprietà territoriali storia delle terre Matildiche dal 1115 al 1230*, trans. Lino L. Ghirardini (Rome: Multigrafica, 1980); Aldo A. Settia, 'Castelli e villaggi nelle terre canossiane tra X e XIII secoli', in *Studi matildici. Atti e memorie del III Convegno di studi Matildici. Reggio Emilia, 7-9 ottobre 1977* (Studi matildici. Atti e memorie del III Convegno di studi Matildici. Reggio Emilia, 7-9 ottobre 1977, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1978), 281–307.

⁷⁸ Elke Goetz, *Beatrix von Canossa und Tuszien: eine Untersuchung zur Geschichte des 11. Jahrhunderts*, Vorträge und Forschungen Sonderband 41 (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1995).

⁷⁹ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 1, ll. 498–581.

⁸⁰ Valerie Eads, 'The Geography of Power: Matilda of Tuscany and the Strategy of Active Defense', in *Crusaders, Condottieri, and Cannon: Medieval Warfare in Societies around the Mediterranean*, ed. Donald J. Kagay and L. J. Andrew Villalon, History of Warfare, v. 13 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 357–9.

the young margrave.⁸¹ Regency was by its very nature an insecure position of power; compounded by the perceived deficiency of women as effective rulers, Beatrice faced usurpation if she did not act decisively to conserve what Boniface had built up. A contemporary example of Agnes and Henry IV reveals the potential dangers of regency during this period.⁸² According to Eva-Maria Butz' analysis of Agnes's regency, queen regents had both a duty and right to be involved in leadership but could not definitively stake a legal claim to do so.⁸³ Agnes' regency ended when Archbishop Anno abducted the young king and stole the regalia in 1062.⁸⁴ Such a dramatic turn of events could have easily applied to Beatrice in her regency. To stave off far-removed claimants and reinforce her ownership, in 1054 Beatrice married her distant relative Godfrey of Lower Lorraine to further secure her property.⁸⁵ By 1055 Frederick had died, and without other male heirs, the allodial property reverted to the control of Beatrice and her new husband. Had Beatrice been unmarried when young Frederick died, the lands would have reverted to the closest male relative of Boniface.

Inheritance practices during this period heavily favoured men, who were perceived as valuable labourers or warriors and were in high demand as a result. Ironically, because of this disproportionately high value of male heirs, and the often imperilled status afforded them, the odds of female inheritance during this period were remarkably high due to their relatively greater chance of survival.⁸⁶ Karl Leyser's landmark work *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society: Ottonian Saxony* discovered that noble women, by virtue of being barred from many physical pursuits such as physical combat or labour intensive jobs, had a higher rate of post-adolescence survival, and were thus able to mitigate their disadvantages in inheritance schemes.⁸⁷ The survey showed that thirty-four noble women outlived one or more husband, compared to eleven who did not. Similarly, of the same group, fourteen sisters survived

⁸¹ Goez, *Beatrix von Canossa und Tuszien*, 11–29; Eva-Maria Butz, 'Empress Agnes of Poitou (1043-1077): Reflections on the Legal Basis of Her Regency', in *Less Favoured - More Favoured: Proceedings from Conference on Gender in European Legal History, 12th - 19th Centuries, September 2004*, ed. Grethe Jacobsen et al. (Copenhagen: The Royal Library, 2005), 2–3; I. S. Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany, 1056-1106* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 28–42; H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 80.

⁸² Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany, 1056-1106*, 30–6.

⁸³ Butz, 'Empress Agnes of Poitou (1043-1077): Reflections on the Legal Basis of Her Regency', 1–2.

⁸⁴ Butz, n. 18.

⁸⁵ Eads, 'The Geography of Power: Matilda of Tuscany and the Strategy of Active Defense', 359; David J. Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, Gender in History (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), 44.

⁸⁶ Jo Ann McNamara, 'Canossa and the Ungendering of the Public Man', in *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, ed. Constance H. Berman, Rewriting Histories (New York: Routledge, 2005), 84.

⁸⁷ Karl Leyser, *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society: Ottonian Saxony* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 67; K. Leyser, 'Maternal Kin in Early Medieval Germany. A Reply', *Past & Present*, no. 49 (1970): 126–34.

compared to nine brothers.⁸⁸ As the sole surviving heir, Matilda was in a particularly strong, though not invulnerable, position to inherit and administer her father's lands.

Jo Ann McNamara has posited that a woman's rights grew throughout the marriage, particularly if she had inherited property.⁸⁹ She further characterised married women during this period as 'peace-weavers' who enacted backdoor alliances and ceasefires through marriage and motherhood.⁹⁰ She describes the system as women at work in a patriarchal framework that valued the authority of fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers. The women within this framework identified themselves in relation to their male kin—mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters. McNamara argues that though this subclass existed for women, they were capable of diplomacy in ways superior to their male counterparts, and thus were the true influencers of the time. While McNamara attempts to pattern these 'peace-weavers' as makers of their own destiny, women were often unable to make their own decisions regarding marriage; both of Matilda's marriages qualify here, one was arranged by Beatrice, while the other was strongly advised by Pope Urban II. While it is true these marriages conveyed certain diplomatic advantages to the women involved, they were not the true weavers but rather threads in a loom largely controlled by men.

1.2.2 Matilda and Marriage

Donizo's emphasis on ancestry is particularly relevant considering the potential impact Matilda's marriages could have had on her inheritance had her circumstances been different. Indeed, throughout Matilda's thirty-nine years of leadership she continuously managed her lands without interference despite her two marriages which, according to practices of the time, should have decreased her autonomy over the region. In late 1069, Beatrice's second husband, the elder Godfrey, became gravely ill in Verdun. Beatrice, in fulfilling a pact made at the outset of their marriage in 1054, brought Matilda to Godfrey's deathbed to marry his son (and her stepbrother) Godfrey IV. This was a common practice during this period to ensure marriages for older women such as Beatrice. Remarried women were afforded greater societal and legal protections as well as financial support, though this often came at a price.⁹¹ Previously married women sometimes had existing children which potentially led to inheritance disputes, and tended to be older and less fertile, which jeopardized their ability to produce an heir for their

⁸⁸ McNamara, 'Canossa and the Ungendering of the Public Man', 85.

⁸⁹ McNamara and Wemple, 'The Power of Women through the Family in Medieval Europe: 500-1100', 131.

⁹⁰ McNamara, 'Woman and Power through the Family Revisited', 26–8.

⁹¹ McNamara, 'Canossa and the Ungendering of the Public Man', 83–100.

new marriage.⁹² To mitigate such circumstances, agreements were made to enhance the appeal of widows. Such an arrangement ensured that after Beatrice's death, Boniface's lands would pass to the heir of her second husband rather than a distant male heir of Beatrice. Theoretically, when Beatrice promised Matilda's hand in marriage to Godfrey IV, she ensured that the male heir of her new husband—and thus, his family—would be entitled to Boniface's lands even if their union did not bear children. In reality, this manoeuvre guaranteed that Boniface's landholdings were concentrated in the hands of Matilda and would still be controlled by her.

Their marriage was, by all accounts, short-lived. There is no record of either party seeking an annulment and it was probably simply dissolved. After the death of their only child named Beatrice in 1071, Godfrey IV left the peninsula without making claim to any of the Canossan lands. Contemporary Chronicler Hubert recorded their separation:

Seductus ille spe conciliandae sibi coniugis, praefatam capsam eburneam cum reliquiis abbati violenter abstulit et Mathildi retulit, relicto tamen altari quod fuerat papae Iohannis. Sed nec sic quidem apud eam maritalem gratiam optinuit, spretusque ab ea et inactus ab Italia Lotharingiam rediit.⁹³

In February 1076, Godfrey IV died; just seven weeks later, Beatrice also succumbed to illness and died. Had Beatrice died first, Godfrey IV would have been legally entitled to the entirety of Beatrice's lands. Due to their earlier estrangement, this would have left Matilda with no recourse to her patrimonial homeland. It was this arrangement and subsequent order of deaths that allowed Matilda to assume full control of the lands.

Matilda ruled alone until the late 1080s when Pope Urban II took the papal throne and urged Matilda to seek remarriage. Urban helped negotiate her marriage in 1088/9 to the young Welf V of Bavaria in order to further upset Henry IV's power base.⁹⁴ Her marriage to powerful family north of the Alps likely disrupted the precarious balance between Henry IV and the network of powerful families who supported him. As with her marriage to Godfrey, her second marriage was short-lived and ended in late 1094 or early 1095. It is possible that Welf's departure came upon his realization that he would not inherit her lands, as they had already been donated to the papacy.⁹⁵ Soon after the marriage's dissolution, Welf and his father

⁹² McNamara and Wemple, 'The Power of Women through the Family in Medieval Europe: 500-1100', 129.

⁹³ Huberti Andaginensis, 'Chronicon Sancti Huberti Andaginensis', ed. L. C. Bethmann and E. Wattenbach, *Scriptores* 8 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1847), 583. 'That man, seduced by the hope of uniting his spouse to himself, violently took away the aforementioned ivory box with the remains of the abbot and returned them to Mathildis, albeit to the abandoned altar built for Pope John. But not even with this act did he regain her marital favour and having been rejected by her and expelled from Italy, he returned to Lorraine.'

⁹⁴ Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany, 1056-1106*, 280.

⁹⁵ Robinson, 295.

abandoned the papal reform and returned north accompanied by Henry IV, who had been unable to leave the peninsula due to earlier interference from Matilda and Welf.

Married women were expected to forgo familial bonds and essentially choose (inasmuch as the marriage process was choice-based) their kin and allegiance.⁹⁶ Matilda bucked this trend and retained strong ties to her biological family, even throughout her marriages. This relationship can be seen in her documents where despite being married, Matilda signed her name as a relation of Boniface and Beatrice.⁹⁷ Godfrey IV is only mentioned once while living, and then once again in memoriam after his death.⁹⁸ From the outset of Matilda's first recorded charter, Matilda and Beatrice are recorded as 'Nos Beatrix, filia quondam Federici, atque Matilda, filia quondam Bonifacii, mater et filia, comitisse ac ducatrices.'⁹⁹ Though this may have been done to syntactically parallel Beatrice's relation to her father Frederick II, Duke of Upper Lorraine, the charter conspicuously omits the only living male heir entitled to the ducal title: Godfrey.

Where Godfrey made hardly any impact on the content and proceedings of the text, her second husband Welf was more conventionally referenced as possessing the ducal title. Her second husband assumed the ducal title in three charters from 1089 or 1090 to 1095 where Matilda is referred to as *comitissa* (countess).¹⁰⁰ Though it may appear that she wholly surrendered the title to her young husband, only four charters survive from the marriage period, and even then, one dated 1092 omits Welf altogether.¹⁰¹ Addressed to San Benedetto Po, the charter intended to make reparations for damages done by the 'persecution of the tyrant Henry IV.'¹⁰² Given the use inflammatory nature of the charter, it may be that Matilda did not to involve her husband in such a public declaration of her opposition to Henry IV. This may have been indicative of Welf's remaining royal sympathies, as he would align himself with Henry IV after the dissolution of their marriage.¹⁰³ With such a small sample size of less than one charter per year, it is difficult to draw any conclusions as to their power dynamic, but the 1092

⁹⁶ Nash, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda*, 17–20.

⁹⁷ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 1: 31–5.

⁹⁸ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 9: 55–7; 28: 104–7.

⁹⁹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 1: 31–5.

¹⁰⁰ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 42: 136–9, 43:139–41, 45: 143–5.

¹⁰¹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 44: 142–3.

¹⁰² Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 44: 143. 'Qui prefatus abas de monasterio suo propter persecucionem Einrici tyranni congregacionem fugiens apud predictam commitissam in montanis sustentatus est.'

¹⁰³ Lino L. Ghirardini, *Storia critica di Matilde di Canossa: problemi (e misteri) della più grande donna della storia d'Italia*, ed. Harald Zimmermann, vol. 111, Deputazione di storia patria per le antiche provincie modenesi, Biblioteca nuova serie (Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1989), 159.

charter suggests that Matilda was still free to make large donations without the presence or support of her husband if she chose.

1.2.3 Visualizing Inherited Authority in the *Vita Mathildis*

The apparent importance of kinship to Matilda and the relative unimportance of her marriages was not lost on her biographer Donizo, as he emphasized Matilda's ancestry throughout the text. While such attention was a typical feature of medieval *vitae*, it may have also served to make a wider point regarding the source of Matilda's titles and power. In the *Vita Mathildis*, five out of the seven full-page illuminations are dedicated to the familial heritage of the countess, while only one scene depicts an event from Matilda's life.¹⁰⁴ These illuminations complement the text of the *Vita*'s first book and illustrate each successive generation of Boniface's paternal family as the text describes them. Alongside the text, these images provided a vital visual link to an earthly authority besides Henry IV's *regnum*.

The first ancestral illumination appears at the outset of Book I, Chapter Two (fol. 19r, Figure 1) which describes how Matilda's great-grandfather Adalbert Atto obtained the relics of Saints Victor and Corona, and of the Bishop-Saint Apollonius. The illumination is laid out in black ink and utilizes minimal colours. Bordered by a foliate design, the image is divided into two registers by a band decorated in a fan pattern. In the upper half, the king presents to Adalbert Atto the relics of Saints Victor and Corona, with the inscription: *Corpora Sanctorum Rex Attoni dedit horum*.¹⁰⁵ Although Atto kneels before the king in a position of subservience, he is still the recipient of a significant gift, suggesting that a positive reciprocal relationship exists between the progenitor of the Canossan dynasty, and the *regnum*. The lower half of the illumination shows Godfrey (Bishop of Brescia) cutting off the right arm of the deceased Saint Apollonius. The saint wears a blue chasuble which matches the blue tomb in the lower right corner. Both Apollonius and Godfrey don *pallia*, the liturgical vestment bestowed on bishops and archbishops as a symbol of their obedience to papal authority. Rather than a mitre, Godfrey is tonsured which may suggest he had not yet become bishop. On either side are two unnamed monks holding large candlesticks and a thurible, indicating Godfrey obtained his relic shortly after the saint's death and funerary service. The immediacy of the scene suggests Godfrey's

¹⁰⁴ The full-page illuminations occur on fols. 7v, 19r, 20v, 21v, 28v, 30v, and 49r. There is one small miniature on 76r of Peter and Paul. There are forty-seven decorated initials, which range in size and relative decorative complexity. It is unclear whether the donation scene on folio 7v actually occurred and if Matilda was ever presented with the manuscript in any form; it is also possible the scene is fictive.

¹⁰⁵ 'The king gave Atto the relics of these saints.'

eagerness to acquire the relic, both honouring the deceased saint, and Canossa. The figure to the right of Apollonius, the only figure in the scene without religious garb, may again be Atto who founded Sant'Apollonio at Canossa in 961 and was buried there upon his death in 988. This is suggested by the visual similarities and positioning between the two registers of the illumination: both figures are centrally positioned, left-facing and have the same hairstyle. In both scenes, Atto handles the relics with clothed hands, and bows in deference to the figures of authority—in the top scene, to the king, and in the bottom, to the bishop. The lower scene is accompanied by the inscription 'Membra secat Sancti Gotfredus dans ea patri,' which directly attributes the acquisition of the relic to Godfrey.¹⁰⁶ These scenes serve not only to bolster Matilda's illustrious familial ties but also to emphasize the connection between her heritage at the monastery of Sant'Apollonio at Canossa and the precious relics held there.

The next illumination appears on fol. 20v (Figure 2) and shows two generations of Matilda's ancestors. The scene appears between the introduction to, and the text of the third chapter itself which tells of the succession of Tedald and his foundation of the monastery at San Benedetto al Polirone. The image is divided into five sections by a loggia-like arcade, and again features a restricted colour palette, here predominantly consisting of green and blue. On the upper level appears Adalbert Atto (left), and his wife Hildegard (right), each of whom is identified by an accompanying inscription; this level represents Matilda's paternal great-grandparents. Both figures are individually seated beneath an arch. Adalbert sits on an elaborate rectangular chair with a green cushion and eagle-headed corners. Hildegard, whose head is covered, sits on a delicate faldstool with claw feet. Both of them hold a floriated stem. This visual motif may be used throughout the text to indicate the respective chain of power as a continually repeated attribute. The branch may also be a visual reference to the exaltation of Palm Sunday, where celebrants followed in Christ's footsteps to Jerusalem.¹⁰⁷ If so, the motif not only binds together the successive generations but also explicitly ties them to an invocation of the Holy Land. Below Atto and Hildegard are their children, from left to right, Rudolf, Godfrey and Tedald, each identified by a label. Both Rudolf and Tedald gesture towards the enthroned Godfrey, though only Tedald is holding a red stem similar to those of Atto and Hildegard, perhaps suggestive of his place as first in the line of succession. Godfrey is now presented as Bishop of Brescia and is identified by the label *Episcopus*. He wears a blue chasuble, a pallium decorated with red crosses, and is shown under a decorated arch with a

¹⁰⁶ 'Godfrey cuts the limbs of the Saint and gives them to his father.'

¹⁰⁷ Max Harris, *Christ on a Donkey – Palm Sunday, Triumphal Entries, and Blasphemous Pageants*, Early Social Performance (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019), 48.

crozier in his left hand. Blessing with his right hand, Godfrey is seated on a faldstool decorated with beast heads and feet. This image emphasises the beginning of Matilda's lineage and the origins of the Canossan dynasty. Taken with the following illumination, just two pages later, it creates a continuous chain of ancestors which leads to Boniface and Beatrice and culminates in Matilda in the final illumination.

The third illumination of Matilda's ancestors is on fol. 21v (Figure 3) and appears at the outset of Chapter Four which describes Tedald, his wife, and his three children. Following the previous illumination's organization, it uses a top-down hierarchy to communicate the genealogical sequence of the figures with the older generation—Tedald and Julia—shown above the younger one—Tedald, Boniface, and Conrad. Unlike the previous illuminations a wider palette is used to decorate the figures, now including hues of red and gold. Tedald and Julia are both referred to with their titles, *marchio* and *comitissa* respectively, and have assumed the positions of Atto and Hildegard, both figuratively and literally. Both figures hold a type of leafy stem, sit on elaborate thrones with columnal stiles topped with foliated capitals, and wear sumptuously decorated garments. On the lower level are Tedald (Bishop of Arezzo, identified as *Episcopus*), Boniface (Matilda's father), and Conrad. Both Conrad and Boniface hold a leafy stem, again possibly to signify inheritance. While the interpretation of the leafy stem as a signifier of inheritance appears to be complicated by two inheritors, Conrad may have been depicted with this object due to his early death. Ultimately, because Boniface inherited the titles and lands of Tedald, Conrad's possession of the leafy stem might suggest a special exception to the visual motif. Boniface gestures towards the younger Tedald, who in return holds out his hand in a gesture of blessing. Both Tedald and Boniface have gold linings on their garments, though Tedald also has a golden pallium over a blue chasuble. Tedald, crozier in hand, is seated on a faldstool with beast heads and feet. The lower portion of this image is particularly suggestive, given the apparent blessing of Boniface by his brother Bishop Tedald, and Boniface's returned gesture which may represent mutual support between Boniface and the Church. Furthermore, it demonstrates the worthiness of the Canossan line as it had borne both spiritual leaders such as Godfrey and the younger Tedald, as well as earthly leaders such as Atto, Tedald, Boniface, and most importantly, Matilda.

The next two ancestry illuminations are full-page portraits of Boniface on fol. 28v (Figure 4) and Beatrice on fol. 30v (Figure 5). Boniface's portrait appears at the beginning of Chapter Nine, with the chapter heading written at the bottom of the page in between his feet and the legs of his throne: 'Cuius staturae et cuius qualitatis extitit Bonefacius, et quid de ipso

Sibilla Prophetizavit.’¹⁰⁸ Along the left edge of the image is the inscription: ‘Te redimat sother Bonefaci Marchio Duxque.’¹⁰⁹ Boniface holds a palm frond in his right hand while his left hand grips his ornately decorated cloak, edged with gold and set with gemstones. He dons a gold domed cap also decorated with embroidery and gemstones.

Beatrice’s portrait is located between the header and the body text of Chapter Ten. Above the illumination is the inscription ‘Det Deus in claris cameris tibi stare Beatrix.’¹¹⁰ The header of the chapter reads: ‘Cum quanta gloria et honore duxit Dux et Marchio Bonefacius illustrem Ducatricem Beatricem.’¹¹¹ Beatrice is similarly depicted seated on an ornately decorated throne with a footrest, wearing elaborately jewelled garments, and holding a red flower, similar to those held by young Tedald (fol. 19v) and Julia (fol. 21v). Her robes have broad, elaborately decorated edging, simulating bejewelled gold-thread fabric. Her round cap is also made of cloth of gold. Beatrice’s throne appears more ornately decorated and features a floriated design.

Compared to the previous illuminations, these full-length portraits have the finest detail and ornate use of pattern and colour. Both Beatrice and Boniface are backed by a plane of blue that frames and distinguishes the subjects, and probably indicates the back of the thrones upon which each subject is seated, although they might also represent cloths of honour which form the canopy of a baldachin. Similarly, both thrones have diagonally-stripped columns topped with stylized leafy elements. There is a sense of continuity between Boniface and Beatrice’s portraits, and it is significant that they appear in sequential order. Within Matilda’s lifetime, the power transferred first from Boniface, then to Beatrice who co-ruled with Matilda, and then upon Beatrice’s death, to Matilda herself.

These ancestral depictions did not arise in a vacuum, so it is worth looking to see if there are visual precedents that the *Vita*’s artist may have been drawing on. The seated portraits of Beatrice and Boniface are likely inspired by images of enthroned rulers, particularly of the Ottonian and Carolingian period. The form was typically reserved for royalty such as imperial portraiture in the late-tenth century *Registrum Gregorii* (Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS. 14 bis) (Figure 6). The portrait of Otto II now at Chantilly, while not novel in its approach to depicting rulers, shows the king surrounded by subordinates—in this case receiving homage from the four provinces of his territory—and originally appeared within a collection of writings from

¹⁰⁸ ‘What moral stature and character stand out in Boniface, and Sibyl who had prophesized about him.’

¹⁰⁹ ‘May the Saviour redeem you, O Boniface, Duke and Margrave.’

¹¹⁰ ‘May God grant you, illustrious Beatrice, rest in his celestial chambers.’

¹¹¹ ‘Duke and Margrave Boniface led the illustrious Duchess Beatrice with much glory and honour.’

Pope Gregory I. Though the gift-giving aspect does not apply to Boniface or Beatrice, the depiction in the Vatican manuscript of enthroned leaders would have signalled royalty and authority. The seated position in folios 20v and 21v might suggest that the elder figures (who were presumably the title holders) and clergy are of equal but different stature which is denoted by their different types of chair. This internal logic within the manuscript dictates that both Boniface and Beatrice be depicted as seated because when their portraits appear in the manuscript, they had already assumed their positions of authority and power, replacing the previous generation of rulers.

Similarly, the depiction of the foundational ancestors of Canossa as in fol. 20v may have been influenced by the portrait of King Astolfo that appears in the eleventh-century *Codex Matritensis Leges Langobardorum* (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS. 413, fol. 16r, Figure 7). The manuscript, made in late-tenth or early-eleventh century Southern Italy, depicts the foundation of the Lombards and provides the basis of their legal code.¹¹² The text of the manuscript, copied several times in the tenth and eleventh centuries, extensively documents the multigenerational chain of inherited power. King Rothari and other members of the royal entourage are gathered under a series of stacked arches similar to the way Atto, Hildegard, and their children are organized in the *Vita*. While the arrangement of arches varies between the two manuscripts, the porticos under which they are arranged function as honorific niches and act as potent symbols of legitimacy and the right to rule. However, it is unknown if Donizo would have ever seen this text. It may be more likely that the two manuscripts were referencing a shared visual signifier of authority.

Kim Sexton writes on this motif, termed *laubia*, as a development of Carolingian architecture that seemingly bridges the evolutionary gap between the Roman *porticus* and the late medieval loggia.¹¹³ She traces the etymology from the Old High German word for a porch or small lodge, to the Latin neologism *laubia*, from which the Italian term *loggia* would eventually be derived. Sexton explicitly ties the appearance of porticoed architecture with the rhetoric of self-governance in the Early Communal period in Italy.¹¹⁴ She asserts that one of the key functions of the civic loggia was to act as a public space in which citizens of all classes

¹¹² Jesús Domínguez Bordona, *Manuscritos con pinturas: notas para un inventario de los conservados en colecciones públicas y particulares de España* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1933); Hubert Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium regum Francorum manuscripta: Überlieferung und Traditionszusammenhang der fränkischen Herrschererlasse* (München: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1995), 99–100.

¹¹³ K. Sexton, 'Justice Seen: Loggias and Ethnicity in Early Medieval Italy', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 68, no. 3 (2009): 309.

¹¹⁴ Kim Sexton, 'Political Portico: Exhibiting Self-Rule in Early Communal Italy', *The Art Bulletin* 97, no. 3 (July 2015): 260.

could witness the development of ‘good government.’¹¹⁵ The visual pairing of classicizing arches and communal participation acted as a strong method of social cohesion. At the same time, she identifies the loggia as a visual cue for the execution of justice in Carolingian manuscripts.¹¹⁶ Their appearance corresponded to the judicial reforms of the Carolingian period which necessitated a more open and participatory physical setting. Though Sexton does not draw any conclusions regarding the depiction of the *laubia* in manuscripts, it seems that the motif only appeared after the architectural feature had already been embraced as part of the built environment for governance within the Italian peninsula. Therefore, to display those of noble heritage within these loggias is to associate them with the carriage of justice. Using this form within the *Vita* may have served to both highlight and explain the authority bestowed on Matilda by her ancestors. By organizing the family members in a similar fashion to the Lombard rulers of yore, particularly by referencing a format seen in a text concerned with authority and law, the continuous chain of power in the Canossan bloodline can be seen.

1.2.4 Gendered Descriptions of Ancestors in the Vita Mathildis

Throughout Donizo’s descriptions and depictions of ancestry, the mark of a male-centric society is evident: while Donizo writes to win the favour (and perhaps patronage) of Matilda, he focuses predominantly on the male side of her family. Though her mother Beatrice was also from an illustrious family, her familial line does not receive nearly as much attention. This de-emphasis on matrilineal ancestry is also reflected in the illuminations where none besides the portrait of Beatrice depict Matilda’s ancestors from her mother’s family. This treatment extends to the ways in which Matilda’s female ancestors, even those on her father’s side, are described within the text. The biographer aligns his characterizations of the women of the Canossan dynasty with the contemporary gender roles and traits allocated to women. Donizo often relies on piety and virtue as benchmarks for the women in the *Vita Mathildis*, whereas the men are afforded a wider variety of descriptors. Donizo associates Julia, mother of Boniface, with her ‘works of piety’ and mentions that she was beloved by all (‘Uxor Tedaldi fit Guillia dicta ducatrix. / Haec placuit parvis pietate, placebat et altis’).¹¹⁷ Within the same chapter, her three sons occupy proportionally more line space. Here the gendered biases at play are obvious:

¹¹⁵ Sexton, 311–2.

¹¹⁶ Sexton, 266.

¹¹⁷ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 1, ll. 452–3. ‘The wife of Tedald, Julia, was called duchess. That pleased the pious, both small and powerful.’

although part of the Canossan dynasty, Julia's prominence is reduced to a brief mention, and then only as a wife and mother.

Beatrice's admirable character traits are only described at length in Chapter Nine which is otherwise devoted to describing the positive qualities of Boniface. Her honour is compared with that of Leah and Rachel, and her wisdom with that of Sarah: 'Stirpe fuit genita regali pulchra Beatrice; / Maiorum mundi stirpe fuit genita. / Splenduit ipsa Liae procul et Rachelis honore; / Ut sapiens Saraa splenduit ipsa procul.'¹¹⁸ Beatrice's death is covered in the last chapter of Book I, but the characterization of her is limited to a 'well-loved' person who was full of 'good actions and words' ('Plena bonis factis dictisque referta Beatrix / Cunctis caranimis, magnis, parvis quoque, Pisis').¹¹⁹ Her illustrious familial heritage—which Beatrice shared with Henry IV—is only mentioned in passing. Furthermore, though she ruled nearly twenty five years without Boniface, her leadership is hardly discussed and is only specifically mentioned in the chapter about Boniface's death ('rite gubernavit, tenuit, comitissa Beatrix').¹²⁰ It should be noted that these descriptions and biblical comparisons were not meant to endorse female leadership but rather to illustrate the exceptional cases of strong women assisting endangered Christians.¹²¹ While the scant textual attention to her in the *Vita* might suggest that Beatrice was either unimportant or had died early in Matilda's life, the presence of Beatrice in Matilda's charters attests to their close relationship and her relative importance to the Canossan dynasty. This differs greatly from the way in which Boniface is described. Boniface is given an active role throughout the *Vita*, and much space is given to his diplomatic and military accomplishments. In Book I, Chapters Eleven through Thirteen, Donizo describes the fruitful relationship between Boniface and the *regnum*. In Chapter Fourteen, Donizo describes the 1046/7 breakdown of the relationship ('Quod aliquando in consilio suo, aliquando occasione vigiliae noctis, Heinricus Rex temptavit capere Bonifacium'),¹²² which marks a tonal shift towards the *regnum*. From that point in the text, the emperor and his subordinates are almost always characterized negatively. While positive adjectives are used for Boniface throughout the *Vita*—'Bonifacio bene docto,'¹²³ 'Mirificum, clarum, generosum,

¹¹⁸ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 783–6. 'The beautiful Beatrice was born of royal lineage, from one of the greatest lineages in the world. She shone with the virtues of Leah and Rachel, Sara's wisdom shining in the distance.'

¹¹⁹ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 1355–6. 'Our Beatrice, full of good actions and words, was very dear to both the poor and the wealthy of Pisa.'

¹²⁰ Donizo, Book 1, l. 1142. 'Countess Beatrice ruled solemnly.'

¹²¹ Rosalind Jaeger Reynolds, 'Reading Matilda: The Self-Fashioning of a Duchess', *Essays in Medieval Studies* 19, no. 1 (2002): 4.

¹²² Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 1, Chapter 14. 'Emperor Henry attempts to capture Boniface: once at the consulate, and again during a night watch.'

¹²³ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 856. 'The well-learned Boniface.'

sepe relatum, / Athletam magnum Bonefacium venerandum,¹²⁴—the entirety of Chapter Nine focuses on his upstanding character ('Cuius staturae et cuius qualitatis extitit Bonefacius, et quid de ipso Sibilla Prophetizavit').¹²⁵ Boniface is described as courageous like Daniel ('Ingenio viguit, sensu similis Danihelis');¹²⁶ handsome and stately like Joseph ('Pulcher et egregius speciosus eratque decorus, / Providus, ut Ioseph pulcher et egregius');¹²⁷ a successful leader like Saul ('Factus ut est iuvenis meruit staturamque Saulis; / Prospere cuncta regit, factus ut est iuvenis');¹²⁸ fierce like David ('Viribus acer erat, Goliae velut ille peremptor / Qui labiis, manibus, viribus, acer erat');¹²⁹ and powerful and wise like Solomon ('Innumeras habuit sapientis opes Salomonis, / Nam mundi pompas innumeras habuit').¹³⁰ Together, these biblical figures ground Donizo's characterization of Boniface in the accomplishments of respected men and kings of the Old Testament, whose existence and actions prefigured Christ. Donizo focuses on Boniface's piety in Chapter Fifteen, subtitled 'Quod Bonefacius studiosus fuit in divinis rebus.'¹³¹ The chapter begins 'Actibus ut mundi Bonefacius iste refulsit, / sic cluit in factis divinis ac venerandis.'¹³² It details his donations to various churches and how generous he was with his financial support. Donizo described Boniface as the most generous person who made bishops proud and enabled the clergy to be the best Christians in their offices. Though the chapter does mention Boniface's pious devotion to the church in terms similar to those applied to the female ancestors, it does so by emphasizing Boniface's wealth and impact as a donor. This association is quite telling; while it may reflect the truth in how Boniface expressed his piety, it also supports Donizo's belief (and potentially his own authorial motives) that material patronage was a method to achieve piety and religious favour.

While Boniface is also praised for his faith, his accomplishments—material and otherwise—are placed at the centre of his life. Thus, the portrait of Boniface is well-rounded and multifaceted in a way that Beatrice's is not. The short text dedicated to Beatrice attests to the author's perception of her as less worthy of attention or perhaps less consequential to the development of Matilda as a leader. Though the disparity could be attributed to Donizo's focus

¹²⁴ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 875–6. 'As often reported, the extraordinarily bright and generous Boniface was also a good athlete.'

¹²⁵ Donizo, Book 1, Chapter 9. 'The moral stature and virtuousness of Boniface; and the prophecies of Sybil regarding him.'

¹²⁶ Donizo, Book 1, l. 753.

¹²⁷ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 755–6.

¹²⁸ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 757–8.

¹²⁹ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 761–2.

¹³⁰ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 763–4.

¹³¹ Donizo, Book 1, Chapter 15. 'Boniface was zealous regarding sacred things.'

¹³² Donizo, Book 1, ll. 1070–1. 'As Boniface shone in his actions of the world, he aimed to honour God in the works of religion and by worship.'

on Canossa—derived from Boniface’s side of the family—even the female figures central to the patrimony such as Hildegarde and Julia are given short shrift within the text. It seems more probable that Beatrice’s minor role in the text can be attributed to the general devaluation of women during this period and to the lack of emphasis placed on matrilineal heritage throughout the *Vita*’s narrative.

1.3 Infiltrating the Boys’ Club: Contemporary Views of Matilda

Matilda was not able to avoid this oppressive misogyny. Though Matilda seems to have occupied roles not typically available to women in eleventh-century Italy, she needed support to achieve this. Matilda was integrated into and probably to some degree insulated by a network of like-minded reformers termed by historians as the ‘Gregorian friendship network.’ First described by I.S. Robinson, the term refers to Pope Gregory VII’s use of ‘friendship letters’ to cultivate alliances with potentially reform-minded people.¹³³ The group included Hugh of Flavigny, Bonizo of Sutri, Anselm of Lucca, John of Mantua, and Rangerius of Lucca, as well as the eponymous Gregory VII.¹³⁴ Matilda appeared in the members’ letters, both as a recipient and when mentioned in the third person, though the letters sent by herself are largely lost. Members of this network would have had distinctly positive perceptions of Matilda, probably due to Gregory’s apparent respect and admiration for the countess. As Gregory was the coordinator of this alliance, his high regard of the countess may have influenced the others in the same way. Though the network extended beyond those listed above, this section will focus on those who had a documented relationship with Matilda, and the way in which they framed her in their writings, both directly and indirectly. By examining how Matilda was viewed within these social relationships, impressions of how she styled her authority to these people might come into focus.

In his *Vita Anselmi Lucensis*, Pseudo-Bardone—taking care to use her titles—described Matilda as remarkably zealous and obedient to both Gregory and Christ: ‘*inventa est sola atque unica dux et marchionissa Mathilda in fide permanens, zelum Dei habens, domino papae Gregorio obediens, quia, ut sanctissimam eius vitam et religionis cognovit ardorem.*’¹³⁵

¹³³ I. S. Robinson, ‘The Friendship Network of Gregory VII’, *History* 63, no. 207 (1978): 1–22.

¹³⁴ Patrick Healy, *The Chronicle of Hugh of Flavigny: Reform and the Investiture Contest in the Late Eleventh Century*, 2016; For more on the ‘Gregorian friendship network,’ see: Robinson, ‘The Friendship Network of Gregory VII.’

¹³⁵ Pseudo-Bardone, ‘*Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis*’, ed. Roger Wilmans, *Scriptores* 12 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1856), ll. 38–44. ‘Matilda is more than just a duke or a marchioness, she has enduring faith, a zeal for God, is obedient to pope Gregory [VII], because her most holy life knows religious fervour.’

Rangerius of Lucca compared Matilda to a female Mars (*faemineo Marte*),¹³⁶ as well as someone who overcame their sex to become a hero ('Quae sexum superet, quae fortia facta virorum').¹³⁷ In his *Chronicon*, Ekkehard of Aura wrote of the immense wealth and fame of the countess and noted her remarkable virtue and piety: 'Qua nimirum femina sicut nemo nostris in temporibus ditior ac famosior, ita nemo virtutibus et religione sub laica.'¹³⁸ Ekkehard portrayed Matilda as the most pious figure among the laity, a superlative which would have also encompassed the secular (and rebellious) *regnum*.

Gregory VII himself used paternalistic language to describe Matilda. This language was probably in part reflective of the dramatic shift in rhetoric used to describe the church as a maternal figure. As Caroline Walker Bynum has noted, there was a trend in the twelfth century to use human relationships to explain doctrinal positions.¹³⁹ Language that was once reserved solely for women and female kinship was absorbed into the church's vernacular where they would be used predominantly by men in reference to male-dominant institutions.¹⁴⁰ Gregory deployed phrases such as 'Bride of Christ' ('sponsam Christi')¹⁴¹ and 'Mother of all Christians' ('Romanam aecclesiam omnium aecclesiarum matrem et magistram')¹⁴² to describe the Church. This linguistic shift occurred alongside the marginalization of women in the church hierarchy during the papal reforms as the clergy was forced to abandon marriage and adopt celibacy.¹⁴³ Gregory VII extended this kinship even further, referring to Saint Peter as the father of all Christians and the 'first shepherd after Christ.'¹⁴⁴ The dogmatic construction itself is likely a reference to Ephesians 5:22-24:

¹³⁶ Rangerius of Lucca, 'Vita Metrica Anselmi Lucensis Episcopi', ed. Ernest Sackur, Gerhard Schwartz, and Bernhard Schmeidler, vol. 2, *Scriptores* 30 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1929), 1. 5404.

¹³⁷ Rangerius of Lucca, ll. 3705–6.

¹³⁸ Ekkehardus Uraugiensis, 'Ekkehardi Uraugiensis Chronica', ed. G.H. Pertz, *Scriptores* 6 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1844), 249. 'Who, doubtless, was a woman like no other in our time in terms of fame and wealth, thus no one was as virtuous and religious within the laity.'

¹³⁹ Caroline Walker Bynum, 'Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother', in *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, ed. Constance H. Berman, *Rewriting Histories* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 21.

¹⁴⁰ Dyan Elliott, 'The Priest's Wife: Female Erasure and the Gregorian Reform', in *Fallen Bodies, Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 81–106; McNamara, 'Canossa and the Ungendering of the Public Man.'

¹⁴¹ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', ed. Erich Caspar, *Epistolae Selectae* 2 (München: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1990), 1.42; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII 1073-1085: An English Translation*, trans. H. E. J. Cowdrey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1.42: 46–7.

¹⁴² Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 232–3; Gregory VII, *The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, trans. H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Oxford Medieval Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 54: 128–34.

¹⁴³ James A. Brundage, 'Sexuality, Marriage, and the Reform of Christian Society in the Thought of Gregory VII', in *Studi Gregoriani: Per La Storia Della «Libertas Ecclesiae»*, ed. Alfons Marie Stickler et al., vol. XIV (Rome: Abbazia Di San Paolo, Roma, 1991), 69–75.

¹⁴⁴ Gregory VII, *The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, 128–34.

Mulieres viris suis subditae sint, sicut Domino: / quoniam vir caput est mulieris, sicut Christus caput est Ecclesiae: ipse, salvator corporis ejus. / Sed sicut Ecclesia subjecta est Christo, ita et mulieres viris suis in omnibus.¹⁴⁵

Gregory also used this system when writing to and about Matilda. He frequently used the title ‘Daughter of Christ’ (*filia dilecta*) or some variant in his correspondence with the countess, assigning a role for Matilda within this kinship construction.¹⁴⁶ Gregory deliberately used this convention to demonstrate that Matilda was a faithful adherent to both the Roman church and to ecclesiastical reform, and to imply the same type of familial obligation of a daughter to her father. This appeal to obligation, disguised as kinship language, is most evident in a letter from Gregory in March 1074 where he begs Matilda not to take the veil and to continue aiding ‘wretched and oppressed churches’ in the service of the universal church.¹⁴⁷ Though not unique to her, this language may have appealed directly to Matilda who derived much of her authority from, and placed much importance on, her ancestry.

1.3.1 *Virago: A Gendered Term of Praise*

When discussing Matilda, her contemporaries seemed to struggle most with her gender; not in the sense that they did not show their awareness of it or wanted to assign a different one to her, but it was difficult for them to reconcile her authority and relative power in the region with the perceived weakness of her sex. When referring to Matilda, the terms varied and typically depended on the writer’s political or social relationship with her. When attempting to demonstrate Matilda’s excellent character, contemporaries often relied on pre-existing stereotypes which linked traits to sex. However, stereotypes pose challenges when describing anomalous figures and required the employment of exceptional vocabulary. In the *Hugonis Chronicon*, Hugh of Flavigny, a reform-minded abbot and ally of Gregory VII, commented on the countess’s military might and courageous spirit, and suggested her virtue and cleverness exceeded that of her male counterparts:

At vero Mathildis comitissa, Romanae aecclesiae filia, virilis animi constantiam tenens, tanto ei fortius resistebat, quanto magis huius astutias et papae innocentiam noverat. Sola enim tunc temporis inventa est inter feminas, quae regis potentiam aspernata sit,

¹⁴⁵ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, n.d., Ephesios 5:22-24. ‘Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord: / Because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church. He is the saviour of his body. / Therefore as the church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things.’

¹⁴⁶ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*; Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, 1.11, 1.47, 1.50, 4.12.

¹⁴⁷ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.5: 55–6; Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, 1.5.

quae calliditatibus eius et potentiae etiam bellico certamine obviaverit, ut merito nominetur virago, quae virtute animi etiam viros praeibat.¹⁴⁸

In attempting to describe a powerful woman whom he respected, Hugh of Flavigny employed language which attempted to navigate the gendered constructs which regarded courage and strength as masculine virtues. To square this incongruity, he refers to her masculine soul (*virilis animi*) and leadership abilities, terming her a *virago*. While modern historians have generously applied the term ‘virago’ to notable women in history, the term appears to have been rarely used by medieval writers.¹⁴⁹ In the seventh century, Isidore of Seville composed his *Etymologies* in which he discussed the origins of the words used to discuss gender, and Isidore used *virago* amidst discussions of the terms *vir*, *mulier*, and *femina*.¹⁵⁰

Virago vocata, quia virum agit, hoc est opera virilia facit et masculini vigoris est. Antiqui enim fortes feminas ita vocabant. Virgo autem non recte virago dicitur, si non viri officio fungitur. Mulier vero si virilia facit, recte virago dicitur, ut Amazona.¹⁵¹

He wrote that *vir* meant ‘man’ and *virago* was a derivative of it, as Eve was derived from Adam, and that it referred to a ‘heroic maiden.’ Isidore outlined the parameters in which a woman became a *virago*: one must engage in the activities of men and have masculine vigour.¹⁵² Isidore’s observations of the term may have come from antique texts such as Virgil’s *Aeneid* which used the term to describe Juturna during her heroic chariot ride.¹⁵³ This is the only instance in which the term is used in the *Aeneid*, though not the only time in which a woman is shown acting in a heroic manner. The character Camilla is similarly described as both *interrita* (undaunted) and as a *bellatrix* (a female warrior); Penthesilea is described

¹⁴⁸ Hugh of Flavigny, ‘Hugonis Chronicon’, ed. G.H. Pertz, *Scriptores* 8 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1848), 462; Patrick Healy, ‘Merito Nominetur Virago; Matilda of Tuscany in the Polemics of the Investiture Contest’, in *Victims or Viragos?*, ed. Christine Meek and Catherine Lawless, *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women* 4 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), 55. ‘But in truth, Countess Matilda, daughter of the Roman Church, who has a manly spirit and with which she greatly resisted the cunningness of him [Henry IV], to such a great extent that the wise Pope knew. Indeed, among women, she [Matilda] alone, was despised by the powerful king, whose shrewdness and might of war she evenly matched, and who could rightly be called ‘virago,’ whose virtuous soul precedes even that of men.’

¹⁴⁹ R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 24–5.

¹⁵⁰ For a more in-depth discussion of the origins of the term, see: Christine Meek and Catherine Lawless, eds., *Victims or Viragos?*, *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women* 4 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005).

¹⁵¹ Isidorus, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum Sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1962); Isidore, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. Stephen A. Barney et al. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 242. ‘To be called a “virago” is to conduct oneself in strength as a man, to do manly works, and to possess masculine energy. Men of antiquity used the term for strong women. A woman who is a virgin cannot rightly be called a ‘virago’ unless she does the duties of a man. But if a woman has done the duties of a man, she can correctly be called a “virago,” like an Amazon.’

¹⁵² Isidore, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, 242.

¹⁵³ Virgil, *Bucolics, Aeneid, and Georgics of Vergil*, ed. J. B. Greenough (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1900), 12.468. ‘Hoc concussa metu mentem, Iuturna virago.’

simultaneously as a *bellatrix* and a *virgo* (virgin).¹⁵⁴ Isidore must have understood the term's nuance, as his writings also distinguish between a virginal warrior and a *virago*; accordingly, his conceptualization of the term was narrow and only to be applied to women with exceptional honour. The rarity of this term in the Middle Ages does not reflect the absence of politically powerful women; rather, it demonstrates what an unusual and transgressive concept it encapsulated, as well as the difficult standards required to achieve the status of a 'heroic maiden.'

Kimberly LoPrete has discussed the reality of the label during the Middle ages; *viragines* were mis-categorized as men, while their presence simultaneously cultivated 'intense anxiety' amongst their male peers.¹⁵⁵ Though they were viewed as having positive, masculine attributes, this was not enough to gain equal status amongst men. At either end of the spectrum, *viragines* were otherised and excluded from the gender binary-dominant system of history.¹⁵⁶ LoPrete rejects the interpretation that being called a *virago* meant undergoing a metaphoric ungendering in order to accommodate male traits; rather, women who successfully performed the same tasks as men were not 'honorary men' but rather 'women of distinction.'¹⁵⁷ This difference is important: there was no confusion concerning whether a *virago* was socially regarded as a man or a woman, and it would be incorrect to suggest that Matilda's contemporaries viewed her as a male. Rather, this term was used as a superlative to imply that, being able to embody some male traits, she was the best of her sex. Though complementary, the period's restrictions on women are still embedded in the term.

1.3.2 Donizo's View of the Countess in the *Vita Mathildis*

Though Donizo abstains from using terms such as *virago*, his text contains numerous descriptors of the countess which focused on both her virtue and her strength. Donizo offers a varied description of her which is more in line with how he described Boniface, rather than his approach to the other women of the *Vita*. The comparisons offer insight to her character and speak to more than just the countess's piety. Donizo describes her virtuous nature by comparing her to Diana:

¹⁵⁴ Virgil, 7.805; 11.711.

¹⁵⁵ Kimberly A. LoPrete, 'Gendering Viragos: Medieval Perceptions of Powerful Women', in *Victims or Viragos?*, ed. Christine Meek and Catherine Lawless, *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women* 4 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), 17–38.

¹⁵⁶ LoPrete, 18.

¹⁵⁷ LoPrete, 24–5.

Haec est tam clara, ceu fulgida stella Dianae / Haec radiata fide, stat spe circumdata
 mire. / Huic sincera manet maior dilectio sane. / Haec peramat celsum, per quem sunt
 omnia, Verbum; / Illius et servos, quos invenit esse modestos, / Diligit et laudat,
 reverenter obedit, honorat. / Haec odit vitia, virtutes comprobatur ipsa; / Elatis alta, mitis
 sed mitibus astat; / Scit mulcere pios, terrere sed haec sit iniquos.¹⁵⁸

That Donizo compared her with a pagan figure may be significant. For one, it may be indicative of the re-incorporation of classical figures, often disparaged as wicked in early medieval texts, into the pantheon of idealized figures. In the Middle Ages, Diana had generally become an outlet for medieval anxieties regarding women, female sexuality, and chastity.¹⁵⁹ In light of Donizo's omissions regarding her marriages, it is possible that the author may have invoked Diana as an example of Matilda's chastity and as a precedent of strength and chastity coexisting in a woman.

Donizo also characterizes Matilda as an embodiment of all four cardinal virtues, prudence, temperance, justice, and strength, and explicitly names each one in Book I.¹⁶⁰ Beyond her piety or goodness, Donizo's description of Matilda implicitly justifies the creation of his biography: as the embodiment of virtue, she naturally deserves to be honoured in text. Further adding to his construction of the countess's persona, Donizo enumerates Matilda's positive qualities as a ruler, her strength as a military leader being repeatedly described: 'Hoc ubi cognovit prudens hera, mox cito movit seque suos, fortes peciit cum presule montes,'¹⁶¹ and 'Corde pio flagrans Mathildis lucida lampas, Adversus binos Domini crucis hos inimicos.'¹⁶²

As with Boniface, Donizo invoked biblical figures to flesh out his portrait of the countess. In drawing out these parallels, Donizo moves beyond general praise, using specific biblical women to bring out different aspects of the countess's persona. Donizo uses the New Testament episode of Martha and Mary to describe Matilda's relationship to Gregory during and after the 1077 meeting with Henry: 'Postposuit regem, per tres tenuit pia menses / Gregorium papam, cui servit ut altera Martha; / Auribus intentis capiebat sedula mentis /

¹⁵⁸ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, ll. 17–25. 'She is as luminous and bright as Diana's star, illuminated by faith and enveloped by hope, in her is a pure, greater love. She worships the Word of God and everything that He has created, as well as His servants when she finds them modest: she honours them diligently and obeys them faithfully. She loathes vices and demonstrates the virtues; she raises high the meek and poor, she is kind to the pious but terrible to the wicked.'

¹⁵⁹ Marilyn Desmond and Pamela Sheingorn, *Myth, Montage, & Visuality in Late Medieval Manuscript Culture: Christine de Pizan's Epistre Othea* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 118–9.

¹⁶⁰ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 1, ll. 40–55.

¹⁶¹ Donizo, Book 1, ll. 144–5. 'This wise Lady knew, as soon as possible to move herself and her men, who were armed and mighty, to claim the mountain.'

¹⁶² Donizo, Book 2, ll. 259–63. 'For with a devout heart, burning bright, Matilda shone like a lamp against the enemies of the cross.'

Cuncta patris dicta, ceu Christi verba Maria.¹⁶³ According to the Gospel of Luke, the parable tells of two sisters visited by Christ and the disciples. Mary was an attentive listener while Martha, distracted by the chores that needed to be completed, asked Christ to intervene on her behalf. He responded: ‘Martha, Martha, sollicita es, et turbaris erga plurima, porro unum est necessarium. Maria optimam partem elegit, quae non auferetur ab ea.’¹⁶⁴ Donizo uses the women to suggest that Matilda both completed the tasks at hand (like Martha)—which likely included fending back Henry and his forces—while also absorbing the reform-minded wisdom of Gregory (as Maria did Christ’s words).

In Book II, Chapter Eight of the *Vita*, subtitled ‘Queen Praxedis’ [Eupraxia’s] separation from King Henry [IV] and the arrival of Pope Urban [II] in Lombardy,’ Matilda is described as the ‘new’ Deborah.¹⁶⁵ After hearing reports that Henry IV’s wife Eupraxia was being abused and sought escape, Matilda intervened to free her. Donizo records Matilda’s role in liberating the queen:

Sic timet ipsa virum, dentem velut agna lupinum; / Cumque timore tremit, furtim munimina quaerit / Mathildis, poscens ut eam disiungat ab hoste, / Aspiciens Debora nova tempus inesse vel horam / Hunc ut prosternat Sisaram, clam quippe catervam / Veronam misit, regina manebat et illic.¹⁶⁶

Deborah appears in the Old Testament Book of Judges where she is described as a *prophetis* and is integral to the deposition of King Jabin of Canaan who had long oppressed the Israelites. Deborah is also the only woman described as a biblical judge who directed the military commander Barak to victory after having a vision that the defeat of Jabin’s army, led by Sisera, would come at the hands of a woman.

Quae misit et vocavit Barac filium Abinoem de Cedus Nephthali: dixitque ad eum: Praecipit tibi Dominus Deus Israel: Vade, et duc exercitum in montem Thabor, tollesque tecum decem millia pugnatorum de filiis Nephthali, et de filiis Zabulon: / ego

¹⁶³ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 169–72. ‘She set neglected the King for three months and piously served Pope Gregory like another Martha; and listened attentively, taking in all the words of the Pope, like Mary did the words of Christ.’

¹⁶⁴ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Lucas 10: 38–42. ‘“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”’

¹⁶⁵ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, Chapter 8. ‘De Separatione Praxedis Reginae Ab Heinricho Rege, et de Adventu Papae Urbani in Longobardiam’

¹⁶⁶ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 739–45. ‘Thus [Queen Praxides] fears her husband, as a lamb fears the teeth of a wolf. When she trembled with fear, she secretly sought the protection of Matilda, calling upon her to release her from her enemy. The new Deborah, discerning that now was the time and hour for her to overthrow Sisera, secretly sent a force to Verona.’

autem adducam ad te in loco torrentis Cison, Sisaram principem exercitus Jabin, et currus ejus, atque omnem multitudinem, et tradam eos in manu tua.¹⁶⁷

Donizo further compares Matilda to Deborah's counterpart Jael, again casting Henry as the commander Sisera: 'Suscipitur recte, reverenter, nobiliterque / A domina sane Mathildi, quae quasi Iahel / In Siserae magnum nunca fixit tempore [*sic*] clavum.'¹⁶⁸ This description transforms Matilda from prophetic leader to brutal enactor and marks a distinct shift in Donizo's portrayal of the countess. Jael appears alongside Deborah in Judges 4, and when Sisera fled from Barak, he sought cover in Jael's tent. Jael first assured the commander of his safety, but after he fell asleep, she drove a tent stake through his temple.

Tulit itaque Jahel uxor Haber clavum tabernaculi, assumens pariter et malleum: et ingressa abscondite et cum silentio, posuit supra tempus capitis ejus clavum, percussumque malleo defixit in cerebrum usque ad terram: qui soporem morti consocians defecit, et mortuus est. / Et ecce Barac sequens Sisaram veniebat: egressaque Jahel in occursum ejus, dixit ei: Veni, et ostendam tibi virum quem quaeris. Qui cum intrasset ad eam, vidit Sisaram jacentem mortuum, et clavum infixum in tempore ejus.¹⁶⁹

Jael was married to the leader of a nomadic tribe who had a peace agreement with King Jabin, so her actions would have been considered treacherous to King Jabin. Nonetheless, they are considered morally justified within the text given the ongoing oppression of the Israelites. This shift reflects a duality: as a wise facilitator, Matilda is like Deborah who guided those around her to physical (and moral) victory. However, it is her rebellion against the *regnum* and her willingness to use force to achieve her goals which also makes Matilda like Jael.

In the next chapter of the *Vita* titled 'The Siege of Nogarà,'¹⁷⁰ Donizo describes the emperor's attempt at taking the castle of Nogarà. In response, Matilda gathered the people of Modena, crossed the Po River, and was enthusiastically greeted by the people of Governolo. Henry was so surprised and frightened that he fled under cover of darkness, deserting their

¹⁶⁷ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Iudicum 4: 6–7. 'She [Deborah] sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, 'The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go, take position at Mount Tabor, bringing ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun.'

¹⁶⁸ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, ll. 748–50. 'The queen was received with reverence and deference, as was customary, by Lady Matilda who was like Jael when she drove a tent-spike into Sisera.'

¹⁶⁹ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Iudicum 4: 21–2. 'But Jael wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, until it went down into the ground—he was lying fast asleep from weariness—and he died. Then, as Barak came in pursuit of Sisera, Jael went out to meet him, and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So, he went into her tent; and there was Sisera lying dead, with the tent peg in his temple.'

¹⁷⁰ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book II, Chapter 8. 'De Obsidione Nogaræ'

camp. Donizo describes the event by comparing Matilda to Judith, the slayer of King Nebuchadnezzar's commander Holofernes.

Castrum Nogarae Comitissam gliscit amare, / Mane receipt eam, vehementer ut
esuriebat; / Cum proprio coetu ceu Iudith ipsa beetur. / Non semel haec regem necat ut
Iudith Olofernem, / Crebro sed impellit, sibi muscipulas quoque tendit, / In quibus ille
cadiit, se quando cavere putavit.¹⁷¹

The parable appears in the Old Testament Book of Judith. After Judith's village was threatened with destruction by the Assyrian commander Holofernes, she took it upon herself to set a trap for the general. She feigned desertion from her tribe in order to gain access to Holofernes' camp, and with her seductive beauty, secured an invitation to the commander's private dinner. Before beheading Holofernes with his own sword, Judith prayed to God to help her destroy the enemies that have risen up against her and her people: 'Confirma me, Domine Deus Israel, et respice in hac hora ad opera manuum mearum, ut, sicut promisisti, Jerusalem civitatem tuam erigas: et hoc quod credens per te posse fieri cogitavi, perficiam.'¹⁷² Further in the passage, Judith is depicted as the implement of God, a tool that saved the Israelites. When Judith returned to her elders, she produced Holofernes' severed head and announced 'Per manum feminae percussit illum Dominus Deus noster.'¹⁷³ This phrase asserted Judith's womanhood and declared her victory over the army and the oppressive king who demanded her tribe's destruction. When the Assyrians found Holofernes' body, they fled rapidly; Donizo uses this scene to describe Henry IV's quick departure from the failed siege.

Donizo also drew on Esther to describe the countess, both in the dedicatory letter and in Book II, Chapter Eleven, entitled 'Conrad's departure from his father Henry, and the death of Pope Urban [II].'¹⁷⁴ In the latter example, the reference is embedded in the author's accounts of Conrad, the king's son and heir apparent, defecting to the papacy's side and Matilda's role therein.

Chonradus dictus fuit hic de crismate tinctus, / Ingenio pollens, genitorem prorsus
abhorrens, / Se dominae largis Mathildis subdidit alis, / Quae veluti dignum valde

¹⁷¹ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 796–801. 'The castle of Nogara grew to love the countess, and in the morning the city welcomed her joyfully. Matilda and her hosts celebrated her as a new Judith, because not only did she beat the king, like Judith did Holofernes, but she also pursues him and ambushes him with traps that he often falls into, even when he takes precautionary measures.'

¹⁷² *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Judith 13:7. 'She came close to his bed, took hold of the hair of his head, and said, "Give me strength today, O Lord God of Israel!"'

¹⁷³ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Judith 13:15. 'The Lord has struck him down by the hand of a woman.'

¹⁷⁴ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, Chapter 11.

carumque propinquum, / Mox suscepit eum, laudans ut rex vocitetur. / Illius tractat patrem sic, Hester ut Aman: / Abstulit uxorem sibi primitus, et modo prolem.¹⁷⁵

Esther is the main protagonist in the Book of Esther who was able to prevent the massacre of her people. According to the story, an advisor to King Ahasuerus named Haman convinced the King to allow him to slaughter the Jews within the Persian Empire. The king's wife Esther revealed her Jewishness and pleaded for the king's protection; not only did he grant her protection, he allowed Esther to retaliate in response. In turn, she sent out a decree announcing that Jews should and could defend themselves with lethal force. Haman was subsequently put to death by the king. To extend the metaphor, if Matilda is Esther, and the wicked Haman is Henry, this means Conrad is Ahasuerus. This intertextual comparison renders Henry the corrupt interloper and establishes Conrad as the rightful (and just) king, who disavowed the source of the corruption. In this way Esther is deployed as a powerful symbol of defiance against those who threatened the destruction of her people: for Esther, it was the Persians; for Matilda, it was Henry and his supporters.

Donizo's selection of Old Testament women to compare to Matilda is telling in that they focus on two themes: diplomacy and violence. Either by cunning diplomacy like Deborah and Esther, or through decisive acts of justifiable violence like Jael and Judith, these women were devoted to protecting their people and were themselves, at times, violent. Donizo uses these women to depict Matilda as extremely pious, loyal, and when necessary, violent. These attributes enabled her to protect the papacy, the church, and those who followed the reform, and her method or level of aggression did not detract from her virtue or piety.

1.3.3 Visualizing Matilda in the *Vita Mathildis*

Donizo indicates the text was being bound when the countess died, which suggests that the illuminations were already finished. From this we may infer that Matilda had some influence on her appearance within the manuscript, though they would have still been filtered through Donizo's impressions of the countess. Treated as partial reflections of Matilda's self, they may yield some further insight as to the countess's persona and contemporary conceptualizations of her as a leader. Two of the seven illuminations in the *Vita* are representations of Matilda, the first appears on folio 7v while the second appears approximately half-way through the text on

¹⁷⁵ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 846–52. 'He was named Conrad at his baptism, and his ingenious strength completely shocked his parents, he was taken under Lady Matilda's generous wing, who treated him as one of her own kin, with respect and dignity, as soon as she received him, she called for him to become king. Matilda dealt with his father like Esther did Haman: first she took away his wife, and then his first son.'

folio 49r. These images serve as visual bookends: she is both the first and last person depicted in the manuscript, reinforcing her importance in the text.

The first illumination of the text is positioned at the outset of the prologue to the *Vita* (Figure 8). On the opposite page (folio 8r), an acrostic announces Matilda as a servant of god and Daughter of Saint Peter: ‘Filia Mathildis Bonifacii Beatricis nunc ancilla Dei filia digna Petri.’ The illumination depicts a donation scene in which Donizo (left) presents an enthroned Matilda (centre) with the completed manuscript. Below the illumination is the caption of the scene: ‘Mathildis lucens precor hoc cape cara volumen.’¹⁷⁶ The inscription acts as a direct statement from Donizo himself who implores her to accept the text he has created for her.

The man on the right, assumed to be her close military advisor Arduino della Palude, holds a sword against his chest.¹⁷⁷ These accompanying figures may also represent the two characteristics most emphasized by Donizo throughout the text: piety (Donizo, the monk) and might (Arduino, the military commander). They also serve to visually enhance Matilda; both Arduino and Donizo are smaller in stature, emphasising Matilda’s larger scale, representative of her superiority. As the largest and central figure, her importance in the scene is immediately felt. The throne is an elaborate structure, featuring lavish foliate carving, spiral columns, and Corinthian-style capitals. The canopy is embellished with floral motifs while the seat is furnished with a large cushion and fine fabric. The throne on which Matilda sits may allude to her baldachin and throne at Canossa, as that would have been an available visual reference for Donizo. The use of blue and red are meant to simulate both the exterior and interior of the cloth baldachin, giving an appearance of an enclosed, three-dimensional space.

Elements of this illumination are replicated throughout the manuscript, with Matilda’s portrait serving as the anchor to deciphering each replicated motif. The countess dons a cape with a bejewelled gold border and a similarly sumptuously golden conical hat. In height, in its gold material, and in the wide jewelled band encircling the head, this hat parallels that worn by Boniface in folio 28v, though Boniface’s cap is less pointed. Beneath her hat, Matilda dons a draped head covering or veil like that which appears under Beatrice’s cap (fol. 30v) and is worn by Hildegard (fol. 20v). Matilda’s throne also sets a visual precedent which is repeated in both Boniface’s and Beatrice’s portraiture: a plane of colour with diagonally striped columns as decoration. Matilda’s style of dress—a lavish cloak with a bejewelled, golden edging—is also recalled in some form throughout every illumination, being shown on the secular figures of the

¹⁷⁶ ‘O splendid Matilda, please accept this precious volume.’

¹⁷⁷ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, XIII.

family. Matilda's pose is also replicated in depictions of her ancestors, as she holds a branch in her hand. While the female ancestors within the *Vita* hold flower-like branches, Matilda's branch resembles those of her male ancestors, particularly that held by Boniface. Though a small detail, the repetition of this visual motif reinforces her inheritance and squarely attributes her authority to the male heirs of the Canossan dynasty. Not only does this image preface the manuscript as a whole, it also serves as an important frontispiece to Book I which enumerates the accomplishments of Matilda's ancestors, creating a direct connection between Matilda's own accomplished life and those of her predecessors. Visually, Matilda serves as the thread which weaves the following illuminations together, joining her own personal history to that of her ancestors.

Though the illumination generally draws on presentation scenes found in other manuscripts, such as the one in the presentation portrait of Bishop Egbertus in the late-tenth century *Codex Egberti* (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS. 24, fol. 2r) (Figure 9). A similar configuration can also be found in a dedication portrait in the eleventh-century *Lectionarium in festis Sanctorum Benedicti, Mauri, et Scholasticae* (Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. 1202, fol. 2r). Created between 1071 and 1087, the scene depicts Abbot Desiderius donating the text to Saint Benedict (Figure 10).¹⁷⁸ Though there are differences between the formulation—namely, that the Montecassino text was likely being donated to the monastery rather than a person—this image could well have been available to Donizo, as Desiderius (Pope Victor III) was an ally in the papal reform movement and well-known to Matilda.¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, the scene appears to reference the same imperial portraits which inspired the ancestral portraits of the *Vita*, suggesting the scenes sprang from the same visual tradition.

The other image of Matilda is the last illumination of the manuscript on folio 49r (Figure 11) between the header and main part of the Book II, Chapter One, which focuses on the meeting between Henry IV and Gregory VII at Canossa in 1077. The image and its inscription —'Rex Rogat Abbatem / Mathildim Supplicat Atque'—contextualize the narrative of the text as originating from a pro-Matilda perspective.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, the reader encounters the image first, meaning that the subsequent text is inherently influenced by the image and its caption. In this way, the image could have acted in line with the psychological principle of

¹⁷⁸ Francis Newton, *The Scriptorium and Library at Monte Cassino, 1058-1105*, Cambridge Studies in Palaeography and Codicology 7 (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 10–1.

¹⁷⁹ G. A. Loud, 'Abbot Desiderius of Montecassino and the Gregorian Papacy', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 30, no. 3 (July 1979): 306.

¹⁸⁰ 'Where Henry merely asks forgiveness of Abbot Hugh of Cluny, he begs Matilda.'

‘priming’ in which the exposure of one stimulus creates a bias towards subsequent related stimuli.¹⁸¹ Thus, the content of the illumination and its inscription—that the king prostrated himself on the ground and Matilda held the literal high ground—would only further convince the reader of Matilda’s dominance and importance to the event.

In the illumination, Matilda appears in a green scallop-patterned robe with golden, bejewelled lining. While she wore a red cloak in the first illumination, the colour scheme in this miniature appears closer to the robes of Boniface and Beatrice: a green cloak with a blue inner garment. She again wears a fabric headdress similar to Hildegard on fol. 20v, though unlike her appearance in folio 7v, she no longer wears a conical cap above it.

Like her ancestors in the previous illuminations, Matilda appears seated. The seat is not an elaborate throne as in fol. 7v and she is not distinguished by a ground of colour or cloth of honour. This deviation represents a visual break from the imagery of enthronement first established by her portrait in folio 7v and then repeated in the portraits of Boniface and Beatrice. Rather, the space behind Matilda is bare, more akin to the seated portraits of her ancestors on fols. 20v and 21v. The open space of the unbacked arch may be intended to recall the *laubia* that appear above her ancestors on fol. 20v. Similar to their appearance earlier in the manuscript, the association would invoke the authority and governance of the *loggias* found in public spaces. The structure also resembles a ciborium, though there are difficulties in that reading. For one, the event is not thought to have taken place in a religious building, but rather, the secular palace at Canossa. Furthermore, as Matilda was not part of the clergy, it would not make sense for her to be placed within a structure meant to be placed over an altar. Nonetheless, the structure strongly resembles ciboria in Tuscany including the ninth-century ciborium of Santa Maria Maggiore in Sovana (Figure 12).¹⁸² Perhaps the artist was invoking a similarly-styled ciborium known to them and borrowed the shape to sanctify Matilda and to communicate Matilda’s visual authority over Henry.

The columns that support the arched structure are similar to the one that divides Atto and Hildegard (fol. 20v), as well as to the columns which adorn the thrones of Boniface (fol. 28v) and Beatrice (fol. 30v). Like many other aspects of Matilda’s portrait on folio 7v, it seems

¹⁸¹ Nobuaki Hsu, *Psychology of Priming*, ed. Zacharias Schütt (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2012), 169–74.

¹⁸² There is also a strong visual likeness to some of the pyramidally-roofed ciboria of thirteenth-century Italy, including the ciborium that appears in Giotto’s *Presentation of the Infant Christ in the Temple*, 1303-05 at the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua. Though later in date, the similarity is striking. Both have a semi-circular arch, a pyramidal roof, and Solomonic columns with Corinthian capitals. It has also been brought to my attention by Prof Tim Ayers and Dr Robert Houghton that the ciborium at Sant’Ambrogio in Milan has a similar shape and is earlier in date than the aforementioned example.

to be a visual motif which was replicated across the illuminations in order to create continuity between each generation. The diagonally striped shafts appear to mimic Solomonic columns, which could be intended to present a visual connection to Saint Peter and Rome. Though that style of column would not come to be associated with the Temple of Solomon until the fifteenth century, during the Middle Ages these columns were associated with the columns marking the tomb of Saint Peter in Rome.¹⁸³ Their appearance throughout the manuscript may be subtle indicators of the Canossan allegiance to the church, the papacy and thus, papal reform.

Henry IV kneels at the feet of Matilda, while her spiritual advisor, Hugh of Cluny, appears seated. Dressed in red religious garments, Hugh holds a crozier and sits on a faldstool similar to that of Bishops Godfrey and Tedald (fols. 20v, 21v). As in fol. 7v, the relative size of the figures may indicate a visual hierarchy, however in this instance, the scale is more complex. Though Hugh—a main negotiator in the 1077 meeting—is depicted as the largest figure, Matilda’s elevated placement suggests her equal status to the abbot. They gaze at each other, and each extends a hand towards the other. The king is altogether excluded from their exchange, and though he is equal in size to Matilda, he kneels on the ground.

Despite the disparity in thrones, Christine Verzár notes that Matilda is depicted in the traditional iconography of rulers: enthroned, beneath a canopy, surrounded by subordinates, and dressed in sumptuous materials including ornately patterned fabrics festooned with what appears to be gold and gemstones.¹⁸⁴ Verzár further compares the configuration to that of the Langobard rulers of the *Liber Legum: Leges salicae, ripuariae, langobardorum, baioariorum, Caroli Magni* (Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.I.2, fol. 154v, Figure 13).¹⁸⁵ The illumination, which appears in another copy of the *Leges Langobardorum*, shows Charlemagne and his son Pepin giving dictation to their scribe for the text. If Donizo referenced the imperial imagery in the two copies of the *Leges Langobardorum*—both completed within the Italian peninsula—he may have done this to perpetuate certain qualities about Matilda and her family, and to undermine the head of the *regnum* himself by using imagery typically reserved for the king.

The variations between the two appearances of Matilda are striking. It is clear the artist intended her to be viewed differently and used different visual cues to emphasise the contrast. These visual differences may intend to signal the two different roles of Matilda in which

¹⁸³ Eric Fernie, ‘Spiral Columns and the Temple of Solomon’, in *Tomb and Temple: Re-Imagining the Sacred Buildings of Jerusalem*, ed. Robin Griffith-Jones and Eric Fernie, Boydell Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018), 159–63.

¹⁸⁴ Verzár, ‘Picturing Matilda of Canossa: Medieval Strategies of Representation’, 75–6.

¹⁸⁵ Verzár, 77.

Donizo casts her throughout the *Vita*: Matilda the secular leader, as she appears in folio 7v, and Matilda the pious reformer as in folio 49r. As the two images act as bookends to the illuminations of the manuscript, this emphasizes the dual roles of the countess throughout her life.

Furthermore, the book is purposefully nonlinear to make clear that Matilda was the culmination of the illustrious Canossan dynasty. Though the text and images start in the present day, with the dedication and donation portrait, they jump back to the time of Adalbert Atto and Hildegard and then move forward through the successive generations. Having seen the outcome of Matilda's life in the near-contemporary donation scene of folio 7v, the viewer is primed to look for similarities between her and her ancestors as the text and images progress. This construction does not continue throughout the second book. Instead, the miniatures end on what is essentially the first defining moment of Matilda's tenure, the meeting at Canossa in 1077, which at the time of the manuscript's creation, was nearly forty years in the past. The images of Book I clearly demonstrated from where Matilda's authority was derived, and that her rulership was legitimated through her family ties. Furthermore, they demonstrated the dynasty's faithfulness to the church. Together, these two interpretive modes created a frame through which Matilda's life and accomplishments could be interpreted.

1.4 Self-Reflections and Visual Representations of Matilda

Although Donizo's depictions of Matilda could have been shaped by her editorial interventions, looking at Matilda's charters which were written in her presence and signed by her own hand may better reveal aspects of the countess's self-fashioning, rather than the persona constructed by Donizo. Nothing in her extant documentation suggests Matilda called herself a *virago*, nor did she draw comparisons between biblical women and herself. Even though these documents followed a prescribed format which limited self-expression, an examination of the formulae she used to legitimize herself will yield a deeper understanding of her self-conceptualization regarding her inheritance, her power, and her authority. These formulae appeared not just in the body of each charter but were also added to her personal signature; by unpacking the biblical allusions woven into her signatory phrase, aspects of Matilda's beliefs and values become visible.

1.4.1 Claiming her title: Matilda's Self-Referential Language in Charters

Though Matilda's extant documents are formulaic, they yield insights into how she asserted herself and her titles. Though there are difficulties in assessing the intellectual authors of Matilda's charters, that Matilda's name was attached to the document suggests a certain level of authority over the intellectual contents. Nonetheless, there would have been a collective of people whose opinions were blended and subsequently reflected in the text of each document. This is especially true for documents involving large institutions such as San Benedetto which appears in her charters regularly. However, that Matilda signed her name to these documents—documents she was likely capable of reading and understanding—suggests she was happy to endorse the contents. So while imperfect as emblems of Matilda's individual agency, they are perhaps the closest existing example of how Matilda presented herself publicly.

It appears that within her own charters, Matilda may have sought to foster a sense of continuity between herself and her parents, using the familial link to reinforce her own authority. Until the death of her mother in 1076, Matilda was occasionally referred to as *dilecta filia* alongside her mother in their joint charters.¹⁸⁶ While her mother was living, this term was used to both indicate Matilda's junior status but also to signal that Matilda had not yet taken on full ducal duties. With this phrase, Matilda claimed her authority through her co-leadership with her living mother, as opposed to the authority of her deceased father, though this phraseology would change after Beatrice's death. In the wake of her passing, Matilda consistently used the phrases *filia marchionis Bonifacii*, *filia quondam Bonifacii*, or some variant thereof, suggesting that the ducal authority of the living surpassed that of the dead. When both parents had died, Matilda reverted to the conventional form and referred to her father, the male heir of the title, as the source of her authority. This phrase appears commonly throughout her charters until her death, though it is notably absent in the three charters she signed with her second husband Welf (m. 1088/89-1095), where he is listed as a co-signer and carries the ducal title rather than Matilda ('Guelfo dei gracia dux et marchio, Matilda dei gracia, si quid est').¹⁸⁷ Rosalind Jaeger Reynolds asserts that while Matilda acknowledged the conventional male-oriented order of power in the document, she retained the actual power and authority of the title.¹⁸⁸ This textual construct closely mirrors Matilda's reality: while married, she still existed in the traditional system that privileged male authority over that of women, regardless of her actual power.

¹⁸⁶ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 14: 68–70; 18: 78–9; Dep 21: 405.

¹⁸⁷ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 43: 139–41.

¹⁸⁸ Reynolds, 'Reading Matilda', 4–5.

Within her own charters Matilda is referred to as both *ducatrix* and *dux*, though the latter occurs comparatively rarely. Reynolds posits that the difference in title was not necessarily a gendered one, but rather an expression of the different levels of authority she held.¹⁸⁹ She asserts that the concepts of gender and power were separate enough to distinguish between male and ducal authority.¹⁹⁰ By using *dux*, Matilda may have attempted to summon a sense of continuity between herself and those who preceded her by selecting their same terminology; this uniformity strengthens her authority.

The most notable example of Matilda's use of *dux* appears in her first charter issued unaccompanied by either her mother or husband in which she writes: 'Ego Matilda dei gratia dux in hac cartula a me facta subscripsi.'¹⁹¹ The term appears to note the transition of power, from her mother to her. Soon after, Matilda returns to using *ducatrix*: 'Ego in dei nomine Matildis comitissa atque ducatrix.'¹⁹² Outside references to her landed titles were not always consistent in their use of gender and seemed to vary depending on the purpose for which they were used. Contemporaries such as Gregory VII and Peter Damian referred to her and her mother Beatrice by the masculine title *dux* rather than the gender-specific *ducatrix*, using a typical salutation 'Dei duci Beatrici et eius filie Mathildi salutem et apostolicam benedictionem.'¹⁹³ It seems that Matilda used the masculine form not to draw authority from maleness but rather because it implied a link to her father Boniface, from whom she derived her power.

Penelope Nash argues that Matilda did not primarily draw authority from using the masculine *dux* but rather it was the use of *inclita*. Nash suggests that the term *inclita Mathildis*, which was used in both her own documents and then again by Donizo in the *Vita Mathildis*, bore overtones of an old Roman imperial title of honour.¹⁹⁴ She argues that though the term came to be used in medieval Latin to also describe ownership in full, typically of land, it's earlier classical meaning ('illustrious' or 'renowned') would have still resonated with the authors and readers of the text.¹⁹⁵ It is also possible that beyond an immediately classical notation of the term, it may have harkened back to a more recent past. The term was also used to address Charlemagne (*inclito augusto Karolo*) and is found throughout Merovingian and

¹⁸⁹ Reynolds, 5.

¹⁹⁰ Reynolds, 4.

¹⁹¹ Matilde, Goez, and Goez, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 26: 97–100.

¹⁹² Matilde, Goez, and Goez, 27: 100–4.

¹⁹³ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 1.77, 109; 2.9, 138; 3.5, 251.

¹⁹⁴ Nash, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda*, 184.

¹⁹⁵ Nash, 150.

Carolingian documents as a customary greeting.¹⁹⁶ Thus it is equally possible the usage was meant to recall the period of Charlemagne, positioning Matilda as a new Christian ruler. Though at odds with Matilda's non-royal birth, this declaration would have been a particularly sharp jab at Henry IV who had by then fallen far from the papacy's favour.

Together, these factors suggest that Matilda intended to centre her own authority around her connections to her family, and perhaps even illustrious leaders of the past, rather than the current *regnum*. If Matilda's use of *inclita* was meant to invoke the past royal authority of Charlemagne rather than the contemporary royal authority of Henry IV, she may have intended to style herself as a spiritual successor. By emphasizing her relationship to Boniface and implicitly undermining the authority of Henry IV, Matilda may have intended these to be subtle markers of her own transgressive attitudes towards the heretical king. This is supported by instances where Matilda's charters refer to Henry as *falsus rex*¹⁹⁷ and *Einrici tiranni*¹⁹⁸ which explicitly inform the audience of Matilda's thoughts on the king and his legitimacy. If she were willing to declare these anti-imperial sentiments outright, it is possible that she also included formulations in her charters which reattributed her authority to other figures.

1.4.2 Matilda's Self-Fashioning in her Signature

Matilda's personal signature may also cast some light on her self-conceptualization and how she positioned herself amongst her peers within larger socio-political and religious networks. Matilda was highly educated and would have been aware of the transgressive nature of her open opposition to the legal source of her own titles and authority. Her signature phrase, 'Matilda dei gratia, si quid est' ('Matilda, by the grace of God, if she is anything') may yield insight into how she wanted to be perceived by others. The signature phrase is incorporated into a Latin cross and features the abbreviation 'SS' (*subscripsit*) marking it as a signature (Figure 14). Most of what Matilda has left behind concerns legal judgments and other technical documents, and though she did not write the documents herself, it is commonly accepted that she was at least capable of signing her own name and dedicatory phrase, indicating she probably was involved in devising the signature formula as well. The *dei gratia* formula had become standard for numerous different offices in many parts of Europe but was typically

¹⁹⁶ Albert Werminghoff, ed., *Concilia aevi Karolini: 742-842*, Concilia 2 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 2003), 274; Friedrich Maaßen, ed., *Concilia aevi Merovingici: 511-695*, 1 vols, Concilia 1 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1989); Karl Zeumer, *Formulae Merovingici et Karolini Aevi: Accedunt Ordines Iudiciorum Dei* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁹⁷ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 38: 130.

¹⁹⁸ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 44: 142–3.

reserved for superiors such as the pope or king, or in some cases, bishops.¹⁹⁹ However, after 1077 or so, Henry IV only used the formulation occasionally as ‘Heinricus quartus dei gratia atque constitutione rex’ and then later as ‘Heinricus dei gratia tercius Romanorum imperator augustus.’ It is unclear why there was a decline in Henry’s usage of the phrase, though it may have been a reaction to Gregory’s *Dictatus Papae* which gave the pope the right to confer (or revoke) imperial authority.

Matilda’s use of this phrase may provide insight into how she envisioned herself within the larger social, political, and religious institutions of the time. When considered alongside the terms used within her charters, Matilda’s deployment of the phrase may have been intended to appropriate imperial language to emphasize her disobedience to the *regnum*. Furthermore, though the phrase itself had become standard amongst the titled class, the scripture from which it originated was also commonly referenced in Gregory VII’s exegesis on the reform. The *dei gratia* formula was derived from a passage in 1 Corinthians where Paul attempted to correct deviance within the Corinthian church:

Ego enim sum minimus Apostolorum, qui non sum dignus vocari Apostolus, quoniam persecutus sum ecclesiam Dei / Gratia autem Dei sum id quod sum, et gratia ejus in me vacua non fuit, sed abundantius illis omnibus laboravi: non ego autem, sed gratia Dei mecum.²⁰⁰

Reform-minded references to 1 Corinthians are frequent in Gregory’s register, indicating the primary advocate of the reform was aware of its potency. In the record of the Lenten Synod of 1080, Gregory referred to the epistle specifically to rebuke Henry and emphasize the obedience of the mortal realm to the heavenly one:

Vos enim patriarchatus primatus archiepiscopatus episcopatus frequenter tulistis pravis et indignis et religiosis viris dedistis. [...] *Et si angelos dominantes omnibus superbis principibus iudicabitis, quid de illorum servis facere potestis?* Addiscant nunc reges et omnes seculi principes, quanti vos estis, quid potestis, et timeant parvipendere iussionem ecclesie vestre. Et in predicto Heinrico tam cito iudicium vestrum exercete,

¹⁹⁹ Ernst Robert Curtius, ‘Devotional Formula and Humility’, in *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 407–8; Lennart Ejerfeldt, ‘Myths of the State in the West European Middle Ages’, *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* 6 (1972): 164.

²⁰⁰ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, 1 Corinthians 15: 9–10. ‘For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.’

ut omnes sciant, quia non fortuitu sed vestra potestate cadet, confundetur, utinam ad penitentiam, *ut spiritus sit salvus in die Domini*.²⁰¹ (Emphasis added)

Thus, during Matilda's lifetime this scripture became part of the exegetical defence of papal supremacy, advocated by the head of the reform himself. With her close relationship to Gregory in mind, it is possible that Matilda's signature may have been intended to reflect Gregory's exegetical approach. Reynolds relates the countess's use of the phrase to her military might and renowned piety, as well as an attribution of her rulership to God.²⁰² While the phrase highlights Matilda's religious devotion, it also has the implicit effect of denying gratitude to anyone else, including Henry, to whom Matilda legally owed her authority.²⁰³ Matilda's usage of *dei gratia* was probably multifaceted and intended to reflect not only its traditional usage for rulers, but also the phrase's new reform-minded exegetical association. Independently, the phrase seems innocuous, even standardized. However, when factored together with Matilda's assertion of her titles and blatant disloyalty to the king within these charters, it appears possible that this phrase may have served another purpose. Matilda may have intended this formula to undermine the authority of the king by both reclaiming a phrase typically used for royalty while also recalling Gregory's assertion of imperial subservience to the Church. The phraseology within Matilda's charters seems to have been intended to assert authority beyond the imperial model; first by highlighting the legitimacy of her power, which was rightfully inherited from her father, and second, by aligning herself with the sanctified powers of God, the Church, and the papacy. Though Matilda's relationship to the papacy waxed and waned throughout her life, her loyalty to the papacy must have been secure, as this convention persisted even when Matilda was having issues with Paschal II's leadership in 1105.²⁰⁴ Though critical of the papal decision to excommunicate Anselm of Canterbury, the letter uses the salutation 'Mathildis marcisae dei gratia, si quid est, tam debitum quam fidele totius subiectionis obsequium.'²⁰⁵ Though the phrase's inclusion in the letter might speak to the formulaic use of *dei gratia*, the

²⁰¹ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 7.14a: 479–87; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 7.14a: 340–44. 'For you have frequently taken away patriarchates, primacies, archbishops, and bishoprics from the wicked and unworthy and have given them to religious men. For if you judge spiritual things, should it be believed that you can do concerning secular things? And if you will judge the angels who rule over all proud princes, what can you do concerning their servants? Now let kings and all secular princes learn how great you are, what you can do, and let them fear to belittle the command of your church. And against the aforesaid Henry, so swiftly execute your judgement that all may know that he does not fall and is confounded by chance but by your power, would that it may be to penitence, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.'

²⁰² Reynolds, 'Reading Matilda', 1.

²⁰³ Reynolds, 1–2.

²⁰⁴ Anselm of Canterbury, *The Letters of St. Anselm of Canterbury*, ed. Walter Fröhlich, Cistercian Studies 142 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1990), 3.83–84.

²⁰⁵ 'Marchioness Matilda, by the grace of God if she is anything, sending the allegiance of total subjection, as much due as it is faithful.'

addendum of in which she declares her ‘total subjection’ to the pope appears to be unique. Though the relationship was strained, it is clear she still intended to demonstrate fealty to the papacy.

The styling of the countess by her peers suggests that Matilda was viewed in a multifaceted way, with her gender being a complication to those who respected her power and authority. The objects directly created for her and which bore her mark—her charters, her signature, and the *Vita*—expressed her anxiety over her legitimacy as a ruler who directly disobeyed the imperial source of her titles. These objects indicate that Matilda acted decisively to shape her authority and embed herself within a larger network of reform-minded people in order to do so. Though her gender was viewed by her peers as an obstacle to overcome, Matilda consciously derived her legitimacy from her ancestry which she then used to concentrate and direct notions of her own strength and leadership.

Though indicative of how she may have personally conceived of her authority, Matilda’s emphasis on ancestry did not render her protected or independent from external sources of power like the *regnum* who sought to punish her disobedience. As a woman entrenched in male-centric politics, her position was complicated by her femaleness and categorical irregularity. It is probably this very irregularity which would have made Matilda vulnerable to the whim of the emperor as her gender demanded external legitimacy to secure control over her patrimony. Instead, Matilda validated her authority through the papacy and engaged in a mutually beneficial system where she provided physical protection and ideological support for the reform, and in return, she was granted authority from the pope who asserted himself above the *regnum*.

Chapter 2: The Material Expression of the Ideals of the Eleventh-Century Papal Reform

This chapter examines Matilda's relationship to the eleventh-century papal reform, and how that relationship manifested itself in her patronage and the resultant objects. It argues that Matilda's propagation of reform-minded imagery was not incidental, unintended, or passive, but rather was an active gesture to demonstrate her allegiance as well as propagate the same sentiments in others. Beyond her military and financial contributions to the cause, Matilda will be seen to have commissioned work that emphasized reforming principles by using iconographic and exegetic interpretations associated with the reform. Furthermore, it will become clear that Matilda utilized these objects to foster relationships that encouraged loyalty to the papacy and the goals of the reform.

However, her actions appear to have gone beyond devotion. There is no doubt that Matilda was herself a pious and devout Christian and it seems most likely that she believed in the values of the reform; however, it is also possible that self-serving objectives co-existed with spiritual motives. As discussed in Chapter One, Matilda had lifelong issues with authority and legitimacy which may have played a role in her support for the papacy. By commissioning objects with reform-minded imagery, particularly concerning papal supremacy, Matilda could simultaneously portray herself as supporting the papacy and its goals, while also denying the authority of the *regnum*. Matilda's title was derived from the king; when Henry IV stripped her of her lands, she would have needed an alternative source of power to legitimize her jurisdiction. Thus, papal authority would have been an attractive alternative. Throughout his tenure, Pope Gregory VII concentrated on the assertion of papal authority and the existence of a papal state which was superior in all ways to the secular *regnum*. Inherent in this assertion was the church's right to categorize and remove disobedient or heretical forces that threatened the earthly authority of the church.

This chapter is focused around three case studies; the *Vita Mathildis*, the Gospels of Matilda (New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492), and the *Relatio de Innovatione Ecclesie Sancti Geminiani* (Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11, fols. 1r-9v). These case studies relate to Matilda's patronage in different ways; the *Vita Mathildis* came from Donizo's desire to generate future patronage and was part of Matilda's material support for Donizo's home institution at Canossa. The Gospels of Matilda were likely commissioned by her, potentially as a gift. The *Relatio*, however, was not itself an object of her patronage: rather, the manuscript documented Matilda's gift of an object, and captured the culture of gift-giving she practised to encourage the reciprocal

ideological support of the eleventh-century papal reform. The case studies in this chapter are meant to demonstrate three things about the fruits of Matilda's patronage: first, in the case of the *Vita Mathildis* manuscript and the Gospels of Matilda, imagery associated with the reform was utilized to demonstrate her faithfulness to the papacy. Second, as documented in the *Relatio*, Matilda formed relationships within the cities of her domain and used gifts to inculcate the ideals of the reform and papal supremacy at a local level. Though not part of Matilda's material patronage, the *Relatio* provides an important account of how Matilda used objects to persuade citizens to support the papacy and their overarching goals. Third, Matilda used gifts such as the Gospels of Matilda which featured exegetical imagery associated with the reform to ensure ideological support from the beneficiaries at the monastery of San Benedetto al Polirone. The purposeful use of reform-minded imagery and exegesis was strategically deployed to depict her as a supporter and defender of the papacy. Through this support for Gregory and the reform's ideas of papal supremacy, Matilda was able to morally justify her legal disobedience to the king, thus enabling her to affix her legitimacy and authority to the only powerful alternative to the *regnum*. Furthermore, by featuring this imagery in objects given to cities and institutions, Matilda could build support for the papacy and their goals while simultaneously eroding those of the *regnum*.

2.1 The Eleventh-Century Schism Between the Papacy and the Regnum, and the Fragmentation of Power

The Investiture Controversy and the ensuing socio-political complexities form the background against which we can understand Matilda's reasons for needing to disconnect her authority from that of the king. Though it is unknown if Matilda's divorce from the *regnum* was specifically motivated by the Investiture Controversy, she certainly took advantage of the estrangement in order to realign her authority with a different power. To understand the conditions that allowed for this dramatic departure from imperial allegiance, and why the papacy was the logical choice for Matilda, one must look beyond the famed 1077 meeting that she helped coordinate at her castle at Canossa, and take into view both the build-up towards and the aftermath of this event. While the climax of the Investiture Controversy may have been the 1077 meeting, the conflict spanned the majority of the countess's life. The struggle was pervasive and caused social and religious divisions as well as physical conflict. Tension between the papacy and the *regnum* lasted beyond her death in 1115f, and although it had then

greatly diminished, the dispute was only formally concluded with the Concordat of Worms in 1122.

2.1.1 Early Tensions Between the King and the Pope

Underpinning the conflict was a competition between the papacy and the *regnum* for power. However, this was not a crisis that came on suddenly. It developed slowly and deliberately, particularly as the papacy began to reclaim privileges that had been previously allocated to the royal court. Prompted by Cardinal Hildebrand (later Gregory VII) who challenged the laity's role within the church's hierarchy, in 1059 Pope Nicholas II issued a papal bull entitled *In Nomine Domini*.²⁰⁶ This edict was largely a response to the events concerning the most recent papal election. In 1058, Antipope Benedict X had been elected after his family arranged his appointment. Hildebrand gathered an oppositional force of cardinals who agreed that the election was improper. This group of cardinals, supported by Beatrice and Godfrey the elder, sought imperial permission from the king's mother Agnes of Poitou and engineered the election of Nicholas II as pope.²⁰⁷

The 1059 papal bull sought to consolidate papal electoral powers in the hands of the church rather than the laity thereby avoiding the creation of another antipope. With this edict, the church sought to curtail the powers of the king and insisted that the Roman church was the sole authority on earth. The bull decreed the selection of the pope would be returned to the church in the form of cardinal elections. Nicholas II must have anticipated a royal backlash and a subsequent disruption of papal elections, as the directive indicates that, whether or not the elected pope was able to return to Rome, he would still maintain the papal office.²⁰⁸ The bull also dictated that the king (Henry IV) shall 'obtain this right [the imperial seat] personally from the apostolic see.'²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ Ernest F. Henderson, *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages* (Honolulu, HI: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), 361–4; Oliver J. Thatcher, *A Source Book for Medieval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Age* (New York: AMS Press, 1971), 113.

²⁰⁷ Mary Stroll, *Popes and Antipopes: The Politics of Eleventh Century Church Reform* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012), 83–89; Robert L. Benson, *Bishop-Elect: A Study in Medieval Ecclesiastical Office* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 150–200; Jehangir Yezdi Malegam, *The Sleep of Behemoth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 21–54; Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State, 1050-1300*, 1999, 33–45.

²⁰⁸ Henderson, *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, 362–4.

²⁰⁹ Henderson, 362; A more specific and nuanced discussion of the papal bullae can be found in Uta-Renate Blumenthal's work who has devoted much time to this subject: Uta-Renate Blumenthal, 'Reform and Rome', in *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 64–105; Uta-Renate Blumenthal, 'The Papacy and Canon Law in the Eleventh-Century Reform', *The Catholic Historical Review* 84, no. 2 (1998): 201–18.

After the death of Nicholas II, an election by the cardinals was held and Alexander II was chosen. Without the cardinals' permission, Henry IV retaliated by nominating the bishop of Parma, Petrus Cadalus, as Antipope Honorius II. In the spring of 1062, the imperialists were able to take Rome by force and install Honorius. Beatrice and Godfrey mediated an agreement between the papacy and the imperial court, and in 1064 Alexander II was able to retake the papal throne.²¹⁰ The relationship between the papacy and *regnum* continued to deteriorate throughout Alexander's tenure, as the pope continued to enforce the principles of the eleventh-century papal reform across Christian Europe.

Beginning in the eleventh century the papacy discouraged acts of simony, namely the purchase and sale of religious seats. Simony was formally prohibited by Clement II (1046-1047), a measure that was reiterated by Nicholas II in his 1059 *Vigilantia universalis*, and again in 1063 by Alexander II.²¹¹ When Alexander II died in 1073, his close advisor Cardinal Hildebrand ascended to the papal throne. As Pope, Gregory VII continued to clampdown on simony, as well as pursuing issues concerning clerical marriage and celibacy. Gregory himself viewed celibacy amongst the clergy as a way to preserve purity and cleanliness.²¹² Furthermore, reformers viewed clerical marriage as disruptive to the order of the clergy, being not simply immoral but disruptive to the investing practices of the church, as married and non-celibate clergy could produce children and encourage the inheritance of offices which further detracted from efforts to centralize that power in the church.

The increasingly blunt and antagonistic texts of the oppositional leaders, Pope Gregory VII²¹³ and King Henry IV,²¹⁴ reveal how tensions began to boil over as both men rebelled against the concept of a terrestrial and heavenly divide. In 1075, Gregory composed the *Dictatus Papae* which declared that the Roman church was founded by and adhered only to God and was the sole authority on earth. The treatise explicitly assigned the use of the imperial insignia and the power to depose the emperor to the pope. It also directly empowered the papacy to divest the bishoprics and abbasies that had been vested by the emperor and 'absolve subjects from fealty to the wicked.'²¹⁵ In the same year, the Lateran Council reaffirmed that the pope alone had the authority to appoint or, inversely, dismiss clergy. The

²¹⁰ Stroll, *Popes and Antipopes*, 119–32.

²¹¹ Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 101–2.

²¹² Brundage, 'Sexuality, Marriage, and the Reform of Christian Society in the Thought of Gregory VII', 70–3.

²¹³ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.55a, 3.6, 3.10, 3.10a, 4.1–3, 4.7, 4.11.

²¹⁴ Theodor Ernst Mommsen and Karl F. Morrison, *Imperial Lives and Letters in the Eleventh Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 147–56.

²¹⁵ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.55a: 149–50; Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII.'

Dictatus asserted papal primacy so thoroughly that there was no longer any doubt whether the church sought to subjugate the *regnum*. Furthermore, the *Dictatus* positioned the pope as a Christ figure, insisting on the obedience of the earthly realm: ‘Quod solius papae pedes omnes principes deosculentur.’²¹⁶ The kissing of feet refers to a passage in Luke 7: ‘Et ecce mulier, quae erat in civitate peccatrix, ut cognovit quod accubisset in domo pharisaei, attulit alabastrum unguenti: / et stans retro secus pedes ejus, lacrimis coepit rigare pedes ejus, et capillis capitis sui tergebat, et osculabatur pedes ejus, et unguento ungebat.’²¹⁷ According to the passage, a sinful woman offered to wash the feet of Christ when his host, Simon the Pharisee, did not make such an offer. By shirking his obligations, Simon was not forgiven for his sins like the sinning woman who kissed Christ’s feet. The parable frames the feet washing and kissing as an act that demonstrates respect and deference, while also being necessary to bring about the forgiveness of sins. By using this construction, the *Dictatus* seems to imply that if a king refused to kiss the pope’s feet—to show respect and fealty—the king would take the position of the pharisee and would not be eligible to have his sins forgiven. Gregory sent a follow-up letter to Henry in December 1075, reminding the king of his obligations to the church, and thus, to the papacy. The letter highlighted the king’s hypocrisy; despite Henry’s claims to be a ‘son of the holy mother church’ and a ‘subject in faith,’ he declined to obey canonical and apostolic decrees.²¹⁸

Henry IV’s response came at the Synod of Worms in January 1076 when he assembled religious and secular loyalists to condemn Gregory as a ‘false monk’ who described his ascension to power as ‘Tu enim his gradibus ascendisti: scilicet astutia, quod monachica professio abhominatur, pecuniam, pecunia favorem, favore ferrum, ferro sedem pacis adisti, et de sede pacis pacem turbasti.’²¹⁹ Henry declared that he is to be judged by Christ alone and that Gregory should relinquish the apostolic chair that he has usurped. He and his supporters continued to appoint clergymen in defiance of papal orders, evoking a stern response from the papacy. In the same year, Gregory VII held a synod during Lent and excommunicated the king

²¹⁶ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.55a: 149–50. ‘That of the pope alone all princes shall kiss the feet.’

²¹⁷ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Lucas 7: 37–8. ‘And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he [Christ] was eating in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.’

²¹⁸ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 3.10: 187–90.

²¹⁹ Henry IV, ‘Die Urkunden Heinrichs IV’, ed. Alfred Gawlik, 3 vols, *Diplomata* 6 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1978); Henderson, *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, 365–72. ‘For thou hast ascended by the following steps. By wiles, namely, which the profession of monk abhors, thou hast achieved money; by money, favour; by the sword, the throne of peace. And from the throne of peace thou hast disturbed peace, inasmuch as thou hast armed subjects against those in authority over them.’

with all his associates. In his letter following the synod, Gregory simultaneously freed people of the ‘entire kingdom of Germans and of Italy’ from any oaths and forbade them from serving the king in any capacity.²²⁰ Henry IV was also given a year to repent before his excommunication became permanent. Just before the end of the year-long period, the king ventured south to meet the pope to atone. In January 1077, the two met at Canossa, the patrimonial power base of the Canossan dynasty.

The selection of Canossa was strategic. Matilda had inherited the territories which controlled many of the main routes in and out of Northern Italy, so she intended to safely escort Pope Gregory under her military protection across the Alps where they were to be joined by a consort of German princes.²²¹ For reasons unknown, the princes never materialized, and Matilda was left alone to protect the pope.²²² It appears that Gregory was travelling north from Rome towards Germany when it was discovered that Henry was coming south instead. In his account of the event, Bonizo of Sutri suggests that Henry had intended to take Gregory by surprise: ‘Et sunt, qui dicunt eum pontificem incautum voluisse capere; quod satis videtur veri simile.’²²³

The Chronicler Lambert of Hersfeld also documented the event contemporaneously in his *Annales*.²²⁴ Lambert described a rebellion amongst the German princes, whose support Henry needed to maintain his claim to the *regnum*. According to Lambert, the princes were perturbed by Henry’s excommunication and their discontent was causing tensions to boil over: unless Henry obtained absolution from Gregory, he would be deposed.²²⁵ This perhaps explains the urgency with which Henry made his daring winter crossing. David Hay suggests news of Henry’s travels likely reached Gregory by the time the pope reached Mantua.²²⁶ Matilda was

²²⁰ Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 3.10a: 191–3.

²²¹ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 67–70.

²²² Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 4.12; Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, 4.12.

²²³ Bonizo of Sutri, ‘Liber Ad Amicum’, ed. Ernst Dümmler, vol. 1, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Libelli de Lite* (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1891), 610; John Andrew Dempsey, ‘Bonizo of Sutri: Life and Work’ (PhD, Boston, Boston University, 2006). ‘Then there are those who say he [Henry] wanted to catch the pontiff unaware; similar enough that it might be plausible.’

²²⁴ Lambert of Hersfeld, ‘Annales,’ ed. V. Lud. Frid. Hesse, *Scriptores 5* (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1844), 134–263; Lampert of Hersfeld, *The Annals of Lampert of Hersfeld*, ed. I. S. Robinson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 51–367; The event was similarly recalled by Berthold of Reichenau, though his description is far less detailed. The greatest discrepancy between the accounts lies in whether or not the pope commanded the scorned king to wait by the gates, as in Lambert’s account, or if the king had chosen to do so of his own accord, as Berthold Berthold of Reichenau maintains, ‘Annales,’ ed. G.H. Pertz, *Scriptores 5* (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1844), 264–326; I. S. Robinson, *Eleventh-Century Germany: The Swabian Chronicles* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), 108–244.

²²⁵ Lampert of Hersfeld, *The Annals of Lampert of Hersfeld*, 345–6.

²²⁶ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 69.

to escort the pope to the Alps and joined Gregory sometime before the pair reached Mantua.²²⁷ Thus, the selection of Canossa appears to have been strategic:²²⁸ with no forthcoming assistance, Matilda's castle would have been the natural choice as its defences and familiarity to the countess provided the tactical advantage.

2.1.2 *The 1077 Meeting at Canossa*

Lambert describes the meeting in detail and depicts the pope as a fair arbiter of sacred justice: 'quem sciat aequitatis et innocentiae incorruptissimum vindiciem et advocatum fore.'²²⁹ Upon his arrival, Henry selected Matilda to join the negotiation team alongside Margravine Adelaide of Turin, Margrave Albert Azzo II of Este, Abbot Hugh of Cluny, and some unnamed Italian princes. According to Lambert, this group was selected due to their importance to Gregory, and their perceived ability to influence the Pope.²³⁰ Gregory insisted that Henry give over the royal insignia to the papacy and declare himself unworthy, but the envoy negotiated a more moderate solution dependent on the king's performing an act of true penance.²³¹ The king—who laid aside his royal garments ('nihil praeferens regium, nihil ostentans pompaticum') and stood with bare feet ('nudis pedibus')²³²—and stood outside the castle gates over the course of three days. On the fourth day, he was permitted to enter and negotiate with Gregory regarding the lifting of his excommunication. It is likely that Lambert intentionally exaggerated his description of the event to raise the stakes of the meeting: Henry's willingness to sacrifice life and limb in exchange for forgiveness conveys the severity of the papacy's threat to Henry's claim to power. In the introduction to his translation of Lambert's *Annales*, I.S. Robinson notes that portions of Lambert's account appear to have been directly borrowed from Gregory, particularly the description of Henry's barefooted penance which appeared in a letter to German bishops and princes in late January 1077.²³³ In the letter, Gregory describes the event:

²²⁷ Hay, 69.

²²⁸ Lampert of Hersfeld, *The Annals of Lampert of Hersfeld*, 350.

²²⁹ Lambert of Hersfeld, 'Annales', 258; Lampert of Hersfeld, *The Annals of Lampert of Hersfeld*, 353. I.S. Robinson translates it as: '[the pope was known to be] a totally uncorrupted vindicator and guardian of justice and innocence.'

²³⁰ Lampert of Hersfeld, *The Annals of Lampert of Hersfeld*, 352.

²³¹ Lampert of Hersfeld, 354; Lambert of Hersfeld, 'Annales', 258.

²³² Lampert of Hersfeld, *The Annals of Lampert of Hersfeld*, 354–5; Lambert of Hersfeld, 'Annales', 259.

²³³ Lampert of Hersfeld, *The Annals of Lampert of Hersfeld*, n. 1868; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 4.12.

Quarum etiam confirmationem per manus abbatis Cluniacensis et filiarum nostrarum Mathildis et comitisse Adelaie et aliorum principum, Episcoporum et laicorum, qui nobis ad hoc utiles visi sunt, recepimus.²³⁴

Gregory names Matilda as a crucial assistant, though only once as part of a larger group including Hugh of Cluny and Adelaide of Turin. Berthold of Reichenau also describes Matilda's participation as part of a larger group of negotiators:

Tandem rex accepto suorum salubri satis consilio, prorsusque deposito priori, quem in papam iam malitioso vecors et odiosus excogitavit studio, interventu et auxilio praecipue domnae Mathildis marchionissae, socrus suae Adelheidae itidemi marchionissae, et abbatis Cluniacensis.²³⁵

It appears that amongst her peers, despite serving as Gregory's protection and having provided the venue, Matilda was not considered to have been one of the leading brokers of the agreement. Amongst contemporary accounts, Arnulf of Milan offers the most favourable description of the countess's involvement:

Interim consilio sanctissimi Cluniensis abbatis, Agnetis quoque regie matris nec non sapientissime iam dicte Matilde statuitur generale colloquium inter ipsos, regem et apostolicum pacis ac iustitiae causa[...]. Sic Matilde magna prudentia consolidata sunt pacis eorum federa in vitis episcopis ac in lite manentibus.²³⁶

While Arnulf includes Matilda as part of a larger envoy, he ends the section by directly attributing the peace agreement to Matilda's 'great prudence.' Aside from Arnulf's account, these descriptions tend to minimise Matilda's involvement and avoid attributing the successful negotiations to any one person. While it is likely that Matilda's opinions were generally important to Gregory, it makes sense that Gregory, amidst a struggle against secular authority, would be reluctant to attribute the victory to another, albeit friendly, secular power.

In the aftermath of the meeting at Canossa, Gregory and Henry IV were able to negotiate a mutual de-escalation, and subsequently, both the excommunication and imperial

²³⁴ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 4.12: 313; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 4.12: 221–2. Translation by H.E.J. Cowdrey: 'We have also received confirmation of them [Henry's promises] through the hands of the abbot of Cluny, and our daughters Matilda and Countess Adelaide, and of other princes, bishops, and laity who seemed to us useful for this purpose.'

²³⁵ Berthold of Reichenau, 'Annales', 289; Robinson, *Eleventh-Century Germany*, 108–244. Translation by Robinson: 'The king finally took the salutary advice of his followers and gave up entirely the previous wicked plan that he had insanely and hatefully devised against the pope. He resolved, primarily through the mediation and help of Margravine Matilda, of his mother-in-law Adelaide, likewise a margravine, and of the abbot of Cluny.'

²³⁶ Arnulf of Milan, *Liber gestorum recentium*, ed. Claudia Zey, trans. W.L. North, vol. 67, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Rerum Germanicarum* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1994), 55. 'Meanwhile, upon the counsel of the most holy abbot of Cluny, the king's mother Agnes, and the aforementioned most wise Matilda, a general conference between the king and the Pope themselves was set for the sake of peace and justice[...]. Thus, through Matilda's great prudence, their agreements of peace were confirmed, although the bishops were unwilling and remained in conflict [with the king].'

ban were lifted. Yet tensions did not ease, and Matilda's soldiers kept guard of the pope for the majority of 1077, providing an armed escort wherever Gregory went.²³⁷ In 1079, Matilda attempted to organize a summit between the pope and king with her cousin Theoderic II as a mediator; Gregory declined as Theoderic had been recently excommunicated by the bishop of Metz.²³⁸ The papal-regnum relationship continued to deteriorate, and by 1080, the imperial investment of bishoprics and other holy offices had resumed. Gregory reinstated Henry's excommunication and endorsed Rudolf as the new rightful king in March 1080.²³⁹ Things escalated quickly: in June of the same year, the king responded by deposing Gregory and appointing Wibert of Ravenna as antipope.²⁴⁰ In the summer of 1080, Gregory and Matilda planned a pre-emptive strike on Ravenna in hope of unsettling the imperial control over the city.²⁴¹ Gregory described his plan in a general letter to his faithful adherents whom he hoped might assist, referring to Matilda in passing as one of the supporters of the military campaign ('Id ipsum quoque nobis et qui circa Urbem longe lateque sunt et in Tuscia ceterisque regionibus principes firmiter pollicentur').²⁴² In October, Matilda was defeated by Henry and his allies at the Battle of Volta after Gregory directed her to block the illegitimate king and his pope.²⁴³ Shortly thereafter in 1081, Henry declared Matilda guilty in absentia and issued an imperial ban against her and she was stripped of her rights, possessions, and titles.²⁴⁴ Henry subsequently began to allocate Matilda's lands to his supporters and referred to her as 'treasonous.'²⁴⁵ Though Henry's legal and armed retaliation against the countess were partially effective in reducing Matilda's funds and mobility, their greatest impact was to cement Matilda's dependence on the papacy for her authority and legitimacy.

Matilda, a widow and now legally barred from her lands, needed to reassert her authority through a competing power; with Gregory at the helm, the papacy provided an alternative. Gregory's assertion of moral and legal authority over the *regnum* in the *Dictatus*

²³⁷ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 70–3.

²³⁸ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 6.22.

²³⁹ Gregory VII, 7.14a, 7.15.

²⁴⁰ Ludwig Weiland, ed., 'Constitutiones et Acta Publica: Imperatorum et Regum', *Leges 12* (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1893), 69–70.

²⁴¹ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 77.

²⁴² Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 8.4: 525; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 8.7: 372–3. Translation by H.E.J. Cowdrey: 'Also the princes who are both far and wide in the environs of the City [Rome] and also in Tuscany and other regions firmly promise the same to us.'

²⁴³ Eads, 'The Geography of Power: Matilda of Tuscany and the Strategy of Active Defense', 377; Lino L. Ghirardini, 'La battaglia di Volta Mantovana (ottobre 1080)', in *Sant'Anselmo, Mantova e la lotta per le Investiture: convegno internazionale di studi (Mantova, 23-24-25 maggio 1986)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli (Bologna: Patron Editore, 1987), 229–40.

²⁴⁴ Alfred Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany, 1056-1273*, 2nd ed (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 117–20.

²⁴⁵ Henry IV, 'Die Urkunden Heinrichs IV', 373, 379, 385.

Papae provided intellectual cover for Matilda's realignment and was necessary for her long-term survival. Her relationship with the papacy was mutually beneficial: the papacy, now in direct opposition to the king and his army, needed Matilda's financial and military support to ward off the incursions of Henry and his antipopes as they continued in their attempts to take Rome. At times, this loyalty pushed Matilda to her financial limit.²⁴⁶ It is possible that Matilda's material support was part of the quid pro quo agreement between her and the papacy. Matilda used objects imbued with associations of the eleventh-century papal reform to encourage loyalty and ideological support. Through these objects, Matilda aimed to create a broader base of support for the reform and thus strengthen her own position against the *regnum*.

2.2 A Reform-minded Interpretation of the *Vita Mathildis*

If Matilda aligned herself with the papacy to oppose the authority of the *regnum*, then aspects of the reform may also have informed the production of objects created for Matilda in an attempt to curry favour with the countess. Such is the case with the *Vita Mathildis*. Donizo was clearly aware of the importance the reform held in Matilda's life and emphasized her family's connections to the Church. In Book II, Chapter Three, which records the death of Gregory and the coronations of Victor III and Urban II, Donizo refers to the 'path of Gregory': 'Filiolae Petri, Christi famulaeque fideli, / Exhortando pia direxit tunc sua scripta, / Gregorii norman [sic] plus precipueque recordans, / Quatinus observet, nec eam dimittere temptet; / Hinc peccatorum veniam dat eique suorum.'²⁴⁷ The biographer records that Matilda intended to stay faithful to the course now known as the eleventh-century papal reform as best she could.

In Book II, Chapter Sixteen, Donizo reprises Matilda's commitment to the papacy during the tenure of Pope Paschal II. Donizo concludes the chapter by reminding the reader that Matilda had long waged war with the emperor and would continue to fight against the enemies of the papacy:

²⁴⁶ Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130*, 32. Matilda would later commandeer the treasury at Nonantola to raise funds for continued support to the papacy.

²⁴⁷ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, ll. 324–8. 'To the daughter of Peter and faithful servant of Christ [Matilda], he directed his holy writings of encouragement, reminding her more than anything to follow the path that Gregory had set, and not to try not to stray. He therefore granted her forgiveness for sins committed.'

Nam per triginta duravit tempora firma, / Nocte die bellans regni calcando procellas. /
Finis adest guerrae, requiem rogat ut sibi prestes. / Si tibi crescet opus, nunquam deerit
tibi robur / Eius, et agnosces quia Petri non amat hostes.²⁴⁸

These lines indicate that Matilda had long defended the papacy, and though by the time of the *Vita*, she was old and probably in ill-health, the text makes clear that she maintained her commitment to keep the *regnum* at bay. The chapter, though brief, makes clear the text's hard-line stance towards opponents of the reform in an exaltation of Paschal. Donizo reminds the beleaguered pope that he alone holds the reins to Rome: 'Omnis nunc Roma sub te, regnique coronam, / Nemo ferre valet, tribuas nisi tu sibi plane. / Qui gestabat eam sine te, o preceptor, habenas, / Tu regis atque tenes, vacuus poterit remanere.'²⁴⁹ Donizo's language implies that Paschal had taken too soft an approach in combatting imperial encroachment compared with his predecessors Gregory VII and Urban II. In his introduction to the translation of the *Vita*, Paolo Golinelli notes that this chapter was probably written after 1111, perhaps in 1114, and was probably motivated by the perceived weakness of Paschal against the *regnum*.²⁵⁰ The chapter was likely a response to Paschal's failure to curb the ambitions of Henry V who, like his father, continued to make imperial investitures, and at one point in 1111, held Paschal hostage.

As a soft rebuke towards papal leadership, this chapter of the *Vita* reveals the fluctuating dynamic between Matilda and the papacy. In an 1105 letter, Matilda wrote to criticize the pope's exile of Anselm of Canterbury, daring to call the Pope's decree 'improper.'²⁵¹ Though the letter itself expresses a great deal of fealty to the Pope, it shows that Matilda was not always in sync with the papacy, and when necessary she gave criticism in hopes of swaying the outcome. Similarly, Paschal wrote in an undated letter to Matilda a stern reminder of her obligation to enforce the will of the papacy, suggesting that she had perhaps neglected or been lax in her duties to do so.²⁵² Donizo seems to have been aware of this tension, perhaps replicating Matilda's frustrations in the text as general criticism of the pope, framing it as a

²⁴⁸ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 1070–4. 'For thirty years, she firmly governed, fighting day and night against the tempests within the kingdom. The end of the war is at hand, and she desires the rest you provide. But if you need her, her strength will never be lacking and you will know it, for she despises the enemies of Peter.'

²⁴⁹ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 1061–4. 'All of Rome is under you now, and no one will be able to wear the crown of the kingdom if you do not give it solemnly. Whoever bears it without you, will remain empty-handed, because you have the government and command you hold the reins.'

²⁵⁰ Donizo, 206 n.169.

²⁵¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *The Letters of St. Anselm of Canterbury*, 3.83–4. 'Indecens enim est tam praecipuum sanctae ecclesiae Romanae membrum tanto tempore exulatum iacere inter alia quasi putridum, et non agere sibi commissum incunctanter officium.'

²⁵² Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Series Latina (Paris: Garnier, 1844), vol. 163. col. 366.

gentle reminder of the pope's obligation. This suggests that Donizo was either aware of the countess's personal relation to Paschal, or, that the tension between the two was publicly known outside of their personal correspondence. Furthermore, Donizo may have recognized a consequence of Paschal's weakness could have been that Matilda's land—which included Donizo's monastic home at Canossa—would have become threatened by imperial claims.

Furthermore, though the chapter itself is brief, it is marked by a small figural illumination in Vat. Lat. 4922. Of the smaller illuminations in the manuscript, this roundel is the only one that is not a historiated initial, making it stand out visually. The roundel (Figure 15) on folio 76r is nestled under the subtitle for the chapter, and though the saints are not named, they are probably the two saints Donizo invokes in the first line of the chapter: Peter and Paul. Paul, on the left, and Peter, on the right, appear to be both holding a processional cross. The double portrait may be an intentional reference to the feasts of Peter and Paul which occurred in late June and coincided with the papal conferral of the pallium.²⁵³ By the early twelfth century, the pair of saints had become deeply associated with this liturgical garment. In the eleventh century, Pope Leo IX dictated that one of the few days where the pallium was allowed to be worn was the feast day of Paul and Peter.²⁵⁴ Furthermore in the 1080s, Cardinal Deusdedit—a close friend of Gregory VII and a zealous reformer—wrote in his canon collection an oath of loyalty to the papacy and addressed it to Peter and Paul (in addition to the Roman Church).²⁵⁵ From the Carolingian period, these types of oaths were typically sworn when the pallium was conferred. Thus, the inclusion of these saints in an oath of papal fealty suggests the ties between the reform and Saints Peter and Paul had permeated different levels of the clergy by the 1080s. Paul also appears throughout Gregory's register, as a defender of the church.²⁵⁶ As Ken Grant notes, Gregory consistently utilized Paul as a 'champion for those who defend the church.'²⁵⁷ Thus, there is a duality within the illumination whereby Saint Peter represents the church and Saint Paul represents the defenders of the church. Given that the double-portrait prefaces a subtle critique implying that Paschal was not fully utilizing his authority, it seems the intention was to remind readers of the symbiotic relationship between the papacy and its defenders, and that both parties had roles to play. The papacy needed to be

²⁵³ Steven A. Schoenig, *Bonds of Wool: The Pallium and Papal Power in the Middle Ages* (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 159–60.

²⁵⁴ Schoenig, 308.

²⁵⁵ Schoenig, 343–4.

²⁵⁶ K. Grant, 'St. Paul in the Register of Pope Gregory VII and the Collection in Seventy-Four Titles', *Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition* 39 (2013): 297–8.

²⁵⁷ Grant, 303.

morally superior so that the defenders could justifiably protect it; in turn, the papacy provided a bastion of authority to shelter its defenders from the corrupt *regnum*.

2.2.1 *The 1077 Meeting as Depicted in the Vita Mathildis as an emblem of allegiance to the reform*

Such reform-centric characteristics can also be seen in Donizo's recollection of the 1077 meeting between Gregory and Henry, which differs from other contemporaneous accounts. According to Donizo, the king was compelled to seek peace with the pope via Matilda after realizing he could no longer rule without the papal blessing: 'Non aliter se rex noscens regnare valere, / ad consobrinam Mathildim misit, ut ipsa / Consilium caperet, quo papa veniret ad Urbe / Longobardiam, peteret veniam sibi Dignam.'²⁵⁸ In Donizo's version, Henry approached Hugh, who was also his godfather, and asked that he be his guarantor of good faith; Hugh declines and insists that he would be unable:

«Non licet hoc» abbas regi respondit; et astans / Illic Mathildis rogavit eum, sed et ipsi / «Hoc faciet nemo» respondit «tu nisi, credo». / Poplitibus flexis dixit rex atque Mathildi: / «Tu nisi me multum iuveris modo, non ego scutum / Ulterius frangam, mulctavit me quia papa: / Consobrina valens, fac me benedicere valde»; / Ipsaque surrexit regique spondit, et exit / Ascendens sursum, stetit ac rex ipse deorsum.²⁵⁹

Hugh remarks that Matilda was the only person able to successfully facilitate a peace agreement between the two parties. Donizo does not credit the whole group with the successful mediation like his chronicling counterparts, instead placing Henry's fate squarely in Matilda's hands. According to the *Vita*, Matilda subsequently agreed to intervene and went to Gregory. The pope believed the sincere words of the countess and agreed to see the king: 'Alloquitur papam de regis fine reclamans; / sinceris dictis dominae veneribilis istis.'²⁶⁰ Donizo inserted this scene to underscore Matilda's decisive role in the negotiations; without her intercession, the pope would not have agreed to hear the king's penitential submission. The accompanying illumination on folio 49r (Figure 11) illustrates this exchange between Henry, Hugh, and Matilda. Rather than showing the climax of the scene as it has been chronicled (the penitent king, prostrate at the gates of Canossa), it presents the height of the dramatic arc of Donizo's

²⁵⁸ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book II, ll. 66–9.

²⁵⁹ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 91–9; Translation by Alison Creber, 'Donizo of Canossa, *Vita Mathildis*, Book II, Prologue, Introduction and Chapter 1' (Unpublished, 2018), 7. "“This is not permitted,” was the abbot's answer to the king; and because Matilda, present at that place, renewed this prayer, but the abbot replied to her, “I believe that no one can do it except you.” Now on bended knees, the king turned to Matilda and said: “If you do not help me in this moment, I can no longer fight because the pope has condemned me: O valiant cousin, make him bless me greatly.””

²⁶⁰ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, ll. 100–1.

interpretation. It is the moment when only Matilda can intercede for the king, and his future is dependent on her decision.

Christine Verzár interprets the narrative of this illumination slightly differently.²⁶¹ She posits that the illumination depicts Henry at the gates of Canossa, which Lambert and his peers recorded as occurring after the envoy bargained with Gregory on the king's behalf. According to Verzár, Henry and Hugh are both outside the gates of Canossa which is represented by the arched structure under which Matilda sits. Verzár has looked beyond the text to situate the illumination within the historical accounts of the event as told by other authors. However, while this reasoning appears to solve some questions concerning the arched structure discussed above in Chapter One, Verzár's interpretation does not consider the illumination in tandem with Donizo's textual narrative, the most reasonable source for the scene. Coupled with the text of the chapter which this illumination precedes and the laudatory nature of the *Vita* towards Matilda, it appears more reasonable that the scene is constructed to highlight her key involvement as presented in the text of the manuscript itself, rather than tell the more commonly given account of her minor role within a team of negotiators.

Henry kneels, craning his head to gaze upon the seated countess. He dons a blue mantle with a thick golden border and a two-toned green cloak. He wears a golden headpiece with red accents which is probably his crown. His left hand rests on his knee while the other holds up his garment; combined with his kneeling pose, the overall effect is of remorse or penitence. Hugh of Cluny is shown on a larger scale, clad in red hooded robes. His robes recall the attire of Benedictine monks, appropriate given his position as Abbot of Cluny.²⁶² With his right hand, he gestures towards Matilda with his index finger; in his left hand, he holds a red crosier to signify his status as the spiritual shepherd to his monastery. He sits on a faldstool behind Henry and beside Matilda with his eyes fixed on her. Matilda sits on a red backless throne under an arched structure. She wears a blue dress and a green, scallop-patterned cloak with a thick gold and red hem. Her head is covered with a simple veil, and her gaze is fixed on Hugh. Her right hand is extended toward Hugh while her left echoes Hugh's gesture.

A close analysis of the image contextualized by the ideals of the eleventh-century papal reform reveals details which suggest the author's and Matilda's distinct allegiances. The use of colour may reflect these intentions. Henry's robes are inversely coloured to those of Matilda, while Hugh's robes are altogether different. Though the colour-reversal may have been used

²⁶¹ Verzár, 'Picturing Matilda of Canossa: Medieval Strategies of Representation', 78.

²⁶² Charles S. Buchanan, 'An Illustrated Romanesque Hagiographic Lectionary (Lucca: Biblioteca Capitolare, Passionario C): Inspiration, Formulation, and Reception', *Studies in Iconography* 28 (2007): 121.

to visually differentiate the characters, the use of colour throughout the *Vita* is more typically used to visually link related characters. Beatrice and Boniface share similarly coloured garments, where the ancestral portraits on folios 20v and 21v are connected through the accentual use of blue. The closest, though incomplete inversion appears in the upper portion of folio 19r where Adalbert Atto receives the relics of Saints Victor and Corona. However, while the blue of Adalbert's cloak is repeated in the king's mantle, the red of Adalbert's mantle is not reflected in the king's cloak.²⁶³ The shared colours of folio 49r visually bind the two figures, relating their shared status as members of the laity through the shared use of blues and greens. The contrast of their robes against the red of Hugh's robes is stark. However, the direct inversion of Henry and Matilda's garments suggests a binary within their shared class as laypeople. If Matilda is on one side, Henry must then belong to the opposition. Thus, within the context of the ruptured papal/imperial relationship, the complete reversal between Matilda and Henry's garment colours may be a signal to the viewers of their opposing allegiances.

Less subtle indications of the Gregorian structure of authority are embedded in the figures' size, poses, and gestures. As in Matilda's portrait on fol. 7v, the relative size of the figures may indicate a visual hierarchy where larger figures are considered more important to the viewer.²⁶⁴ Furthermore, their size may be indicative of their respective importance under a Gregorian-inspired doctrine of earthly authority. As members of the laity, Henry and Matilda are of equal size regardless of their titles. Hugh, a member of the clergy, is larger. Under Gregory's conceptualization of how earthly power should be derived and categorized, even a bishop was entitled to more authority than a king—particularly one as immoral and insubordinate as Henry.

Further distinctions in respective power are reflected in the figures' poses and positions on the page. Though Henry is of comparable size to Matilda he occupies the lowest relative position, and while Matilda is smaller in stature than Hugh, she is elevated to his eye level. This configuration further informs the viewer of Matilda's relative importance to the men. In addition to the characters' positions, the configuration of poses and gestures makes it obvious which figure is being elevated for their loyalty, and which figure is repenting for their disloyalty. Not only does Henry kneel—already atypical imagery for a king—but that he does so before a non-royal, non-clerical woman reveals his obeisance. Both men gesture to Matilda though she only returns the gesture to Hugh, excluding Henry from the configuration of mutual

²⁶³ See Figure 1.

²⁶⁴ See Figure 8.

gazes and gestures. Matilda's literal and metaphorical elevation in the illumination stems from her support for the papacy; though demonstrably smaller than her clerical counterpart, she is entitled to an equal position due to her pious assistance. Combined with these poses, the elevated positions of the papally-aligned figures indicate their moral superiority to the debased king who had not yet been un-excommunicated.

An inscription underneath the scene states: 'Rex Rogat Abbatem / Mathildim Supplicat Atque.'²⁶⁵ This highlights Henry as the penitent party and provides the visual cues to the illumination for the viewer. As the visual encapsulation of lines 90-100, it paints Matilda as the key intercessor in the papal/imperial struggle and positions her as the gate-keeper to the king's eternal salvation. That the illumination depicts Donizo's scene rather than the documented events of the meeting indicates that the image is not meant to be strictly historical but rather synecdochal. Accordingly, Matilda's intercession in this scene is emblematic of the integral role she would play in supporting the papacy throughout her life.

Verzár relates the supplication of Henry to the Adoration of the Magi in which the three kings show deference to the Christ child who was typically depicted on Mary's lap, with Mary acting as the *sedes sapientiae*.²⁶⁶ Verzár's interpretation is validated by Donizo's own comparison between Matilda and Mary; it is possible that the illumination is meant to reference this construct.²⁶⁷ Though Verzár picks up the thread of Matilda as Mary, she does not acknowledge the further implications of overlaying the Adoration *topos* on the *Vita* illumination, particularly in that it would render Henry as one of the magi. As Doina E. Craciun has pointed out, aside from a fourth-century reference in a sermon by Saint Augustine, literary parallels between a specific king and the magi are absent until the end of the twelfth century.²⁶⁸ Furthermore Richard C. Trexler has pointed out that the magi were not even consistently regarded as kings during this period, pointing to Cologne's 1164 acquisition of the magi's bodies and contemporary accounts which do not mention their royalty.²⁶⁹

Trexler's analysis also draws on the magi's use in images of diplomacy and the reception of ambassadors.²⁷⁰ This interpretative mode appears to make more sense in relation to the illumination. While it is possible this image was also intended to draw on the devotional

²⁶⁵ 'Where Henry asks Abbot Hugh of Cluny, he begs Matilda.'

²⁶⁶ Verzár, 'Picturing Matilda of Canossa: Medieval Strategies of Representation', 79–80.

²⁶⁷ See §1.3.2 *Donizo's View of the Countess in the Vita Mathildis*.

²⁶⁸ Doina Elena Craciun, 'Adoration of the Magi and Authority of the Medieval King: An Ambiguous Correlation', in *Ideology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Flocel Sabaté, Approaches from Southwestern Europe (Arc Humanities Press, 2019), 248.

²⁶⁹ Richard C. Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 44–54.

²⁷⁰ Trexler, 44–58.

aspects of Matilda as Mary, Donizo's description of the scene within the *Vita* does not imply a devotional interpretation. This does not mean the comparison is invalid: the scene may be relying on an imperial interpretation rather than a strictly biblical one. Carolingian and Ottonian depictions of the scene tended to formulate it as a metaphor for the victory of the heavenly forces over the earthly which featured an enthroned leader in triumph.²⁷¹ The Carolingians also used this imagery to describe the submission of foreign tribes to the western emperors.²⁷² This construction equated the king (or whoever was being elevated) to Christ and had become emblematic of imperial politics.²⁷³ Thus, if the image does draw on the visual forms of the Adoration, it may do so to communicate the diplomatic process between the two powers. In a text that extensively asserts Matilda's authority outside of the *regnum*, this might be a purposeful manoeuvre to emphasize the superiority of Matilda's authority (as an ally of the Church) to the king. Henry becomes the kneeling king whose only gift to the superior power is his humility and penance. To have his excommunication rescinded, Henry must abandon his royal station and acknowledge the authority of the church. Matilda and Hugh represent the will of the church as executors of this new power scheme in the mortal realm. This image of the kneeling king unveils the power dynamics at play here: the *regnum* has submitted itself to the *sacerdotium*.

2.2.2 Godliness is in the Details: Reading the Pallium as a Sign of the Reform

If the submission of the *regnum* to the *sacerdotium* is a recurrent theme of the *Vita*, examination of the other illuminations can reveal further visual cues that would have signalled to the viewer Matilda's alignment with the papacy. One of these signs is the use of the pallium in the illuminations throughout the *Vita*.

To revisit the depictions of Matilda's ancestors on folios 19r, 20v, and 21v (Figures 16-18), the specificity with which ecclesiastical garments are depicted is especially notable. Apart from the 'episcopus' labels, specific garments were used to indicate ecclesiastical office. Both Godfrey and Tedald bear the traditional trappings of bishops: each holds a crozier and sits on a decorated faldstool. They both wear a mitre, headwear that during the late-eleventh and early-twelfth centuries was increasingly reserved for bishops and archbishops.²⁷⁴ The bishops are

²⁷¹ Trexler, 44–58.

²⁷² Trexler, 54.

²⁷³ Craciun, 'Adoration of the Magi and Authority of the Medieval King: An Ambiguous Correlation', 247–8.

²⁷⁴ Joseph Braun, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient; nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Verwendung und Symbolik*. (Herder, 1907), 448–50.

also depicted with *pallia*. On folio 20v, Bishop Godfrey wears an uncoloured pallium adorned with red crosses and small circles. In the next illumination (fol. 21v), Bishop Tedald similarly dons the pallium, which unlike his predecessor's, is coloured gold with red crosses. Even the dead bishop-saint Apollonius on folio 19r wears one, severed by Godfrey's knife as he removes the saint's head and arm. However, in the same illumination Godfrey also wears an uncoloured pallium with red crosses and small red circles. Godfrey is not labelled 'episcopus' as his other bishop counterparts in the *Vita*, perhaps indicating that he was not yet a bishop, as he would be on folio 20v. If so, this detail suggests that the *Vita's* visual use of the pallium was not simply restricted to bishops.

By the eleventh century, the pallium had become symbolic of allegiance to the Pope. Steven Schoenig posits that kings did not attempt to invest bishops with the pallium 'probably because of its long association with the papacy and firm connection to Peter's tomb in Rome.'²⁷⁵ As part of the conferral of the garment, the pallium was to be laid above Saint Peter's tomb overnight so that it could be imbued with the attributes of the saint.²⁷⁶ Joseph Braun stated that the association with Rome began as early as the eighth century, before it had even become a standard garment for bishops and archbishops, and was always considered a privilege bestowed by the papacy upon certain localities rather than a universally given vestment.²⁷⁷ The clear association between the garment and the papacy was noted by Bede in the eighth century as a method which Popes used to build the fabric of their power.²⁷⁸ This association resulted in the garment becoming something of an insignia for the papacy. In the early eleventh century, Pope Alexander II wrote that the pallium should always be collected in person and was the 'greatest award' of faithfulness.²⁷⁹ The practice of these in-person collections was a way to protect against the improper seizure and use of the vestments, reflective of the rising tensions over the garment and its meaning during Alexander's lifetime.²⁸⁰ His successor Gregory VII

²⁷⁵ Schoenig, *Bonds of Wool*, pt. 3, chs. 7–9. Schoenig offers an excellent and thorough look at the use of the pallium as a religious and political tool during this period.

²⁷⁶ Louis Duchesne, *Origines du culte chrétien; étude sur la liturgie latine avant Charlemagne*, 5th ed. (Paris: A. Fontemoing, 1920), 404–10.

²⁷⁷ Braun, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient; nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Verwendung und Symbolik.*, 627–28; John F. Romano, *Liturgy and Society in Early Medieval Rome*, Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West (Farnham Surrey: Ashgate, 2014), 38, 80; Francesca Tinti, 'The Pallium Privilege of Pope Nicholas II for Archbishop Ealdred of York', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 70, no. 4 (2019): 710–2.

²⁷⁸ Bede and Charles Plummer, *Venerabilis Baedae Historiam Ecclesiasticam Gentis Anglorum, Historiam Abbatum, Epistolam Ad Ecgbertum, Una Cum Historia Abbatum Auctore Anonymo, Ad Fidem Codicum Manuscriptorum Denuo Recognovit, Comentario Tam Critico Quam Historico Instruxit Carolus Plummer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1896), Book 1, 50.

²⁷⁹ Samuel Loewenfeld, ed., *Epistolae pontificum Romanorum ineditae* (Charleston, SC: BiblioLife, 2010), Nos. 76, 81.

²⁸⁰ Braun, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient; nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Verwendung und Symbolik.*, 630.

continued to restrict the garment as the papacy focussed more on protecting the right of papal investitures. In 1073 Gregory referred to the pallium as the ‘proper right’ of the church, and told Bruno, the bishop of Verona, that it could not be granted without his physical presence in Rome.²⁸¹ On several occasions Gregory also wrote on the uses and authorisation to use the pallium, often when settling disputes within bishoprics.²⁸² In a rebuke to Archbishop William of Rouen in 1081, Gregory emphasized the importance of the pallium to the function of his office.²⁸³ In the letter, Gregory indicates that the garment was the customary insignia of William’s office as bishop, and that he should not continue ordinations or consecrations until he had collected it. Thus, a bishop’s essential duties were directly tied to the receipt of the pallium. Receiving the garment in person facilitated an agreement between the pope and the clergy member: by collecting the pallium from the pope himself, the clergy member cemented his alliance to the papacy.

Nonetheless, lay investitures with the pallium continued during this period though they were only tolerated by papally-aligned men. In a letter to Gregory in 1080 or 1081, Wenric of Trier pointed out that pallia conferred by anti-King Rudolf were allowed, whereas those by Henry IV were not.²⁸⁴ Though apparently hypocritical, this standard reinforces the papal authority asserted by Gregory to confer legitimacy on the *regnum*, so long as the *regnum* remained in accordance with the Church. Because Rudolf was seen as a papal ally—indeed he was explicitly endorsed by Gregory—his use of pallia when investing bishops was deemed acceptable. Furthermore, Schoenig cites the use of the pallium as a reward for loyal reformers who ‘renounced lay investiture.’²⁸⁵ Conversely, the revocation of a pallium was used as punishment; with its withdrawal came the annulment of clerical powers, rights, and authority.

Thus, considering the religious context of the garment and its explicit ties to the papacy and the eleventh-century papal reform, the pallia in the *Vita* might serve another purpose beyond signifying ecclesiastical office. The religious figures throughout the *Vita* are shown wearing the pallium not necessarily to just denote their offices, but to signify their allegiance to the papacy. The visual marker also suggests to the viewer that the ancestors of Matilda similarly obtained the favour of the church and were allowed to don the religious apparel. Given

²⁸¹ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.24.

²⁸² Gregory VII, 2.28, 4.13, 4.5, 5.12, 6.38, 7.15.

²⁸³ Gregory VII, 9.1.

²⁸⁴ I. S. Robinson, *Authority and Resistance in the Investiture Contest: The Polemical Literature of the Late Eleventh Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), 153–6; Kuno Francke, ed., ‘Wenrici Scholastici Trevirensis Epistola Sub Theoderici Episcopi Viridunensis Nomine Composita’, vol. 1, *Libelli de Lite Imperatorum et Pontificum 1* (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1891), 297.

²⁸⁵ Schoenig, *Bonds of Wool*, 284.

that Gregory mandated that the recipient collect the garment in person, it implies that each figure wearing the vestment had travelled to Rome for the blessing. Furthermore, as a garment directly associated with the tomb of Saint Peter, the figures themselves would be imbued with the blessing of the Church's progenitor. As a papally-aligned object, the repeated appearance of the pallium reminds the reader that the Canossan Dynasty has long remained faithful to the papacy, and ultimately, to the church and its reforming efforts.

These illuminations highlight the pro-papal character of the *Vita*. To the viewer, the ties to Rome are consistently found throughout the manuscript and text, but in a variety of forms. The manner in which the 1077 meeting at Canossa was depicted further suggests Matilda was instrumental to the church's assertion of dominance over the *regnum*. Furthermore, that the text subtly criticized Paschal for his lacklustre approach implies that Matilda supported the idea of an ideologically forceful papacy that she could defend.

2.3 Matilda and Gifts of Persuasion: Documenting Matilda's Role in the Spread of the Reform

Matilda was well-positioned to promote aspects of the papal reform and papal supremacy to the cities within her domain. Though Matilda's support for the papacy included personal objects with small audiences like the *Vita Mathildis*, her relationship to the Church and the reform was also demonstrated through public actions intended to appeal to larger groups, including both the clergy and the laity. As a prominent local figure, Matilda utilized her relationships within cities to actively spread the values she so ardently defended, and often accompanied such actions with gifts of objects imbued with imagery of the reform. Such is the case with Modena and the gift of golden *pallia* as recounted in the *Relatio de innovatione ecclesie sancti Geminiani ac de translatione eius beatissimi corporis*. Although the manuscript itself is not thought to have been commissioned by her, the *Relatio* showcases Matilda's pivotal role in the translation of Modena's patron bishop-saint Geminianus's remains during the construction of the new Cathedral in 1106. The manuscript offers a contemporary account of Matilda's role within the cities of her domain, and how she used material patronage to encourage loyalty. Matilda actively involved the papacy in local issues and used gifts to induce favour and loyalty among the citizenry towards the papacy.

2.3.1 The Manuscript

The *Relatio* appears on folios 1r-9v of a larger thirteenth-century manuscript entitled *Historia Foundationis Cathedralis Mutinensis* (Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11) which includes documents concerning the twelfth-century reconstruction of the Cathedral in Modena. It is followed by a leaf containing dates in several hands (fol. 10r); the 1302 record of benefices given to San Severo (fols. 11r-13v); the table of contents (fols. 14r-21r); a record of privileges granted to the cathedral, copies of notarial deeds and contracts, and other documents relating to the construction process (fols. 22r-306r). The narrative of the *Relatio* itself thought to be Aimone di Modena's—the author of the epigraph on the exterior of the main apse of the cathedral—first-hand account of the events in 1106.²⁸⁶ The version in the *Historia Foundationis Cathedralis Mutinensis* is considered to be the earliest surviving example of the text.²⁸⁷ The text is accompanied by two miniatures which are divided into two registers and accompanied by inscriptions. The miniatures show ground-breaking and early construction of Modena Cathedral (fol. 1v) as well as the decision to transfer Geminianus's remains and their reburial (fol. 9r).

As the *Relatio* appears as part of a larger collection of documents, it is worth considering the text's placement within the manuscript. The *Historia Foundationis Cathedralis Mutinensis* may have served as a cartulary which documented the rights and privileges of the cathedral. That the *Relatio* appears before the manuscript's table of contents and is not listed therein may suggest that the story and illuminations were meant to act as a preface or prologue, a way to tell the foundational story which contextualizes the following documents and simultaneously elevates the cathedral's history by associating it with Matilda. The narrative of the *Relatio* follows the typical construction of foundational legends in which there is conflict and subsequent resolution, typically spearheaded by a 'legendary' figure.²⁸⁸ Here, that figure may have been Matilda. The narrative of the *Relatio* also fits a broader pattern in the making of cartularies: Georges DeClercq has described the *narrationes foundationum* that appear at the

²⁸⁶ Matteo Al Kalak, *Relatio de innovatione ecclesie Sancti Geminiani: storia di una cattedrale* (Modena: Poligrafico Mucchi, 2004), 1–4; P. Rossi, 'Modena', in *Enciclopedia Dell'Arte Medievale*, ed. Angiola Maria Romanini and Anna Maria D'Achille (Rome: Treccani, 1997).

²⁸⁷ The text of the *Relatio* was copied in the sixteenth century by Alessandro Tassoni for the Estense family as part of a larger Modenese history (Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS. Lat. 388). Tassoni ordered and compiled copies of various historical documents dating until the late fifteenth century; he then added his own history of Modena for the sixteenth century up till the mid-sixteenth century. In the eighteenth century, Lodovico Antonio Muratori used this manuscript for the publication of the *Annales Veteres Mutinenses* in Volume XI of the *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*. Tassoni's copy in the Biblioteca Estense manuscript is shorter and recapitulatory in nature and does not contain any illuminations. Additionally, there are occasionally differences in the grammar and spelling. It is important to note that Arthur K. Porter seems to cite both the thirteenth-century text as well as the *Relatio* text transcribed by Tassoni.

²⁸⁸ Amy G. Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000).

outset of cartularies as deliberate efforts to construct a favourable or consistent history which could involve ‘reworking and editing in a variety of ways, from summarizing or shortening, to stylistic alteration or amplification, and in some cases even interpolation or falsification.’²⁸⁹

However, illuminations would have been uncommon in strictly utilitarian documents such as cartularies which suggests that the *Relatio* may have been copied from a manuscript with illuminations rather than being purpose-made to sit in front of these documents, because if it were purpose-made, there would likely not be any illustration alongside the text.²⁹⁰

Identifiable by the post-twelfth century armour depicted, the illustrations within the *Relatio* are undeniably from the thirteenth-century. Paolo Golinelli suggests that the scenes reflect those which may have appeared within the now-lost twelfth-century original but were copied in the style of the thirteenth century.²⁹¹ To make this point, Golinelli invokes the illuminations of the original *Vita Mathildis* and their appearance within subsequent copies: though the illuminations were changed stylistically, the essence of the images remained the same.²⁹² This reasoning is made more compelling when viewed through Jonathan J.G Alexander’s notion of medieval replication within manuscripts in which subject matter and decoration were linked to the text.²⁹³ In the case of the *Relatio*, this suggests that though the style may have changed, the composition of the image—the figures and their placement—may not have, as the images reflect the narrative of the text. If the *Relatio* and its illuminations have been faithfully copied from a now-lost original and no major revisions were made to the pictorial organization of the images, they are important to our understanding of how contemporary artworks presented her role within the cities of her domain.

2.3.2 Matilda’s Role within the Cities of her Domain

The *Relatio* informs us that the decision to build a new cathedral was a practical one as the previous church was damaged and in danger of total collapse: ‘Crebris scissuris multisque rimis a fundamentis quodammodo videbatur, non solum insistentibus verum etiam intransibus seu

²⁸⁹ Georges Declercq, ‘Monastic Cartularies, Institutional Memory and the Canonization of the Past. The Two *Libri Traditionum* of St Peter’s Abbey, Ghent’, *The Medieval Low Countries* 2 (January 2015): 37–72.

²⁹⁰ Declercq; Georges Declercq, ‘History, Memory and Remembrance in Early Cartularies and *Libri Traditionum*’, *Studia Mediaevali* 58, no. 1 (2017): 1–21.

²⁹¹ Paolo Golinelli, ‘Cultura e religiosità a Modena e Nonantola nell’alto e pieno Medioevo’, in *Lanfranco e Wiligermo: Il Duomo di Modena*, ed. Marina Armandi Barbolini (Modena: Panini, 1984), 121–40.

²⁹² Golinelli, 124.

²⁹³ Jonathan J. G. Alexander, ‘Facsimiles, Copies, and Variations: The Relationship to the Model in Medieval and Renaissance European Illuminated Manuscripts’, *Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989): 61–72; G. H. M. Claassens and Werner Verbeke, eds., *Medieval Manuscripts in Transition: Tradition and Creative Recycling*, *Mediaevalia Lovaniensia*, ser. 1, studia 36 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2006).

exeuntibus, inferre ruina[m].²⁹⁴ During construction in April 1106 the architect Lanfranco ordered that St Geminianus's remains be translated so that the existing cathedral could be wholly demolished as its continued presence inhibited the construction of the new building. The proposed process was intensely debated within the city. Those affiliated with the church were interested in seeing the remains in order to witness the supposed incorruptibility of the saint's body. The citizens were against potentially tainting the remains by exposing them. According to the *Relatio*, the event could not be settled, and Matilda was called upon to fulfil her duties as an overseer and judge. She is characterized as an impartial arbitrator respected by both parties, the sensible choice to settle such a fraught debate within the populace. After hearing the concerns of both parties at a council, Matilda is said to have called upon Pope Paschal II to settle the disagreement:

De altaris quoque prelibati santissimi corporis consecratione, inter episcopos siquidem et Mutinensium cives non modica fit altercatio; quia presules eius reliquias revelare cupiunt, cives autem et omnis populus hoc ex toto renuunt. Queritur ergo principis Mathildis sententias que quidem, sicut decuit, et ut predestinatum fuerat, ipso quoque, ut credimus iam disponente, sedem prenотavit expectandum apostolicam: denuntians hoc in anno venturam esse in Italiam.²⁹⁵

This chain of authority is revealing on several levels. The first is that the people of Modena sought the advice of Matilda regarding the matter, indicating that she was viewed as a fair arbiter whose decisions held weight. The second is that Matilda deferred to the authority of the pope on the matter, which suggests that Matilda sought to involve the papacy on local decisions of church matters. Furthermore, the act of publicly yielding her authority to the papacy may have been intended to actively indicate to the Modenese what the order of power should be as it was conceived by the reform. During this citizen-clergy council, it was further decided that the remains were to be guarded until they could be properly reinterred in the new cathedral. Six soldiers and twelve citizens swore an oath to protect the relics: 'Iurant ergo de ordine militum sex viri, iurant et de civibus bis seni.'²⁹⁶ The text implies that the six soldiers were

²⁹⁴ Modena, Archivio Capitolare di Modena, MS. O.II.11; Ludovico Antonio Muratori, ed., *Relatio Transationis Corporis Sancti Geminiani*, vol. 6, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (Milan, 1724), 4. 'Many holes had developed, and there was leaking from the foundation which appeared to threaten the collapse of the entire building.'

²⁹⁵ Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, vol. 3, 11. 'No slight dispute arose between the bishop and citizens of Modena in regard to the consecration of the altar in which the body of the saint was to be placed, for the prelate desired to expose the relics, but the citizens and the entire populace were quite opposed to this. Therefore, the judgment of the princess Matilda was sought, and she, as was fitting, and as we believe, foreordained by the Provident God, pronounced that the decision of the Apostolic See should be awaited.'

²⁹⁶ Muratori, 'Relatio Transationis Corporis Sancti Geminiani', 7.

supplied by the countess as she is the only figure described in the *Relatio* with a military attaché: ‘princeps cum suo exercitu,’²⁹⁷ and ‘magno exercitu adest et princeps Mathildis.’²⁹⁸

This council is depicted in the upper register of the *Relatio*’s second miniature on folio 9r (Figures 19, 20). As in the case of all miniatures associated with the text, both scenes are framed by a green and blue border, filled with a golden-yellow cross-hatched pattern; above each miniature is an inscription. The inscription of the upper scene, ‘Anno Dominicae Incarnationis millesimo c. vj pridie Kalendae Maij facta est traslatio patroni nostri beatissimi Geminiani,’²⁹⁹ is not located within the illumination’s decorated frame as is the inscription corresponding to the lower scene but appears outside and above the miniature’s frame. This inscription refers to the last week of April 1106 when construction was halted in order to discuss the translation of the saint’s remains. The image depicts Matilda accompanied by two women and interacting with two groups. On the left side are three bishops who are identified by their vestments, mitres, and croziers. Two bishops face towards Matilda, one of them gesturing towards the countess. The other bishop faces a group of four tonsured monks in blue robes and one bearded abbot in black. On the right side of the frame appears a group of five citizens. Among them is the architect Lanfranco who has a Phrygian-like cap and beard. Facing the group of citizens is one of the bewimpled women who accompany Matilda; the other looks on from behind the countess herself. Matilda, in green and red robes, holds a blue staff and gestures with her right hand toward the two bishops who face her. She is the only figure within the frame to have a label: ‘Matildis comitissa.’

Matilda appears engaged in the discussion: she does not merely oversee but participates in it, enmeshed in the activity. In each grouping of figures, there is an exchange of gazes and gestures which help the viewer understand how the scene unfolds: the clergy talk amongst themselves, Matilda’s companions interact with the citizens, and finally, Matilda herself who interacts with two bishops. This grouping positions her as an intermediary. However, her position nearest to the group of citizens suggests she acted as advocate for the citizens with whom her associates confer. The scene is a powerful one: it presents her as someone who was well-respected within her domain and her opinion was important to the citizens, both clergy and laity. She was not just a figure who ruled remotely, but one who actively engaged in local politics.

²⁹⁷ Muratori, 3.

²⁹⁸ Muratori, 7.

²⁹⁹ ‘On day before the first day of May of the 1106th year of the incarnation of the Lord, our most blessed patron Geminianus was transferred.’

Though the illumination may contain thirteenth-century changes which altered Matilda's participation, it corresponds to how the text of the *Relatio* interpreted Matilda's role within her cities. While it is also possible that the *Relatio* exaggerated Matilda's role within the dispute in order to associate the Cathedral's construction with a well-known figure, the countess's extant charters show that such a role would have been well within her purview. Matilda was frequently called upon to solve disputes both secular and religious in nature and was often referred to as a judge.³⁰⁰ Furthermore, Matilda's charters provide evidence that from December 1105 to January 1107 (Figure 21) she remained within the region.³⁰¹ In conjunction, these factors suggest that it is plausible that Matilda was the logical choice to arbitrate such a decision and that the images reflect the nature of her duties as they were perceived by the author of the text.

2.3.3 *The Reburial of Saint Geminianus and Matilda's gift of the Golden Pallium*

The text of the *Relatio* indicates that after considering both sides of the issue, Matilda ruled that the decision on whether the remains should be displayed would be left to Pope Paschal II. The pope had already planned to be in the area for his 1106 Council of Guastalla during which he intended to free Parma, Modena, Reggio, and Bologna from the see of Ravenna as it had stood against the papacy on several occasions.³⁰² A notice was sent around to the entire Modenese province as well as adjoining provinces notifying them that the Pope himself would be present to consecrate the church and oversee the reburial. Accordingly, on the seventh of October, Paschal formally recognized the remains of Geminianus, and declared the remains should be displayed until the next day when the altar was consecrated. The *Relatio* describes the event in October 1106 as so heavily attended that the whole city was filled with people:

Fit et conventus Populorum utriusque sexus, qualis nec nostris temporibus antea visus est, nec alicujus memorise prius habetur insertum. Nullus enim locus, nulla platea, nulla domus, nulla porticus, nullum atrium saltern vel modicum a conventu Populorum poterat inveniri vacuum.³⁰³

³⁰⁰ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 25: 95–7; 30: 112–3; 32: 114–6; 75: 220–1; 93: 258–60; 117: 309–10; 130: 335–6.

³⁰¹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 93–9: 256–74.

³⁰² Uta-Renate Blumenthal, *The Early Councils of Pope Paschal II, 1100-1110*, Studies and Texts - Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies 43 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978), 37, 51–4; Ludwig Weiland, ed., 'Paschalis II. Concilium Guastallense. 1106. Oct. 22', vol. 1, *Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regum 1* (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1893), 564–6.

³⁰³ Muratori, 'Relatio Transationis Corporis Sancti Geminiani', 6; Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, 3: 13. Porter translates this as 'A great assembly of bishops, clerks, abbots and monks came together, as well as a great number

The crowd consisted of members of the clergy (*ordo clericorum*), all the people of the church (*universus eiusdem ecclesie populus*), citizens of Modena (*mutinenses cives*), and soldiers of the church (*ecclesiae milites*).³⁰⁴ The presence of the *ecclesiae milites* suggests a show of strength by the church, perhaps a reminder from Paschal of papal authority and might. Furthermore, although likely exaggerated to some degree, the description vividly conveys the local importance of the relics across social classes.

The lower half of the illumination on folio 9r (Figure 22) depicts the events surrounding the translation of Geminianus. Given the pope's absence from the illumination, the scene may have been the period during which the onlookers could see the bishop-saint's remains, while the saint's body was prepared for the pope's consecration. The illumination is captioned with the inscription: 'Eodem anno. vij. idus. Octubris dedicator et consecrator corpus et altare ipsius Confessoris.'³⁰⁵

The scene is crowded with figures and divided by the lip of St Geminianus' tomb. In the upper section of the scene are supervisors to the saint's translation; their elevated status ensures a rarefied view of the saint's remains. At either end of the scene are a pair of unnamed figures, perhaps representing the citizens of Modena. From left to right, the named characters, are Matilda, Lanfranco (architect), Bonsignore (Bishop of Reggio), and Dodone (Bishop of Modena). Lanfranco (*Lanfrancus*) lifts the lid of the tomb (*Lapis monumentj*) with assistance from Bonsignore (*Episcopus reginus*) to expose the wrapped body of Saint Geminianus. Matilda (*Matildis*) grasps a piece of fabric patterned with crosses. One of the unlabelled figures behind her gestures to the countess and her gift. On the right Dodone (*Dodo episcopus mutinensis*) presents a chalice and paten. According to the text of the *Relatio*, Dodone offered a 'fine silver chalice and paten, marvellously decorated within and without with gold inlay' and Matilda came bearing wonderful gifts such as gold, silver, and remarkable *pallia insignia*.³⁰⁶ Porter translates *pallia insignia* as 'altar clothes [*sic*].'³⁰⁷

The silhouette of the saint's body in repose appears in the mid-portion of the scene. The pattern of the shroud covering him has the same pattern and golden yellow colour as the crosshatching of the border of the miniature. The tomb (labelled *monumentum*) has a green lid,

of soldiers and a multitude of men and women such as in our times had never been seen, nor is there record that so great a number had ever before come together. No place, no piazza, no house, no portico, no vestibule, however small, could be found that was not crowded with the populace.'

³⁰⁴ Muratori, 'Relatio Translationis Corporis Sancti Geminiani', 4–5.

³⁰⁵ 'On the 9th of October in the same year, the body of the confessor and altar was consecrated and dedicated.'

³⁰⁶ Muratori, 'Relatio Translationis Corporis Sancti Geminiani', 8. 'Princeps Mathildis dona ferens ingentia: aurum, argentum, pallia insignia.'

³⁰⁷ Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, 3: 12–4. Porter uses the term 'clothes' which suggests finished garments rather than 'cloths' which would suggest the type of fabric laid over an altar.

perhaps to invoke *verde antico* marble, a precious material which suggests the city's reverence for their patron saint. Though the front of the tomb towards the viewer is undecorated, both the flanking side and interior are decorated with a gradient of blue, perhaps indicating light and shadow on the interior of the sarcophagus. The same blue gradient decoration forms the outer border of the illumination, enhancing the close visual association between the manuscript and the saint's body.

In the lower portion of the scene, the various guardians of the tomb stand to attention in front of the sarcophagus. Though uniformly labelled *custodes monumenti*, the figures of this lower portion of the scene can be divided into two groups: the *cives* and *milites* which number twelve and six, respectively. These groups intentionally invoke the council's decision, as described in the text of the *Relatio*, to protect the relics with twelve Modenese citizens and six soldiers from Matilda's own military. The difference in status between the *custodes* can be observed in their dress. Where the *cives* are shown in modest armour and only a few of them hold weapons, the *milites* are dressed in more complicated armour and are all armed. In a small detail on the far right of the lower scene, one of the *cives* supports the lid of the sarcophagus. Though excluded from the actual opening of the tomb, the *cives*' touch expresses the devotional passion that overcame the city and the desire of ordinary citizens to take part in and be physically close to such a momentous event.

The iconography appears to borrow elements from the 'Women at the Tomb' scene in the story of Christ's resurrection and replicates motifs such as the tomb lid (Figures 23, 24, 26), winding cloth (Figure 23, 25), and sleeping soldiers (Figures 23, 25). The Women at the Tomb scene also appears in Matilda's own Gospel Book (Figure 26), dated to the end of the eleventh century. As the manuscript was probably made nearby, it indicates the iconography of the Women at the Tomb was known to artists within her domain. The *Relatio* scene adapts these iconographical elements to fit the story: the wrapped body of Geminianus resembles Christ's shroud, and the soldiers, while not sleeping, occupy the frontal space of the sarcophagus in a similar manner. The people present at the translation are not the holy women who have come to the tomb on Easter Sunday, but instead are those active in the translation and represent the figures in Modena most worthy of the honour. Geminianus's body is the visual counterpoint to Christ in the 'Women at the Tomb' model, indicating the saint's importance within the city.

While the text states that this event was overseen by the pope, the image showcases Matilda as the critical figure. As the sole woman within the scene, Matilda's presence is imbued with the iconographic meaning of all three holy women and indicates her perceived position and significance within the event. Within this configuration, Matilda becomes the facilitator

for Geminianus's exaltation as the Virgin Mary gave birth to Christ and facilitated the development of Christianity. Matilda played a similarly essential role in the ideological spread of the reform and was considered by her peers to be the executor of Gregory's pious will.³⁰⁸ Thus, Matilda's positioning as Mary within the scene seems apt.

We have already seen that Matilda's adjudication of the translation dispute was part of her expected duties, and that she may have called in the papacy to illustrate the authoritative command of the reform, but could her actions have carried ulterior motives? Perhaps the October 1106 reburial of Saint Geminianus served as an opportunity for Matilda to reinsert papal values into the city of Modena, and to sway the citizens towards the papacy rather than the faltering *regnum*. Matilda's long-time antagonist Henry IV had recently died in August 1106, so the event would have been perfectly timed to promote pro-papal values within the city. Furthermore, the 1080s and 1090s had proved difficult for pro-papal forces within Modena; in 1081, Gregory VII excommunicated the local Bishop Eriberto for being aligned with Henry IV; however, despite being deposed, Eriberto held the seat until his death in 1094.³⁰⁹ Though he was replaced by a papal candidate, it was a brief tenure as the replacement died in 1097. Modena did not have a bishop when the new cathedral was begun in 1099, but Dodone was appointed during the construction in 1100. Luigi Simeoni has suggested that the people of Modena were wary of the new bishop who was so adamantly in favour of papal reform, in marked contrast to the preceding years of imperial dominance within the city.³¹⁰ This reluctance may explain why Dodone does not have as prominent a position in the illumination as Bonsignore, the bishop of Reggio Emilia, who was already well-established within the region.³¹¹ Matilda may have strategically called upon the pope to visit the event to encourage citizens to accept Dodone and embrace the papacy, while simultaneously glorifying the city and its bishop-saint.

This strategy may have included Matilda's gift to the body of Geminianus which allows further insight into the occasion. Though Porter vaguely termed them 'altar clothes,' it is possible Matilda's gift was more directly linked to the reform and papal loyalty. Matteo Al Kalak suggests that the *pallia insignia* were laid on Geminianus' remains before the tomb was

³⁰⁸ Pseudo-Bardone, 'Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis', 19; Alison Creber, 'Extracts from Pseudo-Bardo, Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis on Matilda of Tuscany' (Unpublished, 2018).

³⁰⁹ Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130*, 167.

³¹⁰ Luigi Simeoni, 'I vescovi Eriberto e Dodone e le origini del Comune di Modena', *Atti e memorie: Deputazione storia patria per le antiche province modenesi*, 8, 2 (1949): 77-96; Carluccio Frison, 'Dodone', in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, ed. Alberto Maria Ghisalberti and Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana (Rome: Treccani, 1991).

³¹¹ Raffaello Volpini, 'Bonsignore', in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, ed. Alberto Maria Ghisalberti and Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana (Rome: Treccani, 1971).

shut during the 1106 translation.³¹² During the 1955 unsealing of the sarcophagus, strands of gold thread and a silver cross, thought to have been one of two that adorned the *pallia*, were found in the tomb.³¹³ This evidence suggests that the text and images were correct in their depiction of Matilda's gift; however, what type of cloth gift did Matilda actually make? The surviving physical evidence is scant and only threads remain making an physical assessment impossible. Though it is possible that Matilda's gift was simply decorative cloth, an altar cloth would have probably been referred to as *palla dominica* or *palla altaris* in order to distinguish it from liturgical garments.³¹⁴ From the fifth century, women were forbidden to touch or handle the altar cloth which suggests Matilda would have been unable to lay the gift herself as is depicted in the illumination and described in the text.³¹⁵ If the cloth was meant to be laid over the body like a shroud, it would have likely been referred to as a *brandeum*, as *brandea* which served a specific role as a most prestigious relic.³¹⁶

Lucia Travaini suggests that small crosses found in the tomb may have adorned the cloth and could have been made in the Holy Land based on similarly styled moulds and crosses dated to the twelfth century.³¹⁷ Liturgical garments, including *pallia*, were often adorned with such small crosses.³¹⁸ Furthermore, if the author of the account was in fact Aimone, a canon of the cathedral, he would surely have been familiar enough with liturgical garments to use the appropriate term to describe it. Roberta Gilchrist has noted that there have been examples of burials of bishops with consecration clothing, indicating it would not have been unusual to associate the garment with burials of bishops.³¹⁹ Thus, it seems possible that Matilda laid liturgical garments such as a pallium on the bishop-saint's remains rather than another type of cloth.

³¹² Al Kalak, *Relatio de innovatione ecclesie Sancti Geminiani*, 17–18; Matteo Al Kalak, *Il sepolcro del Santo 1106-1955: dalla Relatio all'ultima apertura* (Modena: Poligrafico Mucchi, 2004); Marina Armandi Barbolini, ed., *Lanfranco e Wiligelmo: Il Duomo di Modena* (Modena: Panini, 1984), 121–8.

³¹³ Al Kalak, *Relatio de innovatione ecclesie Sancti Geminiani*, 10–12; Lucia Travaini, 'Saints, Sinners and...a Cow: Offerings, Alms and Tokens of Memory', in *Money and the Church in Medieval Europe, 1000-1200: Practice, Morality and Thought*, ed. Giles E. M. Gasper and Svein H. Gullbekk, Religion and Money in the Middle Ages (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 212–3.

³¹⁴ Thomas M Izbicki, 'Linteamenta Altaria: The Care of Altar Linens in the Medieval Church', in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles 12*, NED-New edition (Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 41–3.

³¹⁵ Lynda L. Coon, 'The Rhetorical Uses of Clothing in the Lives of Sacred Males', in *Sacred Fictions: Holy Women and Hagiography in Late Antiquity* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 65.

³¹⁶ Meta Harrsen, 'Pope Gregory the Great as Guardian of the Apostolic Relics', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (NKJ) / Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art 5* (1954): 307; John M. McCulloh, 'The Cult of Relics in the Letters and "dialogues" of Pope Gregory the Great: A Lexicographical Study.', *Traditio 32* (1976): 165–7.

³¹⁷ Travaini, 'Saints, Sinners and...a Cow: Offerings, Alms and Tokens of Memory', 213.

³¹⁸ Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, *The Pope's Body*, trans. David S. Peterson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 138.

³¹⁹ Roberta Gilchrist, 'Clothing the Body: Sexuality and Transitional Rites', in *Medieval Life*, NED-New edition, Archaeology and the Life Course (Boydell & Brewer, 2012), 70–1.

By conferring ornate *pallia* on the beloved bishop-saint in the presence of the pope and the people of Modena, Matilda's gift may have acted as a symbol. The giving and receipt of the pallium had become the primary token of papally authorized investiture. In the presence of the pope, perhaps Matilda was allowed to make this symbolic gesture as an acknowledgement of her commitment and alignment to the papacy. If the garment itself was associated with loyalty to the papacy, it is possible this honour extended to the few lay individuals who were papally sanctioned to confer the garment. As discussed above, this secular investment was tolerated by political allies such as anti-King Rudolf.³²⁰ By 1106, Matilda had acted on behalf of the Church for several decades; though unconventional, perhaps this privilege was an extension of the duties she enacted throughout her life. By laying the garment on the saint's remains, Matilda may have been enacting a performative investment of the bishop-saint, implicitly suggesting the patron saint, and thus the city, was appropriately obedient to the Roman church and being given the corresponding garment. What better venue to make such a point than the widely anticipated event attended by large crowds? The occasion itself must have been a spectacle: throngs of people clamouring to see the pope's service and the remains of their city's beloved patron saint as his remains were bestowed with luxurious gifts, including the golden *pallia*. It is hard to believe that this event would not have had a persuasive effect on the citizens who beheld it.

In Modena, Matilda did not enforce a top-down ideological change but rather, a grass-roots initiative to win the hearts of the citizens to the papacy's side. During this same period, Matilda was embroiled in an on-going insurrection in Parma following her direct intervention to appoint a pro-papal bishop, Bernard of Vallombrosa.³²¹ Though the affair would be later resolved in her favour, perhaps Matilda's performance at Modena in October 1106 was a subtle form of diplomacy and persuasion: the velvet glove rather than the iron fist. Rather than forcibly installing a bishop sympathetic to the papacy's goals, Matilda intended to earn the citizens' loyalty by lavishing attention on the city, its citizens, and its problems. That she swiftly attended to their dispute regarding the patron saint and managed to attract the pope's attention to the event may have indicated a level of favour to the citizens of Modena. Furthermore, her lavish gifts to Geminianus's remains would have been a sign of honour and respect. The common people may not have grasped the theological implications, but they

³²⁰ Robinson, *Authority and Resistance in the Investiture Contest*, 153–56; Francke, 'Wenrici Scholastici Treverensis Epistola Sub Theoderici Episcopi Viridunensis Nomine Composita', 297.

³²¹ Nash, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda*, 59.

certainly would have understood the value of a precious gift from their countess to their patron saint.

The *Relatio* is crucial in helping us to understand how Matilda may have worked to spread pro-papal sentiments amongst the people of her domain. If the *Vita Mathildis* retroactively documented the Countess' devotion to the reform as a laudatory summation of the countess's success, the *Relatio* may be the closest thing to a contemporary narrative of Matilda's pro-papal gifts in action. She did not convince people to join ranks simply through moralizing and piety as the *Vita Mathildis* may have had readers believe. Rather, as documented by the *Relatio*, Matilda persuaded the city of Modena through conscious and direct actions aimed at commending the papacy and its ideals to the people.

2.4 Reading the Reform: The Gospels of Matilda (MS. M.492)

Stepping further back into Matilda's life, it is possible another example survives of an object given to assert or solidify her pro-papal leanings. Rather than documenting the gift of a pro-papal item as the *Relatio* does, the *Gospels of Matilda* (New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492) may have been the gift itself. With this donation, Matilda may have intended to make her allegiance clear as well as that of the receiving institution, San Benedetto al Polirone. Furthermore, the manuscript contains exegetical images which suggest Matilda's support for the papacy translated to her support for the pre-crusade argument in favour of justified violence. The dogma of the reform did not stop at the construction and enforcement of papal supremacy; rather, it grew to include the conceptualization of just, Christian violence and warfare. If objects intimately associated with Matilda exhibited reformist tendencies, could they also be interpreted as supportive of the justified Christian violence? This question will inform the following interpretation of the *Gospels of Matilda*, containing exegetical images which may serve to tie Matilda's established support for the papacy to her support for the pre-crusade doctrine of justified violence.

Matilda is assumed to be the patron of the manuscript due to a note dating from the late fourteenth century affixed to the inside of the front cover, which names Matilda as the donor of the book to San Benedetto al Polirone and reads: 'Liber quattuor evangelistarum quem donavit comitissa Matilda (sic) abbati et monachis Sancti Benedicti de Padolirone.'³²² While

³²² George Warner, *Gospels of Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, 1055-1115* (New York: Roxburghe Club, 1917), 34–35; Stiegemann et al., *Canossa 1077*, 63–5; Robinson, 'The Metrical Commentary on Genesis of Donizo of Canossa: Bible and Gregorian Reform.' 'The book of four evangelists that the Countess gave to the abbot and monks to San Benedetto al Polirone.'

this later note certainly does not provide any conclusive evidence, it is plausible that Matilda could have donated the manuscript to the monastery as she made numerous donations to San Benedetto al Polirone during her lifetime, indicating a strong affinity with the monastery. Her patronage of the monastery is well documented, appearing in extant records at least eighteen times between 1092 and her death in 1115.³²³

Aside from the later note, there is a further clue that can support Matilda's patronage: a text entitled *Liber Vitae* was included after the gospels on fols. 102-106 and was commissioned by Abbot Wilhelmus (1080-1099) to honour Matilda, Urban II, and Hugh of Cluny.³²⁴ The *Liber Vitae* indicates the text was intended to be placed on the altar: 'Bone memorie domnus Wilihelmus abbas fecit hunc librum fieri, iugiter in altari mansurum.'³²⁵ A *Liber Vitae* contained names that would have been read aloud at services in honour of those who had given a donation.³²⁶ This list could have appeared within another manuscript so it seems the choice may have been deliberate and may suggest a level of importance for the text to which it was attached.

Within the *Liber Vitae* is a document dated 8 April 1109 (fols. 104v-105r) issued by Abbot Albericus (1099-1123) who was Wilhelmus' immediate successor. This document outlines the obligation of the Abbey of San Benedetto to both the countess and her military advisor, Arduino della Palude. It was probably written as a response to the documents of March 1109 signed between Albericus and Matilda in which the countess renewed an earlier donation to the monastery and made a guarantee of protection.³²⁷ The *Liber Vitae* is a useful tool for dating the gospels manuscript as it mentions both Urban II (d. 1099) and Hugh of Cluny (d. 1109) as still living. If the *Liber Vitae* were intended to be bound into the volume so as to come after the Gospels, this would suggest that the *terminus ante quem* for the gospels would be 1098 or 1099.

Fabrizio Crivello suggests that the illuminations appear unfinished and that this may have been the result of Henry IV's siege of Mantua and San Benedetto al Polirone in the late

³²³ Goez, *Beatrix von Canossa und Tuszien*, 44: 142–3; 67: 200–3; 68: 203–4; 79: 229–31; 80: 231–3; 92: 256–8; 111: 295–7; 112: 297–9; 120: 315–6; 122: 318–20; 123: 320–2; 126: 326–9; 127: 329–31; 129: 333–5; 133: 340–2; 135: 344–6; 137: 349–51; 138: 352–57.

³²⁴ Warner, *Gospels of Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, 1055-1115*, 32–4.

³²⁵ Warner, 33.

³²⁶ Jill Hamilton Clements, 'Writing and Commemoration in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Death in Medieval Europe: Death Scripted and Death Choreographed*, ed. Joëlle Rollo-Koster (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 15; Albrecht Classen, 'Death and the Culture of Death Universal Cultural-Historical Observations, with an Emphasis on the Middle Ages', in *Death in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times*, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 20–1.

³²⁷ Matilde, Goez, and Goez, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 112: 297–9; 113: 300–1.

1080s and early 1090s, suggesting that the illuminations may belong to an earlier period.³²⁸ This theory overestimates the damage done to San Benedetto al Polirone during the siege and the amount of disruption caused by it. David J. Hay, in his military analysis of the countess's battles, indicates that during this period Matilda continued to hold fortresses north of the Po, as well as 'virtually the entire Southern Bank [of the Po]', including and even beyond San Benedetto which is just south of Mantua, the ultimate target of Henry's wrath in that region.³²⁹ Matilda did make a donation to San Benedetto al Polirone in a 1092 charter though the document only mentions Henry's persecution of the general area, not that the structures suffered any damage themselves.³³⁰ It seems more probable that the monastery suffered financial losses due to the ongoing battle. Though this may have impacted the monastery in other ways, it is uncertain if it would have been as disruptive as physical damage as Crivello suggests. Furthermore, the 1092 donation is the first recorded instance of Matilda's patronage to the monastery among her existing charters and letters. While it is possible that the countess supported the monastery prior to that year, there is no documentary evidence for this. It seems unlikely that the monastery would have already been at work on a manuscript dedicated to the countess before 1092.

The Morgan Library manuscript contains six full-page illuminations, six smaller miniatures, four incipit pages, and seven canon tables. The canon tables (fols. 15r-18r) and the incipit pages to Jerome's preface and to the gospel of Matthew (fols. 13r, 21r) are brightly coloured and ornately decorated with foliate interlace; their predominant colours are gold, blue, and green, with accents of red. There are three smaller initials (fols. 13v, 19r) which are partially coloured. The remaining incipit pages and initials of the gospels of Mark (fol. 43r), Luke (fol. 60v) and John (fol. 84v) are gold and red in colour. Otherwise, the illustrations dealing with biblical scenes are primarily composed of grey-green bistre drawings, accented with gold and red. Warner concludes that the intention was likely to finish the illuminations and initials to the level of Matthew's portrait and the incipit to his gospel: in full colour with accents of gold.³³¹ Ron Baxter suggests that it is possible that the majority of figural scenes were left uncoloured and accented with gold to distinguish them from the sumptuously painted portrait of Matthew.³³² Though assessing the reason for the manuscript's inconsistent colouring

³²⁸ Stiegemann et al., *Canossa 1077*, 63.

³²⁹ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 128–31.

³³⁰ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 41: 142–3.

³³¹ Warner, *Gospels of Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, 1055-1115*, 16.

³³² Ron Baxter, 'Speech and Writing in the Gospels of Matilda of Canossa', in *Image, Memory and Devotion: Liber Amicorum Paul Crossley* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 78.

is difficult, Baxter's reasoning is alluring; however, the most straight forward explanation is that for reasons unknown to modern historians, the illuminations were left unfinished. This is supported by the fact that the red and gold were applied to every illumination, suggesting that the illuminator was working in stages, and that miniatures following Matthew's incipit page were simply left uncoloured.

2.4.1 Matthew's Pallium and the Saint as a Papal Asset

Matthew's evangelist portrait (Figure 27) appears on folio 14v and receives greater emphasis in comparison with the other evangelists. His portrait appears on the last page of Jerome's preface, and visually stands alone, whereas the other evangelists' portraits appear combined with narratives such as Mark who sits next to a scene of John the Baptist preaching, and above the Baptism and First Temptation of Christ (fol. 42v, Figure 28). Luke's portrait appears next to the Annunciation (fol. 58v, Figure 29), and John's portrait appears alongside a depiction of the Miracle at Cana (fol. 83v, Figure 30). Matthew's evangelist portrait is standard in terms of attributes. He has a golden nimbus and gestures with two hands towards the book held by his evangelist symbol, depicted here as a semi-nude man. The book is inscribed with the opening of the Gospel of Matthew: 'Liber generationis filii David filii Abraham.' The high-backed throne on which he sits is sumptuously decorated with various tones of blues, greens, and yellows. Significantly, Matthew also dons an elaborate pallium above his blue robe, adorned with three crosses and gems.

Robert Rough cites a specific connection between the eleventh-century papal reform and Matthew's liturgical garment. Rough cites a 1080 letter from Gregory VII to Archbishop Alfanus I (Rough mischaracterizes the letter as being addressed to Robert Guiscard) which contains a directive to translate the newly discovered body of Saint Matthew to the eponymous cathedral in Salerno.³³³ Rough then suggests that during this event the saint was dressed in a pallium, pointing to an account from a late sixteenth-century pilgrim who witnessed the saint's pallium turn gold after being sprinkled with Holy Water.³³⁴ Rough does not consider that the pallium witnessed by the pilgrim in 1571 may not have been a part of the 1085 reburial and instead uses it as evidence that the saint and pallium had always been inextricably linked.

³³³ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 8.8. The cause for Rough's misinterpretation is unclear. In Cowdrey's translation of the Register the letter is addressed to Archbishop Alfanus I of Salerno. The letter does not read as a directive, instead it takes a more congratulatory tone to the archbishop for locating the presumed-lost body of Saint Matthew. Near the end of the letter, Gregory suggests to Alfanus to 'urge and counsel' Robert Guiscard to 'show appropriate reverence and honour.'

³³⁴ Rough, *The Reformist of Illuminations in the Gospels of Matilda, Countess of Tuscany*, 46.

Though the pilgrim's account may not be reliable evidence, the gospel's visual deployment of the pallium suggests a connection to the principles of the reform and papal supremacy by depicting a garment that could only be obtained through special favour from the pope.

Like its appearance in the *Vita Mathildis*, the *pallia* of Matthew and Mark are not necessary to identify the figures. Therefore, it is possible that the *pallia* within the Gospels serve as visual markers meant to align these biblical figures with the reforming papacy of the eleventh century. By depicting them with papal garments, the artist visually declares the saints to be supporters of the papacy's reformist goals. Where the *pallia* of the *Vita* denote papal favour and contemporary allegiances, here the garment appears to act differently. By depicting the saints dressed in *pallia*, the miniatures implicitly suggest that they were supportive of the reform and were rewarded with the garment from the pope, as would have been the custom. Thus, the depictions use the garment to link the contemporary papal reform with the apostolic forefathers.

The connection between Matthew and the reform is not limited to the saint's pallium. Further connections between Matthew and the eleventh-century papal reform can be established by examining Gregory VII's relationship to the saint. To commemorate the acquisition of Matthew's relics, Robert Guiscard erected a cathedral in the saint's honour. In 1084, after being forcibly exiled from Rome by Henry IV, Gregory was offered shelter at Guiscard's court in Salerno.³³⁵ Nearing completion, Gregory consecrated the cathedral, and possibly the remains of the saint, in 1085.³³⁶ He died soon after and was buried in the south-east apse.³³⁷ In his letter regarding Matthew's remains, Gregory treats the discovery as confirmation that Christ was attending to the concerns of the church—most likely referring to the 1080 permanent excommunication of Henry.³³⁸ This reverence for the apostle was not likely to have been due to personal affinity but rather, it may have been rooted in Matthew's place within papal dogma, his scripture being explicitly used as evidence for papal primacy.

Gregory's register contains more references to the gospel of Matthew than it does to any other source. The passage most often quoted in his documents is Matthew 16, specifically verses sixteen to nineteen. These lines directly refer to the confession and selection of Peter,

³³⁵ Herbert R. Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 83.

³³⁶ Valerie Ramseyer, 'The New Archbishopric of Salerno', in *The Transformation of a Religious Landscape*, 1st ed., Medieval Southern Italy, 850–1150 (Cornell University Press, 2006), 153.

³³⁷ John Julius Norwich, *The Normans in the South, 1016-1130* (London: Longmans, 1967), 243.

³³⁸ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 8.8.

and while the event occurs in all three synoptic gospels, this is the only version to which Gregory refers.

Respondens Simon Petrus dixit: Tu es Christus, Filius Dei vivi. / Respondens autem Jesus, dixit ei: Beatus es Simon Bar Jona: quia caro et sanguis non revelavit tibi, sed Pater meus, qui in caelis est. / Et ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam, et portae inferi non praevallebunt adversus eam. / Et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum. Et quodcumque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum et in caelis: et quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in caelis.³³⁹

The passage was commonly interpreted as the foundation of the Roman church—the moment when Christ appointed Peter as the steadfast progenitor of Christianity on earth. Going back to the earliest popes, this passage was consistently used to justify papal primacy, and even when popes added to the scriptural framework, references to that original passage remained central.³⁴⁰ Unlike the other synoptic gospels, Matthew alone indicates Peter’s authority as being derived from Christ and establishes Peter’s right to govern the church. As Peter’s successor, Gregory leaned heavily on this passage in his record of the 1080 Lent Synod which permanently and irreversibly excommunicated Henry.³⁴¹ This long-standing exegetical dependence on Matthew’s gospel created a deep connection between the saint and the papacy. Thus, Matthew’s pallium in the Gospels may mean to visually reinforce the ties between Matthew and the papacy: the apostle who first described the powers of the papacy would agree with papal supremacy and thus, is depicted in the liturgical garment which had become tied to papal allegiance and obedience to the hierarchy of the reform.

2.4.2 Narrating the Reform through Biblical Analogies

While the *pallia* would have been a potent symbol of papal loyalty, Biblical narratives in the Gospel may have also played a role in communicating papal supremacy. Aside from the evangelist portraits, the Gospel book is filled with scenes from Christ’s life such as the Adoration of the Magi (fol. 20v), the Temptation of Christ (fols. 42v-43r), the Miracle at Cana (fol. 83v), and the Crucifixion (fol. 101r). However, two scenes appear to present examples of

³³⁹ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Matthaeus 16: 16–9. ‘Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”’

³⁴⁰ Kenneth Pennington, ‘Papal Fullness of Power’, in *Pope and Bishops*, The Papal Monarchy in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 53–4.

³⁴¹ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 7.14.

New Testament violence being done either by Peter or by Christ himself. The two scenes in question, the Arrest of Jesus with Peter cutting off Malchus's ear (fol. 100v) and the Cleansing of the Temple (fol. 84r) exemplify justified violence used to punish and expel non-Christians. At the time of the manuscript's creation, Gregory VII had already asserted the papacy's authority in the *Dictatus Papae*, among other letters and writings on the matter. If this gospel was part of Matilda's material patronage, the depiction of these scenes may have alluded to Matilda's perceived role within the reform: physical enforcement. Furthermore, if the gospels were part of a larger patronage relationship with San Benedetto al Polirone, as suggested by the pledge of the manuscript's *Liber Vitae*, it may have also served to reinforce the monastery's support for the papacy.

The Kiss of Judas (Figures 31, 31a) occupies the lower third portion of the page and is divided into three main clusters: on the right is a group of beardless Romans, one of whom carries a shield inscribed with S.P.Q.R (Senatus Populusque Romanus), the abbreviated insignia of the Roman Republic. The group is armed with swords, spears, torches, and lamps. Their leader, Judas Iscariot, leans towards the face of Jesus who stands on the left. Judas holds a scroll which reads 'Ave Raby', indicating his treacherous kiss. Jesus, with a crossed nimbus holds two scrolls. The right scroll refers to John 18:7 and Matthew 26:55: 'In illa hora dixit Jesus turbis: Tamquam ad latronem existis cum gladiis et fustibus comprehendere me: quotidie apud vos sedebam docens in templo, et non me tenuistis.'³⁴² The left scroll refers to Matthew 26:50 and Luke 22:48, and identifies Judas as Christ's betrayer ('Jesus autem dixit illi: Juda, osculo Filium hominis tradis?').³⁴³ Together, Christ's scrolls identify Christ as the aggrieved party who was betrayed and subsequently arrested for his beliefs by the godless Roman forces. Behind Christ is a group of five haloed apostle; though they are unlabelled, they probably represent the disciples who would flee upon Christ's arrest; the only two to remain would be Peter and Judas. The third group features only Peter, on the left, and Malchus on the right; their arrangement follows the division of the two groups above; Christ and his followers are on the left while Judas the heretics appear on the right. Peter—who is positioned directly under Christ—has Malchus by the hair and uses a knife to cut his ear off in an attempt to prevent the arrest of Christ. The violent act is recounted in all four gospels, though it is only in John that

³⁴² *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Matthaeus 26:55. 'In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.'

³⁴³ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Lucas 22:48. 'but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"'

Peter is named as the aggressive apostle: ‘Simon ergo Petrus habens gladium eduxit eum: et percussit pontificis servum, et abscidit auriculam ejus dexteram. Erat autem nomen servo Malchus.’³⁴⁴

An allegorical reading of this scene may be helpful in conceptualizing how this scene fits into the eleventh-century papal reform. In the scene, Peter acted as the defender of both Christ himself and his teachings and displays willingness to resort to violent punitive actions. Like Peter, the papacy must assert itself against those who wish to bring harm to the followers of Christ—by the late eleventh century, the Church had already made statements on this topic and had recruited devout followers like Matilda to act as physical defenders. The most telling aspect of this scene is that they have omitted Christ’s response. In Luke 20:51, Christ intervenes, scolding Peter and staying his hand: ‘Respondens autem Jesus, ait: ‘Sinite usque huc.’ Et cum tetigisset auriculam ejus, sanavit eum.’³⁴⁵ Most importantly, in an act of peace-making Christ then healed Malchus’ ear. By omitting this act of healing, the scene takes on a confrontational tone in which those who dare to go against Christ will suffer the wrath of the church through its steward, the pope. The narrative of the miniature is further distorted when considered in relation to the events as recalled by the gospels. In the gospels, Peter’s aggression comes as a response to the unjust arrest of Christ. The miniature, however, only depicts the initial meeting between Christ and Judas; the Roman soldiers have not yet seized Christ, nor have the disciples fled. Therefore, Peter’s aggression in the miniature may appear to be preemptive when situated within the narrative of the scene above. The framing of this scene is markedly different from that which appears in the Gospels of King Henry III (Bremen, Stadtbibliothek Bremen, MS. B. 21, fol. 43v). Made in the 1040s, the manuscript similarly features the betrayal and arrest of Christ (Figure 32). However, the framing of the scene is different: here, the scene is paired with Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem. In one illumination, the beginning and end of the Passion cycle are depicted. Though he is being detained by the Roman soldiers, Christ extends his hand in blessing towards both Peter and Malchus. Thus, in the Gospels of Henry III Peter’s violent act is framed not as an act of righteous vengeance but one in which Christ’s direct intervention prevented further harm, a quite different interpretation to the scene in the Gospels of Matilda where Peter’s violence is unmitigated by Christ. In the Matildine version the scene’s appearance at the bottom of the

³⁴⁴ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Ioannes 18:10. “Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.”

³⁴⁵ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Lucas 22:51. ‘But Jesus answered, “No more of this!” And he touched the man’s ear and healed him.’

page suggests its inevitability, prefaced by Christ's pre-crucifixion preparations, and followed immediately on the next page by Christ's death and resurrection. The focus appears to be intentionally on the violent act rather than on Christ's intercession.

This scene was not the only demonstration of violence in the manuscript. The other major display of righteous aggression is the Cleansing of the Temple (fol. 84r, Figure 33) at the beginning of the Gospel of John. This scene proportionally occupies the most amount of space for any one story in the manuscript. The basic story of the Cleansing remains mostly unchanged across all four gospels, described in Matthew 21:12-17, Mark 11:15-19, Luke 19:45-48, and John 2:13-16. Christ entered the Temple of Jerusalem and encountered money-changers and merchants. Christ decried them as sinners, believing their activities transformed his house of prayer into a 'den of robbers,' a reference to Jeremiah 7:11, which preaches against false religions and false idolatry.

Et prope erat Pascha Judaeorum, et ascendit Jesus Jerosolymam: / et invenit in templo vendentes boves, et oves, et columbas, et numularios sedentes. / Et cum fecisset quasi flagellum de funiculis, omnes ejecit de templo, oves quoque, et boves, et numulariorum effudit aes, et mensas subvertit. / Et his qui columbas vendebant, dixit: Auferte ista hinc, et nolite facere domum patris mei, domum negotiationis.³⁴⁶

In the gospels of Mark and John, Christ becomes the enforcer and punisher in order to enact this banishment. He overturned the tables of the money-changers, and the benches of the dove-sellers. John's account, however, is more explicit in its violent detail. Christ gathered rope and fashioned a whip-like device to herd the animals, and presumably their owners, out of the sacred temple.³⁴⁷ These details are also referenced in the illumination, by including a whip of cords and livestock.

The Cleansing Scene is divided into three horizontal registers, framed by an arch decorated with a fan and floral motif. The left edge is supported by the decorated 'I' of the beginning of the rubric introducing the gospel's text, while the right is held up by a crouching figure. The scene unfolds much as Latin text is read: from the top left corner to the bottom right. In the top left corner, outside the arch that encompasses the scene, is an architectural

³⁴⁶ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Ioannes 2: 13–6. 'When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!"'

³⁴⁷ N. Clayton Croy, 'The Messianic Whippersnapper: Did Jesus Use a Whip on People in the Temple (John 2:15)?', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 3 (2009): 555–68. It is likely that Christ fashioned several cords of rope (likely belonging to the merchants) together into a multi-tailed whip. It is agreed that Christ likely struck the animals, and that he may have also struck their owners as well.

representation of Jerusalem which marks Christ's entrance to the interior space of the temple. The immediacy of Christ's actions is striking. Though he has hardly left the entranceway—his arm and drapery overlapping the opening suggest this—he has already raised his arm to strike with the whip and begin his expulsion.

The first register features Christ, whip in one hand, scroll in the other. The scroll contains text which reads: 'Auferte ista hinc et nolite facere domum patris mei domum negotiationis' from John 2:16, and 'scriptum est enim domus mea orationis uocabitur uos autem fecistis eam speluncam latronum' from Matthew 21:13, both referring to the cleansing scene. Christ, adorned with a crossed nimbus and classicizing robes, advances towards a money changer and a merchant but makes no contact with the sinners in his path. Rather, his scroll is the weapon of disruption, thrust into the paths of the money-changers. The first stumbles backwards off his chair while his table, covered with birds and coins, is toppled by the advancing Christ. To his right is a merchant who has turned to escape; he looks back upon the unfolding scene and gestures away from Christ, presumably to escape the wrathful violence. He carries a rod with a small barrel attached, signifying his role as a merchant. Further right, outside the decorated frame, are three merchants who have fled the space, further indicating that the arch that encloses the scene represents the temple itself.

Christ's actions and movement ripple outwards from the upper register: in the central register, one merchant is shown partially exiting the temple on the right. Two merchants seem to gesture to Christ, acknowledging his presence but not yet alarmed. Similarly, in the bottom register merchants and money-changers go about their business. At the right, a merchant points towards Christ—the only figure in this register to acknowledge the disorder above—while ushering two other merchants towards an exit, bird, and ox in tow.

The Betrayal of Christ and the Cleansing of the Temple both rely on John's overtly aggressive interpretations: for the Betrayal, John is the only author who names Peter, and for the Cleansing, the only one to depict Christ as an armed enforcer. These illuminations reflect a conscious choice to depict the violent version of the events, serving two primary purposes in their interpretations of this gospel: first, as a commentary on the church's moral obligation to expel any heretical figures as authorized by Christ, a standpoint that was particularly emphasized by contemporary reformers who commented on the scripture and exegetically adapted it to inform their positions regarding the papal reform. The second and perhaps more subtle purpose was to display the proper Christian use of physical force to enact the will of the church and the papacy. This reconfiguration of physical force was a necessary step towards the

development of the Crusades, one that necessarily hinged upon the rise of papal supremacy, one of the core aspects of the Investiture Controversy.

2.4.3 *The Corrective Powers of Papal Primacy: The Cleansing Narrative and the Reform*

The temple-cleansing imagery was not lost on other reformers who sought to drive out heretics. In his 1052 text *Liber Gratissimus* Peter Damian uses the imagery of the money-changers and dove-sellers to allude to simoniacs, whom he considered to be heretics.³⁴⁸ In his 1057 text *Libri Tres Adversus Simoniacos*, Humbert of Silva Candida mentioned the Cleansing of the Temple on several occasions across the three volumes: six times in Book I, and once in Book III.³⁴⁹ Anselm II of Lucca, in his scathing response to Antipope Clement III (Archbishop Wibert of Ravenna) entitled *Contra Wibertum Antipapam*, spoke of the cleansing in an exegesis on the book of Matthew:

Unde multum tremenda sunt haec, dilectissimi, et digno expavescenda timore, sedulaque praecavendum industria, ne veniens improvisus, perversum quid in nobis unde merito flagellari ac de ecclesia ejici debeamus, inveniat.³⁵⁰

Contained within Anselm's writing is a barely disguised application of the parable to the contemporary challenges faced by the modern church. Anselm goes on to allegorize the sale of doves as the simoniacal acts which he and other reformers intended to drive from the ranks of the church. Much as they had sinned by trading in the house of God, so too did those who sought out clerical offices in return for goods or services.

The Cleansing of the Temple was also allegorically applied to the 'typological and moral exegesis' that immediately followed the First Crusade. Beginning as early as 1105 with Baldric of Bourgueil's *Historia Ierosolimitana*, six individual chroniclers drew connections between the crusaders, who fulfilled the role of Christ, and the Muslims as the money-changers and merchants.³⁵¹ In this, the chroniclers explicitly characterized the Muslim opponents as despoilers of the Holy Land, much as the Jews had debased the temple with greed and idolatry;

³⁴⁸ Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, vol. 145, col. 141. 'Quid est igitur offam picis in draconis ora projicere, nisi manifeste cum Petro dicere: "Pecunia tua tecum sit in perditionem?" Quod profecto princeps iste tunc veraciter protulit, cum cathedras distrahentium columbas evertit, cum trapezitas expulit, cum in templo Dei fieri venale commercium recusavit.'

³⁴⁹ Migne, vol. 143, cols. 1033–171. Humbert cites Matthew 21:12–7 in all instances.

³⁵⁰ Migne, vol. 149, cols. 475–8. 'For this reason, much are these things to be feared, dearly beloved, and worthy of frightening dread, and we must beware with attentive diligence, lest he, coming by surprise, finds something perverse in us, for which we must be whipped and expelled from the church.'

³⁵¹ Katherine Allen Smith, 'The Crusader Conquest of Jerusalem and Christ's Cleansing of the Temple', in *The Uses of the Bible in Crusader Sources*, ed. Elizabeth Lapina and Nicholas Edward Morton, Commentaria, Sacred Texts and Their Commentaries: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic, volume 7 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017), 20.

as a result, a second cleansing of the Temple is made necessary. Though these accounts were written after the end of the successful First Crusade, their use of the cleansing scene may have been a link in the interpretative chain that began in the mid-eleventh century. These adaptations reflect a long-held tradition of reinterpretation and expansion on the cleansing narrative to suit their evangelization of the crusades.³⁵² Thus, the Cleansing of the Temple may have been prophetic for members of the eleventh-century papal reform. It represented the appropriation of sacred spaces by earthly, secular forces and the necessary violence to cast them out. Though with Gregory this desire was focused primarily on the investment of bishoprics, towards the end of the eleventh century, this drive for religious control, purity, and papal supremacy developed into the crusading culture of Urban II and his peers.

In the eleventh century, the ‘temple’ of the cleansing scene no longer solely represented the body of Christ, as it had in the Early Christian period, but now took on a greater significance as the ‘entire body of believers.’³⁵³ Accordingly, heretical forces needed to be reformed or excised completely in order to maintain the moral and religious integrity of the Church. This belief was repeatedly espoused by Gregory against Henry and his supporters who viewed them as forces of evil, who if left unchecked, would bring ruin to the mortal realm.³⁵⁴ This intellectual construction seemingly obliged the development of papal supremacy and configuration of ecclesiastic strength in order to oppose that of the secular *regnum*.

As part of Matilda’s material support for San Benedetto al Polirone, perhaps this manuscript intended to draw parallels between the Church’s faithful defender (and their patron), and the justified violence within the Bible. As Peter cut the ear of Malchus, and as Christ forcibly expelled the sinners, they both did so righteously in defence of the Church. So too Matilda’s battles with Henry were violent but justifiable in defence of the infallible Church. With her armed forces, wealth, and extensive land holdings Matilda was the papacy’s primary cudgel with which dissidents within the Italian peninsula could be brought into line or punished. As such, it seems natural that she endorsed the nascent concept of ‘just’ war in the name of Christianity and promoted its ideals in her patronage. Her position as the ‘enforcer’ may also explain a dedication that appears in the Gospel’s *Liber Vitae* which lists Urban II,

³⁵² Elizabeth Lapina and Nicholas Edward Morton, eds., *The Uses of the Bible in Crusader Sources*, Commentaria, Sacred Texts and Their Commentaries: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic, volume 7 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017), 21–4.

³⁵³ Smith, ‘The Crusader Conquest of Jerusalem and Christ’s Cleansing of the Temple’, 24.

³⁵⁴ Brett Edward Whalen, ‘Christendom and the Origins of Papal Monarchy’, in *Dominion of God* (Harvard University Press, 2009), 39.

Matilda, and her closest military advisor, Arduino della Palude.³⁵⁵ Though it may be coincidental to the Siege of Jerusalem, the appearance of this dedication on a manuscript with two illuminations of sanctified violence might have been meant to praise both a moral enactor of the reform as well as the primary defender of it. Furthermore, though the illuminations would not have been seen by every person at the monastery, the gospels' visual contents may have been absorbed by those responsible for leading sermons, while the *Liber Vitae* ensured the Gospels would be in constant use, the text ever-present on the altar in an open sign of allegiance to Matilda, the papacy, and papal supremacy.

Apparent across these three manuscripts is Matilda's support for the papacy and intellectual by-products of the eleventh-century papal reform such as justifiable Christian violence. The *Vita Mathildis* openly displayed Matilda's life-long allegiance to the papacy in both the text and images within the manuscript. Not intended as an external tool of persuasion as the other case studies, it perhaps best represents a retrospective on Matilda's participation in an anti-imperial power structure and pious defence of the papacy's goals. Furthermore, it likely reflected the sentiments of an institution long patronized by Matilda, the Benedictine community of Sant'Apollonio at Canossa, which had probably absorbed and reflected back Matilda's own beliefs about papal primacy and the reform. Though the farthest removed from the countess' material patronage, the *Relatio* documented Matilda's personal involvement in the cities under her command suggesting that she may have used objects to garner support for the papal reform and the papacy. Finally, the Gospels of Matilda demonstrate that Matilda encouraged the institutions under her protection such as San Benedetto al Polirone to adhere to the goals of the reform through the use of objects. The Gospels framed scenes of violence, either by Peter or by Christ, as justifiable and necessary to both enforce the goals of the papal reform and to defend Christianity, internally as with those who were excommunicated and externally as with the heretics in the Holy Land. These scenes may have reminded those at San Benedetto of the necessity of Matilda's military strength, particularly as clergy members were explicitly barred from taking up arms but remained vulnerable to acts of imperial violence. These objects demonstrate the fluency with which Matilda used her material patronage to communicate her allegiance to the papacy and the principles of the reform. She integrated them into existing relationships with cities and institutions in order to make clear her support and encourage similar sentiments to create a broader base of support. The more supporters who

³⁵⁵ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, 218–9; see also: Vito Fumagalli, "Il Poema Di Donizone, Nel Codice Vaticano Latino 4922," in *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ed. Paolo Golinelli (Milan: Jaca Book, 2008), 241–52. Fumagalli refers to Arduino as a subject of Canossa.

refused the authority of the *regnum*, the stronger her own case was in upholding the Church's authority over the king.

Chapter 3: Matilda and the Crusades: Virtual Pilgrimage at San Lorenzo, Mantua

Papal primacy was not only a central tenet of the eleventh-century papal reform, but within Matilda's lifetime it also came to underpin the sanctified violence of the First Crusade. The supremacy of the papacy created an obligation of service within the laity which could then be deployed against various evils or enemies. Though Gregory VII never successfully launched a 'crusade' as they have come to be called, the reforming pope was directly responsible for promoting the fundamental ideologies which later empowered Urban II in his crusading effort. Gregory was cognizant of the need for organized action and appealed to Matilda to assist him in a military campaign to liberate beleaguered Christians on the way to Jerusalem. This call-to-arms never materialized, and Matilda never travelled beyond the peninsula in defence of the Church. This chapter will argue that her close involvement with Gregory's crusading ambitions left a mark on Matilda's patronage and that she used patronage as a way to express her support for the crusades. By employing an expanded understanding of what actions qualify as 'crusading,' new perspectives regarding Matilda's patronage can be unearthed and a wider selection of methods are available for scrutinizing it.

Study of this period cannot and does not produce a single-direction explanation of cause and effect. It is not merely the case that the reform led to the crusades, but rather a simultaneous, interrelated flourishing of intellectual and religious concepts underpinned both movements. When considering another aspect such as pilgrimage, both armed and unarmed, the web becomes denser and even more difficult to untangle. Such is the case with San Lorenzo in Mantua, this chapter's central case study. The chapter will assess how this building came to be built in the eleventh century, arguing that Matilda was the patron, and that her motivation can be understood through a complex network of ideas, including reform, pilgrimage, and crusade.

3.1 Holy Violence: Connecting the Papal Reform to the Crusades

It is no coincidence that the First Crusade was launched only two decades after Gregory's *Dictatus Papae*. Rather, the dogmatic configuration of *jus bellum justum* which was integral to the First Crusade directly stemmed from papal supremacy. Gregory VII's *Dictatus Papae* asserted four main principles that were directly relevant to the concept of papal authority, which itself was inherent to justified violence. First, the pope alone was to use the imperial insignia, and princes must show fealty to the pope. Second, the pope could not be judged by any mortal man. Third, the Roman Church is infallible. Finally, any person who stands against the Roman

church cannot be considered ‘catholic’ and is thus subject to action by the church.³⁵⁶ As Carl Erdman suggests, this last tenet was particularly important to the construction of *jus bellum justum*; though violence against fellow Catholics was considered unjust, it became principally different when the culprit was deemed either schismatic or a heretic.³⁵⁷ Within this power asserted by the papacy, polemicists were able to craft doctrine which not only justified the corrective abilities of the church in the physical realm, but also encouraged them.

Furthermore, the writers and thinkers who promoted the reform were often the same people who wrote in favour of the armed defence of Christianity. Katherine Allen Smith wisely reminds us that the medieval ‘historians’ we look to for information concerning the papal reforms and the First Crusade were the very same authors writing exegetical texts.³⁵⁸ These authors simultaneously caused and witnessed the expansion of papal authority into sanctified violence. After defending a separate and superior papal sovereignty, they then applied this newfound authority to the mortal plane for issues they had not been previously powerful enough to address. One such author was Anselm II of Lucca, a life-long supporter of the reform and trusted advisor to Gregory. Anselm’s texts often forcefully supported the will of the papacy, and in 1081 he was appointed by Gregory as a spiritual guide to Matilda.³⁵⁹ In his *Collectio Canonum* of c. 1083, he articulates his concept of a ‘just’ war in which physical force could be appropriately used to enact the will of the Church in the world.³⁶⁰ Kathleen Cushing has noted that Anselm’s text focused on the clerical definition of ‘excommunicates, schismatics, and heretics’ more than other canonical collections of the recent past.³⁶¹ Cushing indicates Anselm had conceived the idea that the church itself could act defensively rather than depending on a secular force, particularly when that secular force was excommunicated.³⁶² Furthermore, according to Erdmann, Anselm supplemented his ecclesiastical doctrines with notions of warfare and violence, insisting that salvation should be the goal and ideal outcome of every violent encounter.³⁶³ But who amongst the reformers could put into practice these ideas if the clergy themselves were barred from taking up arms?

³⁵⁶ Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, ed. Erich Caspar, *Epistolae Selectae* 2 (München: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1990), 2.55a; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII 1073-1085: An English Translation*, trans. H. E. J. Cowdrey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 2.55a.

³⁵⁷ Carl Erdmann, Marshall Withed Baldwin, and Walter A Goffart, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, University Library, 2010), 247.

³⁵⁸ Smith, ‘The Crusader Conquest of Jerusalem and Christ’s Cleansing of the Temple’, 26–7.

³⁵⁹ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 242.

³⁶⁰ Anselm II of Lucca, *Collectio canonum*, ed. Friedrich. Thaner (Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1965).

³⁶¹ Kathleen G. Cushing, ‘Anselm of Lucca and the Doctrine of Coercion: The Legal Impact of the Schism of 1080?’, *The Catholic Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (1995): 356–7.

³⁶² Cushing, 365.

³⁶³ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 245.

Anselm must have envisioned that lay supporters such as Matilda would take on the role of physical enforcers, as Carl Erdmann and Ian Robinson have argued. According to Erdmann, Anselm was responsible for fostering a ‘warlike spirit’ at Matilda’s court.³⁶⁴ Erdmann’s assessment derives from one of Anselm’s biographers, Rangerius of Lucca, who recalls Anselm’s involvement in rallying Matilda’s troops and that he used his sermons to lift morale by comparing Matilda’s soldiers to the Maccabees.³⁶⁵ Ian Robinson suggests that Antipope Clement III (Archbishop Wibert of Ravenna) accused Anselm of indoctrinating Matilda concerning the use of ‘just’ force as preached by the reformers, a conclusion he reaches by examining Anselm’s response, the *Contra Wibertum Antipapam*.³⁶⁶ In his response, Anselm denied Clement’s accusations and instead asserted all of Matilda’s actions were righteous and justified, including her use of physical force.³⁶⁷ This characterization of Matilda as the papacy’s physical enforcer was also one held by Anselm’s contemporary, Bonizo of Sutri. In his *Liber ad Amicum*, he implores the ‘knights of God’ to follow in the militaristic footsteps of the ‘most excellent Countess Matilda’:

Emulenter [gloriosissimi Dei milites] in bonum excellentissimam comitissam Matildam, filiam beati Petri, que virile animo, omnibus mundanis rebus posthabitis, mori parata est potius quam legem Dei infringere et contra heresim, que nunc sevit in ecclesia, prout vires suppetunt, omnibus modis impugnare.³⁶⁸

Matilda’s reforming peers clearly envisioned a role for Matilda within the concept of *jus bellum justum*. With her extensive military capabilities, she was viewed as a protector and enforcer of the Church, using violence when necessary. However, because Matilda’s aggression towards heretical forces was inclusive of Henry IV, doctrinal protection from the papacy was necessary to ensure that her motivations were just and defensible.

3.1.1 Gregory VII and a Pre-Crusade Call to Arms

³⁶⁴ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, 241–2.

³⁶⁵ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, 242; Rangerius of Lucca, ‘Vita Metrica Anselmi Lucensis Episcopi’, 3659–64.

³⁶⁶ I. S. Robinson, ed., *The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century: Lives of Pope Leo IX and Pope Gregory VII*, Manchester Medieval Sources Series (Manchester; New York: New York: Manchester University Press; Distributed by Palgrave, 2004), 46; Anselm of Lucca, ‘Liber Contra Wibertum’, ed. Ernst Bernheim, *Libelli de Lite Imperatorum et Pontificum I* (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1891), 527.

³⁶⁷ Migne, *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*, vol. 149, cols. 475–8.

³⁶⁸ Bonizo of Sutri, ‘Liber Ad Amicum’; Robinson, *The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century*, 48. ‘Worthy of emulation and the most glorious of Christ’s soldiers, Countess Matilda, the blessed daughter of Peter, of manly spirit, neglecting all worldly considerations, is prepared to die rather than to break the law of God and to oppose the heresy that has now been sown within the Church, as long as her strength permits.’

Gregory's position on enacting Christian violence and just warfare against heretics and excommunicates is plainly reflected in his own writings. In February 1074 Gregory issued a call-to-arms to William I of Burgundy in the form of a letter.³⁶⁹ The pope requested that the count make his military forces available to aid and defend the Roman church, and to pass along the letter to other faithful members³⁷⁰ of the church who were capable of military aid:

Unde, memores nobilitatis vestrae fidei, rogamus et admonemus strenuitatis vestrae prudentiam: quatenus praeparetis vestrae militiae fortitudinem ad succurrendum Romanae ecclesiae libertati, scilicet, si necesse fuerit, veniatis huc cum exercitu vestro in servitio sancti Petri.³⁷¹

This request specifically referred to the Christians in the East who had rebelled against the Roman church. Gregory had hoped to subdue the insubordinate Christians, not by bloodshed but by intimidation and show of force. In the same letter, he also expressed interest in journeying to Constantinople to aid the Christians who were being ravaged by the Saracens, and then continue on to Jerusalem. Alongside her mother Beatrice, Matilda is mentioned as an ally in the effort: 'et idem vester nuntius veniat per comitissam Beatricem quae cum filia et genero in hoc negotio laborare procuret.'³⁷² This explains why neither Matilda nor her mother were listed among the recipients of the circulated letter: they had already agreed to help and were in the process of making arrangements. Within the next month, Gregory sent the same request out to 'omnibus christianam fidem defendere volentibus.'³⁷³ His summons beseeches those willing to take up arms against a 'race of pagans' who had laid siege to Constantinople:

A quo sicut a plerisque aliis cognovimus, gentem paganorum contra christianum fortiter invaluisse imperium et miseranda crudelitate iam fere usque ad muros Constantinopolitane civitatis omnia devastasse et tyrannica violentia occupasse et multa milia christianorum quasi pecudes occidisse.³⁷⁴

³⁶⁹ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 1.46; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.46.

³⁷⁰ Gregory specifically lists Raymond IV, count of Saint-Gilles, Richard, Prince of Capua, and Amadeus II, son of Adelaide.

³⁷¹ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 1.46; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.46. Cowdrey translates it as: 'Therefore being mindful of the sworn word of your illustrious self, we ask and urge you in the wisdom of your zeal to make ready a force of your knighthood to uphold the liberty of the Roman church—that is, if it shall be necessary, you should come here with your army in the service of St Peter.'

³⁷² Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 1.46; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.46. 'And let this messenger of yours come by way of Countess Beatrice, who with her daughter and son-in-law has it in train to contend in this business.'

³⁷³ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 1.49; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.49. 'To all who are willing to defend the Christian faith.'

³⁷⁴ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 1.49; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.49. 'We had learned from him just as from many others that a race of pagans has strongly prevailed against the

In June of the same year Gregory met Matilda at S. Flaviano, where Matilda and Beatrice had mustered troops, to discuss the best way forward.³⁷⁵ Though cut short—Beatrice and Matilda were called away to deal with an insurrection in Lombardy—the meeting indicates that Gregory fully intended to carry out this plan and that it was not merely a gesture. That Matilda and Beatrice had already summoned soldiers suggests the level of seriousness with which they attended to Gregory’s plan. Furthermore, that they were able to assemble troops in such a short period of time—the first letter regarding the plan was only sent four months prior—shows they prioritized requests from the church and took their duties as physical defenders seriously. In a letter of December 1074, Gregory informed Henry IV of his intended expedition to aid the Christians in the aforementioned besieged areas, referencing his earlier letters.³⁷⁶ The December letter is not necessarily a request for aid but rather a notification of obligation. Couched in reassurances of papal love for the king, Gregory informs Henry of the suffering and slaughtering of Christians in Byzantium, and the pope’s intention to incite Christians everywhere to their defence. He indicates that over 50,000 people had pledged themselves to the campaign and had begun to prepare for it.

Quam admonitionem Italici et ultramontani, Deo inspirante ut reor immo etiam omnino affirmo, libenter acceperunt; et iam ultra quinquaginta milia ad hoc se praeeparant et, si me possunt in expeditione pro duce ac pontifice habere, armata manu contra inimicos Dei volunt insurgere et usque ad sepulchrum Domini, ipso ducente, pervenire.³⁷⁷

Though Gregory indicates his desire to reclaim the schismatic Church of Constantinople and Armenia, he also clearly states that he intends to take the armed forces onto the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. A few days later, Gregory issued another letter to those faithful to St Peter and explicitly solicited the support of those beyond the Alps in a military quest to aid the Eastern

Christian empire and with pitiable cruelty has already almost up to the walls of the city of Constantinople laid waste and with tyrannical violence has seized everything; it has slaughtered like cattle many thousands of Christians.’ Cowdrey indicates that Gregory was referring to the Seljuk Turks who had defeated the Byzantine army at the Battle of Manzikert in 1071.

³⁷⁵ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.85; Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 47–8.

³⁷⁶ Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, 2.31; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.31.

³⁷⁷ Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, 2.31; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.31. ‘By God’s inspiration, as I think—no, even as I altogether maintain, men from Italy and from beyond the Alps have accepted this challenge, and already more than 50,000 are making themselves ready so that, if they can have myself as leader and as pontiff on a campaign, they are prepared to rise up in armed force against the enemies of God and to go as far as the sepulchre of the Lord under his leadership.’

Christians in the Byzantine empire.³⁷⁸ This is a reiteration of the requests made throughout the year and once again, Gregory alludes to the crossing of the sea to defend the Christian faith.

Proinde ex parte beati Petri rogamus monemus et invitamus, ut eo modo, quem portitor horum dixerit, ad nos quidam vestrum veniant, qui christianam fidem vultis defendere et caelesti regi militare: ut cum eis viam favente Deo praeparemus omnibus, qui, caelestem voluntatem defendendo, per nos ultra mare volunt transire et, quod Dei sint filii, non timent ostendere.³⁷⁹

Again, Gregory depicts his plan as a necessary step to defend the Christian faith and ‘serve the heavenly king.’ Here, he explicitly ties the act to the promise of an eternal reward by citing 2 Corinthians (‘nam per momentaneum laborem aeternam potestis acquirere mercedem’) to suggest that those who take part in such a quest will be granted an eternal reward for their participation:

Id enim, quod in praesenti est momentaneum et leve tribulationis nostrae, supra modum in sublimitate aeternum gloriae pondus operatur in nobis, non contemplantibus nobis quae videntur, sed quae non videntur. Quae enim videntur, temporalia sunt: quae autem non videntur, aeterna sunt.³⁸⁰

Following these broader requests, Gregory composed a private letter to Matilda in December 1074, making a similar request for assistance.³⁸¹ Gregory speaks of his desire to cross the sea to aid the Christians who were being slaughtered like cattle (‘ut christianis qui more pecudum a paganis occiduntur’). He reminds Matilda that while it is noble to die in service of her country, to give one’s life for Christ is an elevated call to glory (‘pulcherrimum est ac ualde gloriosum carnem morticinam pro Christo dare, qui est aeterna uita’). He explicitly requests that Matilda assist him on the journey—one he has made clear he intends to personally lead—while her mother Beatrice should remain behind to safeguard their joint interests on the peninsula in their absence:

Credo enim multos milites in tali labore nobis fauere, ipsam etiam nostram imperatricem nobiscum ad illas partes uelle uenire tque secum ducere, matre tua in

³⁷⁸ Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, 2.37; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.37.

³⁷⁹ Gregory VII, ‘Das Register Gregors VII’, 2.37; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.37. ‘Accordingly, on behalf of blessed Peter we ask, urge, and invite that, as the bearer of this letter will relate, some of you may come to us who are willing to defend the Christian faith and to serve the heavenly King, in order that, God willing, we may make ready the way for all who, to defend the heavenly excellency, are prepared through us to cross over the sea and who are not afraid to show that they are the sons of God.’

³⁸⁰ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, II Corinthians 4: 17–8. ‘For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.’

³⁸¹ Gregory VII, *The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, no. 5.

partibus his relicta pro tuendis rebus communibus; quia sic tute Christo iuuante possemus abire.³⁸²

Though no extant letter documents Matilda's reply, the sustained subsequent relationship between the countess and pope suggests an affirmative response to the request. Nevertheless, the journey never materialized. Cowdrey pinpoints three reasons for the failure of the 1074 campaign: first, Prince Gisulf II of Salerno failed to distribute equitable rewards; second, the Pisans within Matilda's army had revived a dispute with Gisulf and he needed to be extricated from the city; third, a point also raised by Erdmann, an insurrection in Lombardy necessitated the attention of both Beatrice and Matilda.³⁸³ Cowdrey further suggests that there were underlying issues of palatability and that Gregory's call to arms too strictly enforced the concept of papal supremacy upon the laity.³⁸⁴ No such quest would ever be launched by Gregory again and shortly thereafter imperial and papal relations reached breaking point. Without imperial support, it was unlikely that Gregory would have been able to muster enough military aid for his campaign, even with Matilda's full support. Gregory died in 1085, having never successfully ventured to the Levant as he had envisioned. Though Matilda herself did not participate in any campaign to liberate Jerusalem, either under Gregory VII or later under Urban II, it is clear her support was considered necessary and important.

Two decades later, Urban II would build upon but slightly alter Gregory's call to arms. In Fulcher of Chartres' account of the Council of Clermont in 1095, the pope alluded to the Cleansing of the Temple, building on the same exegetical interpretation used by Gregory VII :

Res ecclesiasticas praecipue in suo iure constare facite, ut et simoniaca haeresis nullatenus apud uos radicet: carete ne uendentes ac ementes flagris flagellati dominicis per angiportus in exterminium confusionis miserabiliter propellantur.³⁸⁵

The target of the allegorical cleansing has shifted. Whereas earlier exegetic texts considered the subject of the cleansing to be within the church (to purge those who opposed its supremacy and directives), here the subject is the cleansing is the Holy Land. This shift de-emphasized

³⁸² Gregory VII, No. 5. 'Now, I believe that many knights support us in such a task, also that our empress herself desires to come with us to distant parts and to bring you with her, leaving your mother behind to safeguard our common interest here; for so, with Christ's help, we might depart in safety.'

³⁸³ Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 428–9; Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 160–2.

³⁸⁴ H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'Pope Urban II's Preaching of the First Crusade', *History* 55, no. 184 (1970): 178–9.

³⁸⁵ Fulcher of Chartres, 'The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Book I (1095–1100)', in *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials*, ed. Edward Peters, 2nd ed, Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 51. 'Especially establish ecclesiastical affairs firm in their own right, so that no simoniac heresy will take root among you. Take care lest the vendors and moneychangers, flayed by the scourges of the Lord, be miserably driven out into the narrow streets of destruction.'

Gregory's reformist (and mostly internal) goals and effectively provided an acceptable external enemy to rally against. While it is uncertain how faithful Fulcher is to Urban's words, his account can testify to the evolving usage of the Cleansing metaphor, if not by the pope himself, then at least by lower members of the clergy like Fulcher. Whether deployed by the pope or others, these subtle shifts in exegetical writing may have increased the traction Urban was able to generate for his campaign.

3.2 The Myth of the Monolithic Crusade: Crusading with or without Violence

Neither Gregory nor his attempted military endeavours are typically associated with the Crusades in the same way as Urban was. This is likely due to two factors: Gregory's planned military action was not realised, and the definition of 'crusade' varies. To understand Matilda's place within the construction of the First Crusade, it is first necessary to understand what constitutes a crusade and whether Gregory's planning—in which Matilda was heavily involved—was a crusade-like action. Admittedly, this subject is controversial and beyond the scope of this thesis; nonetheless, it is worth examining the broader definition of 'crusade' to understand how it has been applied to Gregory's planned military journey of 1074. The term 'crusade' is in itself a creation of historians, and this section of the chapter is predominantly historiographical. By understanding the criteria against which Urban's call was judged part of the crusade, this part of the chapter will use those standards to reassess the status of Gregory's 1074 call to arms, and thus, Matilda's place in the planning of it.

Carl Erdmann wrote extensively on the question of what could be considered 'crusading' and argued that because the march to and liberation of Jerusalem was not Gregory's primary goal in 1074, the campaign cannot rightfully be called a crusade.³⁸⁶ Furthermore, in his assessment of Gregory's plan, he dismisses the participation of Beatrice and Matilda as 'grotesque' and a 'bad joke.'³⁸⁷ He further takes this reliance on Canossa (that is, both Beatrice and Matilda) as a sign of the pope's political motivations and suggests that Gregory never truly intended to act on his plan.³⁸⁸ Erdmann further draws on Matilda's defeat in 1080 at Volterra by imperial troops as proof that the countess's participation would have been insufficient.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁶ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 161–70.

³⁸⁷ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, 167. 'He was to be accompanied—grotesque as it may sound—by the old empress Agnes and Countess Matilda of Tuscany, while none other than Henry IV was asked to undertake the custody of the Roman Church. All this might be taken as a bad joke by a malicious opponent if Gregory's own letters were not our source of information.'

³⁸⁸ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, 167.

³⁸⁹ Erdmann, Baldwin, and Goffart, 174.

Erdmann generally avoids labelling the planned expedition as a crusade, or Gregory as a proper antecedent to Urban in the development of the crusades.

Hans Eberhard Mayer acknowledges that Gregory's plans were crucial in conceptualizing the idea of 'papally directed military action in the Middle East.'³⁹⁰ He draws connections between the methods used by Gregory and those used by Urban two decades later but distinguishes between the type of services rendered by the intended participants of each campaign, deploying different language in their respective descriptions. Those called upon by Gregory were referred to as *militia sancti Petri*, while Urban's were considered a new class of fighter termed *militia Christi*.³⁹¹ Furthermore, Mayer argues that Erdmann overestimated the centralized role of the church as a defining characteristic of a crusade.

Jonathan Riley-Smith put papal authorization at the centre of his definition of 'crusade.'³⁹² Earlier papal expeditions and authorizations of military force are included in this definition. Like Mayer, Riley-Smith also believes that the distinction between the *militia sancti Petri* and the *militia Christi* is a delineating notion that separates the plans of the two popes. The institutionalization of a papal military force obliged the laity to serve not simply on behalf of St Peter (and thus, the pope) but of Christ himself which elevated Urban II's military action to a 'crusade,' but not that of Gregory. Despite this, Riley-Smith describes Urban's call as 'conventional' as it was similar to the calls put forward by contemporary Church reformers.³⁹³ Thus, he concludes, Urban's actions were an extension and advancement of the principles of Gregory.

In a methodological analysis of crusade scholarship and in order to summarize some of the dominant opinions in this debate, Giles Constable described four different perspectives that are traditionally employed when considering the parameters of a crusade: traditionalist, pluralist, popularist, and generalist. Traditionalists categorize a crusade as an act of war occurring within the Middle East and strictly aimed at assisting local Christians to liberate Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre.³⁹⁴ Pluralists believe the sole defining characteristic of a

³⁹⁰ H. E. Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. John II Gillingham, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 19–21.

³⁹¹ Mayer, 19–21.

³⁹² Louise Riley-Smith and Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095-1274*, Documents of Medieval History 4 (London: Edward Arnold, 1981); Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); Jonathan Riley-Smith, 'Crusading as an Act of Love', in *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, ed. Constance H. Berman, Rewriting Histories (New York: Routledge, 2005); Jonathan Riley-Smith, 'An Army on Pilgrimage', in *Jerusalem the Golden: The Origins and Impact of the First Crusade*, ed. Susan B. Edgington and Luis García-Guijarro, *Outremer* 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 101–16.

³⁹³ Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 2–12.

³⁹⁴ Giles Constable, *Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth Century*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), 3–44.

crusade is its authorization by the papacy; by this definition, the history of crusades can be extended both before and beyond those sanctioned by the traditionalists. Constable goes on to describe as popularists those who essentialize the joint clerical and popular enthusiasm and emphasize the spiritual motives of those at the heart of the crusading movement. To popularists, the only true crusade was the First Crusade which was characterized by both. Finally, he describes a group termed the generalists. This last group is composed of historians who believe that crusade is synonymous with holy war and the physical defence of the Christian faith in exchange for the forgiveness of sins. Generalists tend to expand the definition to include actions, papally sanctioned or not, that intend to rebuke the enemies of Christianity, both internally and externally.

Christopher J. Tyerman cautions against trying to neatly package the crusading phenomena when, in reality, they were the culmination of the periods' conditions which themselves evade linearity.³⁹⁵ His approach is seemingly holistic, conscious of the 'fluidity and imprecision' of the crusades.³⁹⁶ Instead, Tyerman embraces an individualistic approach to each campaign within a larger exploration of themes. The scope of this approach renders general categories irrelevant due to the ever-shifting social, economic, political, and religious norms. Tyerman's approach, which unifies the dominant factors of each historiographic category outlined by Constable, is the most productive when considering the nature of the planning, rather than execution, of Gregory's proposed military action.

In studying Gregory's planned 1074 military campaign, it seems best to disregard the restrictive and seemingly impermeable nature of these individual historiographic categories as they deal almost exclusively with the crusade events rather than the planning thereof. Instead, when these categories serve as characteristics in a rounded approach like that of Tyerman, we can deduce the following things from the abortive 1074 call-to-arms. Firstly, the call was made explicitly by the pope himself. Secondly, Gregory made clear the action was to aid the Christians of the east in defence of the Christian faith and in service of the church. Thirdly, the goal was to bring the 50,000 mustered troops to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The only criterion which does not apply to the 1074 appeal is that it failed to gain and hold widespread approval, as the dominant facet of a popularist approach. Thus, according to the majority of historiographic criteria, the actions intended by Gregory VII could be rightfully categorized as behaviour building towards a crusade. This is ultimately how I would class Gregory's planning:

³⁹⁵ Tyerman, Christopher. *Chronicles of the First Crusade*. London: Penguin, 2012. Tyerman, Christopher. *The Invention of the Crusades*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998.

³⁹⁶ Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1998), 5.

had it actually gone forward as intended, it would have crossed into the realm deemed by historians as a crusade.

3.2.1 Gender and the First Crusade: How Womanhood Shaped and Limited the Role of Women

The first public letter soliciting support makes it clear that Matilda was not a token figure but rather an active partner in this planned crusade from the start. If we continue to consider the idea of this hypothetical crusade, which was intended but never brought to fruition, how can we envisage Matilda's participation? Though not barred by the same restrictions applied to the clergy, her gender would have been a complicating factor in the material and physical support she could have offered during the journey. Even within the historiographic framework of 'crusade' and accepting the events of 1074 as the type of planning commensurate with a crusade, the problem still remains that the concept of a 'crusade' centres on fighting and travelling unimpeded. Bearing arms was almost universally a masculine task, and thus crusading as it has been typified by scholars—that is, an armed journey in service of the Church—has been historically rendered masculine. Thus, to rely on a model that privileges violence and movement largely excludes the participation of women (alongside other marginalized groups like the sick and poor) while singularly centring the masculine experience. With this in mind, it is important to focus on the case of gender and the crusades, as gender is a critical factor when discussing Matilda. While women's involvement in the crusades is well-documented,³⁹⁷ they are inherently considered within a framework defined by the actions and movement of men. Women could and did participate in the First Crusade, though in fewer numbers than their male counterparts. This is largely due to both ingrained social standards that dictated the exclusion of women, children, and clergy on these voyages, as well as a socioeconomic model across all classes that deprived women of financial independence and restricted their movements, rendering them largely dependent on their male relations.

Conor Kostick suggests that women desired to participate in the crusade alongside the men in their lives who had already pledged their support, and while women were typically left

³⁹⁷ Natasha R. Hodgson, ed., *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Boydell and Brewer, 2007); Conor Kostick, *The Social Structure of the First Crusade* (Boston: Brill, 2008); Elisabeth M. C Van Houts, *Married Life in the Middle Ages, 900-1300* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); Keren Caspi-Reisfeld, 'Women Warriors during the Crusades, 1095-1254', in *Gendering the Crusades*, ed. Susan Edgington and Sarah Lambert (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 94–107; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095-1131* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Susan Edgington and Sarah Lambert, eds., *Gendering the Crusades* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); J. F. Verbruggen, 'Women in Medieval Armies', in *Journal of Medieval Military History*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers, Kelly Devries, and John France, vol. 4, Volume IV (Boydell & Brewer, 2006), 119–36.

to care for the home, records exist which suggest some, across social classes, set out to join the journey.³⁹⁸ Aside from those classed as ‘prostitutes,’ women’s roles were limited; as such, they sometimes wore male clothing, despite risking anathema.³⁹⁹ Kostick also concludes that noble women did not often play independent roles within the crusades and that such a result was ‘hardly surprising’ given how infrequently aristocratic women independently wielded authority.⁴⁰⁰

These conclusions are drawn from contemporary accounts of women within the First Crusade. Anna Comnena’s 1140 recollection of the First Crusade writes ‘carrying palms and crosses on their shoulders; women and children, too, came away from their countries... such an upheaval of both men and women took place then as had never occurred within human memory.’⁴⁰¹ Similarly, in Albert of Aachen’s early twelfth-century *Hierosolymitanae expeditionis*, women appear to be present though their status is largely relegated to passive attendants whose presence was a liability to their protectors. His account explicitly compares the noble women who were kidnapped to ‘dumb animals’ who were ‘sent into perpetual exile into the land of Khurasan as if they were in a cage or prison.’⁴⁰² These sentiments, informed by the period’s gender stereotypes, are echoed in Robert of Rheims’ account⁴⁰³ as well as that of Fulcher of Chartres, who directly attributed the Franks’ inability to take Antioch to the women who were present.⁴⁰⁴

Natasha R. Hodgson’s work on women within the crusades tracks the status gained and lost within each stage of a woman’s life: as a daughter, wife, mother, and widow.⁴⁰⁵ She concludes that women were paradoxically considered as both inhibitors and enablers in the crusading effort.⁴⁰⁶ She highlights that, much like their medieval counterparts, eighteenth and nineteenth-century scholars excised women from the historic events of the crusades. This has led to the erasure of women from the discussion, an error from which the discipline is still

³⁹⁸ Conor Kostick, ‘Women and the First Crusade: Prostitutes or Pilgrims?’, in *The Social Structure of the First Crusade* (Brill, 2008), 273.

³⁹⁹ Kostick, 283–4.

⁴⁰⁰ Kostick, 277.

⁴⁰¹ Anna Comnena and Elizabeth A. S. Dawes, *The Alexiad of the Princess Anna Comnena* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), 249–50.

⁴⁰² Albert of Aachen and Susan Edgington, *Albert of Aachen’s History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, Crusade Texts in Translation 24, 25 (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), Book 8, Chapters 19–20.

⁴⁰³ Robert the Monk and Carol Sweetenham, *Robert the Monk’s History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana*, Crusade Texts in Translation 11 (Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), Book 3, Chapters 10–1.

⁴⁰⁴ Edward Peters, ed., *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials*, 2nd ed, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), Book I, Chapter 15, 72.

⁴⁰⁵ Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative*, 236.

⁴⁰⁶ Hodgson, 237.

recovering.⁴⁰⁷ Hodgson refers to the case of Eleanor of Aquitaine who joined the Second Crusade with her husband Louis VII and is considered one of the most high-profile cases of a noblewoman who took the cross. Even then, Hodgson reminds us, this attention mostly surrounded Eleanor's perceived role in the failure of the journey.⁴⁰⁸

It seems that though women were present in numbers unable to be ignored by the overwhelmingly male chroniclers, their roles were often defined in relation to the men they followed. At best, women were largely uninvolved and could provide impetus for the men to take on protective roles; at worst, women acted as sinful distractions who were killed, raped, or kidnapped as a result of their presence amongst the crusading men and caused them to fail. If Urban II declared unaccompanied women to be more burdensome than advantageous in his 1095 speech at Clermont,⁴⁰⁹ how does Matilda fit into Gregory's 1074 plan? It is clear that Gregory intended Matilda to accompany him and to supply a large number of troops. I will argue that, instead of leading her military forces, Gregory had an alternative role in mind for her which centred around alternative expressions of piety, particularly pilgrimage, which would have provided an existing model for participants such as Gregory and Matilda to journey beside the armed men who sought to cleanse the Holy Land.

3.2.2 *Crusading as a Form of Armed Pilgrimage*

While Urban undoubtedly drew upon the foundations set by Gregory, he took what Cowdrey terms a 'novel step' and associated his own summons with a pilgrimage so that participants could still reap the benefits associated with such a journey.⁴¹⁰ In a 1096 letter, Urban writes that the church would offer the whole remittance of their sins in exchange for making a journey to Jerusalem, offering the same benefits as a pilgrimage—though now they would do so armed.⁴¹¹ Urban did not mean to replace pilgrimage; rather, his call to arms represented a modification of existing pilgrimage practices. This is evident in the way the two activities were described by contemporaries. Léan Ní Chléirigh notes that both armed and unarmed participants were described as *peregrini* which had been largely used previously to describe

⁴⁰⁷ Hodgson, 242–5.

⁴⁰⁸ Hodgson, 244.

⁴⁰⁹ Robert the Monk and Sweetenham, *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana*, 223.

⁴¹⁰ Cowdrey, 'Pope Urban II's Preaching of the First Crusade', 178–82.

⁴¹¹ Cowdrey, 187.

pilgrimage-like journeys.⁴¹² Chléirigh notes that crusades had much in common with pilgrimages in format: a predeparture vow, the consideration of penance for the successful completion, and the protection of property and position by canon law for both pilgrims and crusaders. In an analysis of the contemporary Latin texts being produced during the First Crusade, Chléirigh concludes that eleventh and twelfth century authors did not assume that bearing arms would contradict the state of being a *peregrinus*, and that often, these same authors described crusaders not as a new, distinct group but rather, as part of a larger, older group: pilgrims.⁴¹³ This analysis also suggests that the crusaders modelled their behaviour after the pilgrims, partaking in fasts and prayers similar to those of their non-militant counterparts. Chléirigh's analysis further indicates that the term *peregrini* was used collectively to refer to entire crusading forces, and that the majority of Latin narratives of the First Crusade referred to crusaders as *peregrini* and their crusade as a *peregrinatio*.⁴¹⁴

Marcus Bull remarks that the salvific economy associated with the Crusades was not simply a scholarly contrivance but reflected a shift into novel territory.⁴¹⁵ Urban had artfully inserted violence and physical strength into the existing concept of pilgrimage to encourage potential participants, as the voluntary nature of the crusades meant people could not be obliged to participate. Bull suggests that though there is scant evidence to suggest how the laity were persuaded, Urban may have leveraged the sin-absolving properties of penance to make the task more appealing.⁴¹⁶ It seems then that the First Crusade was an advanced form of pilgrimage. This new form utilized the same rites and vows as before but also added the new goal of physically defending the church which itself brought new spiritual advantages.⁴¹⁷

Gregory's 1074 letter to Matilda and his broader requests of Catholic Christendom appear to pre-empt this. While Gregory does refer to the military nature of the intended journey ('Credo enim multos milites in tali labore nobis fauere,'⁴¹⁸ 'militare,'⁴¹⁹ and 'pugnandum'⁴²⁰),

⁴¹² Léan Ní Chléirigh, 'Nova Peregrinatio: The First Crusade as a Pilgrimage in Contemporary Latin Narratives', in *Writing the Early Crusades*, ed. Marcus Bull and Damien Kempf, NED-New edition, Text, Transmission and Memory (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2014), 68.

⁴¹³ Chléirigh, 64–5.

⁴¹⁴ Chléirigh, 68.

⁴¹⁵ Marcus G. Bull, 'The Roots of Lay Enthusiasm for the First Crusade', *History* 78, no. 254 (1993): 353–4.

⁴¹⁶ Bull, 364.

⁴¹⁷ M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, 'From Pilgrimage to Crusade: The Liturgy of Departure, 1095–1300', *Speculum* 88, no. 1 (2013): 45–6.

⁴¹⁸ Gregory VII, *The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, nos. 5, 12–3. 'I believe that many knights support us in such a task.'

⁴¹⁹ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 2.37; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.37.

⁴²⁰ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 2.37; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 2.37. 'Itaque, fratres karissimi, estote ad pugnandum fortissimi pro laude illa et Gloria, que omne desiderium

he separates the aid of Matilda into a non-physical category of prayerful encouragement: ‘Proinde praedicta imperatrix causa orationis uenien [sic] multos ad hoc opus una tecum posset animare.’⁴²¹ Matilda is not described as a leader of the troops she might commit to the journey but instead as a spiritual leader who might inspire others to join. It is clear that this did not imply staying behind to enlist the support of others. Gregory specifically mentions that Beatrice, the mother of Matilda, would stay behind to safeguard their common interests and administer their lands: ‘...matre tua in partibus his relictis pro tuendis rebus communibus; quia sic sancte Christo iuuante possemus adire.’⁴²² Furthermore, Gregory tells Matilda of the virtue of dying in the service of the cross and requests her help in completing his planned voyage: ‘...si quid potes adhibere consilium immo creatori tuo adiutorium/ summopere procura, quia si pulchrum est, ut quidam dicunt, pro patria mori, pulcherrimum est ac ualde gloriosum carnem morticinam pro Christo dare, qui est aeterna uita.’⁴²³ Gregory’s choice of words suggests the dual nature of his request to Matilda; *consilium* (counsel) addressed her moral and intellectual support, while *adiutorium* (assist) spoke to the physical assistance she was expected to provide. It seems, then, that Gregory envisioned Matilda as a companion who journeyed alongside the armed *milites*, who would not herself engage in the physical defence but would still receive the spiritual benefits of the journey. We can therefore conclude that Gregory envisioned a role for Matilda similar to that of a pilgrim, and that Gregory conceived his plan to include both armed and unarmed participants.

3.2.3 *Virtual Pilgrimage, Virtual Crusade?*

In accepting that the crusades developed as a specialized form of pilgrimage—that is, weaponized or armed pilgrimage—we can begin to relate the crusades to other forms of pilgrimage, specifically non-mobile or mental pilgrimages which may have been articulated through acts of patronage. Through her support for reformist policies and her close involvement with Gregory’s failed 1074 call-to-arms, Matilda appears to have been a willing but ultimately

superant, qui hactenus fortes fuistis pugnare pro rebus, quas non potestis detinere nec sine dolore possidere.’ ‘Therefore, most beloved brothers, be strong to fight for that praise and glory which surpass all desire—you who hitherto have been strong to fight for things that you cannot keep or possess without sorrow.’

⁴²¹ Gregory VII, *The Epistolae Vagantes of Pope Gregory VII*, no. 5. ‘If, moreover, the empress came and devoted herself to prayer, she in concert with you [Matilda] might encourage many to take part in this work.’

⁴²² Gregory VII, no. 5. ‘Leaving your mother behind to safeguard our common interests here; for so, with Christ’s help, we might depart in safety.’

⁴²³ Gregory VII, no. 5. ‘Do all that you can to give your counsel, and still more your help, to your Creator; for some say that though it is a noble thing to die for your country, it is a far more noble and praiseworthy task to sacrifice our corruptible flesh for Christ, who is eternal life.’

unable participant. Is it possible, therefore, that Matilda commissioned objects and structures in order to virtually enact the journey, reaping the spiritual benefits, and spreading its ideals within her patrimony?

‘Virtual’ pilgrimage is often used to refer to a purely mental act of travelling in which a person envisages the process of visiting holy places. This mental exercise can be aided by a text, an object, or an architectural simulacrum meant to mimic the unreachable spaces one would, but is unable to, visit on a physical pilgrimage. Laura Gelfand’s redefinition of pilgrimage moves beyond the distinction between physical and virtual pilgrimages and differentiates the latter further into ‘performative’ and ‘imaginative’ virtual pilgrimages:

Performative pilgrimage describes physically engaged pilgrimage that does not involve travel to a particular destination...Imaginative pilgrimage involves a contemplative activity like reading a text that takes the devotee on an imagined tour of the Holy Land.⁴²⁴

Can this new schema be used to create further subcategories of crusading? Matilda and her acts of patronage constitute a unique lens through which this question can be explored. The remainder of this chapter will argue that Matilda articulated her support for the journey and unfulfilled desire to participate in the planned crusade in carefully targeted acts of patronage, notably San Lorenzo in Mantua.

3.3 San Lorenzo, Mantua: A Case Study

The Rotunda of San Lorenzo in Mantua (Figure 34) provides a case study to examine the intersection between Matilda, papal reform, the crusading movement, and virtual pilgrimage. As the church largely escaped early-modern alterations that befell many other contemporary structures, it still provides insight into Mantua in the eleventh century, long before the church was decommissioned and its sacraments transferred to Sant’Andrea in 1579.⁴²⁵ After the rotunda’s closure, little else is known until the church was ‘rediscovered’ in 1906, but local history suggests that, over the course of the intervening centuries, the building was obscured by shops and homes and used as a courtyard space, its domed roof having collapsed at some

⁴²⁴ Laura D. Gelfand, ‘Illusionism and Interactivity: Medieval Installation Art, Architecture and Devotional Response’, in *Push Me, Pull You*, ed. Sarah Blick and Laura Gelfand (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 88–9; Laura D. Gelfand, ‘Sense and Simulacra: Manipulation of the Senses in Medieval “Copies” of Jerusalem’, *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies* 3, no. 4 (December 2012): 407–22.

⁴²⁵ Arturo Calzona, “Gli affreschi dell’XI secolo alla Rotonda di Mantova,” in *Studi Di Storia Dell’arte Sul Medioevo e Il Rinascimento Nel Centenario Della Nascita Di Mario Salmi: Atti Del Convegno Internazionale, Arezzo-Firenze, 16-19 novembre 1989* (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 1992), 280.

point.⁴²⁶ The rotunda is significantly below the modern street level and enclosed by other buildings which were created during periods of urban growth and redevelopment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The current church is thought to have been constructed in 1083, the date recorded in a graffito within the church. This ‘1083’ inscription, incised into the brick partially behind the intonaco, was found by archaeologists when the church was rediscovered and reconstructed in 1906. The inscription is in Arabic numerals and does not appear to have been done by a skilled workman.⁴²⁷

Both Arturo Calzona and Ercolani Marani suggest the date was inscribed in a fifteenth-century hand as part of Alberti and the Gonzaga family’s refurbishment of nearby Sant’Andrea, though Alberti’s plan did not ultimately include San Lorenzo.⁴²⁸ Arabic numerals were not widely used in many parts of northern Italy until before the sixteenth century, unless the inscriber was someone educated in a university which began to teach the system in the late thirteenth century.⁴²⁹ An attractive alternative to Calzona and Marani’s theory might place the inscription closer to the building’s 1579 decommissioning, as the sixteenth century saw an increase in the widespread use of Arabic numeration. The inscription could have been done then to preserve the believed foundational date before the church was closed to the public.

However, as Arabic numeration increasingly became standard throughout Europe, it is equally possible that it was added later. Though the building was not in public use after its closure, it is possible the inscription was added by a member of the public whose residence or business abutted the forgotten rotunda. This means that the inscription could very well have been added at any point until its twentieth-century discovery. Though this inscription appears to solve the dating question for San Lorenzo, it may simply reflect a commonly held belief about the church’s foundation, rather than any truth about its origins.

⁴²⁶ ‘Scoperta della chiesa di S. Lorenzo Martire in Mantova’, *Bollettino d’Arte* III (March 1908): 118–9. This is the original announcement concerning the rediscovery of the church. It does not indicate who was responsible for identifying the church as S. Lorenzo, but it does describe the condition in which the church was found.

⁴²⁷ Luciano Bertinelli and Achille Truzzi, *La Rotonda Di S. Lorenzo in Mantova*, 2nd ed. (Mantua: Fraternalità Domenicana di Mantova, 1962), 7. An image of the inscription can be seen in Figure 2 of this text; it is surrounded by great deal of graffiti and is presently too difficult to photograph due to the condition of the plaster in which it is etched.

⁴²⁸ Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, 164; David S. Chambers, ‘Sant’Andrea at Mantua and Gonzaga Patronage 1460-1472’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 40 (1977): 99–103; Ercolano Marani, ‘Tre chiese di Sant’Andrea nella storia dello svolgimento urbanistico mantovano’, in *Il Sant’Andrea di Mantova e Leon Battista Alberti. Atti del Convegno di studi organizzato dalla città di Mantova con la collaborazione dell’Accademia Virgiliana nel quinto Centenario della basilica di Sant’Andrea e della morte dell’Alberti, 1472-1972, Mantova, 25-26 aprile 1972* (Mantua: Edizione della Biblioteca comunale di Mantova, 1974), 88–89.

⁴²⁹ Joseph Mazur, *Enlightening Symbols* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 56–57.

Nonetheless, the 1083 date also corresponds to the local tradition documented by Ippolito Donesmondi, a seventeenth-century historian who, in his compendium of Mantuan history, attributes the construction of San Lorenzo to Matilda.⁴³⁰ It is unclear whether the building was visible—it certainly was not in use but may have not yet been covered by other buildings—during Donesmondi’s lifetime, though contemporaneous maps suggest it was still a distinctive feature of the cityscape in his time (Figure 35). While the specific entry in Donesmondi’s text is undated, it occurs between the 1077 entry entitled ‘*Humiliatione grande dell’Imperatore*’ and the 1086 entry ‘*S. Anselmo [Anselm II of Lucca] muore.*’⁴³¹ These two events can be independently dated so the date of construction, according to Donesmondi, can be placed within that range of 1077-86. Though not evidence of the rotunda’s construction per se, it does suggest that by the seventeenth century, the accepted date ranged from the late 1070s to the mid-1080s.

Arthur Kingsley Porter, writing only a few years after the rediscovery and restoration of the rotunda in his landmark survey of Lombard Architecture, approximated the date of the rotunda to around 1115. Porter based this conclusion on the rotunda’s shared stylistic features—namely the masonry, shafts, and capitals—with S. Sofia of Padua which he dated to 1123 (Figures 36, 36a).⁴³² The stylistic comparison is bereft of any specific detail, and though both San Lorenzo and S. Sofia have thin engaged columns on the exterior, Lombard banding, and trapezoidal capitals, these features also occur in numerous other eleventh-century churches throughout Northern Italy.⁴³³ Ultimately, this style is not so specific to either building or locality that a direct link can be made regarding specific dates. Porter briefly mentions the rotunda’s attribution to the countess and closes his assessment by asserting that his dating was ‘not inconsistent’ with the long-standing tradition that attributes the rotunda to Matilda.⁴³⁴ Porter remains the only notable scholar to propose such a late construction date for San Lorenzo and his assessment has not been widely accepted by other scholars.

⁴³⁰ Ippolito Donesmondi, *Dell’istoria ecclesiastica di Mantova* (Mantua: Ludovico Osanna fratelli, Stampatori Ducali, 1616), book 4, 224–5.

⁴³¹ Donesmondi, bk. 4. These entries occur on pages 222 and 230, respectively.

⁴³² A. Kingsley Porter, *Lombard Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1917), vol. 2, 119–27.

⁴³³ These same features—the Lombard band and thin applied pilasters or columns—can be found on early eleventh-century buildings in Italy such as San Vittore alle Chiuse in Genga, Pieve di Santa Maria in Viguzzolo. These features are also common in the Lombard Romanesque of Northern Italy, appearing on San Michele Maggiore in Pavia, which dates from the late eleventh or early twelfth century. Instances of the trapezoidal columns appear in Italy as early as the tenth century as in the interior of the baptistery of San Vittore in Arsago Seprio where they feature in the gallery arcade.

⁴³⁴ A. Kingsley Porter, *Lombard Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1917), vol. 2, 512–4.

3.3.1 *Attributing San Lorenzo to Matilda*

Though documentation regarding the church is sparse and no record of it survives within Matilda's extant documents, she has long been associated with the church's eleventh-century construction. This association is also evident on the exterior of the church: above this entrance is a lintel inscribed 'Divo Laurentio Dicitum Anno Domini Cccxii.' Another door opposite the apse is surmounted by a lintel inscribed with 'Et Anno Mlxxxix a Matilde Canossa Refectum.' These lintels were added during the early twentieth-century reconstruction and reflect Matilda's place in local history at the turn of the twentieth century. This section will examine this local belief. Historical, architectural, pictorial, and sepulchral evidence will be used to further support Matilda's patronage, opening up new pathways regarding the building's stylistic and iconographic assessment.

Vito Fumagalli has written on the long-standing importance of Mantua to the Canossan dynasty, a relationship which materialized under her father Boniface and which Matilda continued.⁴³⁵ Fumagalli does not say specifically whether Matilda was responsible for San Lorenzo, though in a note he suggests that one should regard any certain attribution with caution.⁴³⁶ Calzona asserts Matilda's patronage of the San Lorenzo in Mantua by way of her close familial relationship to the city.⁴³⁷ He indicates that Boniface's marquisate palace was located within Mantua and that upon his death in 1052, he was buried in San Michele in Mantua.⁴³⁸ Accepting a foundation in the 1080s, Calzona points out that only Matilda had both the means and authority to sponsor the construction of San Lorenzo.⁴³⁹

In order to investigate the construction date of 1083, an examination of the events of this decade in relation to Matilda's ties to the city is necessary. In July 1079, Matilda made a donation to Mantua's cathedral of sixty-seven servants.⁴⁴⁰ In 1081, the imperial palace in Mantua was abandoned, suggesting that it is unlikely that Henry or any imperially-aligned faction was responsible for the construction of the rotunda.⁴⁴¹ The 1080s was the last decade of firm control that Matilda had over the city before its allegiance shifted to Henry IV in

⁴³⁵ Fumagalli, 'Mantova al tempo di Matilde di Canossa', 27–37; Fumagalli, 'Economia, Società e istituzioni nei secoli XI-XII nel territorio modenese', 43.

⁴³⁶ Fumagalli, 'Mantova al tempo di Matilde di Canossa', n. 75.

⁴³⁷ Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, 163–5.

⁴³⁸ Calzona, 164–9.

⁴³⁹ Calzona, 222–3.

⁴⁴⁰ Matilde, Elke Goetz, and Werner Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica 2 (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1998), no. 27: 100–3.

⁴⁴¹ Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, 195.

1091.⁴⁴² According to the diploma of Henry IV, 1081 was the beginning of the most antagonistic period between the emperor and the countess, lasting until 1084.⁴⁴³ In 1081, the Emperor deprived the countess of her title and properties and ventured down to Rome to oust Gregory, though he would not succeed in doing so until March 1084.⁴⁴⁴ In May 1083, Matilda donated seven plots of land to San Michele in Mantua where Boniface was buried, perhaps to commemorate her father who had spent much of his life shoring up his authority within the city.⁴⁴⁵ There is a four-year gap in her charters between 1084 and 1088; this gap may be the result of Matilda's fixation on Henry's occupation of Rome and the death of her trusted leader and advisor, Gregory VII.

Though Matilda had suffered serious military defeats during the early 1080s, Mantua was still consistently counted among her most faithful territories. After her crushing defeat at the Battle of Volta, David Hay suggests that Matilda's options were limited, and she would have probably taken refuge in one of her power bases within Mantua or in the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines.⁴⁴⁶ She continuously held the city until 1090 when, according to Hay, Henry's military campaigns refocused on Matilda herself and sought to deprive her of the city.⁴⁴⁷ Her increasingly fraught relationship with the city near the end of the decade is mirrored in her documents when they resume in 1088. The flurry of charters drawn up within the city include an agreement between Bishop Ubald and the countess, as well as an easing of tolls and relinquishment of public property to the city in 1090.⁴⁴⁸ In 1091, after Matilda's defeat at Tricontai, Henry IV took Mantua.⁴⁴⁹ In a display of superiority and probably as a direct jab at the countess herself, Henry spent both Christmas 1091 and Easter 1092 in the city.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴² Giuseppe Sissa, 'L'azione della Contessa Matilde in Mantova e nel suo contado', in *Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963* (Studi Matildici; atti e memoire del convegno di studi matildici. Modena e Reggio Emilia. 19, 20, 21, ottobre, 1963, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1964), 147–55.

⁴⁴³ Robinson, *Henry IV of Germany, 1056-1106*, 215–7. Robinson thoroughly deconstructs the movements of the Emperor through his documentation. I have distilled his findings into general trends, but for a more complete account of this period, see chapter six of the aforementioned text, entitled 'The Second Italian Expedition, 1081-1084', 211–35.

⁴⁴⁴ Henry IV, 'Die Urkunden Heinrichs IV', Nos. 332, 334, 338–9, 345, 356, 359.

⁴⁴⁵ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Toszien*, no. 36: 124–8; Dorothy F. Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130: History and Patronage of Romanesque Façades* (Farnham Surrey: Ashgate, 2017), 42.

⁴⁴⁶ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 87.

⁴⁴⁷ Hay, 128–31.

⁴⁴⁸ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Toszien*, nos. 40–3: 133–41.

⁴⁴⁹ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 128–31; David Hay, 'Silensis and Aferesis in the Vita Mathildis: How Donizo's Marginalia Explain the Battle of Tricontai (1091/1092)', *Storicamente* 13 (2017).

⁴⁵⁰ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 133.

The souring of their relationship is documented by Donizo in the *Vita Mathildis*. The author devotes an entire chapter to the city's betrayal when the citizens accepted the privileges offered by the emperor to entice the citizens to switch allegiance away from the countess in 1091.⁴⁵¹ Donizo's intense and lengthy rejection of Mantua indicates Matilda's deep connection to the city which he must have felt compelled to weaken. The author then describes how the city returned to Matilda's side only to rebel again upon the false news of her death in 1114.⁴⁵²

Furthermore, the dedication of the church may hold a clue to Matilda's involvement. The name 'Laurentius' derives from *lauream tenens*, or the holder of a laurel wreath. It is the name of a victor, appropriate for a martyr-saint who was lauded for his persistent faith against a tyrannical, anti-Christian emperor.⁴⁵³ The thirteenth-century hagiographical compendium *Legenda Aurea* indicates that Saint Lawrence was entrusted by Emperor Marcus Julius Philippus and Pope Sixtus II to protect key Christian texts and distribute the emperor's treasure to the churches and poor of Rome as alms. Lawrence kept the Christian texts safe and distributed the treasures to the poor in order to keep them from the heretical emperor. Philippus, depicted as sympathetic to Christianity, was usurped by Decius, a strident pagan. Decius is framed in *Legenda Aurea* as an explicitly anti-Christian and anti-papal force responsible for the deaths of numerous popes.⁴⁵⁴ When Decius demanded that Lawrence present the material wealth of the church, he instead presented the poor, indigent, and unwell as proof of the true treasure of the church; as punishment, Decius ordered Lawrence to be set over a gridiron to be burned alive. While the *Legenda* was compiled considerably later than the eleventh century, its hagiography is still useful because it cited popular accounts and patristic texts from earlier periods. Furthermore, Lawrence is buried in the Basilica di San Lorenzo fuori le mura in Rome, creating a direct spiritual link to Rome and the papacy.

The dedication to Lawrence invokes two things: one, his steadfast faith against an unyielding imperial and ungodly force, and two, the protection of the church's precious items,

⁴⁵¹ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, Chapter 5.

⁴⁵² Donizo, Book 2, Chapter 19; Riversi, 'Matilda and the Cities'; Robert Houghton, 'Italian Bishops and Warfare during the Investiture Contest: The Case of Parma', in *Between Sword and Prayer: Warfare and Medieval Clergy in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Radosław Kotecki, Jacek Maciejewski, and John S. Ott, Explorations in Medieval Culture, volume 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 274–302.

⁴⁵³ Lucy Grig, *Making Martyrs in Late Antiquity* (London: Duckworth, 2004), 136–41; David Hugh Farmer, 'Laurence', in *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Michael Lapidge, *The Roman Martyrs: Introduction, Translations, and Commentary*, First edition, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 316–47.

⁴⁵⁴ William Granger Ryan and Eamon Duffy, 'Saint Lawrence, Martyr', in *The Golden Legend*, Readings on the Saints (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 449–60. It is worth noting that the author of the *Legenda* has some confusion regarding dates and names of emperors. Decius was not the emperor responsible for martyring Lawrence, Sixtus, and Stephen, but Valerian. Furthermore, there is no substantial evidence that Philippus was actually friendly towards Christianity.

again from an anti-papal force who sought the destruction of the Church. Such a dedication, particularly in the aftermath of the 1077 meeting between Henry and Gregory, may have been intentionally chosen to demonstrate opposition to the *regnum*. As such, the dedication could have usefully reflected Matilda's own protection of the church. She had, after all, engaged in similar behaviour to that of Lawrence. In 1082, Matilda asked the abbot Gerard of Canossa for the monastery's treasures to be melted down and given to the pope for the defence of the church.⁴⁵⁵ Similarly, shortly after Matilda's 1083 seizure of the abbey of Nonantola from the forces of Henry IV, Matilda had the treasury melted down to pay for defensive action of the church on behalf of Gregory VII.⁴⁵⁶ In both instances, Matilda not only worked to produce funding for the church's defence, but in doing so, prevented the treasures from being seized and misused by imperial forces. Thus, while we do not have a document that confirms Matilda's involvement, these connections to the city indicate that Matilda not only had the means and the motive to commission ecclesiastical monuments in the city, but that, in 1083—the date recorded within the building itself—she would also have had the opportunity to do so.

3.3.2 *The Building*

To understand the potential role of San Lorenzo within Matilda's patronage, a thorough description of the building is necessary. San Lorenzo is a centrally-planned rotunda made of brick (Figure 37) which has its main entrance and an apse located along an east-west axis. The rotunda is a two-storey building with an internal diameter of 14.3 meters. The interior space rises about 13.50 metres from the original floor. The central diameter, excluding the ambulatory, is approximately 7 metres. A brick Lombard-style blind arcade, surmounted by a sawtooth patterned band, runs around the building directly below the roofline. On the lower level, every four arches of the blind arcade correspond to an engaged colonette. Each colonette has a simple squared base, their shafts rising from the ground to the Lombard band, with miniature trapezoidal capitals, similar to the interior capitals. There are no engaged colonettes on the upper level of the rotunda, though the same Lombard band and sawtooth motif are repeated below the roofline. The irregular placement of seven windows on the ground floor is probably due to the inclusion of two staircases on either side of the entrance which provide

⁴⁵⁵ Katherine L. Jansen, Joanna Drell, and Frances Andrews, eds., *Medieval Italy: Texts in Translation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 272–3; Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130*, 32–3.

⁴⁵⁶ Quintavalle, 'Matilda and the Cities of the Gregorian Reform', 79–80.

access to the gallery. In the drum of the dome, there are five, evenly-spaced windows which illuminated internal frescoes.

The ground floor features an arrangement of ten columns which support the upper gallery on a series of stilted round arches. Eight of these columns are wholly made of brick, with slightly truncated cubic capitals and plain bases, though it is unclear which of these were restored in the early twentieth century. In front of the apse, there are two unmatched columns (Figure 38), probably spolia from an unknown Roman source. Facing the apse, the right-hand column is made of granite with a trapezoidal capital (Figure 39); it has a diameter of 52 centimetres. The column on the left-hand side (Figure 40) is of marble and has a diameter of 47 centimetres; it has a smooth surface apart from the upper third which is fluted. This column, like the brick columns inside the Rotunda, has a trapezoidal capital. The column appears to have been left unfinished, though it is clear from surface incisions that the fluting was meant to continue the length of the column. The gallery has been commonly referred to as a *matroneum* and is situated approximately 6 metres above the ground floor. It is unclear why this gallery has been termed a ‘*matroneum*’ as there is nothing inside the remaining structure to suggest it was dedicated to that use. The term first appears in the status report published in 1908 and may have been prompted by the historic link to Matilda. There are ten columns in the gallery which directly correspond to those on the ground floor. According to the 1908 report, some of columns of the upper gallery were missing and subsequently replaced.⁴⁵⁷ They are smaller in size than their counterparts below, but otherwise identical in shape (Figure 41).

A small but potentially meaningful aspect of the interior decoration of the rotunda are the two terracotta tiles embedded in the wall separating the ground floor arcade and the gallery (Figures 42, 43). There is no evidence to suggest these tiles are remnants of a lost tiled surface, but rather they appear to be fragments which were incorporated into the brickwork, subsequently covered by intonaco and fresco. The tiles are uniform in design: two griffins in heraldic poses flanking an ampoule.⁴⁵⁸ Marzio Dall’Acqua, in the only detailed study of the tiles at San Lorenzo, dates them to the late tenth to early eleventh century on the basis of iconography and style linked to coeval terracotta, and suggests they may have been intended to serve as guardian figures.⁴⁵⁹ Calzona believes the tiles relate specifically to the relic of the

⁴⁵⁷ “Scoperta della Chiesa di S. Lorenzo Martire in Mantova,” *Bollettino d’Arte* III (March 1908): 118–9.

⁴⁵⁸ Massimo de Paoli, ‘Rotonda di S. Lorenzo a Mantova. Rapporto tra apparato pittorico e membratura architettonica’, in *Rotonde d’Italia: analisi tipologica della pianta centrale*, ed. Valentino Volta, 1st ed., 795 (Milan: Jaca Book, 2008), 67–9.

⁴⁵⁹ Marzio Dall’Acqua, ‘Terrecotte medievali della rotonda di San Lorenzo in Mantova’, *Civiltà mantovana*, no. 18 (1968): 351–5.

Holy Blood which is stored at the nearby church of Sant'Andrea.⁴⁶⁰ He discards Dall'Acqua's stylistic assessment and dates them to an earlier period, contemporary with fragments excavated in Brescia that have been dated to the eighth or ninth century. Accordingly, Calzona believes the fragments could have come from an earlier incarnation of Sant'Andrea, originally constructed in the ninth century to protect the then-newly acquired blood relic. Calzona suggests these fragments were incorporated into San Lorenzo to glorify the relic of the Holy Blood, considered a treasure within Mantua.⁴⁶¹ If indeed deriving from an earlier version of Sant'Andrea, these fragments indicate a strong relationship between the two churches.

3.3.3 *The Frescoes*

Though highly damaged—no doubt due to the near four centuries of neglect—the interior of San Lorenzo has remnants of several fresco cycles; these are present on the vaults of the ground floor ambulatory, as well as on the surface of the wall between the ground floor and upper gallery. They have predominantly been dated on stylistic grounds to the eleventh or twelfth century, roughly contemporary with the building.⁴⁶² The surviving, identifiable fragments in this area which date from this period include: Christ the Judge, Adoration of the Magi, Meeting with Herod, Resurrection of Christ, Massacre of the Innocents, and Saint Joseph Visited by an Angel.⁴⁶³ The best preserved of these frescoes is the Adoration scene, though it too has suffered great paint loss (Figure 44). This area also features the 'Martyrdom of San Lorenzo,' which has been dated later on stylistic grounds and is contemporaneous with another fresco of the saint behind the altar. It is possible that the martyrdom scene was painted over an eleventh-century depiction of the saint.⁴⁶⁴ Calzona notes that the sequence of these frescoes is unusual: rather than circumnavigating the interior space as is typical for central-plan buildings, the frescoes move outward from the apse in a manner more common in basilicas.⁴⁶⁵ Rather than a

⁴⁶⁰ Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, 204.

⁴⁶¹ Calzona, 204.

⁴⁶² Massimo de Paoli, "Rotonda di S. Lorenzo a Mantova. Rapporto tra apparato pittorico e membratura architettonica," in *Rotonde d'Italia: analisi tipologica della pianta centrale*, ed. Valentino Volta, 1st ed., 795 (Milan: Jaca Book, 2008), 70.

⁴⁶³ Calzona, 'Gli affreschi dell'XI secolo', 282.

⁴⁶⁴ de Paoli, 'Rotonda di S. Lorenzo a Mantova. Rapporto tra apparato pittorico e membratura architettonica', 67–69. Due to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, travelling to photograph these fragments was made impossible.

⁴⁶⁵ Calzona, 'Gli affreschi dell'XI secolo', 282–4; Giannino Giovannoni, 'Interpretazione iconografica degli affreschi della Rotonda di S. Lorenzo a Mantova', in *Sant'Anselmo, Mantova e la lotta per le Investiture: convegno internazionale di studi (Mantova, 23-24-25 maggio 1986)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli (Bologna: Patron Editore, 1987), 130–3; Photographing these frescoes is incredibly difficult, given their position and poor condition. Arturo Calzona has a useful index of black and white photographs in his text *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, figs 253–68.

prescribed line of sight moving either clockwise or anticlockwise, the viewer is free to view different narratives in either direction.

There are also remnants of frescoes on the vaults of the ground floor ambulatory (Figures 45-47) which Giannino Giovannoni relates to scenes from the apocalypse, a point with which Calzona agrees.⁴⁶⁶ Both scholars agree that these frescoes are probably also contemporary with the building and that they were executed by at least three different hands.⁴⁶⁷ Of the two best surviving frescoes, one depicts a scene of six angels holding globes and palm fronds (Figure 45) which Giovannoni relates to figures entrusted to guard Eden.⁴⁶⁸ The other fresco similarly depicts four figures, potentially the four Evangelists, surrounding a central object (Figures 46, 47). Giovannoni deliberates on whether the object is a dove or a chalice but concludes that the object was meant to recall a chalice with the holy blood, perhaps adorned with a single host.⁴⁶⁹

One element appears to unite the various fresco cycles: painted depictions of architectural elements and the simulation of three-dimensional space. The painted space can best be seen in the Adoration fresco (Figure 44) which shows the figures beneath a fictive arcade—with columns partially aligned with those of San Lorenzo, seemingly creating a space between the two levels where the narrative action happens. Conversely, this illusionistic technique can serve to integrate the physical elements of San Lorenzo into the fresco scenes. This is enhanced by the similarity between the columns in the frescoes and those in the upper gallery which are made of brick but painted in dark and light grey, as well as with diagonal stripes, to resemble marble (Figure 48). Additionally, each column's capital is painted with a foliate design resembling a Corinthian capital (Figure 49). Other illusionistic elements can be seen on the voussoirs of the gallery arches, as well as in rosettes which are painted on the underside of the arcade arches (Figures 48-50).

By obscuring the line between the real and depicted—that is, the surface of the architecture and that which is depicted upon its surface—the viewer is invited to imagine themselves as witnesses to the narrative scenes framed by these painted architectural features. The columns are transformed from ordinary brick with trapezoidal capitals to elegant marble columns of varying tones with richly carved Corinthian capitals. The painted scene invites the

⁴⁶⁶ Giovannoni, 'Interpretazione iconografica degli affreschi', 130–31; Calzona, 'Gli affreschi dell'XI secolo', 282.

⁴⁶⁷ Giovannoni, 'Interpretazione iconografica degli affreschi', 129–33; Calzona, 'Gli affreschi dell'XI secolo', 285–6.

⁴⁶⁸ Giovannoni, 'Interpretazione iconografica degli affreschi', 131.

⁴⁶⁹ Giovannoni, 131–2.

viewer to become a physical witness: where the viewer merely sees the scene, the witness is present inside the scene, drawn into the illusion.

The two fresco cycles suggest two things: first, while the Adoration of the Magi is a fairly standard scene in ecclesiastical art, the image shows the submission of earthly kings. The use of the Adoration imagery here may speak to anti-imperial sentiments by showing the humility of a king in the presence of God. The appearance of such a scene within a city then allied with Matilda and the Papacy suggests the scene may have been used for its undertones of royal submission.⁴⁷⁰ The frescoes also suggest there was at least partial concern for issues of salvation, particularly given the image of what has been interpreted as a chalice. Revelations makes it clear that in order to be redeemed and made worthy for heaven, one must accept the Blood of Christ:

Et a Jesu Christo, qui est testis fidelis, primogenitus mortuorum, et princeps regum terrae, qui dilexit nos, et lavit nos a peccatis nostris in sanguine suo, / et fecit nos regnum, et sacerdotes Deo et Patri suo: ipsi gloria et imperium in saecula saeculorum.⁴⁷¹

In 1079, Gregory VII held a synod regarding the Eucharist to admonish Berengar of Tours who had expressed doubt regarding Christ's presence in the Eucharist. During this council, Gregory affirmed that the Eucharist was being converted into the Lord's body and blood:

Maxima siquidem pars panem et vinum per sacre orationis verba et sacerdotis consecrationem Spiritu sancto invisibiliter operante converti substantialiter Spiritu sancto invisibiliter operante converti substantialiter in corpus Dominicum de virgine natum, quod et in cruce pependit, et in sanguinem, qui de eius latere militis effusus est lancea.⁴⁷²

At the synod, Berengar had to re-swear an oath to the Church which included a denunciation of Henry IV and indicated many of the council members wished to 'unsheathe the apostolic sword against his [Henry's] tyranny.'⁴⁷³ Thus, the council explicitly tied the acceptance of Christ's presence in the Eucharist to the rejection of the *regnum*. This may suggest that the chalice image within San Lorenzo is also an anti-imperial sign, painted in the aftermath of the

⁴⁷⁰ Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, 215.

⁴⁷¹ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Apocalypse 1: 5–6. 'And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.'

⁴⁷² Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 6.17a; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 6.17a. 'The Holy Spirit invisibly working, the bread and wine are substantially converted into the Lord's body, born of a virgin, which also hung upon the cross, and into the blood which flowed from his side through the soldier's lance.'

⁴⁷³ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 6.17a; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 6.17a. '...illius tyrannidem gladium apostolicum debere evaginari.'

dispute. Furthermore, an image of Christ's blood would have been amplified by the holy blood relic in Mantua, barely one-hundred feet from the rotunda. As such, San Lorenzo may have been conceptualized as part of the experience of Sant'Andrea.

3.3.4 *Blood & Bones: Relics in Eleventh-century Mantua*

The interplay between the Holy Blood and Longinus, and Sant'Andrea and San Lorenzo is crucial in unpacking the significance of the rotunda to Matilda and its connection to Jerusalem. The Holy Blood relic was reportedly procured by a Roman soldier later referred to as Longinus at the Crucifixion and brought back to Mantua shortly before he was martyred in the first century.⁴⁷⁴ Longinus is named in John 19:33-34 when he pierces the side of Christ and acquired the blood: 'Ad Jesum autem cum venissent, ut viderunt eum jam mortuum, non fregerunt ejus crura, / sed unus militum lancea latus ejus aperuit, et continuo exivit sanguis et aqua.'⁴⁷⁵ According to the early ninth-century account of the *Annales Regni Francorum*, the relic of the Holy Blood was first discovered in Mantua in 804 and recognized as legitimate by Charlemagne, who had the relic verified by Pope Leo III.⁴⁷⁶ Skeletal remains, presumed to be those of Longinus, were recovered in Mantua shortly afterwards. After being apportioned to both Charlemagne and the Pope, the blood was reburied to avoid confiscation by invading forces in the 830s. The blood relic was (re)discovered in Mantua in 1048; it was officially recognized by Pope Leo IX in 1053 in the presence of Henry III, to whom it was again apportioned. The remaining blood was kept at Sant'Andrea.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁴ Rose Jeffries Peebles, *The Legend of Longinus in Ecclesiastical Tradition and in English Literature, and Its Connection with the Grail* (Bryn Mawr: Bryn Mawr College; J. H. Furst, 1911); Luciana Rodighiero Astolfi, 'The History and Tradition of the Precious Blood of Christ in Mantua', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 17, no. 4 (October 2017): 224–7; Roberto Capuzzo, *Sanguis Domini Mantuae: le inventiones del prezioso Sangue di Cristo nella costruzione dell'imperium Christianum e dell'identità civica di Mantova*, Biblioteca della Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa. Studi 21 (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2009); Roberto Capuzzo, 'The Precious Blood of Christ: Faith, Rituals and Civic and Religious Meaning during the Centuries of Mantuan Devotion', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 17, no. 4 (October 2017): 228–45.

⁴⁷⁵ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Ioannes 19: 32–4. 'But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.'

⁴⁷⁶ Frederick Kurze, ed., 'Annales Regni Francorum Inde a 741 Usque Ad 829, Qui Dicuntur Annales Laurissenses Maiores et Einhardi', *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum Separatim Editi* 6 (Hanover: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1895), 192.

⁴⁷⁷ Kathryn Blair Moore, *The Architecture of the Christian Holy Land: Reception from Late Antiquity through the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 103–4; Nicholas Vincent, *The Holy Blood: King Henry III and the Westminster Blood Relic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 54–64; Richard W. Barber, *The Holy Grail: Imagination and Belief* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 128; Joe Nickell, *Relics of the Christ* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 168–9.

In 1056, Henry III gave the blood relic to Count Baldwin V of Flanders, to resolve a power dispute. Upon Baldwin's death in 1067, the relic passed to Judith of Flanders. In 1071, Judith married Welf IV and in the next year, Welf V was born. In the late 1080s, when Welf V was sixteen or seventeen, he was wed to Matilda of Canossa, then in her forties. In 1094, Judith and Welf IV made a sizeable donation which included the blood relic to the imperial monastery at Weingarten.⁴⁷⁸ Further complicating this web of connections, the relic's rediscovery has also been tied to Matilda's parents, Boniface, and Beatrice. In the early seventeenth century, the historian Donesmondi suggested the Confraternity of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, a company designed to venerate and protect the blood relic, could have been founded as early as the eleventh century during Boniface's and Beatrice's rule of Mantua.⁴⁷⁹ Thus, coinciding with the intensification of the Investiture Controversy, these two blood relics were twinned: one belonging to the papally-aligned Mantua, and one to the imperial monastery at Weingarten.

During this same period, San Lorenzo may have held the bones of Longinus, possibly associated with an altar dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre itself.⁴⁸⁰ The bones were found soon after the ninth-century discovery of the blood relic and were quickly assumed to be those of Longinus himself. Indeed the exact location of Longinus' bones during this time period are unknown, but contemporary documentation reveals that eleventh and twelfth-century Mantuans believed they held the corporeal remains of Longinus. In his thorough study of the holy blood *inventions* of 804 and 1048, Roberto Capuzzo notes that a 1135 document notes that the body of Longinus had long-existed in Mantua. Capuzzo is noncommittal to the location of the relics, suggesting that they could have existed in the same crypt as the holy blood.⁴⁸¹

Where Sant'Andrea's blood relic may have been the star of Mantua's spiritual programme, San Lorenzo's display of Longinus' remains would have played a key role in emphasizing Mantua's blood relic over those elsewhere. If stored at San Lorenzo, the bones of Longinus would have served to amplify the blood relic in Mantua by displaying the saint who had originally acquired the sample from the body of Christ himself, adding prestige to Mantua's relic holding. By housing the bones within the architectural complex, possibly at San Lorenzo,

⁴⁷⁸ Donesmondi, *Dell'istoria ecclesiastica di Mantova*, vol. 2. bk 6. p 18.

⁴⁷⁹ Donesmondi, vol. 2. bk 6. p 18. 'In honore di cui fu fino al tempo del sodetto Pontefice istituita una compagnia di secolari, conordini particolari, alla quale furono concesse molte Indulgenze: se bene vogliono altri ch'ella avesse principio fino al tempo di Bonifacio, e Beatrice, per opera d'alcuni ciechi, che miracolosamente all'ora riebbero la vista.'

⁴⁸⁰ Marani, 'Tre chiese di Sant'Andrea nella storia dello svolgimento urbanistico mantovano', 87–89; Moore, *The Architecture of the Christian Holy Land*, 103. Marani bases this assessment on a sixteenth century account, though it is unclear whether this altar was dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre in the eleventh century.

⁴⁸¹ Capuzzo, *Sanguis Domini Mantuae*, 119.

viewers would be reminded of the city's role in the saint's life and that the Mantuan blood came directly from the source, creating an irrefutable provenance. This arrangement of relics and buildings may have been related to a larger spiritual arrangement in order to re-enact the holy landscape of Jerusalem.

Marani has suggested that the inspiration for the Matildine construction of San Lorenzo was the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The blood relic was rediscovered in Mantua in the very same year that Constantine IX Monomachus (r. 1042-55) finished rebuilding the Holy Sepulchre after it was nearly destroyed earlier in the eleventh century.⁴⁸² Perhaps then, the reconstruction of San Lorenzo was tied to an invocation of Jerusalem. This recreation would have been activated when pilgrims made their way from San Lorenzo to Sant'Andrea's blood relic and, it would have induced the same types of religious and emotional outcomes as physical pilgrimage to the holy city itself.⁴⁸³

According to Marani, the (re)discovery of the blood relic in Mantua may have spurred the creation of a series of interconnected buildings. These smaller churches—San Lorenzo, Sant'Ambrogio, San Salvatore—acted as satellites and likely owed their foundations to Sant'Andrea.⁴⁸⁴ Little is known about Sant'Ambrogio and San Salvatore's individual roles or significance within this complex due to their destruction. Marani suggests these buildings were not made to fit the usual functions of community spiritual service. He elaborates that the complex of buildings, created to highlight the precious blood relic at Sant'Andrea, purposefully invoked antique sepulchral forms such as the rotunda for meditative purposes and to appeal to the rise of pilgrims in the area.⁴⁸⁵ Kathryn Blair Moore expands on this idea: when experienced by the pilgrim, this arrangement of buildings was meant to evoke the same type of devotional and emotional response as physically visiting Jerusalem.⁴⁸⁶ Moore attributes the obscurity of this connection to the destruction of the complex, sparing only San Lorenzo (itself obscured for centuries) and Sant'Andrea.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸² Marani, 'Tre chiese di Sant'Andrea nella storia dello svolgimento urbanistico mantovano', 88; Robert Ousterhout, 'Rebuilding the Temple: Constantine Monomachus and the Holy Sepulchre', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 48, no. 1 (1989): 68–70; Robert G. Ousterhout, 'The Temple, the Sepulchre, and the Martyrion of the Savior', *Gesta* 29, no. 1 (1990): 44; Robert G. Ousterhout, "'Sweetly Refreshed in Imagination": Remembering Jerusalem in Words and Images', *Gesta* 48, no. 2 (2009): 162; Denys Pringle, 'The Crusader Church of the Holy Sepulchre', in *Tomb and Temple: Re-Imagining the Sacred Buildings of Jerusalem*, ed. Robin Griffith-Jones and Eric Fernie, Boydell Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018), 79–84.

⁴⁸³ Marani, 'Tre chiese di Sant'Andrea nella storia dello svolgimento urbanistico mantovano', 88.

⁴⁸⁴ Marani, 87.

⁴⁸⁵ Marani, 88–9.

⁴⁸⁶ Moore, *The Architecture of the Christian Holy Land*, 103.

⁴⁸⁷ Moore, 103.

In this arrangement, the churches were placed along the main road to Sant'Andrea (Figure 51). Though Moore and Marani have used a late sixteenth or early seventeenth-century map of Mantua by Gabriele Bertazzolo (Figure 52), the complex which Moore has described can be better understood in an earlier map of the city, from a larger topographic map of Veronese territory circa 1437-1439 (Figure 53).⁴⁸⁸ As an inset to the larger map, it gives a simplified view of Mantua and depicts only the most prominent roads and buildings, such as the Palazzo Ducale, Castello di San Giorgio, and the Cathedral of San Pietro. While Sant'Andrea and San Lorenzo are clearly identifiable—San Lorenzo is drawn as a round church east of the centrally located Sant'Andrea—I have estimated the locations of both Sant'Ambrogio and San Salvatore using their positions on the Bertazzolo map. It appears that the buildings given distinction must have been notable parts of the fabric of the city. To show these four churches in relation to the main routes through Mantua suggests they were important buildings. Individually the lesser churches may not have been significant but were important collectively. This may indicate, as Marani and Moore have suggested, that these buildings were part of an architectural complex constructed to promote the veneration of relics and emulate pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The inclusion of this relic-oriented architectural complex indicates that the complex was recognizable into the fifteenth century. This earlier map of Mantua also preserves a crucial detail regarding this architectural arrangement that is obscured in the Bertazzolo map. Sant'Andrea and San Lorenzo marked the city's most traversed space.⁴⁸⁹ In the earlier map, this centrality is unmistakable: all major routes into the city led to Sant'Andrea and San Lorenzo, a configuration that persists today.

3.3.5 *The Rotunda and The Holy Sepulchre*

It is impossible to discuss centrally planned churches like San Lorenzo and their relation to the Holy Sepulchre without mentioning Richard Krautheimer's foundational discussion of an iconography of medieval architecture.⁴⁹⁰ It is worth noting that Krautheimer does not view the mimetic relationship between European buildings and the Holy Sepulchre as a direct one, but rather as a 'network of reciprocal half-distinct connotations.'⁴⁹¹ He speaks of the symbolic

⁴⁸⁸ For an image of the larger map of Verona, refer to Robert Tavernor, *On Alberti and the Art of Building* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 126.

⁴⁸⁹ Tavernor, 143–5.

⁴⁹⁰ Richard Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an "Iconography of Mediaeval Architecture"', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 1–33; Catherine McCurrach, "'Renovatio' Reconsidered: Richard Krautheimer and the Iconography of Architecture', *Gesta* 50, no. 1 (2011): 41–69.

⁴⁹¹ Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an "Iconography of Mediaeval Architecture"', 9.

importance of numbers and repetition in architectural copies, referencing Christian numerology. Krautheimer briefly mentions San Lorenzo, but only as an aside when discussing the ease of constructing circular edifices with supports in multiples of four. He notes that with ten columns, San Lorenzo is among a group of circular churches with what he deems an unusual number of supports.⁴⁹² Krautheimer does not explicitly count or discount San Lorenzo among the Holy Sepulchre inspired churches, but rather addresses it as an anomaly. He concludes that in the replication of the Holy Sepulchre, architectural copies alluded to the church either by their number of piers (8) or columns (12), reflecting the number of supports present at the Holy Sepulchre. Krautheimer does not consider the total number of supports in the Anastasis Rotunda (20) as a point of comparison. Apparent aberrations to the numerical scheme are attributed to less rigid imitations. He cites sextuple arrangements as frequent and suggests a link to the most common iteration found in round churches, the duodecuple arrangement. Krautheimer's attempt at formulating a logical pattern for imitation risks reducing the structures to a series of numbers which excludes any apparent deviations. With careful modification, however, the theory can be adapted to 'non-standard' buildings such as San Lorenzo.

To continue Krautheimer's allowance for halves and doubles, would the ten-support arrangement of San Lorenzo not then be a similar reduction, not of the eight piers or twelve columns, but of the total twenty supports at the Holy Sepulchre? With this minor adjustment to his theory, a 'non-standard' rotunda such as San Lorenzo can also be classed as an architectural copy of the Anastasis Rotunda. Moreover, when investigating the significance of the divisor two in medieval Christian numerology—a method adopted from Krautheimer himself,⁴⁹³ we can refer, for example, to Joseph Sauer who cites Bruno of Segni (a contemporary of Matilda), when discussing the many Christian dualities related to the number two, which included the twin philosophy of the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*.⁴⁹⁴ This duality was at the heart of pilgrimage; the active life was the physical act of journeying to holy sites, either armed or unarmed, whereas the contemplative life was the meditative exercise

⁴⁹² Krautheimer, 10. Krautheimer names two other churches: Ste. Marie at Rieux Minervois, with seven supports, and Neuvy-St.-Sépulcre, with eleven supports. He names no other round buildings with ten supports, though these examples are not meant to be singular in their number of supports, merely examples.

⁴⁹³ Krautheimer, 10–3. 'The importance of number symbolism in medieval thought is too well known to need any emphasis.'

⁴⁹⁴ Joseph Sauer, *Symbolik des Kirchengebäudes und seiner Ausstattung in der Auffassung des Mittelalters : mit Berücksichtigung von Honorius Augustodunensis, Sicardus und Durandus* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1924), 78–9.

inherent to worship. This duality, though just one among many, may indicate a potential meaning for the halves and doubles present at San Lorenzo.

Furthermore, the number ten may not have been a random selection. The number is considered the sum of perfection by St Augustine; seven, for the whole of God's creation, and three for the holy Trinity.⁴⁹⁵ Ten is inherently connected to the commandments, central to the behaviour of virtuous Christians.⁴⁹⁶ Perhaps then we can perceive the ten columns present on the ground floor of San Lorenzo not as an anomaly as suggested by Krautheimer, but rather as an amplification of certain Christian principles, intended to tie the structure to both Jerusalem and the act of pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This expansion upon Krautheimer's initial theory—allowing for multiplication and division of the total supports—can draw out new relationships between spiritually significant numbers and the replication of the form of the Holy Sepulchre.

In proposing this expansion of Krautheimer's theory and San Lorenzo as a satellite in a 'New Jerusalem' configuration with Sant'Andrea, we must also consider the repeated pattern of colonettes present on San Lorenzo's exterior which may have also been intended to invoke the interior supports of the Holy Sepulchre. This type of external visualization is present in other buildings modelled after the Holy Sepulchre. Neta Bodner has commented on the case of the twelfth-century Pisa Baptistery (Figure 54).⁴⁹⁷ According to Bodner, in what she terms an 'inside-out switch,' the lower exterior blind arcade of the baptistery is meant to visually describe the interior ambulatory arcade of the Holy Sepulchre. She similarly comments on the use of columns, twenty in total, on the exterior lower level of the baptistery as part of a systematic translation of features from within the rotunda. It is possible the same internal-externalization is at play at San Lorenzo, though with less rigidity than Bodner describes at the Pisa Baptistery. She attributes the inside-out switch to a desire to externalize the core of the sepulchre within the confines of European monumental, free-standing architecture.⁴⁹⁸

I agree with Bodner that context is crucial for Holy Sepulchre-inspired buildings. If San Lorenzo acted as a part of a larger martyrial complex, the exterior of the building would help make its purpose clear to visitors. Thus, perhaps as the participant enacted their pilgrimage

⁴⁹⁵ Elizabeth den Hartog, '1, 2, 3, 6: Early Gothic Architecture and Perfect Numbers', *Architectural Histories* 2, no. 1 (2014): 17.

⁴⁹⁶ Elizabeth Read Sunderland, 'Symbolic Numbers and Romanesque Church Plans', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 18, no. 3 (1959): 97.

⁴⁹⁷ Neta Bodner, 'The Baptistery of Pisa and the Rotunda of the Holy Sepulchre: A Reconsideration', in *Visual Constructs of Jerusalem*, ed. Bianca Kühnel, Galit Noga-Banai, and Hanna Vorholt, vol. 18, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 99–100; Neta B. Bodner, 'Why Are There Two Medieval Copies of the Holy Sepulcher in Pisa? A Comparative Analysis of San Sepolcro and the Baptistery', *Viator* 48, no. 3 (September 2017): 103–24.

⁴⁹⁸ Bodner, 'The Baptistery of Pisa and the Rotunda of the Holy Sepulchre: A Reconsideration', 101–2.

within this ‘New Jerusalem’ complex, they were intended to circumambulate the building before entering. Circling the round church and witnessing the colonettes could have invoked the same motion and meditation as would have been experienced upon entering the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Thus, it is possible that the whole of San Lorenzo—the interior, the exterior, and the relic it housed—served to recreate the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem by invoking different senses in different ways. Bianca Kühnel has written on the meditative properties evoked by these types of site, suggesting that the mental evocation of a visual monument transported the viewer to the ‘memory of the events of the salvation history’ while simultaneously ‘commemorating the viewer’s orientation to the future.’⁴⁹⁹ By activating different senses beyond sight, the rotunda may have meant to recreate a more immersive religious experience than that provided by on its own.

Sebastián Salvadó writes that round churches in the West were not just meant to visually invoke the Holy Sepulchre. Rather, they acted as the setting for the ‘re-enactment of the spiritual drama that pilgrimage to the East made possible.’⁵⁰⁰ At San Lorenzo, both the interior and exterior provided an opportunity to reproduce the performative roles associated with the physical Holy Sepulchre. This enabled visitors to combine the active motion of ‘performative pilgrimage’ and the mental world-building of ‘imaginative pilgrimage,’ fully utilizing San Lorenzo as a simulacrum of the Holy Sepulchre as part of a larger reproduction of Jerusalem.

3.3.6 *Interpreting Matilda’s Motivations in San Lorenzo*

By interpreting San Lorenzo as an act of Matilda’s patronage, this chapter has aimed to explore questions concerning the intention behind the creation of the rotunda as it existed in the 1080s. In the form of a classic whodunnit, the selection of Matilda as the prime suspect appears the most logical: she possessed the means, the motive, and the opportunity to commit this act of patronage within Mantua. When viewed in conjunction with Gregory’s failed call-to-arms in 1074 and the fact that Matilda would never again have an opportunity to visit Jerusalem, it seems possible that San Lorenzo was a way to bring the holy city to her. Perhaps Matilda

⁴⁹⁹ Bianca Kühnel, ‘Virtual Pilgrimages to Real Places: The Holy Landscapes’, in *Imagining Jerusalem in the Medieval West*, ed. Lucy Donkin and Hanna Vorholt, Proceedings of the British Academy 175 (Oxford; New York: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2012), 263–4.

⁵⁰⁰ Sebastián Salvadó, ‘Commemorating the Rotunda in the Round: The Medieval Latin Liturgy of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and Its Performance in the West’, in *Tomb and Temple: Re-Imagining the Sacred Buildings of Jerusalem*, ed. Robin Griffith-Jones and Eric Fernie, Boydell Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018), 413, 427.

intended San Lorenzo to bolster the religious profile of the city so beloved by her father. Matilda may have envisioned San Lorenzo as a key player in a martyrial complex designed to simulate pilgrimage, thus combining her own active defence of Christianity against heresy with an imagined journey to the Holy Sepulchre.

Furthermore, Matilda's documents suggest a history of her interest in pilgrimage via donations made in support of pilgrims and the poor. In 1080, Matilda made a donation in which she entrusted Sant' Andrea with the administration of a hospital built just outside of Mantua for the poor and for pilgrims which was dedicated to Saint Martin.⁵⁰¹ In 1099, Matilda donated a piece of land to San Ponziano in Lucca for the construction of a similar hospital.⁵⁰² These donations suggest that not only did Matilda have a sustained interest in the welfare of pilgrims, but that she was acutely aware of their presence as a unique group with unique needs. Thus San Lorenzo may represent a continuation of this desire to support the *perigrini*, and perhaps herself reap the benefits of such spiritual journeys.

As Calzona has proposed, it is also possible that the rotunda was meant to recall Charlemagne's Palatine Chapel at Aachen, perhaps meant to position Matilda as a new Charlemagne.⁵⁰³ Charlemagne became tied to the concept of crusading in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In the eleventh century, the *Chronicon* of Benedict of Monte Soratte indicated that Charlemagne had been on a pilgrimage to Constantinople and Jerusalem and that his authority as an emperor stemmed from this journey.⁵⁰⁴ Charlemagne was regarded as the prototypical Christian king who acted in accordance with the directives of both Christ and the Papacy.⁵⁰⁵ In Einhard's *Vita Caroli Magni*, there is an explicit reference to the concession of the Holy Sepulchre from Harun-al-Raschid, the Abbasid Caliph of Bagdad, to Charlemagne.⁵⁰⁶ Charlemagne's supposed defence of Spain against the tyrannical Muslim rulers appears in the

⁵⁰¹ Paul F. Kehr, ed., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum: Italia Pontificia*, vol. 7 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1961), 318, 331. Matilda would later revoke this privilege in 1101.

⁵⁰² Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 51: 157–8.

⁵⁰³ Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, 164–5.

⁵⁰⁴ Matthias Becher, 'Epilogue Hero and Saint: The Afterlife of Charlemagne', in *Charlemagne*, trans. David S. Bachrach (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 138; Matthew Gabriele and Oxford University Press, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 98.

⁵⁰⁵ Jace Stuckey, 'Charlemagne as Crusader? Memory, Propaganda, and the Many Uses of Charlemagne's Legendary Expedition to Spain', in *The Legend of Charlemagne in the Middle Ages: Power, Faith, and Crusade*, ed. Matthew Gabriele, Jace Stuckey, and Palgrave Connect (Online service) (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 137–52; Nancy Bisaha, 'Crusade and Charlemagne: Medieval Influences', in *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Anne A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 183–214; Becher, 'Epilogue Hero and Saint: The Afterlife of Charlemagne.'

⁵⁰⁶ Einhard and Balbulus Notker, *Early Lives of Charlemagne by Eginhard and the Monk of St. Gall*, trans. A. J. Grant, Medieval Library (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1966), 36; Aryeh Grabois, 'Charlemagne, Rome and Jerusalem', *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 59, no. 4 (1981): 793.

eleventh-century *Song of Roland*.⁵⁰⁷ Gregory VII, in his 1081 letter to Bishop Hermann Metz regarding the disobedient Henry IV, cites Charlemagne among the holy leaders who continued the legacy of Constantine as defenders of the Church.⁵⁰⁸ Thus, if Matilda intended to fashion Mantua into her new seat of power and invoke Charlemagne, she could also draw on this association to fashion herself into a crusader.

Furthermore, Calzona's reading does not inherently exclude the Anastasis Rotunda as Aachen itself may have been intended to reference the Dome of the Rock, interpreted as the Temple, as well as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Bianca Kühnel has drawn on the explicit connections between Aachen and Jerusalem, citing a letter from Alcuin to Charlemagne where the author compared the two.⁵⁰⁹ She also suggests Aachen would have invoked Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre through relics and other symbolic objects amassed by Charlemagne himself.⁵¹⁰ No doubt one of the relics intended to recall Jerusalem would have been the relic of the Holy blood, extracted by Charlemagne from Mantua's relic. Thus, it seems San Lorenzo and Aachen, and were inexorably connected by their twinned blood relics in addition to sharing architectural features with the Anastasis Rotunda.

Calzona suggests that as a reference to Aachen, San Lorenzo was used by Matilda to further assert her regional dominance.⁵¹¹ Contextualized within Matilda's lifelong opposition to the *regnum*, her repossession of imperial imagery would likely have been seen as subversive as it positioned Matilda as a successor to Charlemagne, rather than Henry. By connecting the rotunda to Aachen and Charlemagne, perhaps Matilda may have intended to assert her own authority. By appropriating imperial iconography, Matilda may have sought to position herself as a leader in the model of Charlemagne and create a physical connection through support of the blood relic at Sant'Andrea. This connection, in addition to her martial denial of imperial authority, would have affirmed her as a defender and executor of papal primacy and Catholic authority.

In accordance with Calzona's position that the Rotunda of San Lorenzo was reformist in nature, the inherent connections between the papal reform and the development of the Crusades, discussed earlier in this chapter, render San Lorenzo a statement in favour of the

⁵⁰⁷ Simon Gaunt and Karen Pratt, eds., *The Song of Roland and Other Poems of Charlemagne*, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Bisaha, 'Crusade and Charlemagne: Medieval Influences', 32.

⁵⁰⁸ Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII'; Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 8.21.

⁵⁰⁹ Bianca Kühnel, 'Jerusalem in Aachen', in *Monuments & Memory: Christian Cult Buildings and Constructions of the Past*, ed. Mariëtte Verhoeven, Lex Bosman, and Hanneke van Asperen (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2016), 96.

⁵¹⁰ Kühnel, 100.

⁵¹¹ Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde*, 223.

papal authority which was central to both ideologies. Close examination of San Lorenzo suggests Matilda connected her support of the reforming papacy to her support of justifiable Christian violence. Additionally, through a refined reading of Krautheimer's theory of architectural duplication of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the rotunda can be understood as an act of pilgrimage, both imaginative and performative. By replicating the Holy Sepulchre and invoking the proto-crusader Charlemagne, Matilda may have sought to earn the same spiritual benefits as those who had made and would continue to make the physical journey to the Holy Land, an opportunity not available to her.

Chapter 4: Patronage as Legacy Building: Matilda's Selection of Tomb Decoration

By examining the decoration of tombs probably chosen by Matilda, this chapter will explore the manner in which Matilda crafted her own visual legacy and the legacies of those within her innermost circle. The first half of the chapter will focus on two case studies: the tomb of Beatrice in Pisa made in 1076; the tomb of Anselm II the Younger of Lucca from 1086. Examination of these case studies will reveal to what extent Matilda deployed funerary objects to promote certain ideals concerning herself, her family, and the eleventh-century papal reform.

The chapter's second half will explore the afterlife of Matilda. First, it will look to her own burial site in San Benedetto al Polirone begun in 1115 and finished in 1151. Though San Benedetto likely had ulterior motives regarding her burial, it was still partially concerned with the legacy Matilda had promoted for herself. The chapter will conclude with an analysis of her seventeenth-century reburial at St. Peter's in Rome by Pope Urban VIII. Urban's staged revival of the countess centred around her body and transformed her into a symbol of strength for the papacy. This chapter argues that through this revival, the Pope passed Matilda's legacy through the filter of his own ambitions, resulting in her transformation into a symbol of Christian might and papal victory. Furthermore, Urban utilized Matilda and her donations to fill the gap in the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri* left by the invalidated Donation of Constantine. This focus may have inspired the 'One-Hundred Churches' myth which has continued to have an effect on modern studies of Matilda's material patronage and influence.

4.1 Matilda and Beatrice: Ancestral Legacy

Matilda's mother Beatrice died on 18th April 1076 in Pisa and was laid to rest in the city in a reused Roman sarcophagus. It is unlikely that Beatrice selected the tomb herself as her death appeared to be so swift that Matilda was not able to be at her bedside.⁵¹² They had governed side by side for several years and were frequently mentioned by others in tandem; by all surviving accounts, they appear to have been close. Unlike Matilda's own prolonged battle with gout which allowed her time to prepare her estate and to make burial arrangements, Beatrice was apparently not afforded the same opportunity. Instead, it is probable that Matilda, who was Beatrice's sole heir, was instrumental in the process of choosing her mother's burial

⁵¹² Lazzari, 'Matilda of Tuscany', 1.

site and tomb. This tomb is a marble sarcophagus, now in the Camposanto in Pisa, but was originally positioned in the Cathedral itself.

Matilda's charters can be used to understand her movements and possible opportunities for patronage at Pisa which may have been tied to her mother's burial there. Such an approach has been taken by Tiziana Lazzari who suggests that the burial did not occur until 1100.⁵¹³ In June 1100 Matilda took the cathedral chapter of Pisa under her protection, confirmed its possessions, and freed it from public charges.⁵¹⁴ In the same year, she donated a plot of land in the city and its annual interest payments to the cathedral to fund its new construction.⁵¹⁵ Matilda continued this material support in 1103 when she donated the castles of Pappiana and Livorno to the cathedral chapter of Pisa for the completion of construction, as well as a property outside the walls of Pisa near the church of San Nicola.⁵¹⁶ Lazzari cites the 1100 charter as evidence of a mortuary donation on behalf of her mother, proposing that the sarcophagus was chosen for her mother's tomb because it matched the classical style of the new cathedral of Pisa which used white marble revetment and blind arcades to evoke architectural elements from antiquity.⁵¹⁷ This dating would suggest Matilda waited nearly three decades to select a burial monument. Lazzari attributes this long gap between Beatrice's death and Matilda's patronage to a soured mother-daughter relationship, perhaps due to the consanguineous nature of Beatrice's second marriage to which Matilda may have objected.⁵¹⁸ Lazzari's chronology does not suggest why Matilda decided to honour her mother with a burial two decades later and what happened to Beatrice's body in the meantime.

It would be reasonable to look at the documents closer to Beatrice's death to investigate whether Matilda may have executed the burial patronage earlier. In 1076, the year of Beatrice's death, there is only one extant charter from Matilda. Dated May 1076, it records a donation to San Sisto in Piacenza, given at Marengo in the town of Marmiolo, seven kilometres north of Mantua; there is no reference to Beatrice's death in this document.⁵¹⁹ However, there are three documents from 1077 and 1078 that demonstrate Matilda's presence in and around Pisa, making an earlier coordination of her mother's burial possible. The next recorded charter occurs in June 1077 when Matilda was in Pappiana, a small village about seven kilometres

⁵¹³ Lazzari, 4.

⁵¹⁴ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Toszien*, 61: 186–8.

⁵¹⁵ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 63: 190–2.

⁵¹⁶ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 74: 217–20.

⁵¹⁷ Lazzari, 'Matilda of Tuscany', 4–5.

⁵¹⁸ Lazzari, 9–12.

⁵¹⁹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Toszien*, 19: 80–1.

north of Pisa.⁵²⁰ Furthermore, in August 1077 Matilda made a large donation to the Pisan cathedral chapter and asked that a mass be said to honour her mother on the anniversary of her death, for the salvation of her soul:

Insuper et anc conditionem supradicto tenore episcopo imponimus, ut annualiter anniversarium matris mee Beatricis honorifice celebret pro mercede anime patris mei matrisque mee et mee sine omni mea et heredum ac proheredum meorum contradictione vel repetitione.⁵²¹

This donation was later mentioned by Gregory VII in a letter from November 1078 to Bishop Landulf of Pisa as having been made for the benefit of Beatrice's soul:

...que divina pietas per serenissimam filiam nostram Mattildim pro remedio anime matris sue in eadem ecclesia sepulte, concedere dignata est, videlicet locum qui dicitur Scannellum cum castellis et pertinentiis suis et alia, que in futurum Deo auctore a fidelibus legaliter conferenda sunt.⁵²²

Gregory's letter does not make sense if the burial occurred in 1100 as Lazzari suggests. Beatrice is mentioned in this letter as 'pro remedio anime matris sue in eadem ecclesia sepulte,' suggesting that by 1078 she had already been buried in the cathedral.⁵²³ While this could indicate a temporary burial, there are no records to suggest that Beatrice's body had ever been relocated from a different casket. Therefore, given the evidence it seems that 1077 was the most likely time for Beatrice to have been buried and that based on her documents, Matilda was probably the one who coordinated the effort.

The sarcophagus has long been associated with Beatrice and Matilda and was memorialized with two inscriptions indicating it as such. The first, dated to 1116, was likely placed to coincide with Matilda's death. Now lost, the inscription was recorded in 1812 and attributes the burial and sarcophagus to the mother and daughter:

Anno Domini MCXVI Kalendas Augusti Obiit Domina / Matilda felicis memorie comitissa / que pro anima genetrices sue domine / Beatricis comitisse venerabilis in hac

⁵²⁰ Matilde, Goez, and Goez, 20: 81–3; 21: 83–5; 22: 85–7.

⁵²¹ Matilde, Goez, and Goez, 23: 87–92. 'In addition to the abovementioned conditions imposed on the bishop, there is to be an annual celebration to honour the souls of my father and mother Beatrice as well as me and my heirs or representative of my heirs, repeatedly and without objection.'

⁵²² Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 6.12; Gregory VII, 'Das Register Gregors VII', 6.12. '...we allow, grant, and confirm to it both the things that from ancient times have been justly given and those which divine goodness has deigned to grant through our most serene daughter Matilda for the benefit of the soul of her mother who is buried in this church, namely, the place which is called Scanello with its castles and appurtenances and other things which in future by God's prompting should be lawfully made over by the faithful.'

⁵²³ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 6.12: 291–2. Cowdrey translates the passage as: '...for the benefit of the soul of her mother who is buried in this church.'

/ Tumba honorabili quiescentis / In multis partibus mirifice hanc/ Dotavit eclam quarum anime / requiescant in pace.⁵²⁴

The other plaque, dated to 1303, has been recorded by Giorgio Vasari. Vasari indicated that in 1303, Beatrice's sarcophagus was embedded in the outer wall of the Pisan Cathedral but had originally been located inside the cathedral:

Sub dignissimo operario d. Burgundio tadi, occasione graduum fiendorum per ipsum circa ecclesiam, supradicta tumba superius notata bis translata fuit, tunc de sedibus primis in ecclesiam, nunc de ecclesia in hunc locum, ut cernitis, excellentem.⁵²⁵

Though one needs to be cautious when taking a sixteenth-century account of fourteenth-century plaques as evidence for the eleventh century, Vasari's account suggests that Beatrice's body was initially given a place of honour within the cathedral before being moved outside, though it is unclear why the tomb was moved. Nonetheless, there is no suggestion by historians that these inscriptions have ever referred to other sarcophagi or were erroneous in their attribution of the sarcophagus to Beatrice.

4.1.1 *The Sarcophagus*

The sarcophagus which has long been considered Beatrice's is 240 cm by 104 cm by 60 cm, made of marble of Roman origin, and is probably from the second century C.E. (Figure 55). Depicted in relief across the front and sides of the sarcophagus are scenes related to the Hippolytus myth. According to the myth, Hippolytus was the son of Theseus and an Amazon; when Hippolytus's mother died, Theseus remarried Phaedra. Phaedra fell in love with her stepson and when her feelings were not reciprocated, she falsely accused Hippolytus of making inappropriate advances. Theseus cursed his son and prayed to his father Poseidon to kill his wicked son; Poseidon responded to his request by sending a giant boar. While driving his chariot along the shore, the boar emerged from the sea and frightened the horses. Hippolytus

⁵²⁴ Allesandro da Morrona, *Pisa Illustrata nelle arti del disegno*, vol. 2 (Livorno: Marenigh, 1812), 316; Lazzari, 'Matilda of Tuscany.' Lazzari translates it as: 'In the year of the Lord 1116, on the ninth day of the calends of August, died Lady Matilda, Countess of blessed memory, which for the soul of her mother, the venerable Lady Countess Beatrice, who rested in this tomb worthy of honor, magnificently endowed this church with assets located in many places. Their souls rest in peace.'

⁵²⁵ Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, ed. Gaston du C. De Vere, Everyman's Library (New York: Knopf, 1996), 60–1. '1303 A.D...the abovementioned grave was transferred twice, then in the church near the seats, and now here, to this excellent and distinguished space.'

fell off and was dragged along the rocks until he died.⁵²⁶ The story was dramatized in lost tragedies by Sophocles (*Phaedra*) and Euripides (*Hippolytus Kalyptome*), in which Phaedra is depicted as immodest and unscrupulous. This characterisation of Phaedra also persists in the surviving first-century play by Seneca the Younger (*Phaedra*).⁵²⁷ In a second, surviving play by Euripides (*Hippolytus Stephanophorus*), Phaedra is depicted with a strong sense of modesty which causes her to struggle with her feelings towards her stepson.⁵²⁸ The myth was also treated by Ovid in *Heroides 4*.⁵²⁹

Depictions of this myth on sarcophagi are somewhat formulaic and are typically comprised of two scenes divided by a column. The left side always depicts Phaedra with her nurse surrounded by some handmaids while Hippolytus is readying himself for the hunt. It is the scene on the right that varies and is usually one of two types.⁵³⁰ Like Beatrice's sarcophagus, earlier variants depict a heroic scene of a wild boar hunt. Later iterations replaced the boar hunt with a scene showing the arrival of the delegation sent to Athens to inform Theseus about the death of his son (Figure 56).⁵³¹

The front face of Beatrice's sarcophagus presents the earlier arrangement of two scenes, divided by a column. On the left is the seated Phaedra while the nurse—the old woman who, in some versions of the legend, tells Hippolytus of his stepmother's forbidden love—gestures at the nude Hippolytus. Playing about Phaedra's lap are two *putti* which represent two different kinds of love: conjugal charity and Eros or, carnal passion.⁵³² Preceding the dividing column which is partially separate from the background, is Hippolytus who prepares his horse and dog for the hunt, gazing back onto the previous scene. Hippolytus, the only figure shown in the heroic nude aside from the *putti*, appears multiple times from left to right to indicate the passage

⁵²⁶ Zahra Newby, *Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture: Imagery, Values and Identity in Italy, 50 BC-AD 250*, Greek Culture in the Roman World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Frank Laurence Lucas, *Seneca and Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Michael Koortbojian, *Myth, Meaning, and Memory on Roman Sarcophagi* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Euripides, *Hippolytos. Edited with Introduction and Commentary*, ed. William Spencer Barrett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); William Smith, ed., 'Hippolytus (2).', in *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology* (London: C.C. Little and J. Brown, 1846).

⁵²⁷ John Roberts, ed., 'Hippolytus', in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁵²⁸ Euripides and Robert Bagg, *Hippolytos, The Greek Tragedy in New Translations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Euripides, *Hippolytos. Edited with Introduction and Commentary*; Pietro Pucci, 'Phaedra', in *Euripides' Revolution under Cover: An Essay* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), 49–61.

⁵²⁹ Howard Jacobsen, 'Heroides 4: Phaedra', in *Ovid's Heroides* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), 142–58.

⁵³⁰ Paul Zanker and Björn Christian Ewald, *Living with Myths: The Imagery of Roman Sarcophagi*, trans. Julia Slater, First Edition, Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 344–5.

⁵³¹ Zanker and Ewald, 344–5.

⁵³² Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*.

of time across the two scenes. Beyond the column is the scene of Hippolytus's hunt which foreshadows his death by Poseidon's giant boar. Hippolytus sits on his rearing horse and draws a weapon to slay the giant boar which has emerged from a tree on the right. In the foreground is a woman dressed as an Amazon; she is 'Virtus', the personification of the value and the strength of the warrior.⁵³³ Three dogs surround the boar with one biting its foreleg. Atop the tree from which the boar has emerged is a figure meant to personify the mountains. The back side of the sarcophagus does not have any decoration. The two ends of the sarcophagus (Figures 57, 58) show Hippolytus preparing himself for the hunt. Both side scenes are in lower relief than the frontal scene, with the right side (Figure 57) appearing to have been unfinished or subject to extreme and uneven erosion. The figures on the left side appear to be less finished in terms of detail and texture and are carved in lower relief than the figures on the other side of the sarcophagus (Figure 58). As no hunt takes place within the myth, as Hippolytus is slain en route, elements were borrowed from other aspects of the story to create one. The scene essentially combines Hippolytus's departure and the attack of Poseidon's boar, but adds in the Amazonian figure and hunting dogs to expand on the myth's interpretation.

4.1.2 *Phaedra and Hippolytus: A Matter of Interpretation*

It is crucial to address the differences between the textual and visual articulations of the myth in antiquity. Roman burial imagery was not meant to be taken as literal interpretations of their literary counterparts.⁵³⁴ The term *Entmythologierung* ('demythologisation') has been used to describe the act of reframing these mythical scenes where they were not viewed in a strictly literal sense but instead recontextualized with other visual narratives to achieve more diverse interpretations.⁵³⁵

Zahra Newby suggests that literal readings of mythological sarcophagi scenes were not often intended by their Roman creators. According to Newby, the modes in which these objects are viewed can include 'myths as allegories of apotheosis, expressing belief in the soul's continued survival after death, to interpretations of them as retrospective, commenting

⁵³³ Björn C. Ewald, 'Paradigms of Personhood and Regimes of Representation: Some Notes on the Transformation of Roman Sarcophagi', *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 61/62 (2012): 41–64; Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*.

⁵³⁴ Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*; Newby, *Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture*; Lucy Audley-Miller, Beate Dignas, and University of Oxford, eds., *Wandering Myths: Transcultural Uses of Myth in the Ancient World* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018).

⁵³⁵ Zahra Newby, 'In the Guise of Gods and Heroes: Portrait Heads on Roman Mythological Sarcophagi', in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi*, ed. Jaś Elsner and Janet Huskinson, *Millennium-Studien* 29 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 218.

on the deceased's qualities and interests during life, or simply reflecting his [the patron's] tastes and education.⁵³⁶ Accordingly, the possible interpretations regarding Hippolytus and Phaedra sarcophagi are vast.

In the case of Phaedra and Hippolytus, the tragic details of the myth—the incestuous aspect and Phaedra's suicide—were intentionally muted in sarcophagi scenes. Rather, the scenes focused on Phaedra's state of mind.⁵³⁷ Thus, Phaedra's great and enduring love could be used to signify the unconditional love of a spouse or parent, while her rejection by Hippolytus became a generic farewell scene. With this shift, the death scene of Hippolytus was not perceived as tragic because of Phaedra's false accusations which led to his death, but because it represented the premature death of a loved one and the grief of those left behind.⁵³⁸ Sometimes the scene was intended to honour a couple; Hippolytus took on the appearance of the husband while the *Amazon/virtus* figure was modelled after the wife.⁵³⁹ In this arrangement, the wife embodied the feminine counterpart to the masculine virtue; that is, forbearance in the face of the pain of parting, self-sacrifice, and tragedy.⁵⁴⁰

Furthermore, though no hunt takes place in the myth, funerary portrayals of the scene co-opted the visual language of imperial boar hunting in order to make the Hippolytus figure appear virtuous and noble.⁵⁴¹ To this end, when Hippolytus's hunt was featured in depictions of the myth (as it is in the case of Beatrice's tomb), it was often meant to indicate the masculine ability of the deceased through the actions of Hippolytus.⁵⁴² The concept was originally associated with Roman imperial imagery, and later appropriated by members of the upper social classes of Rome to celebrate their own strength, courage, and virtue.⁵⁴³

Although this sort of non-direct interpretation of the imagery would have been standard for Roman viewers of the second and third century, the same cannot be said for medieval viewers and purchasers. Were these scenes viewed as their literary counterparts and interpreted literally or was it possible that medieval viewers also participated in a form of demythologisation? Or, was the imagery ignored altogether and the object valued for its

⁵³⁶ Newby, 190.

⁵³⁷ Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*, 48; Newby, *Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture*, 293–6.

⁵³⁸ Newby, *Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture*, 302.

⁵³⁹ Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*, 224.

⁵⁴⁰ Zanker and Ewald, 105.

⁵⁴¹ Steven L. Tuck, 'The Origins of Roman Imperial Hunting Imagery: Domitian and the Redefinition of Virtus under the Principate', *Greece & Rome* 52, no. 2 (2005): 221–45.

⁵⁴² Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*, 48.

⁵⁴³ Tuck, 'The Origins of Roman Imperial Hunting Imagery: Domitian and the Redefinition of Virtus under the Principate', 237–8; Stine Birk, 'Using Images for Self-Representation on Roman Sarcophagi', in *Using Images in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), 40–1; Silke Schwandt, 'Virtus as a Political Concept in the Middle Ages', *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 10, no. 2 (2015): 71–90.

material? Further to these questions, we must consider whether Matilda could have been familiar with the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus, and if she knew it well enough to distinguish it from other myths. The configuration of Hippolytus's death on Beatrice's sarcophagus is strikingly similar to common configurations of Adonis's death (Figures 59, 60) which could have led to a different interpretation of the subject matter on Matilda's part. As no documentation exists concerning Matilda's personal library, we cannot ascertain Matilda's knowledge of ancient mythology. However, hypotheses regarding her potential exposure to these myths can be formed by looking at how and where they were propagated in the Middle Ages.

The ancient tragedy predominantly lived on in copies of Seneca the Younger's *Phaedra*, though fewer copies remain than of other works by the author.⁵⁴⁴ According to Michael Clarke, Senecan tragedies can be grouped into two main branches. One of these, the 'Etruscus' class, is made up of Italian copies based on a 'late eleventh-century manuscript derived probably from Montecassino.'⁵⁴⁵ Based on geographic location and date of creation, such a manuscript could have been available to Matilda and her court.⁵⁴⁶ A copy of the text was also in the library of the monastery of Pomposa near Ferrara. This manuscript no longer survives but is recorded in a booklist written before 1093, which suggests Matilda could have had access.⁵⁴⁷ Pomposa is referenced in chapters 15-16 of the first book of the *Vita Mathildis*, and had an established connection with Matilda's father, Boniface.⁵⁴⁸ Furthermore, Matilda's charters suggests she interacted with both the Bishopric of Ferrara and the Abbots of Pomposa on several occasions.⁵⁴⁹ She therefore may have been able to access the library at Pomposa and the text of the myth itself. Additionally, the work of *The First Vatican Mythographer*, written between the last quarter of the ninth century and the third quarter of the eleventh, and

⁵⁴⁴ Birger Munk Olsen, 'Comment peut-on déterminer la popularité d'un texte au Moyen Âge? L'exemple des oeuvres classiques latines', *Interfaces: A Journal of Medieval European Literatures*, 2017, 9–11.

⁵⁴⁵ Michael Clarke, 'Reconstructing the Medieval Irish Bookshelf: A Case Study of Fingal Rónáin and the Horse-Eared Kings', in *Classical Literature and Learning in Medieval Irish Narrative*, ed. Ralph O'Connor, *Studies in Celtic History*, XXXIV (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2014), 134, n. 61.

⁵⁴⁶ L. D. Reynolds, ed., *Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 378–81; L. D. Reynolds, *The Medieval Tradition of Seneca's Letters* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965); R. H. Philp, 'The Manuscript Tradition of Seneca's Tragedies', *The Classical Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (1968): 150–79; Clarke, 'Reconstructing the Medieval Irish Bookshelf: A Case Study of Fingal Rónáin and the Horse-Eared Kings', n. 61.

⁵⁴⁷ Lazzari, 'Matilda of Tuscany', n. 31.

⁵⁴⁸ Vito Fumagalli, "Il poema di Donizone, nel Codice Vaticano Latino 4922," in *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ed. Paolo Golinelli (Milan: Jaca Book, 2008), chaps. 15: ll.1077, 16: ll. 1114–5.

⁵⁴⁹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 31: 112–3, 32: 114–6, 97: 266–9.

transmitted in one twelfth-century manuscript (Vatican Reg. Lat 1401), includes the myth.⁵⁵⁰ Though this does not account for specific contact to Matilda, the anonymous author relied on numerous antique sources which suggests a general cultural awareness of the myth to which Matilda could have been privy. Matilda was described by her biographer as an educated woman who spoke several languages and signed her own charters.⁵⁵¹ With this level of instruction, Matilda certainly had the necessary skills to understand the texts and could plausibly have come into contact with the myth.

Lazzari suggests that not only was Matilda familiar with the myth, but she specifically chose the sarcophagus because of the myth's resonance in her own life.⁵⁵² She relates the moralizing anti-incest message of the myth to the marriage between Beatrice and her fourth cousin, Godfrey of Lower Lorraine, as it violated the terms of the Lateran Council of 1059 which barred marriages within a certain degree of familial relation. Lazzari proposes that the marriage caused Beatrice and Matilda to become estranged, drawing as evidence on Matilda's absence at her mother's death and letters from early 1074 in which Gregory VII urged Matilda to repent from her sins.⁵⁵³

However, it is important to note that Beatrice's marriage, while technically consanguineous according to the decree, was not seen as an issue by the Church. Because they were married before Pope Nicholas II banned consanguinity up to the seventh degree in 1059, they were not subject to the same regulation that would follow Nicholas's decision.⁵⁵⁴ Beatrice and Godfrey addressed the issue, acting beyond what was expected of pre-existing married couples; they vowed chastity and pledged financial support to religious communities, and were praised by Peter Damian for doing so.⁵⁵⁵ Furthermore, Lazzari's argument assumes that the myth was taken literally, and that its message was one of censure. Though it is possible that medieval viewers could have interpreted the myth as such, Elizabeth Archibald suggests that when medieval writers utilized incest in their own stories, typically drawing parallels to Phaedra and Hippolytus, the mothers who were accused of incest 'almost always repent and

⁵⁵⁰ Ronald E. Pepin, *The Vatican Mythographers* (New York: Fordham University, 2008), 33–4; Nevio Zorzetti and Jacques Berlioz, eds., *Premier Mythographe du Vatican*, 2. tirage, Collection des Universités de France Série latine 328 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2003).

⁵⁵¹ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ll. 40–4. *Responsum cunctis haec dat sine murmure turbis: / Haec hilaris semper facie, placida quoque mente; / Haec apices dictat, scit Theutonicam bene linguam; / Haec loquitur laetam quin Francigenamque loquelam; / Haec Longobardos nutrit, regit, et facit altos.*

⁵⁵² Lazzari, 'Matilda of Tuscany', nn. 31, 32.

⁵⁵³ Lazzari, nn. 50–4.

⁵⁵⁴ Nash, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda*, 36–7; Kathleen G. Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change*, Manchester Medieval Studies (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 149.

⁵⁵⁵ Nash, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda*, 37; Stroll, *Popes and Antipopes*, 229.

died saved.’⁵⁵⁶ It seems more likely that if the incestuous aspects of the narrative were important to Beatrice’s sarcophagus, Matilda would have viewed it allegorically with Beatrice as the saved mother rather than unrepentant sinner. Additionally, it seems unlikely that Matilda viewed her own mother’s marriage more severely than the Church and purposefully chose the scene to shame Beatrice.

It seems more plausible that the sarcophagus was chosen to honour her mother and her virtue. Bearing in mind the husband/wife duality present in the Hippolytus/female *virtus* figure arrangement, the scene could well have been selected as a double dedication to both Beatrice and Matilda’s father, Boniface who died and was buried in Mantua in 1052.⁵⁵⁷ Though Boniface died in Matilda’s youth, her father continued to be ever-present in Matilda’s life. Up until her death, she used a formula expressing the relationship to her father (‘Matildis dei gratia, si quid est, filia Bonifacii marchionis et ducis’) to identify herself.⁵⁵⁸ Additionally, the 1077 donation to the Cathedral of Pisa specifically indicates that Boniface’s soul was also to be included in the spiritual benefits of the donation. This suggests that Matilda intended Beatrice’s burial to spiritually honour her father as well, and that it could have informed the decision to select this particular sarcophagus.

It is equally possible that this particular sarcophagus was not selected for the mythological associations of its imagery, but rather was based on materiality, availability, and chance. Phaedra and Hippolytus scenes were relatively common compared to other depictions of death and grieving such as scenes of lamentation, the underworld, or actual death and would have been more readily available.⁵⁵⁹ With the availability of this scene, perhaps then the imagery was rendered less important, elevating instead the material associations of the ancient marble. In selecting the sarcophagus Matilda may have hoped to associate her mother with the prestige and *auctoritas* of the marble, unaware or unconcerned of the mythological implications of the scene.⁵⁶⁰ Regardless of the potential narrative implications of the sarcophagus’s decoration, the materiality of the marble object was undeniably connected to Rome, which likely played a hand in Matilda’s selection.

⁵⁵⁶ Elizabeth Archibald, *Incest and the Medieval Imagination*, 1st ed (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 234.

⁵⁵⁷ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 1, ll. 1124–7.

⁵⁵⁸ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 134: 342–4. This formulation is only absent on the few documents with which she signed with her husband Welf and after their separation in the 1090s, Matilda returned to the previous configuration. ‘Matilda, by the grace if any, is the daughter of the Marquis and Duke Boniface.’

⁵⁵⁹ Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*, 106.

⁵⁶⁰ Dale Kinney, ‘Roman Architectural Spolia’, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 145, no. 2 (2001): 138–61.

4.1.3 The 'Romanitas' of Pisa

Beatrice's tomb was probably one of the large number of marble objects brought to Pisa by ship as part of the maritime trade that connected the city to other areas of the peninsula. In his material and stylistic analyses of the spolia in Pisa, Arnold Esch suggests they were often selected from places around Rome, Paestum, and Pozzuoli, and then shipped back up the Tyrrhenian coast.⁵⁶¹ This acquisition of Roman marble objects may have been a facet of the city-wide claim that Pisa was closely linked to ancient Rome, or that it should even been considered as a new Rome, and should thus adopt similar aesthetic and material practices. This perception was contemporaneously articulated in the *Carmen in victoriam pisanorum*. The eleventh-century epic poem recounts the 1087 campaign, sponsored by Matilda herself, in which Pisa and Genoa raided the North African city of Mahdia.⁵⁶² The opening quatrain introduces the campaign as comparable to the Roman conquest of Carthage: *Inclitorum Pisanorum scripturus istoriam, / antiquorum Romanorum renovo memoriam: / nam extendit modo Pisa laudem admirabilem, / quam recepit olim Roma vincendo Cartaginem.*⁵⁶³ In his annotated translation of the *Carmen*, Giuseppe Scalia suggests that the invocation of Rome was not only a rhetorical device but also reflective of Pisan attitudes towards *romanitas* within the city.⁵⁶⁴ The spoils of the campaign were used to fund the embellishment and endowment of Pisa's cathedral, suggesting a vested interest in reusing Roman objects to position the city as a New Rome.⁵⁶⁵

This fervour was not just relegated to the revival of a Roman-inspired material style or the perception of Pisa as the heir of Rome, but also manifested itself in the twelfth-century revival of Justinian principals in law practices within the Italian peninsula, a development of which Matilda will have been aware.⁵⁶⁶ She may even have been personally acquainted with

⁵⁶¹ Arnold Esch, 'Reimpiego dell'antico nel medioevo: la prospettiva dell'archeologo la prospettiva dello storico' (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1999), 78–108; Zanker and Ewald, *Living with Myths*, 3.

⁵⁶² Eloise M. Angiola, 'Nicola Pisano, Federigo Visconti, and the Classical Style in Pisa', *The Art Bulletin* 59, no. 1 (1977): 1–27; H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'The Mahdia Campaign of 1087', *The English Historical Review* 92, no. 362 (1977): 1–29. Cowdrey notes that Matilda likely chose Bishop Benedict of Modena (whom she had installed in 1085), a Papalist closely aligned with Bishop Anselm II of Lucca, as the 'spiritual overseer' for the 1087 campaign.

⁵⁶³ Anonymous, *Il carme pisano sull'impresa contro i Saraceni del 1087*, trans. Giuseppe Scalia (Padua: Liviana, 1971), ll. 1–4. 'I will write the history of the celebrated Pisans, renewing the memory of Roman antiquity: for I extend to Pisa an admirable praise, which Rome once received by conquering Carthage.'

⁵⁶⁴ Anonymous, 587.

⁵⁶⁵ Cowdrey, 'The Mahdia Campaign of 1087', 18.

⁵⁶⁶ Thomas J. McSweeney and Michèle K. Spike, 'The Significance of the Corpus Iuris Civilis: Matilda of Canossa and the Revival of Roman Law', in *Matilda of Canossa & the Origins of the Renaissance: An Exhibition in Honor*

scholars who have been credited with establishing the study of Roman Law at the University of Bologna. In the thirteenth century, a teacher at the University named Odofredus listed two individuals responsible for establishing the study of Roman Law at Bologna in the first decade of the twelfth century: Irnerius and his teacher Pepo.⁵⁶⁷ Irnerius lectured on the *Corpus iuris civilis* and was the teacher of the *Quatuor doctores* (Bulgarus, Martinus Gosia, Jacobus de Boragine, and Hugo de Porta Ravennate) at the university.⁵⁶⁸ Thomas J. McSweeney and Michèle Spike have connected Pepo to several of Matilda's documents where he is described as an *advocatus* for several churches within her domain which had received donations from Matilda and her parents.⁵⁶⁹ McSweeney and Spike further suggest that Pepo's student Irnerius appears as 'Wernerius' (possibly an alternate spelling) in a 1113 document between Matilda and Sant'Andrea in Ravenna as a *causidicus* (lawyer).⁵⁷⁰ Between May and October of 1116 Wernerius also signed nine imperial edicts by Henry V in order to execute premortem agreements made between Matilda and the king. If the 'Wernerius' described in Matilda's documents is the same 'Irnerius,' this would establish a strong connection between the countess and figures responsible for the revival of Roman law.

Ronald G. Witt doubts Matilda's influence on either Irnerius or his master Pepo and judges the evidence as inconclusive.⁵⁷¹ Indeed, while it does appear Matilda had contact with these jurists, it probably suggests simply that she was familiar with figures interested in the revival of Roman law, not that she personally directed them in their efforts. It is unlikely that any sole person was responsible for the redevelopment of Roman law; rather, it is more probable that Matilda, Pepo, and Irnerius/Wernerius were drawing on two related aspects of the same, larger interest in Roman antiquity developing within the region. Where the jurists sought to revive the legal ideals of ancient Rome, Matilda participated in the physical

of the 900th Anniversary of Her Death, ed. Michèle K. Spike (Williamsburg, VA: The Muscarelle Museum of Art, The College of William and Mary, 2015), 29–39.

⁵⁶⁷ M. Michèle Mulchahey, 'Odofredus Announces His Course on Roman Law at Bologna (ca. 1230)', in *Medieval Italy*, ed. Katherine L. Jansen, Joanna Drell, and Frances Andrews, Texts in Translation (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 174–5; Manlio Bellomo, 'Ius Commune in Europe', in *The Common Legal Past of Europe, 1000–1800*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 59–61; Josiah C. Russell, 'Gratian, Irnerius, and the Early Schools of Bologna', *The Mississippi Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (1959): 179–82.

⁵⁶⁸ Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 157–9.

⁵⁶⁹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 2: 35–9; 25: 95–7; 32: 114–6; McSweeney and Spike, 'The Significance of the Corpus Iuris Civilis: Matilda of Canossa and the Revival of Roman Law', 31.

⁵⁷⁰ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 128: 331–2; McSweeney and Spike, 'The Significance of the Corpus Iuris Civilis: Matilda of Canossa and the Revival of Roman Law', 31.

⁵⁷¹ Ronald G. Witt, *The Two Latin Cultures and the Foundation of Renaissance Humanism in Medieval Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Witt cites Burchardt of Ursperg who similarly writes of Matilda's influence on Irnerius to begin his commentary on Roman law 'per petitionem Mathilde comitisse.'

reincarnation of Roman monuments, including the refashioning of Roman spolia and reuse of marble objects. As these two forces coalesced, they would have helped to present Matilda's domain as a New Rome, not just in appearance but in spirit as well.

This socio-political force of *romanitas* was already on the rise when Beatrice died. By selecting a Roman marble sarcophagus, Matilda may have been consciously participating in a rising trend in Pisa in order to claim the glory of ancient Rome for her family line. It appears that the trend of integrating Roman-like attributes continued within Matilda's domain. Near the end of her own life, Matilda would return to marble and its associations with Rome when she ordered the refashioning of the ancestral tombs at Canossa. Donizo's dedicatory letter for the *Vita Mathildis* specifically mentions that marble tombs were selected, transported, and then made worthy for her ancestors so they could be reburied:

Cum ad clarorum principum mausoleum jam per quinque lustra nostra resideret humilitas, nullamque ex eis videret memoria quod apicum commendaret perpetuitas, accidit quando nuper vestri honoris sublimitas. Canossam deduci arcas iussit marmoreas ad tumulandum dignius eorum corpora.⁵⁷²

These ancestors—Adalbert Atto, Hildegard, Rodulf, Tedald, Guillia, and Conrad—are the same figures illustrated and discussed in the first book of the *Vita*. This dedicatory letter draws a parallel between the 'illustrious' bodies of the ancestors, and the only material seemingly appropriate to house them.⁵⁷³ The acquisition and transportation of the *arcas marmoreas* would have been a great effort; this alone might suggest the importance of the reburials and the perceived necessity of the material. Through this description Donizo has reached back into the shared memory of the Italian peninsula and drawn upon the greatness of the Roman Empire, expressed in an illustrious material to further enhance the prestige of Canossa. As with Beatrice's tomb, the material is marble. Even if the tombs had come from Modena as Claudio Franzoni suggests—a direct distance of nearly 38 kilometres—the steep crag upon which the castle sat would not have made the several-thousand-kilogram sarcophagi easy to move. Franzoni notes in a report on the remaining Canossan sarcophagi fragments that they appear to have been reworked in the early twelfth century, suggesting a desire to incorporate antique aesthetics and ideals into a medieval aesthetic framework.⁵⁷⁴ That the *Vita* attests to the

⁵⁷² Quintavalle, 'Matilda and the Cities of the Gregorian Reform', 80–1; Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 1, Incipit Epistola. 'When it comes to our most famous Canossan rulers, they have already laid in a humble state for twenty-five years, their state of longevity came to mind. Orders were made that when the illustrious tombs of Canossa were ordered to be refreshed, that the marble coffins be made worthy for their bodies to be reburied in them.'

⁵⁷³ Quintavalle, 'Matilda and the Cities of the Gregorian Reform', 80–1.

⁵⁷⁴ Franzoni, *Il 'Portico Dei Marmi' Le prime collezioni a Reggio Emilia e la nascita del Museo Civico*, 18–22.

replacement and possible reworking of half a dozen marble sarcophagi suggests the material, and its associations were of some importance to the countess. By selecting marble objects Matilda may have intended to bestow a sense of prestige and authority on the burials, something apparently not inherent in other materials.

It is also plausible that there were narrative considerations for the tomb wherein Matilda, knowledgeable of classical, mythological reception, wished to honour her mother (or parents) in a classicizing way. These two theories of Matilda's motivations—both iconographically and materially driven—are not mutually exclusive. It is possible that Matilda was both familiar with the classical interpretations of this myth while also seeking the prestige of marble for her mother. By associating her mother's burial with the status of antique marble, Matilda could also claim some of the glory for herself and for the Canossan dynasty. Given the 1303 inscription that accompanied Beatrice's sarcophagus when it was embedded into the cathedral's wall, it is clear that Beatrice's tomb remained associated with Matilda, indicating the effectiveness of her arrangements into the fourteenth century.

4.2 Anselm II of Lucca: Reforming from Beyond the Grave

*Ille fons erat, hic quasi rivus bonus ab illo fluebat, et aridam irrigabat. Ille caput totum corpus gubernabat, iste quasi manus studiosa quod iniunctum est peragebat.*⁵⁷⁵

A decade later, Matilda likely engaged in a similar form of image-crafting with Bishop Anselm II of Lucca. Several contemporary sources have credited Matilda with making the arrangements for the burial of Anselm at the Cathedral of San Pietro in Mantua. This section will assess why Matilda was entrusted with this task and, as with Beatrice's burial, to what extent the imagery of the selected tomb was reflective of her own allegiances, or motivations. In order to do this, it is necessary to examine Anselm's relationship to the eleventh-century papal reform, and furthermore, to Matilda herself. Cited at the start of this section, a passage from pseudo-Bardone's *Vita Anselmi*, dating from 1086/7, presented Gregory as the source of the reforming ideals and Anselm as the one who helped enact them: where Gregory VII was the mind, Anselm

⁵⁷⁵ Pseudo-Bardone, 'Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis', 22–3; Kathleen G. Cushing, *Papacy and Law in the Gregorian Revolution* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 63. Translation by Cushing. '[Gregory] was the source; [Anselm] was the good stream that flowed from him and watered the arid ground, [Gregory] was the head that governed the entire body; [Anselm] was the zealous hand that executed what had been imposed.'

was the ‘zealous hand’ who spread reform ideals. This section will examine where Matilda fits into this configuration and if this relationship was expressed in Anselm’s burial.

4.2.1 Anselm, the Eleventh-Century Papal Reform, and Matilda

Anselm was a crucial part of the eleventh-century reform which positioned papal supremacy as the dominant doctrine. I have already discussed Anselm’s importance in the formation of the concept of righteous violence in Chapter Three, but a greater understanding of his beliefs is necessary. Anselm II succeeded his uncle Anselm I (Pope Alexander II) as bishop in 1073. On the advice of Gregory VII, Anselm’s investiture by the emperor was delayed to avoid contamination due to Henry IV’s continued association with excommunicated advisors.⁵⁷⁶ In 1074, Anselm was appointed by Gregory to serve as Matilda’s spiritual advisor, a role he would fill until his death in 1086.⁵⁷⁷ In 1080, Anselm was expelled from Lucca by imperial allies after Matilda’s defeat at Volta; he fled the city and took up residence at her court.⁵⁷⁸ Her support was not a unique incident but part of a well-established relationship between the two. In 1082, Anselm was appointed bishop of Reggio Emilia, a position he held until late 1084 or early 1085.

Anselm wrote extensively in support of the goals of the reform and was a close advisor not only to Matilda but also to Gregory himself. One of his most important works was the *Collectio Canonum* which he completed around 1083. From the outset, the primacy of the Church (and the papacy), is made imperative and it is through this lens that the entirety of the *Collectio Canonum* should be viewed. The collection enumerates the rights of the clergy, the ideal hierarchy of society where the clergy was above reproach from any layperson, as well as the selection and duties of clergy members.⁵⁷⁹ Kathleen G. Cushing has suggested the *Collectio* was created to convey the church’s obligations to compel those who had strayed from the church (and the reform) to return, using force when necessary to remedy their sins.⁵⁸⁰ In the last chapters of the *Collectio Canonum*, ‘De Excommunicatione’ and ‘De Iusta vindicta,’ a cohesive idea of the Church’s corrective powers is outlined, strengthening the ideas of the

⁵⁷⁶ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, 1.21: 24–5; Louis I. Hamilton, *A Sacred City: Consecrating Churches and Reforming Society in Eleventh-Century Italy*, Manchester Medieval Studies (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 118–9.

⁵⁷⁷ Cinzio Violante, ‘Anselmo da baggio’, in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, ed. Alberto Maria Ghisalberti and Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana (Rome: Treccani, 1961); Pseudo-Bardone, ‘Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis’, chap. 12, p. 17.

⁵⁷⁸ Hay, *The Military Leadership of Matilda of Canossa, 1046-1115*, 80–1.

⁵⁷⁹ Hamilton, *A Sacred City*, 120–1; Cushing, *Papacy and Law in the Gregorian Revolution*, 68.

⁵⁸⁰ Cushing, ‘Anselm of Lucca and the Doctrine of Coercion: The Legal Impact of the Schism of 1080?’, 359–60.

collection as a whole. The *Collectio Canonum* was essential in delineating the rights and consequences of the adherents and opponents of the reform.

After Gregory's death in May 1085, Anselm was listed as his preferred successor in Gregory's final testament.⁵⁸¹ However, Anselm died in March 1086 and the position instead passed to Desiderius (Pope Victor III) in May 1086.⁵⁸² After Anselm's death, two biographies were written to highlight the pious nature of his life in order to have him canonized: Pseudo-Bardone's *Vita Anselmi episcopi Lucensis* and Rangerius of Lucca's *Vita metrica S. Anselmi lucensis episcopi*.⁵⁸³ Both authors were concerned with demonstrating Anselm's life-long devotion to the reform and the church.⁵⁸⁴ He was canonized by Pope Victor III in 1087.

The texts describe the close relationship between the bishop and the countess. The *Vita Anselmi* described Anselm as Matilda's advisor who conceived the righteous governance while Matilda was the pious executor:

Illa pro pietate matris sollicitabatur, ille gubernandi artem meditabatur; illa potestatem exercebat, ille regebat; illa praeceptum et ille dedit consilium. Excellebat tamen ille in omnibus, quia obedierunt sanctitati suae tam ipsa, quam sui omnes, plus tamen ipsa.⁵⁸⁵

Rangerius's *Vita Metrica* echoes the sentiments shared in the *Vita Anselmi* regarding Anselm's spiritual guidance of Matilda, and their close relationship.⁵⁸⁶ This relationship between Matilda and Anselm is also described in Matilda's biography. Donizo acknowledges the guidance that Anselm offered Matilda, drawing on the relationship between the Virgin Mary and the apostle John to describe it: 'Gregorius presul Romanus, ut egit Iesus / In cruce qui moriens dat

⁵⁸¹ Gregory VII, *The Register of Pope Gregory VII, 1073-1085*, Appendix 3: 445–6.

⁵⁸² Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, 144–5.

⁵⁸³ Paolo Golinelli, 'Dall'agiografia alla storia: le "Vitae" di Sant'Anselmo di Lucca', in *Sant'Anselmo, Mantova e la lotta per le Investiture: convegno internazionale di studi (Mantova, 23-24-25 maggio 1986)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli (Bologna: Patron Editore, 1987), 27–61; Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130*, 27; Francesca Guerri, 'Nihil Terrenum, Nihilque Carnale in Ea: Matilda of Tuscany and Anselm of Lucca during the Investiture Controversy', *Storicamente* 13 (2017); Rangerius of Lucca, *Sancti Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis Vita, a Rangerio Successore Suo, Saeculo XII Ineunte, Latino Carmine Scripta*, ed. Vincentio de la Fuente (Madrid: Typis Viduae et Filii E. Aguado, 1870); Pseudo-Bardone, 'Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis'; Rangerius of Lucca, 'Vita Metrica Anselmi Lucensis Episcopi.'

⁵⁸⁴ Cushing, *Papacy and Law in the Gregorian Revolution*, 63.

⁵⁸⁵ Pseudo-Bardone, 'Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis', 19; Creber, 'Extracts from Pseudo-Bardo, Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis on Matilda of Tuscany.' '[Matilda] was moved by maternal piety; [Anselm] thought of the art of governing. She exercised power; he governed. She issued commands; and he gave counsel.'

⁵⁸⁶ Rangerius of Lucca, *Sancti Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis Vita, a Rangerio Successore Suo, Saeculo XII Ineunte, Latino Carmine Scripta*, ll. 3565–82, ll. 7021–4; David J. Hay, 'The Campaigns of Countess Matilda of Canossa (1046--1115): An Analysis of the History and Social Significance of a Woman's Military Leadership' (PhD, Toronto, University of Toronto, 2000), 105–6.

discipulo genitricem, / Commisit dominam sic Anselmo comitissam.⁵⁸⁷ This sentiment is expanded upon later when Anselm is commended for his ‘precious counsel.’⁵⁸⁸

There is evidence which suggests that Matilda informed both accounts. Pseudo-Bardone cites Matilda as his source on several occasions in the *Vita Anselmi*, using phrases such as *narrante de se ipsa domna Mathilda venerabili comitissa* and *sub domnae Mathildae comitissae narratio didici et testimonio*.⁵⁸⁹ Matilda’s ties to Rangerius’s *Vita Metrica* are less straightforward but still present. The dedicatory preface from the *Vita Metrica*’s original manuscript (now lost) is copied in the *Vita Mathildis*.⁵⁹⁰ It is unclear why Donizo recorded it but it may have been to commemorate the existing relationship between Matilda and Rangerius, as she invested him as bishop of Lucca in 1099.⁵⁹¹ The copied dedication suggests that Matilda worked closely with Rangerius on the text, perhaps even as a patron. Matilda’s involvement with both the *Vita Anselmi* and the *Vita Metrica* suggests that Matilda was probably also involved in the campaign to have Anselm canonized. Paired with Matilda’s long-time relationship with the bishop-saint, her involvement suggest that she intended to actively curate and propagate a legacy for Anselm.

4.2.2 *The Uncorrupted Body and the Disappearance of the Tomb*

Matilda’s involvement with Anselm’s legacy was not limited to these biographies. Donizo’s *Vita* notes that Matilda was responsible for Anselm’s burial in Mantua and frames the act as Matilda working on behalf of the recently deceased Gregory VII: ‘Quem sibi comissa per Gregorium Comitissa, / Ut decuit digne sepelivet mesta benigne. / Artus Anselmi condivit Mantua terris.’⁵⁹² Pseudo-Bardone’s recollection of the burial included Matilda, but describes that the Bishop Bonizo of Sutri, aided by the holy spirit whom he had summoned, insisted Anselm be buried *in episcopo episcopus* (at the Cathedral of San Pietro in Mantua) rather than at the monastery of San Benedetto:

⁵⁸⁷ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, ll. 284–6; Guerri, ‘Nihil Terrenum, Nihilque Carnale in Ea.’ Guerri translate the passage as: ‘[...] As Jesus dying on the cross had entrusted his mother to his disciple John, Pope Gregory [VII] entrusted the lady, Countess Matilda to Anselm [of Lucca].’

⁵⁸⁸ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ll. 289–90. *Concilii magni vir hic angelus hic fuit annis; / Consilium cuius sequitur Comitissa venustum.*

⁵⁸⁹ Pseudo-Bardone, ‘Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis’; Creber, ‘Extracts from Pseudo-Bardo, Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis on Matilda of Tuscany.’ Translation by Alison Creber. Respectively, the passages are ‘In the narrative told by the venerable Countess Lady Matilda’ and ‘under Lady Matilda, Countess, I learned of the testimony.’

⁵⁹⁰ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, 154–5.

⁵⁹¹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 52: 158–61.

⁵⁹² Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ll. 375–8. ‘The sad but good Countess Matilda, working through Gregory, gave him a proper burial, as it befitted him. The body of Anselm is preserved in the territory of Mantua.’

Rogavit itaque, quoad vixit, quatenus in capitulo monasterii sancti Benedicti, [...] unde frater ipse ac monachus fuit, sepulturae commendaretur; et cum, concedentibus episcopo atque comitissa caeterisque omnibus, iam deferretur ad monasterium corpus, affuit subito reverendissimus Sutriensis episcopus dominus Bonizo, quem et Spiritus sanctus suscitavit, ut clamaret dignum esse, ut in episcopio episcopus sepeliretur.⁵⁹³

Pseudo-Bardone's account notes the presence other reformers which suggests that the event had itself attracted the attention of the reforming community, demonstrating Anselm's importance and notoriety during the period.⁵⁹⁴ Bonizo of Sutri also wrote on the event, declaring that Anselm was buried in San Pietro, near the altar dedicated to God, Jesus Christ, Mary the Virgin, and others. He described Anselm's tomb as an ornately decorated marble casket.⁵⁹⁵ Rangerius of Lucca's biography of Anselm, which states that Matilda made arrangements for the burial of the bishop-saint, also described Anselm's tomb as a sarcophagus: 'In parasceve, Matilda prospiciente / Quaedam ceca, loco nata Coloniola, / Post venias fletusque graves devota tapeto / Sarcophagi faciem tersit et auxit opem.'⁵⁹⁶ Together, these accounts seem to suggest that Matilda coordinated the burial and that she probably selected a marble sarcophagus for the Anselm, paralleling Matilda's burial for her own mother.

While the body of the saint is still displayed in the main altar of San Pietro, it is not clear whether Anselm's *locello marmoreo* survives. The sarcophagus does not appear to have been a part of the 1590s renovation of San Pietro when the new main altar was constructed.⁵⁹⁷ Thus, locating Anselm's sarcophagus requires some detective work and hypothesizing.

⁵⁹³ Pseudo-Bardone, 'Vita Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis', 24. 'He prayed therefore, as long as he lived, in the monastery of St Benedict [...] where he was to be buried with his fellow monks; and when, in the presence of the bishops, the countess [Matilda] and the rest who brought the body down to the monastery, the most revered Bishop Bonizo of Sutri, was made by the Holy Spirit worthy to speak up that the bishop [Anselm] should be buried in the bishop's seat.'

⁵⁹⁴ Robinson, *The Papal Reform of the Eleventh Century*, 39.

⁵⁹⁵ Rodolfo Signorini, 'Per la storia della salma di S. Anselmo e delle sue traslazioni', in *Sant'Anselmo, Mantova e la lotta per le Investiture: convegno internazionale di studi (Mantova, 23-24-25 maggio 1986)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli (Bologna: Patron Editore, 1987), 97-118; Pietro Torelli, *L'Archivio capitolare della Cattedrale di Mantova fino alla caduta dei Bonacolsi*, vol. III, Pubblicazioni della R. Accademia Virgiliana di Mantova. ser. I. Monumenta (Verona: R. Accademia Virgiliana di Mantova, 1924). '...in locello marmoreo comptum et ornatum...iuxta altare quod est dedicatum et consecratum ad honorem Dei et domini nostri Iesu Christi et S. Mariae semper virginis et eiusdem supradicti sancti Apostoli Petri ad Vincula et S. Silvestri summi pontificia et sanctorum martyrum Gervasii et Protasii.'

⁵⁹⁶ Rangerius of Lucca, 'Vita Metrica Anselmi Lucensis Episcopi', ll. 7023-4. 'In preparation for Matilda's provisions in the small settlement, the place of his birth after the tears flowed on the carpet and sarcophagus, she wiped her face and was prompted to increase aid.'

⁵⁹⁷ Donesmondi, *Dell'istoria ecclesiastica di Mantova*, 358-9. *Poscia havendo trasportato più in alto l'Altare maggiore, col pretioso corpo di Sant'Anselmo novamente vestito in habito pontificale, che sotto fù trovato esser vestito da monaco di San Benedetto, per essere stato di quella Religione, come fù detto; vi fece far sopra esso altare un gran tabernacolo di forma piramidale, con molta spesa, & artificio, tutto indorato con vaghe figure intorno di rilievo, d'altezza smisurata: il quale rende oltre modo maestevole il Coro.*

According to an eighteenth-century history of Saint Anselm, in 1392 the bishop-saint's tomb was opened and the body—described as uncorrupted—was paraded through the streets of Mantua before being redressed and reinterred, though this record does not specify where.⁵⁹⁸ In 1395 Jacobello and Pietro Paolo dalle Masegne were hired to rebuild San Pietro and added a side chapel dedicated to Anselm, where the patron saint was interred in an altar dedicated to S. George.⁵⁹⁹ Sometime during the life of Francesco II Gonzaga (1466-1519), Anselm's body was moved to a purpose-built chapel to the right of the entrance of the cathedral, and in 1545 the body was moved to its present location under the main altar (Figure 61).⁶⁰⁰ It appears both moves were concerned only with his corporeal remains.

What happened to the original tomb of Anselm? A lead-lined wooden coffin, reported to have been inside the marble sarcophagus which held Anselm's body, is now located inside the sacristy of the cathedral.⁶⁰¹ This wooden coffin is first mentioned in the sixteenth century and may not be original as there is no earlier documentation of it, though local tradition has associated it with Anselm. Considering it is located near the wooden casket of Ercole Gonzaga—a sixteenth-century bishop, papal legate to the council of Trent, and noted reformer—it is entirely possible that Anselm's wooden casket was fashioned as a tertiary relic in order to link one reforming bishop to another.

There has not been much historical investigation of Anselm's original tomb: church historians have typically been more interested in the miraculously uncorrupted body of Anselm than the object that held him. This corporeal focus may explain why it is so difficult to assess whether the original sarcophagus still survives and where it may have been originally located: the body and sarcophagus could have been parted as early as 1395; and the tomb, which would no longer have held the body of the bishop-saint, could have undergone a number of physical or locational changes since then.

⁵⁹⁸ Andrea Rota, *Notizie storiche di S. Anselmo vescovo di Lucca e protettore di Mantova* (Verona: Per Pierantonio Berno libraio nella Via de'Lioni, 1733).

⁵⁹⁹ Signorini, 'Per la storia della salma di S. Anselmo e delle sue traslazioni', 101.

⁶⁰⁰ Donesmondi, *Dell'istoria ecclesiastica di Mantova*, 342. *Posciarivoglio l'occhio del pensiero al glorioso Sant'Anselmo vescovo di Lucca & avvocato della città di Mantova, il cui sacro corpo da che fa riposto nella chiesa Cattedrale al tempo di Matilda, che passamano trecent'anni, mai era stato veduto; e propostoui d'honorarlo quanto più poteva; gli fece fabricare una sontuosissima Capella in San Pietro a man destra nell'entrare, (doppo haverlo processionalmente, e co riguardeuole apparato fatto portare per la Città) religiosamente per le mani del Vescovo Uberti lo fece riporre.* In relation to the body's movement to its present day location, see page 173: *...e'l Cardinale levando il corpo di Sant'Anselmo, ch'era in una Cappella dalla parte destra, solennemente lo collocò sotto all'Altar maggiore, ch'allora fa fatto; ordinando, ch'ogn'anno fosse mostrato nel giorno della sua festa, che viene a diciotto di Marzo: E soleva farlo vestire in habito di Cardinale (come anco s'è detto) conciosia che vivendo fosse di cotal dignità ornato.*

⁶⁰¹ Signorini, 'Per la storia della salma di S. Anselmo e delle sue traslazioni', 109.

Recently Arturo Calzona has argued that the tomb of Anselm may be the ‘city-gate’ sarcophagus located in the cathedral (Figures 62, 63a,b).⁶⁰² The sarcophagus (without the lid, which is of later construction and was likely added in the sixteenth century to commemorate John Bonus) is 230 x 115 x 93 cm. The date is a matter of debate. Arturo Carlo Quintavale has proposed that the sarcophagus is wholly medieval dating to the late-twelfth century.⁶⁰³ Francesco Molesini agrees that the entire sarcophagus is a medieval creation, possibly of the twelfth century, designed to mimic Early Christian sarcophagi.⁶⁰⁴ He points to the differently styled hair, simple smooth footwear, and linear fabric folds.⁶⁰⁵ He also posits that it was unlikely to have been an Early Christian object because of Mantua’s status as a small, rural community following the fall of the Roman Empire.⁶⁰⁶ However, this theory neglects the transmission of marble objects across the peninsula during the eleventh century, as was the case with Beatrice’s sarcophagus. Furthermore, the city-gates formula was not known to have been copied in the Middle Ages.

Calzona suggests that it was likely an early Christian creation because it fits into a relatively small group of sarcophagi (the ‘city-gates’ group).⁶⁰⁷ He argues that the sarcophagus resembles other similarly dated late antique sarcophagi of the fourth and fifth centuries, though he suggests that it was partially recarved in the medieval period, and it was originally unfinished late antique work being adapted for new use.⁶⁰⁸ Scholars agree the right side of the sarcophagus was carved by a later hand than the front and other side of the sarcophagus.⁶⁰⁹ Other examples of the city-gate type such as the fourth-century Louvre (Figures 64a,b) and Sant’Ambrogio sarcophagi (Figures 65a,b), and the early-fifth century sarcophagus at Ancona Cathedral (Figures 66a,b), depict the sacrifice of Abraham and Moses’s receipt of the Law

⁶⁰² Arturo Calzona, ‘L’altercatio tra Mantova e Canossa: Immagini “diverse” al servizio della Riforma’, in *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa: tra castelli, monasteri e città*, ed. Arturo Calzona, Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia, Italy), and Civici musei di Reggio Emilia (Italy) (Milan: Silvana, 2008), 20–49.

⁶⁰³ Arturo Carlo Quintavalle, ‘L’antico ritrovato, città architettura, figura. In San Caprasio di Aulla, il castello di Berceto, i sarcofagi del Sant’Ambrogio di Milano e del Duomo di Mantova’, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Medioevo: immagini e ideologie: atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, 23-27 Settembre 2002, Milan: Electa, 2005), 337–63.

⁶⁰⁴ Francesco Molesini, ‘Una nuova proposta di datazione per il sarcofago tardoromano del Duomo di Mantova e la scultura paleocristiana del Mantovano’, *Civiltà mantovana* 37, no. 113 (2002): 42.

⁶⁰⁵ Molesini, 42.

⁶⁰⁶ Molesini, 45–6.

⁶⁰⁷ Calzona, Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia, Italy), and Civici musei di Reggio Emilia (Italy), *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa*, 43.

⁶⁰⁸ Calzona, ‘L’altercatio tra Mantova e Canossa: Immagini “diverse” al servizio della Riforma’, 42–4.

⁶⁰⁹ Molesini, ‘Una nuova proposta di datazione per il sarcofago tardoromano del Duomo di Mantova e la scultura paleocristiana del Mantovano’, 44–5; Calzona, Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia, Italy), and Civici musei di Reggio Emilia (Italy), *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa*, 43; Quintavalle, ‘L’antico ritrovato, città architettura, figura. In San Caprasio di Aulla, il castello di Berceto, i sarcofagi del Sant’Ambrogio di Milano e del Duomo di Mantova.’

under a series of arches. This appears to be a similar configuration to San Pietro (Figure 67), though identifying aspects such as the kneeling figure of Isaac, have been cut away. Therefore, even with medieval re-carving, it appears the San Pietro sarcophagus fits into the ‘city-gates’ type of Early Christian sarcophagi.

The plaque on the lid of the sarcophagus indicates the tomb held the body of John Bonus who died in 1249. Alongside the evidence of medieval re-carving, this has led to some scholars to believe the tomb was procured specifically for Bonus.⁶¹⁰ However, 1543 is the earliest confirmable date for the sarcophagus holding Bonus is remains, and the lid itself bears evidence of being made altogether separate from the sarcophagus.⁶¹¹ From 1543, it was placed in Sant’Agnes of Mantua until it eventually was moved to San Pietro in the 1830s and placed in its current position in 1926.⁶¹²

4.2.3 Imagery and Connotations

The most compelling argument that this sarcophagus may have belonged to Anselm is the imagery which adorns the face of it as it had specific pro-papal connotations relevant to the eleventh-century papal reformers. The San Pietro sarcophagus has sculptural decoration on three sides.⁶¹³ The front of the sarcophagus, which sustained damage when it was dropped during a move in the late eighteenth-century, likely depicts Christ among the apostles; a typical arrangement for ‘city-gates’ sarcophagi. Though four figures are largely destroyed, their feet survive, indicating there were originally thirteen people in total (Figures 63a,b). The figures stand in front of an arcade of round arches and composite columns. According to the city-gate sarcophagi type, the central figure was probably Christ. His feet and the platform that he stood upon, the drapery of which cascades over the edge of the sarcophagus, are all that remain. To his immediate left may have been a female figure, identified by the floor-length robes. In other late antique ‘city gate’ sarcophagi the figure is sometimes washing Christ’s feet and may be Mary Magdalen (Figures 64-66). The remaining, less-damaged apostles are dressed in classicizing, calf-length robes with naturalistic, though still stylized, folds. The figures stand in attention to Christ in various poses and appear to be holding scrolls.

⁶¹⁰ Marion Lawrence, ‘A Gothic Reworking of an Early Christian Sarcophagus’, *Art Studies*, no. VII (1928): 89–153.

⁶¹¹ Molesini, ‘Una nuova proposta di datazione per il sarcofago tardoromano del Duomo di Mantova e la scultura paleocristiana del Mantovano’, 35.

⁶¹² Molesini, 35; *Matilde e il tesoro dei Canossa*, 42.

⁶¹³ The back of the sarcophagus has no carving.

On the right end of the sarcophagus is another tripartite scene carved in relief (Figure 67). Again, the figures appear under an arcade, carved in shallow relief compared to the depth of the frontal scene. The columns on either side of the central figure are of different types; the left column is round and has a layered acanthus leaf capital, while the right column is an octagonal column with a more traditional Corinthian capital. Under the central arch appears a veiled woman. On either side are bearded men; the man on the left holds a scroll, pointing to it with two fingers, while the man on the right gestures with an open hand to the woman in the centre. On the left end of the sarcophagus a wedding scene is carved in relief under a shallow arcade with octagonal columns and foliated capitals surmounted by towers (Figure 68). A veiled woman (on the left) shakes the hand of a man (on the right) who holds a scroll. Between them appears a notary, holding a stylus and tablet. Under the right arch a beardless man stands on a rock, perhaps Moses on Mount Sinai, receiving a tablet from the hand of God. Under the left arch a bearded man makes a blessing gesture.

However, it is not these end scenes which bear potential links to Anselm, Matilda, and the reform. Rather, it is the imagery of the sarcophagus's front. The frontal scene depicts the *traditio legis*, a motif commonly found on Early Christian sarcophagi which shows Christ imparting the New Covenant, the New Testament counterpart to the Old Covenant given to Moses.⁶¹⁴ Early Christian *traditio legis* scenes borrowed imagery from Old Testament instances of divine law, such as Moses with the commandments, to portray the legitimacy of the Church's authority. André Grabar has observed that the iconography of *traditio legis* is inherently tied to the imagery of Roman imperial authority.⁶¹⁵ The utilization of such established forms was not intended to further the cause of Roman imperial leaders but rather to subvert them. By appropriating models of imperial authority for themselves, early Christians sought to defy the ruling mandate of the (pagan) Romans who would rule after Constantine.⁶¹⁶

The *traditio legis* motif underwent a revival in the Middle Ages, showing the malleability of the image. Armin Bergmeier has discussed medieval interpretations of the iconography of *traditio legis*. He notes that under the Carolingians the scene became increasingly associated with papal primacy, often expressed as a synthesis of the *traditio legis*

⁶¹⁴ Tom Devonshire Jones, Linda Murray, and Peter Murray, eds., 'Traditio Legis (the Giving of Law)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art and Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁶¹⁵ André Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of Its Origins*, The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 10, 1961 (London: Routledge, 1980), 41–4.

⁶¹⁶ Lee M. Jefferson, 'Revisiting the Emperor Mystique: The Traditio Legis as an Anti-Imperial Image', in *The Art of Empire: Christian Art in Its Imperial Context*, ed. Lee M. Jefferson and Robin Margaret Jensen (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2015), 49–86.

and the *traditio clavium* in which Peter received the keys and Paul the law from Christ.⁶¹⁷ According to Bergmeier, medieval instances of *traditio legis* were meant to highlight the role of the apostles in the distribution of the new holy law as promised by Christ. Following Urban II and the first crusade, the *traditio legis* was transformed into a motif emphasising the value of spreading Christianity to infidels, and the proselytizing role of the apostles.⁶¹⁸ However, Bergmeier rejects a ‘political reading’ of medieval adaptations of the *traditio legis* and dismisses ‘Rome’s political claim to primacy over other bishoprics’ as a legitimate interpretative mode for the theme.⁶¹⁹ According to him, the effect of papal supremacy on regional politics—that Rome was the ultimate authority on Earth, according to Gregory VII’s *Dictatus papae*—can be separated from the missionary goals of the Crusades. As demonstrated in Chapters Two and Three, this position is untenable. It defies the complexity of papal politics in the eleventh and twelfth centuries wherein papal primacy went hand-in-hand with the expulsion of heretics within the Holy Land. Bergmeier’s distinction between the political and religious is a modern one, not supported by a close reading of the period where the religious was often political, and objects with religious connotations became signifiers of allegiance. The assertion of papal authority was at the heart of the crusades, appearing within the larger campaign against infidels and other threats to the Church. Papal supremacy was not simply a religious doctrine; it had political effects including the estrangement between the *regnum* and the papacy. This was not just incidental, but inherent to the Church’s insistence that it constituted the supreme earthly power, above all other institutions. Thus, papal primacy cannot be discarded as a plausible reading of *traditio legis* imagery in the Middle Ages. If one accepts that *traditio legis* was employed at the time of the crusades to depict the duty of Christians to proselytize and reclaim the Levant, one must also accept that this was a direct product of papal primacy as an inherently political doctrine.

In the eleventh-century consolidation of papal authority, papal ideology already overlapped with and began to eclipse imperial forms. The *Dictatus papae* put forth the concept of papal expropriation of imperial representation in the eighth stated power: *Quod solus possit uti imperialibus insigniis*. Though it primarily referred to the use of official imperial insignia, it was understood to be an assertion of papal control over the entirety of the *regnum*. Implicit to this were also the methods and iconography used to describe imperial leadership. Therefore,

⁶¹⁷ Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, 47.

⁶¹⁸ Armin F. Bergmeier, ‘The Traditio Legis in Late Antiquity and Its Afterlives in the Middle Ages’, *Gesta* 56, no. 1 (2017): 46–52.

⁶¹⁹ Bergmeier, 52.

the reuse of early Christian models of imperial subversion such as the *traditio legis* could have been an impactful way for medieval reformers to visually describe the principle of papal supremacy and their duty to enforce it.

Calzona suggests the selection of an antique marble tomb for Anselm may have been related to the fashioning of Mantua as a new Christian Rome in the ‘*stato canusino*’ (Canossan state) in which church dedications (San Paolo, San Pietro, and San Lorenzo) during the lifetime of Boniface, Beatrice, and Matilda were used to mirror the most important churches of Rome.⁶²⁰ This reading is consistent given the rise of *romanitas* during this period which Matilda may have promoted with the selection of Beatrice’s sarcophagus.

As discussed above in Chapter Three, the 1080s were a decade of shifting allegiances within Mantua and it is possible that this sarcophagus was meant to induce pro-papal sentiments within the city by gifting the city’s bishop-saint with a sarcophagus of prestigious material. Furthermore, the *traditio legis* iconography may have drawn on Anselm’s prominent role in the reform and to his contributions to the development of canon law which were fundamental to the conceptualization of papal authority. Additionally, a more personal connection may lie in the bishop-saint’s origins. Anselm was likely educated in Milan and was perhaps made a canon at Sant’Ambrogio in his early days.⁶²¹ As mentioned above, at Sant’Ambrogio is a city-gates sarcophagus from (Figures 66a,b) the tenth century formed the base of the pulpit.⁶²² Perhaps Matilda, aware of this, chose the San Pietro sarcophagus to associate Anselm with the revered Saint Ambrose, another bishop-saint from antiquity and one of the Four Doctors of the early Church.

To conclude, given their close relationship and the contemporary accounts of her involvement in his burial, Matilda is the most likely candidate to have commissioned Anselm’s tomb. Her involvement with the two posthumous *vitae* demonstrates that she was interested in actively shaping Anselm’s legacy. Furthermore, as Rangerius refers to a sarcophagus in the *Vita Metrica* (‘sarcophagi’⁶²³) and Bonizo describes a casket made of marble (‘*in locello marmoreo comptum et ornatum*’⁶²⁴), it is highly probable that the bishop-saint was initially

⁶²⁰ Calzona, ‘L’altercatio tra Mantova e Canossa: Immagini “diverse” al servizio della Riforma’, 41.

⁶²¹ Cushing, *Papacy and Law in the Gregorian Revolution*, 44.

⁶²² Anat Tcherikover, ‘The Pulpit of Sant’Ambrogio at Milan’, *Gesta* 38, no. 1 (1999): 35–66. Tcherikover primarily focuses on the pulpit rather than the base, though it appears that the sarcophagus base has not been subject to the same medieval interventions as the pulpit.

⁶²³ Rangerius of Lucca, ‘Vita Metrica Anselmi Lucensis Episcopi’, ll. 7023–4.

⁶²⁴ Signorini, ‘Per la storia della salma di S. Anselmo e delle sue traslazioni’; Torelli, *L’Archivio capitolare della Cattedrale di Mantova fino alla caduta dei Bonacolsi. ...in locello marmoreo comptum et ornatum...iuxta altare quod est dedicatum et consecratum ad honorem Dei et domini nostri Iesu Christi et S. Mariae semper virginis et*

interred in a marble tomb. Although many questions remain concerning the sarcophagus at San Pietro, its frontal display of the *traditio legis* scene would have been appropriate for a major proponent of the papal reform such as Anselm. Furthermore, Matilda could have hoped to achieve similar diplomatic results as she did with her gifts to Geminianus and Modena as discussed in Chapter Two; an ancient Roman marble sarcophagus would have made a prestigious gift whose imagery would have reinforced the ideals of papal supremacy.

4.3 Matilda's Near Posthumous Legacy: The Pavement at San Benedetto al Polirone

After a long illness Matilda died at the age of sixty-nine, on 24 July 1115 at Bondeno di Roncore, near Reggiolo in Reggio Emilia. In May of that year, she issued her penultimate charter which both acknowledged the grave state of her health and reconfirmed the extensive donations she made to the church of San Benedetto al Polirone in November 1114.⁶²⁵ She was buried in the abbey church at San Benedetto, about seven kilometres outside Mantua (Figure 69), though contemporary details of her burial are unclear. A marble sarcophagus and floor mosaic within the Santa Maria Chapel have long been associated with her burial there and may therefore represent her legacy as it was interpreted by her supporters at San Benedetto in the period following her death and the subsequent dispute regarding her lands.⁶²⁶ If intended for Matilda's burial, they may be interpreted as a part of the long term patronage relationship between her and the abbey, and assessed with regard to the ideological aspects which Matilda had spent her life impressing upon those within her domain, including those at the abbey.

As mentioned above in Chapter One, San Benedetto had strongly established ties to the Canossan family: it was founded by Matilda's paternal grandfather Tedald in 1007 and benefitted from the patronage of her father Boniface.⁶²⁷ In addition to this established familial relationship with San Benedetto, Matilda's decision to be buried there may have been a

eiusdem supradicti sancti Apostoli Petri ad Vincula et S. Silvestri summi pontificia et sanctorum martyrum Gervasii et Protasii.

⁶²⁵ Matilde, Goez, and Goez, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 138: 352–7; 135: 344–6.

⁶²⁶ Golinelli, *L'Abbazia di Matilde: Arte e storia in un grande monastero dell'Europa Benedettina [1007-2007]. San Benedetto Po, 31 agosto 2008 - 11 gennaio 2009*, 104; Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130*, 52; Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone'; Paolo Piva, 'La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)', in *Studi matildici. Atti e memorie del III Convegno di studi Matildici. Reggio Emilia, 7-9 ottobre 1977* (Studi matildici. Atti e memorie del III Convegno di studi Matildici. Reggio Emilia, 7-9 ottobre 1977, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1978), 243–54; Quintavalle and Calzona, *Wiligelmo e Matilde*, 97; Spike, *Matilda di Canossa (1046-1115)*, 92; Stiegemann et al., *Canossa 1077*, 65–6; Verzár, 'Picturing Matilda of Canossa: Medieval Strategies of Representation', 75–90.

⁶²⁷ Pierpaolo Bonacini, 'Il monastero di S. Benedetto Polirone: formazione del patrimonio fondiario e rapporti con l'aristocrazia italiana nei secoli XI e XII', *Archivio Storico Italiano* 158, no. 4 (586) (2000): 623–78.

continuation of a patronage relationship built on mutual loyalty to the eleventh-century papal reform. Matilda was actively involved in the monastery's affairs and encouraged it in supporting the papal reform. Sometime between 1074 and 1077, Matilda placed the monastery under the protection of Pope Gregory VII who in turn entrusted it to Hugh of Cluny. Though the relationship was mostly titular in nature, it ensured the appointment of reform-minded abbots who were approved by Cluny.⁶²⁸ Matilda continued to nourish this reform-minded development through material support and physical defence. Her acts of patronage to San Benedetto are well documented and appear at least eighteen times between 1092 and her death in 1115 within her extant records.⁶²⁹ The first instance of material support to the monastery in 1092 makes clear Matilda's stance on the encroaching *regnum*, calling Henry IV a tyrant. This term only appears once in all of her existing charters which suggests that the receiving institution, San Benedetto, was sympathetic to her views on the king.⁶³⁰ It appears that as time went on, Matilda only strengthened her ties to the monastery, relying on them as loyal administrators: she transferred both a Mantuan hospital⁶³¹ and the Gonzaga monastery⁶³² to the administration of the abbey. This relationship does not appear to have been one-sided and can be observed in the *Liber Vitae* that appears at the end of the Gospels of Matilda (New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M. 492, fols. 102r-105r). Inside the *Liber Vitae* is a document which outlines San Benedetto's obligation to the countess and states that the monks pledged to 'perform rites in her honour until the end of the world.' This document was probably written as a response to a renewed donation and a guarantee of protection made by Matilda in March 1109.⁶³³

In November 1114, Matilda made an extensive donation to San Benedetto, greatly enlarging the holdings of the monastery.⁶³⁴ In April of 1115 she reinstated control of property in Quistello to San Benedetto.⁶³⁵ One month later, Matilda reconfirmed her donations to the monastery. The charter acknowledges Matilda's ill health and makes clear that she intended

⁶²⁸ Glass, *The Sculpture of Reform in North Italy, ca. 1095-1130*, 51–2.

⁶²⁹ Goetz, *Beatrix von Canossa und Tuszien*, 44: 142–3; 67: 200–3; 68: 203–4; 79: 229–31; 80: 231–33; 92: 256–8; 111: 295–7; 112: 297–9; 120: 315–6; 122: 318–20; 123: 320–2; 126: 326–9; 127: 329–31; 129: 333–5; 133: 340–2; 135: 344–6; 137: 349–51; 138: 352–7.

⁶³⁰ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, *Die Urkunden und Briefe der Markgräfin Mathilde von Tuszien*, 44: 143. 'Qui prefatus abas de monasterio suo propter persecucionem Einrici tiranni congregacionem fugiens apud predictam commitissam in montanis sustentatus est.'

⁶³¹ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 67: 200–3.

⁶³² Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 68: 203–4.

⁶³³ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 112: 297–9; 113: 300–1. For more on the *Liber Vitae* and its relationship to the gospels, see Chapter 2.

⁶³⁴ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 135: 344–6.

⁶³⁵ Matilde, Goetz, and Goetz, 137: 349–51.

the rights of the monastery to be upheld into perpetuity, including large fines for anyone who violated the charter. At the outset of the charter Matilda is recorded to have said aloud: ‘Quisquis in sanctis ac venerabilibus locis aliquid de suis contulerit rebus, centuplum accipiet et, quod melius est, vitam possidebit eternam.’⁶³⁶ While this phrase underlines Matilda’s expectation of reciprocal spiritual advantages, it is possible that there were also material expectations of the monastery. Though no documents exist regarding the construction of a burial monument which might attest to this, Matilda may have expected material acknowledgement in return for her extensive 1114 and 1115 donations, particularly in light of her failing health.

It is likely that Matilda was first buried outside the church and was moved inside in the 1130s.⁶³⁷ Paolo Piva has suggested that Matilda was first buried in a *sacellum* entirely separate from both the main church at San Benedetto and the Santa Maria chapel.⁶³⁸ Piva draws on an epitaph recorded in 1595 by historian Arnold Wyon, which both Piva and Quintavalle have connected to the 1151 burial. Piva suggests it was found in some Polironian manuscript which documented the inscription:

Hoc ego marmoreo claudor comitissa sepulchro / Nomine quondam dicta Mathildis
eram / mille annis domini cursis centum decemque / Quinque simul propria carne soluta
fui / Occubui victura deo dum quintus haberet / Mensis residui julius octo dies / Mantua
cum fuerim princeps tibi numina lauda / larga fuit hic monachis plebs pia vive memor
/ Quum tibi coenobium fundaverit hocque sacellum / Et Theodaldus qui mihi dulcis
avus.⁶³⁹

Piva goes on to suggest that the last two lines of the inscription suggest the burial was not inside the main church, or even the Santa Maria chapel, but in a different place altogether outside of both: a small shrine dedicated to Matilda. He writes that later scholars took this as evidence of the chapel’s existence as a purpose-built resting place for Matilda rather than a separate

⁶³⁶ Matilde, Goez, and Goez, 138: 352–7. ‘Whoever will bestow anything of his possessions on holy and venerable places will receive a hundred-fold, and what is better, he will possess eternal life.’

⁶³⁷ Golinelli, ‘Matilde dopo matilde (1115-2015)’, 41.

⁶³⁸ Piva, ‘La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)’, 243–4.

⁶³⁹ Piva, 243–45; Arturo Carlo Quintavalle, ‘The Geography of Death: Tombs of Saints and Nobles in the Lands of the Canossas’, in *Romanesque Saints, Shrines and Pilgrimage*, ed. John McNeill and Richard Plant (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020), 155. The last three lines, of greatest interest, read: ‘...the faithful, unforgetting monks and people who live here at the monastery [San Benedetto] have established this shrine for thyself [Matilda] and for Theodaldus, my sweet grandfather.’

building. Quintavalle's architectural assessment of the building, as detailed below, suggests the chapel predates Matilda's death and was refashioned for the use.⁶⁴⁰

Paolo Golinelli connects the move of the body to the renovation of the church, the beginning of mosaic work in the main building, and the 1132 visit by Pope Innocent II.⁶⁴¹ Instead, moving Matilda's body may have been a reaction to the dispute regarding the status of Matilda's lands. King Henry V, son of Henry IV and distant cousin of the countess, claimed heirship and took possession of the lands. A few years later in 1128, his successor Lothair III had his claim to the *terra Mathildis* challenged by the anti-King Conrad. To settle the dispute, in 1132 the papacy and Lothair reached an agreement which decided the lands belonged to the Church but would be entrusted to Lothair as a privilege.⁶⁴² Thus, the translation of Matilda's body may have been part of this political dispute where San Benedetto, and by proxy the Pope, asserted their ownership over Matilda and her lands.

It is unclear whether the marble casket already served as her original tomb outside the church or if it was a part of the relocation inside. After the move, Matilda's body is thought to have been first located in the Santa Maria Chapel which is connected to the main abbey church. It was moved several times in order to accommodate local visitors who desired easy access to her remains (Figure 70).⁶⁴³ The sarcophagus is presently located in a shrine outside the sacristy and was moved there in the 1790s.⁶⁴⁴ The earliest reference to Matilda's casket dates to the fourteenth century when it was described as large and consisting of very white alabaster (Figure 71); a fifteenth-century description suggests it remained largely unchanged while Matilda's body occupied the tomb.⁶⁴⁵ Its modern appearance, including the inscription on the lid, the lions upon which it rests, and the *putti* which surround it are all the result of later interventions.⁶⁴⁶ What remains is a plain, rectangular sarcophagus, bereft of decoration. This

⁶⁴⁰ See §4.3.1 *The Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone* for more information regarding the construction of the chapel.

⁶⁴¹ Golinelli, 'Matilde dopo matilde (1115-2015)', 41.

⁶⁴² I. S. Robinson, 'Innocent II and the Empire', in *Pope Innocent II (1130-43): The World vs the City*, ed. John Doran and Damian J. Smith, Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West (London New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 62-4; Lothar, *Die Urkunden Lothars III. und der Kaiserin Richenza*, ed. Emil von Ottenthal and Hans Hirsch, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae 8 (München: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1993), 46: 75-7; 50: 80-2.

⁶⁴³ Piva, 'La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)', 252.

⁶⁴⁴ Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone', 653.

⁶⁴⁵ Holman, n. 31 Holman writes that alabaster was an interchangeable term during the period. See also: Piva, 'La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)', 252.

⁶⁴⁶ Piva, 'La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)', 254; Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone', n. 34. Piva hypothesizes that the four lions upon which the tomb rests may have been from the tomb of Cesare Arsago which were removed by Giambattista Marconi in

selection may speak to the prestigious association of marble during the rise of *romanitas*, a trend which continued after Matilda's death. Additionally, perhaps the lack of decoration lent the tomb austerity and thus, humility. However, this section will not dwell long on the sarcophagus itself as it was heavily modified, particularly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Instead, of interest is the grand pavement which may have appeared beneath Matilda's tomb and its potential iconographic ties to the eleventh-century papal reform.

4.3.1 *The Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone*

The Santa Maria chapel (Figure 72) no longer retains its Romanesque character as it was significantly altered in later centuries. According to Paolo Piva the construction of the chapel corresponded to that of the pavement. The mosaic pavement inside the chapel is dated by an inscription to 1151: *Anno Domini Mille C. L. I. Indictione Xiiii Epacta I. Concvrrentes Vii.*⁶⁴⁷ However, Arturo Carlo Quintavalle suggests that an earlier phase of the chapel existed without mosaic decoration.⁶⁴⁸ The twelfth-century construction likely replaced an early eleventh-century construction from the time of Matilda's paternal grandfather Tedald. Quintavalle indicates this previous phase is evident in the chapel's incorporation into the construction of the new church; he points to both the integration of the chapel's double portico and the subsequent asymmetry of the left side of the church's plan as evidence that the chapel predated the church.⁶⁴⁹ Quintavalle does not draw any conclusions about the significance of such asymmetry, but that the church plan was modified so substantially to incorporate the existing chapel suggests the site was of particular importance. If Matilda was moved inside during the 1130s as previously suggested, it not only seems plausible that the chapel was already in place—a notion only strengthened by Quintavalle's assessment of a previous iteration of the chapel—but that the tomb's placement preceded the mosaics, which may suggest that the mosaics were added to compliment Matilda's tomb. Furthermore, the chapel is recorded to have housed funerary services for the monks, indicating that it was at some point spiritually equipped for such events.⁶⁵⁰ Additionally, the presence of the mosaic pavement indicates the chapel's importance; combined with the iconographic content of the images, it seems plausible

the late-eighteenth century. Holman indicates that the inscription may date to the sixteenth century and lack the paleographical notations of medieval inscriptions. She draws connections to the inscription which appears on Lucrezia della Mirandola's tomb which is dated to 1503.

⁶⁴⁷ Porter, *Lombard Architecture*, 360–1.

⁶⁴⁸ Piva, 'La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)', 7; Quintavalle and Calzona, *Wiligelmo e Matilde*, 97; Stiegemann et al., *Canossa 1077*, 65–7.

⁶⁴⁹ Quintavalle and Calzona, *Wiligelmo e Matilde*, 97.

⁶⁵⁰ Stiegemann et al., *Canossa 1077*, "Mosaikfragment mit figurlicher Darstellung", 65–6.

that the site was intentionally decorated to honour Matilda who had long patronized the abbey and whose intentions were closely aligned with those of the monastery.

4.3.2 The Pavement

The chapel's pavement, finished in 1151, is of great interest for its iconographic content. Perhaps instigated by the dispute over the *terra Mathildis* and laid just a few decades after Matilda's death, the pavement can provide a key to understanding how her legacy was framed by a major beneficiary of her patronage. The chapel contains various traces of the pavement which likely covered the entire floor, indicated by surviving fragments at various positions throughout the chapel (Figure 73). On the lower level of the chapel along the south wall there is a section with a roundel containing a flailing fish with winding, foliated scrolls extending above and below (Figure 74). On the same level, near the passage on the west end of the chapel where it connects to the church, is another preserved area which has four beasts inside roundels and a disembodied human head (Figure 75). Within this same section are the remnants of another inscription which appears to give a date; though it uses a similar formula to the whole inscription that survives near the virtues, due to the present loss, a specific year cannot be discerned. These areas were discovered in the 1970 excavation of the chapel.⁶⁵¹

The most complete area of the pavement is located up a step in an elevated portion of the chapel and consists of five main elements: the four virtues figures, two pairs of encircled figures, two figures on the ends, and on a lower register, a series of inverted beasts (Figure 76). The remaining areas of the mosaic are filled with rinceaux decorated with flowers, geometric shapes, and other foliate designs. In the centre there are the four cardinal virtues (Figure 77), inscribed *Prudentia*, *Justitia*, *Fortitudo*, and *Temperantia*. These female figures do not hold their typical attributes—a book, a scale, weapons, and either an extinguished flame or two vessels, respectively.⁶⁵² Rather, in addition to being labelled, they each hold a palm frond and stand under a rounded arcade supported by horizontally banded columns with Corinthian capitals. The figures are dressed in long robes and adorned with a crown, each one slightly different in character. The figures are largely black and white with accents of golden-yellow on the crowns, fronds, robe collars, faces and hands.

⁶⁵¹ Golinelli, *L'Abbazia di Matilde: Arte e storia in un grande monastero dell'Europa Benedettina [1007-2007]*, San Benedetto Po, 31 agosto 2008 - 11 gennaio 2009, 104; Spike, *Matilda di Canossa (1046-1115)*, 41; Stiegemann et al., *Canossa 1077*, 65–6.

⁶⁵² Shawn R. Tucker, ed., *The Virtues and Vices in the Arts: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2015), 107–8.

The cardinal virtues are shown under the same type of loggia used in Donizo's *Vita* to display Matilda's ancestors and on the city-gates sarcophagus at San Pietro in Mantua.⁶⁵³ Ever-present in the rounded arches of Roman ruins, this architectural device was synonymous with Rome and created a visual link between the cardinal virtues and antiquity. The increasing reuse of Roman objects in the twelfth century may partially explain the figures' appearance and arrangement as they seem to recall the Muses sometimes present on Roman sarcophagi which similarly depicted female figures in classicizing dress, each nested under a round arch with striped, Solomonic columns with Corinthian capitals (Figures 78, 79). The pavement may also be drawing on the use of the Romanesque round arches in manuscripts. As discussed in Chapter One, the loggia had been adapted by rulers as an organizational tool of visual hierarchies and by the twelfth century would have also been associated with authority and rulership. It is possible that the architectural motif may have meant to underline both the virtues' classical origins from pagan antiquity—an indicator of the same *romanitas* considered when selecting her mother's tomb—while simultaneously co-opting the visual language that had developed around rulers in the Middle Ages.

The virtue figures of San Benedetto hold palm fronds which may refer to the biblical sign of victory as in Psalm 91: 'Justus ut palma florebit; sicut cedrus Libani multiplicabitur.'⁶⁵⁴ In his ninth-century text *De Universo*, Rabanus Maurus wrote that the palm was the sign of victory, and he would later describe it as a symbol of those who had displayed acts of faith amongst the persecuted.⁶⁵⁵ Penelope Mayo suggests that Lambert's *Liber Floridus*, compiled between 1090 and 1120, furthered this imagery by directly associating the palm with victory of the Church in Jerusalem after the First Crusade.⁶⁵⁶

In her work on virtues in the Middle Ages, Jennifer O'Reilly noted that the twelfth century brought about a shift in the way virtues were represented. Theologians became more interested in placing the virtues in a theological context and understanding their nature.⁶⁵⁷ The

⁶⁵³ See Chapter One of this thesis for a longer discussion on the use of loggia.

⁶⁵⁴ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Psalmi 91:13. 'The just man shall flourish like the palm; he shall multiply like a cedar in Lebanon.'

⁶⁵⁵ Beati Rabani Mauri, 'De Universo Libri Viginti Duo', in *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 111, *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus, Series Latina* (Paris: Garnier, 1844), XIX, Book 6, cols. 511–2; Beati Rabani Mauri, 'Commentariorum in Ecclesiasticum', in *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 109, *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus, Series Latina* (Paris: Garnier, 1844), col. 929; Penelope C. Mayo, 'The Crusaders under the Palm: Allegorical Plants and Cosmic Kingship in the "Liber Floridus"', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973): 36.

⁶⁵⁶ Mayo, 'The Crusaders under the Palm: Allegorical Plants and Cosmic Kingship in the "Liber Floridus"', 36–8.

⁶⁵⁷ Jennifer O'Reilly, *Studies in the Iconography of the Virtues and Vices in the Middle Ages*, Outstanding Theses in the Fine Arts from British Universities (New York: Garland Pub, 1988), 53.

figures are not engaging in the physical victory over vices as in an early thirteenth-century copy of the twelfth-century *Speculum virginum* (Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, MS. W.72, fol. 31r, Figure 80), yet neither are they depicted in the roundels made popular in Carolingian depictions.⁶⁵⁸ Though the San Benedetto virtues appear unarmed, the defensive action is played out in the arrangement of figures around them.

To the right of the virtues appears the dating inscription which frames two roundels with a unicorn and a dragon-like serpent facing each another (Figure 81). The unicorn has its front right hoof raised and its horn pointing down towards the chest of the dragon, who has raised its clawed foot and opened its mouth to reveal a red tongue. These figures have been interpreted in tandem as an allegory for the defence of the church: the unicorn acts as Christ who battles against Satan, the dragon.⁶⁵⁹ The dragon figure is a probably a reference to Satan's appearance in the Book of Revelation 12:9, where he is described as the 'great dragon, ancient serpent:' 'Et projectus est draco ille magnus, serpens antiquus, qui vocatur diabolus, et Satanas, qui seducit universum orbem: et projectus est in terram, et angeli ejus cum illo missi sunt.'⁶⁶⁰ By the twelfth century the unicorn had developed Christian associations. It was the subject of chapter 36 of the *Physiologus*, a fourth-century text which described the natural world and animals in moralizing terms.⁶⁶¹ According to the text, the unicorn's single horn signified the unity between Christ and God. The *Physiologus* also described the unicorn as shrewd and elusive: 'neither principalities, powers, thrones, nor dominions can comprehend him, nor can hell hold him.'⁶⁶² Coupled with the green and red cross that appears on the unicorn's hindquarter, an intentional connection between the unicorn and Christ seems plausible. The unicorn similarly appears as a Christological symbol at Piacenza in the border of a twelfth century mosaic of the months and labours at San Savino (Figure 82).⁶⁶³ The unicorn of San Savino is accompanied by a virgin and appears amidst armed men engaged in a struggle. Charles E. Nicklies has interpreted this group of figures as the reincarnation of Christ and his

⁶⁵⁸ O'Reilly, 115–6.

⁶⁵⁹ Piva, 'La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)', 246–8.

⁶⁶⁰ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Apocalypse 12:9. 'The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.'

⁶⁶¹ Danielle Jacquart, 'Physiologus', in *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, ed. André Vauchez (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁶⁶² Michael J. Curley, ed., *Physiologus: A Medieval Book of Nature Lore* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 51. 'Acerrimum vero quod di cit eum id est quod neque principatus, neque potestates, neque throni, neque dominationes intelligere potuerunt, nec infernus tenere valuit.'

⁶⁶³ A. Kingsley Porter, 'San Savino at Piacenza II. Ornament. Conclusions', *American Journal of Archaeology* 16, no. 4 (1912): 495–517; Charles E. Nicklies, 'Cosmology and the Labors of the Months at Piacenza: The Crypt Mosaic at San Savino', *Gesta* 34, no. 2 (1995): 108–25; Francesca Tagliatesta, 'Iconography of the Unicorn from India to the Italian Middle Ages', *East and West* 57, no. 1/4 (2007): 175–91.

ability to overcome the strife of the mortal world.⁶⁶⁴ Though the unicorn at San Benedetto does not appear with a virgin as it does at San Savino, the accompanying virgin may have been implied to have been Matilda, whose mortuary remains acted as a powerful substitute for her visual representation. Matilda was not a ‘virgin’—she was married twice and had children who died in infancy—but her own biographer Donizo explicitly compared Matilda to Mary which may indicate the success of Donizo’s framing of Matilda and its impact on her legacy.⁶⁶⁵ Furthermore, the chapel is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Though it is unclear whether the chapel underwent a rededication, this dedication could itself have filled the role of the Virgin, adding a transformative aspect to the space, as well as further associating Matilda with Mary. Where the unicorn/virgin pairing is apparent in the San Savino mosaic, here the coupling of the virgin and unicorn happens in real time; the prayers to the Virgin(s)—Mary and Matilda—conjure up their spiritual presence to fulfil their medieval role.

Moving outwards from the virtues are several paired figures. It must be noted that these figures may not have been intended to act in dialogue with one another; this reading is partially the result of the mosaic’s remnants which have created the appearance of symmetry, but also the product of a desire for narrative uniformity where all the images tie into a larger iconographic plot. Nonetheless, the pairing of these images appears sensible, particularly when otherwise the soldier and creature appear to have no nearby visual equal—both are excluded from their nearest figures’ frames, who turn away from them—and serve no discernible purpose.

To the left of the virtues is the other set of roundels, surrounded by rinceaux designs within a rectangular frame. On the immediate left a man thrusts a spear from his roundel into the griffin which faces him, wounding the creature (Figure 83). Blood spurts forth from the griffin’s chest, indicated by two thin strips of red tile. Dressed in antique style garments, the man who attacks the griffin may represent the harm posed to the church by heretical forces. Because the griffin persisted as a Christological symbol, this pair of figures may refer to the Crucifixion and the stabbing of Christ (the Griffin) by Longinus in John 19:31-37.⁶⁶⁶ This reading is particularly persuasive given the presence of two interrelated relics in nearby Mantua: the Holy Blood and the skeletal remains of Longinus.⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁴ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, Book 2, ll. 169–72. See §1.3.2 *Donizo’s View of the Countess in the Vita Mathildis*.

⁶⁶⁵ Donizo, Book 2, ll. 284–86.

⁶⁶⁶ Piva, ‘La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)’, 248.

⁶⁶⁷ See §3.2.4. *Blood & Bones: Relics in Eleventh-century Mantua*.

The outermost characters of the mosaic are thought to correspond to one another outside the thick black frame which encases the other figures. To the extreme right is an armed figure wielding a shield and sword (Figure 84). On the extreme left is a grotesque figure, composed of a human head with the ears of an ass and long stylized hair, a bird's body, and a tail with a serpent's head which leans in toward the human head (Figure 85). Piva interprets the human-beast figure on the left as a symbol of heresy; through a passage in Donizo's *Vita*, Piva further attributes the figure to Antipope Clement III whom Donizo likened to the beast of the apocalypse.⁶⁶⁸

Compared to the man fighting the griffin who appears more Roman in appearance, this man is dressed in a more medieval-style tunic, holding a 'knightly sword' which became popular during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries.⁶⁶⁹ Though finer shapes can be limited in mosaics, the soldier's sword may reflect changing military aesthetics of the time, as pommel morphology began to shift around 1150. The sword's pommel here appears to be more closely related to Oakeshott's 'Type D' which would have still been considered novel during the creation of the mosaic.⁶⁷⁰ This small detail may suggest that the figure was intentionally designed to mirror contemporary fashion, distinguishing it from the figure with the tunic. If so, this figure can be interpreted in the context of contemporary struggles of the Church. In Matilda's time, it was predominantly the struggle between the papacy and the *regnum* but by the time of the mosaic's creation, the Concordat of Worms had resolved much of the tension, and the paired figures could instead refer to the perceived threat of a Muslim recapture of the Holy Land. The Second Crusade had occurred just a few years before, making it a particularly pressing issue in the minds of Christians.

Underneath the figures runs a Greek meander in which seven creatures are upside down to the viewer (Figures 85a-c). Though most of them are dog-like, there are a few notable exceptions. The third animal from the right appears to be an ibex, and the second a grotesque beast with a human head, an avian body, and a serpent's tail, not unlike the figure that appears on the extreme left of the pavement. The first animal from the right is partially damaged, but what remains resembles the head of the dragon found on the right side of the mosaic, due in

⁶⁶⁸ Piva, 'La Tomba della contessa Matilda (nota filologica)', 248; Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ll. 218–20. Piva cites the second book of the *Vita*, ll. 218–20, where Donizo compares Antipope Clement III to the beast of the apocalypse during his forceful entry into Rome to unseat Gregory VII: *Hic est Guibertus fallax, vastator apertus / Aecclesiae Christi, merito quem signat abissi / Bestia quam vidit dilectus in Apocalipsi*.

⁶⁶⁹ R. Ewart Oakeshott, *The Sword in the Age of Chivalry*, 3rd ed. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 80–94.

⁶⁷⁰ Oakeshott, 80–94.

part to the coloured tongue that flickers out of the mouth, a feature not shared among the other creatures.

The seven inverted animals that run along the lower border may be a reference to the cardinal sins.⁶⁷¹ However, as Jennifer O'Reilly has pointed out, while the cardinal virtues (which included the theological virtues *Fides*, *Spes*, and *Caritas*) were sometimes opposed to their 'contraria' in later medieval art, these 'contraria' did not universally stem from the cardinal sins.⁶⁷² Thus, we need to be cautious when identifying these figures with individual sins. Perhaps these figures were not meant to individually represent specific sins, but to collectively represent the larger concept of heresy, particularly considering the aggressor and defender theme that permeates the non-virtue mosaics. This is supported by the association between canines and the concept of heresy, particularly with the preaching of false gospel and with practitioners of Judaism.⁶⁷³ In his exegesis of Canticles 2.15, Pope Gregory I identified the foxes with heretics who sought to ruin the vineyards of Christianity: 'Capite nobis vulpes parvulas quae demoliuntur vineas: nam vinea nostra floruit.'⁶⁷⁴ From 1143 to 1145, Bernard of Clairvaux wrote extensively on heresy and heretics, referencing the same verse. His exegetical commentary on Canticles 2.15 warned of the dangers that opposed the church and faithful Christians, drawing heavily on the imagery of foxes and dogs to discuss the heretics.⁶⁷⁵ This reading may explain why the figures are inverted to the viewer, who was intended to enter from the church. The view would showcase the four virtues and the scenes depicting the defence of the church while the inverted heretical figures would appear prone.

4.3.3 Heresy and the Defence of Virtues as Images of the Gregorian Reform

The physical and moral struggle between good and evil therefore emerges as a common theme within the surviving parts of the mosaic. This theme can be understood as a caution against heresy in the mortal realm and as a way to promote virtuous Christian conduct.⁶⁷⁶ From this point of view, the figural pairs within the mosaic thus act allegorically, underlining the duty of

⁶⁷¹ O'Reilly, *Studies in the Iconography of the Virtues and Vices in the Middle Ages*, 43–4.

⁶⁷² O'Reilly, 44.

⁶⁷³ Elliott Horowitz, 'Circumcised Dogs from Matthew to Marlowe', *Prooftexts* 27, no. 3 (October 2007): 531–45.

⁶⁷⁴ Keith H. Kendall, 'Mute Dogs, Unable to Bark': Innocent III's Call to Combat Heresy', in *Medieval Church Law and the Origins of the Western Legal Tradition: A Tribute to Kenneth Pennington*, ed. Kenneth Pennington, Wolfgang P. Müller, and Mary E. Sommar (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 170–8.

⁶⁷⁵ Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Bernard of Clairvaux, the 1143/44 Sermons and the 1145 Preaching Mission: From the Domestic to the Lord's Vineyard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁶⁷⁶ Nicklies, 'Cosmology and the Labors of the Months at Piacenza: The Crypt Mosaic at San Savino.'

faithful Christians to defend themselves from heretical ideas both within and without the church. Within this conception, the virtue figures might act as the guiding principles which frame the struggle playing out amongst the other figures. According to the Old Testament Book of Wisdom, the cardinal virtues were the labours of the pursuit of wisdom which existed as the knowledge of God:

Doctrix enim est disciplinae Dei, et electrix operum illius. / Et si justitiam quis diligit, labores hujus magnas habent virtutes: sobrietatem enim et prudentiam docet, et justitiam, et virtutem, quibus utilius nihil est in vita hominibus.⁶⁷⁷

The virtues in the mosaic take on a duality: they represent not only the foundation of a ‘good’ Christian, but also the by-product of adherence to ‘good’ Christianity. Heretics are excluded from this pursuit of wisdom and thus cannot achieve virtuous behaviour. According to Thomas McPherson and Jonathan Harrison, the cardinal virtues represented ‘fundamental and inescapable features of moral or rational (or human) life.’⁶⁷⁸ Thus, if the cardinal virtues are associated with human behaviour, the inverse—sin and heresy—must belong to the realm of inhumanity. This duality is expressed in San Benedetto’s mosaic where heresy is represented as unnatural and takes the form of the beastly figures. That the virtue figures successfully rebuff the heretical figures suggests the pavement’s message is a moralizing one that casts heresy as a sin so evil it demanded physical response. In the context of the extreme shifts in Christianity of the eleventh and twelfth centuries—the 1054 East-West schism, the Investiture Controversy, the First and Second Crusades—the presence of virtue figures at a staunchly reformist abbey may have meant to signal that their practice of Christianity, and thus the reform, was correct and virtuous, and those who did not practise this type of Christianity were heretical, unnatural, and potentially ruinous.

Such a display and defence of virtues only enhances the theory that the chapel of Santa Maria served as Matilda’s burial location. Matilda was considered a virtuous figure by her reform-minded contemporaries, including Hugh of Flavigny, Pseudo-Bardone, and Ekkehard of Aura, who described the countess as a model of virtuousness and a defender of the church.⁶⁷⁹ As a defender of the church, she was then a defender of God’s knowledge, and thus, a defender

⁶⁷⁷ *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, Sapientia 8: 4–7. ‘For she [Wisdom] is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and an associate in his works. And if anyone loves righteousness, her labours are virtues; for she teaches self-control and prudence, justice and courage; nothing in life is more profitable for mortals than these.’

⁶⁷⁸ Thomas McPherson and Jonathan Harrison, ‘Symposium: Christian Virtues’, in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, vol. 37 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 51–82.

⁶⁷⁹ See §1.1.3 *Infiltrating the Boys’ Club: Contemporary Views of Matilda* for more on how Matilda was regarded by her peers.

of virtue as well. Similarly, in the *Vita Mathildis* Donizo explicitly named the cardinal virtues, to describe her:

Latus ista viget, virtutes quattuor illae / Largifluae degunt omni quia tempore secum. / Alta regens iustos regit hanc prudential cunctos; / Discrete vadit, sua temperat acta ducatrix; / Exercet valde pietatem iusticiamque; / Iudicis observant caelestis iura timenda; / Fortis in adversis, minus est elata secundis; Inque fide vera deitatis credula sperat.⁶⁸⁰

Given her long-standing relationship with San Benedetto and their deep relationship to the reforming papacy, it is likely that those at the abbey would have shared this belief about the countess and wanted to immortalize her with a depiction of the moral (and physical) battle she waged against enemies of the church during her lifetime. However, this mosaic may also represent the first instance of how Matilda's afterlife would be shaped by those who sought to wield her legacy for their own gain. Her reputation as an ardent defender of the church would have only enhanced their standing with the papacy; as such, it appears sensible that the abbey should highlight her so vigorously. Furthermore, Matilda's commemoration likely also stemmed from the conclusion of the *terra Mathildis* dispute between the papacy and the *regnum* in 1132. When the dispute ended, it was declared that Saint Peter rightfully owned the land; perhaps the commemorative efforts of the reburial and mosaic pavement were a celebratory response that not only honoured the countess but also served to reassert the Church's claim to her lands and sovereignty from the *regnum* which sought to repossess them. Thus, the themes within the mosaic represent Matilda's usefulness to the Church and may represent the earliest development of Matilda's posthumous legacy as a devout and virtuous defender.

4.4 The Afterlife of Matilda

There is an adage which suggests ordinary people die three deaths: the first is our physical death, the second is when our physical body ceases to exist—buried or otherwise—and the third and final death is when there is no one left who remembers us. The afterlife-cycle for prominent figures is markedly different. As with many powerful figures, Matilda's influence

⁶⁸⁰ Donizo, *Vita di Matilde di Canossa*, ll. 41–8. 'Her [Matilda] fame is even greater since the four virtues, constant companions, flow from within. High prudence holds her, the one who governs righteously; she proceeds with discretion and temperance tempers the actions of the Duchess; She strongly exercises piety and justice; A feared judge who observes the law of God; Strong in adversity, and not at all arrogant in prosperity; She is hopeful and true in her faith in God.'

did not end with her death in 1115. San Benedetto helped shape Matilda's posthumous reputation, partly informed by the memory of the countess that lived on in those who survived her and partly by the tangible legacy she had crafted for herself, refracted through the institutions and people with which she had been involved. At San Benedetto, her patronage encouraged an alignment of reform-minded ideals which were reflected in the objects produced, including the pavement probably made in her honour. This legacy would continue to morph and evolve until it was seized upon by Pope Urban VIII (r. 1623 – d. 1644) to serve his specific religious goals.

In this section, I will examine her afterlife and her transformation from person to symbol facilitated by the Church's enduring attention. However, between her death and Urban's seventeenth-century revival, there are many extant visual and literary sources concerning Matilda that lie beyond the scope of this thesis. Paolo Golinelli has written extensively on the 'afterlife' of Matilda, though his research is a survey which lacks analytic specificity. Beth Holman has written on Matilda's burial at San Benedetto as it may have influenced Lucrezia Pico della Mirandola to emulate the patronage of the countess in the sixteenth century.⁶⁸¹ The dominant impressions of Matilda's early posthumous history that have survived relate to her usefulness as a religious symbol of virtuous behaviour, and as Holman states, as 'an *exemplum* of her sex.'⁶⁸² This section intends to scrutinize the motivations of Urban's revival, how it was enacted in a visual programme, and what its effects were on the reception of the countess.

As this chapter is object-oriented rather than historiographical in approach, this enquiry will focus on the countess's physical remains as they served as a point of interest for those who sought to channel her legacy. For Matilda, as time passed beyond her physical death, she first became a concept—the memory of a person who once existed—anchored by her corpse. In the seventeenth century when Pope Urban VIII ordered her remains to be removed from San Benedetto and reinterred at Saint Peter's in Rome as part of a monumental iconographic programme, Matilda was transformed into a symbol. This papal glorification of her corporeal relics was the instigating force behind her amplification from a locally prominent person to a symbol of might and piety for all of Christendom.

⁶⁸¹ Golinelli, 'The Afterlife of Matilda of Canossa (1115-2015)', 31–36; Golinelli, 'Matilde: La Donna e il Potere'; Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone.'

⁶⁸² Holman, 'Exemplum and Imitatio: Countess Matilda and Lucrezia Pico Della Mirandola at Polirone', 637.

4.4.1 Urban VIII and Matilda

While Urban VIII was not the first person to adopt Matilda as a symbol,⁶⁸³ his fascination ushered in a new wave of enthusiasm that produced new accounts of the countess which continue to influence modern scholars. Prior to becoming pope, Urban wrote extensive moralizing verses to explore the role of the church as it negotiated a Post-Reformation world, a recurrent theme throughout his papal tenure. By the late 1620s, Urban's literary work had undergone a shift which reflected his desire to assert both himself and his see as the rightful apex of the Christian world.⁶⁸⁴ During this period, Urban composed a multi-stanza poem entitled *In lode della Contessa Matilda* examining the territorial integrity of the Papal states which had grown partially out of Matilda's donations to the papacy upon her death.⁶⁸⁵ The ode was written as a direct address to the countess herself, while also linking Matilda's behaviour as a faithful servant of the papal tiara to his own goals as pope.⁶⁸⁶

The poem was probably written in tandem with his acquisition of Matilda's remains. In the early 1630s, Urban VIII ordered the transferral of Matilda's remains to Rome. Between the 1630 plague and the 1628-1631 war of Mantuan succession, Mantua was in administrative disarray; it is possible that this period of turmoil provided the necessary cover for the papacy to assert its will with little resistance.⁶⁸⁷ According to Agnello Maffei's 1675 account of the move, San Benedetto had come under significant financial pressure and the abbot Ippolito agreed to let the pope take Matilda's body in exchange for a payment to help settle their debts. Ippolito is said to have taken the body without care, reportedly breaking Matilda's neck and knee joints in order to fit her into the small wooden casket they had prepared.⁶⁸⁸ When Duke Charles I discovered the loss, he attempted to have Urban return the body but was unsuccessful.

⁶⁸³ Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, ed. Hellmut Wohl, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl, 2nd ed (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 5–6, 124, 138. Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564) thought himself a descendant of Canossa after being addressed as a kinsman in a letter from Alessandro di Canossa in 1520, a conception the artist perpetuated throughout his life. Matilda is also thought to have inspired Dante Alighieri's character 'Matelda' in the *Divine Comedy* (written c. 1308-1320) Mazzaro, 'The Vernal Paradox: Dante's Matelda'; Bianchi, 'Matilde di Canossa e la Matelda Dantesca'; Reynolds, 'Who Is Matilda?'

⁶⁸⁴ Peter Rietbergen, 'Maffeo Barberini - Urban VIII, the Poet-Pope, or: The Power of Poetic Propaganda', in *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome*, Barberini Cultural Policies (Brill, 2006), 105.

⁶⁸⁵ Maffeo Barberini, *Poesie toscane del card. Maffeo Barberino hoggi papa Urbano ottavo*, ed. Andrea Brogiotti (Rome: Rev. C. Apost., 1640), Antistrophe I, 101. 'A te, MATILDA, Inno festoso applaude. / Del sesso femminil fulgida luce, / Prode guerriera, e Duce, / De' magnanimi Heroi germe gradito, / Che già posta de' Toschi in vago sito / Resser' ampia Cittade. / Poscia conuene lor volger' il piede / Dalla paterna sede, / E passaro di Reggio alle contrade, / E di dominio à nuovo acquisto intenti / Locaron di Canossa i fondamenti.'

⁶⁸⁶ Barberini, Antistrophe II, 104. Barberini uses the phrase 'La valorosa Donna' and 'con cuor ardito'

⁶⁸⁷ Peter Hamish Wilson, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 83.

⁶⁸⁸ Scipione Agnello Maffei, *Gli annali di Mantova*, *Historiae urbium et regionum Italiae rariores* 176 (Bologna: A. Forni, 1990), Book 8, Chapter 8, 508.

The inscription on Matilda's Vatican tomb indicates that her remains were a gift (*liberalitate celeberrimae huc ex Mantuano*) to the Church.

In 1633, Urban VIII selected Gian Lorenzo Bernini to construct a burial monument for Matilda.⁶⁸⁹ While work on the monument progressed, Matilda's body was interred at Castel Sant'Angelo. The monument was unveiled in March 1637, though work continued on further decorations such as the putti until early 1644 when it was officially completed (Figure 87). The monument and tomb are located in the right aisle of St Peter's, next to the original location intended for Bernini's statue of Constantine (Figure 88).⁶⁹⁰ Matilda is one of only three women who has a burial monument at St. Peter's.⁶⁹¹

The monument is composed of three main elements: the sarcophagus which bears her remains, the putti who hold the dedicatory plaque, and the over-life size statue of Matilda. The casket itself is reminiscent of ancient Roman sarcophagi (Figure 89); it is trapezoidal in shape and rests upon stylized pedestals. A frieze, depicted in bas and high relief, runs across the face of it. The scene is the famed meeting at Canossa in 1077. To the left, Henry IV—who has set aside his crown and sceptre—has prostrated himself at the feet of Gregory VII who appears seated in the centre of the scene. On the right of Gregory, Matilda gestures to the humbled king while gazing at the pope. She appears much like the larger sculpture of the monument: draped in classicizing robes with a diadem atop her head. Matilda's pose suggests she is intervening on behalf of the king in his plea to the pope to be un-excommunicated. The message here is

⁶⁸⁹ Rudolf Wittkower, *Gian Lorenzo Bernini: The Sculptor of the Roman Baroque*, 4th ed (London: Phaidon Press, 1997); For documents issued by Urban VIII pertaining to the tomb, see: Oskar Pollak and Dagobert Frey, *Die Kunsttätigkeit Unter Urban VIII: Die Peterskirche in Rom*, ed. Ernst Trenkler (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1981); Torgil Magnuson, *Rome in the Age of Bernini*, Kungl. Vitterhets, Historie Och Antikvitets Akademiens Handlingar, 34. d., 36. d (Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International ; Humanities Press, 1982); William Chandler Kirwin and Philipp P. Fehl, *Powers Matchless: The Pontificate of Urban VIII, the Baldachin, and Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, *Hermeneutics of Arts*, v. 6 (New York: P. Lang, 1997); Daniele Pinton, *Bernini: Sculptor and Architect* (Rome: ATS Italia Editrice, 2009); C. D. Dickerson et al., *Bernini: Sculpting in Clay* (New York; New Haven CT: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2012); Charles Avery and David Finn, *Bernini: Genius of the Baroque* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2006); Irving Lavin, 'Bernini at St. Peter's: Singularis in Singulis, in Omnibus Unicus', in *St. Peter's in the Vatican*, ed. William Tronzo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 111–243; Karen J. Lloyd, 'Bernini and the Vacant See', *The Burlington Magazine* 150, no. 1269 (2008): 821–4; Irving Lavin, *Bernini and the Unity of the Visual Arts*, *The Franklin Jasper Walls Lectures 1975* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library; Oxford University Press, 1980).

⁶⁹⁰ Verzár, 'Legacy and Memory of Matilda: The Semiotics of Power and Reform.'

⁶⁹¹ William Tronzo, ed., *St. Peter's in the Vatican* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005). Christina, Queen of Sweden, was buried in the crypt in 1689, and a monument to her was erected in the basilica in 1702 under Popes Innocent XII and Clement XI. The monument features a small marble casket, two small putti, a gilt and bronze medallion, and gilt and bronze crown atop a pillow. Maria Clementina Sobieska, Queen of England, was interred in 1735 at the request of Clement XII. At the request of Pope Benedict XIV, a monument erected in the basilica in her honour in 1742. Located above a doorway, it features a porphyry sarcophagus atop which is a white marble figure of Charity holding a painted portrait of Maria Clementina. Three other women are buried at St Peter's, though they do not have monuments: Saint Petronilla, an early Christian saint (1st or 3rd century CE); Charlotte, Queen of Cyprus (d. 1487), who was buried in the Old Saint Peter's and then moved to the grottoes in 1610; Agnesina Colonna Caetani (d. 1578), who was an Italian noblewoman.

made clear: the secular *regnum* has been humbled and must set aside their authority to yield to that of the Church. Matilda is showcased as a mediator in the resolution of the dispute; she is cast as a pivotal character in the submission of the earthly realm to the heavenly one, and the enforcement of papal supremacy.

Above the sarcophagus is the dedicatory plaque, encircled by a foliate-wreath and supported by two putti. The left-hand putto looks out towards the viewer while the one on the right looks up, admiring Matilda. The plaque is a dedication to Matilda, describing her as a defender of the apostolic see, noting her courageous and ‘manly’ spirit (Figure 90).⁶⁹²

Urbanus VIII Pont Max / Comitissae Mathildi virilis animi foeminae / sedis apostolicae propugnatrici / pietate insigni liberalitate celeberrimae huc ex Mantuano sancti Benedicti / coenobio translatis ossibus / gratus aeternae laudis promeritum / monumentum posuit anno MDCXXXV.⁶⁹³

Analysing the precise language used in the inscription is useful in unpacking Urban’s potential motives for this reburial monument. The inscription uses the term *propugnatrici* meaning ‘defender’ which is etymologically derived from *propugnare* meaning ‘to rush out to fight, go forth to fight’ or to ‘to fight or contend for, to defend.’ The term is preceded by the phrase ‘virilis animi foeminae,’ or literally ‘woman of manly spirit.’ This description is necessary to justify the use of a military term such as *propugnatrici*, which is inherently masculine, to describe a woman. By referring to her ‘manly’ spirit, her military accomplishments and appearance within the funerary monument are able to be reconciled with her gender. The use of military terms in the inscriptions is entirely appropriate considering the depiction of the countess in the funerary monument with military accoutrement. The dedication is further enhanced by the motto ‘tuetur et unit’ (she protects and unites), which appears on a banner carried by the putti at the apex of the sculpture’s aedicule. The phrase accompanies a heraldic coat of arms with a pomegranate. The use of *tuetur* is revealing as it underlines the simultaneous roles of Matilda’s guardianship: she not only defended the church, but actively upheld papal goals during her lifetime. The use of *unit* conveys more about the desires of Urban than it does Matilda as she was far from a unifying figure. It seems more likely that this choice reflects Urban’s desire to portray Matilda as a symbol with which he can align himself.

⁶⁹² Lavin, ‘Bernini at St. Peter’s: Singularis in Singulis, in Omnibus Unicus’, 141–2; Lavin, *Bernini and the Unity of the Visual Arts*.

⁶⁹³ ‘Pope Urban VIII to Countess Matilda, a woman of manly spirit, defender of the apostolic site, eminent for her devotion, very famous for her generosity, after moving her bones here from the Monastery of St Benedict in Mantua, with gratitude, built in the year 1635 this monument that will deserve to be eternally honoured.’

Like her appearance on the sarcophagus, Matilda is styled as an ancient Roman goddess (Figure 91). She dons a small breastplate and carries a commander's baton—gripped tightly, as if with intent—in her right hand, signalling her as a military leader rather than a combatant herself.⁶⁹⁴ The breastplate may refer to sixteenth century depictions of Pallas Athena,⁶⁹⁵ while the baton may be the that of the Captain General of the Church—an honorary title bestowed upon faithful members of the laity—which was denoted with a baton, typically blessed by the pope himself.⁶⁹⁶ In her left hand, she holds the papal key and cradles the papal tiara in the crook of her elbow. Her hair is in a classical style with an antique styled diadem nested on her head.

Though complicated by modern lighting systems, the location of Matilda's sculpture allowed Bernini to take advantage of the natural light emanating from above: her face would have been shrouded by shadow while her baton pierced outwards.⁶⁹⁷ This dramatic play of light reveals the intent and direction of her action, underscored by the objects in her hands. In a bronze cast of Bernini's clay maquette of the sculpture the staggering metaphorical weight of the papal crown and key can be felt, visible in the way they pull on Matilda's robes (Figure 92).⁶⁹⁸ According to an extant preparatory drawing done by Bernini, Matilda was intended to be surrounded by two seated statues of Faith and Justice (Figure 93). The figures were meant to hold the dedicatory plaque but were reduced to the pensive putti in order to accommodate a larger statue of the countess.⁶⁹⁹ Rudolf Wittkower connects this drawing to the earlier memorial for Carlo Barberini, Urban VIII's eldest brother, which also intertwines military might and papal supremacy in allegorical figures wearing military helmets, indicated by a shield and the papal insignia.⁷⁰⁰ In Matilda's monument, this planned inclusion of Faith and Justice may have been an allusion to the virtue figures at San Benedetto, though unlike San Benedetto, these figures would have signalled the unification of the theological and cardinal virtues. Not only would this sort of imagery have demonstrated the encompassing nature of papal supremacy

⁶⁹⁴ Lavin, 'Bernini at St. Peter's: Singularis in Singulis, in Omnibus Unicus', 141.

⁶⁹⁵ The armour type appears in several depiction of Pallas Athena: Marcantonio Raimondi's *Pallas Athena standing on a globe, a spear in her left hand, a shield in her right*, ca. 1520-1527. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Cesare Nebbia's *The Contest Between Athena and Poseidon for the Possession of Athens*, c. 1570s. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Jan Saenredam's *Pallas Athena*, c. 1595. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland. Federico Zuccaro's, *Pallas Athena Shows Taddeo the Prospect of Rome*, c. 1595. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

⁶⁹⁶ David S. Chambers, *Popes, Cardinals and War: The Military Church in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 142.

⁶⁹⁷ Avery and Finn, *Bernini*, 74–8.

⁶⁹⁸ Dickerson et al., *Bernini*, 132–5.

⁶⁹⁹ Avery and Finn, *Bernini*, 76.

⁷⁰⁰ Wittkower, *Bernini*, 249.

which sought to influence both the secular and religious realms, but the nature of Matilda herself, driven by both her faith and sense of (papally directed) justice.

Matilda was a useful figure for Urban who sought to convey papal might amidst a period of turmoil for the Church, which was faced with reconstituting its power in a post-Tridentine world. This desire was also reflected in his pontifical name choice which he selected to emulate Urban II (1088-1099), under whose papal guidance the First Crusade was launched in the Levant.⁷⁰¹ Urban VIII's own tenure took place at the end of the Counter-Reformation, and his tenure was largely dominated by the Thirty-Years' War, a struggle which essentialized the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism. Urban may have considered his own tenure as parallel to that of Urban II: where Urban II's foe was the heretical forces who acted against the unity of the Eastern and Western Christian churches, Urban VIII faced the Protestant aggressors. Thus, the depiction of the king's submission to the papacy on Matilda's casket would have been a powerful one. Her monument, adorned with the equipment of military leadership, would have made clear the will of the papacy to be the dominant earthly force. Thus, Matilda's own accomplishments are subverted and attributed to the will of the church, a subtle shift that transforms her from an active agent into a passive participant on the side of a higher power, driven not by her own motivations but by devotion. Urban's selection of Matilda represented the ultimate rejection of all aggressors who sought to weaken or destroy the papacy, and clearly aligned him with a past pope who was responsible for one of the greatest papal victories.

4.4.2 Urban's Matildine Patronage Beyond the Monument

In 1637, while work on the tomb was continuing, Urban also commissioned the artist Giovanni Francesco Romanelli to begin work on a series of frescoes for the *Sala della Contessa Matilda*, a room in which liturgical vestments were stored. This room is closed to the public though one of Romanelli's preparatory sketches exists at the Morgan Library in New York which is particularly revealing to Urban's additional motivations in reviving Matilda.⁷⁰² The sketch dates to 1637 and the resultant fresco was completed five years later in 1642.⁷⁰³ The preparatory

⁷⁰¹ Kirwin and Fehl, *Powers Matchless*, 11.

⁷⁰² I have not been able to visit the room personally in part due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in part because of the restricted nature of the room, which is typically reserved for the Pope, only occasionally being open to guests.

⁷⁰³ Jacob Bean et al., *The Seventeenth Century in Italy*, vol. 2, Drawings from New York Collections (Greenwich, CT: Distributed by New York Graphic Society, 1965), 65–6; Jacob Bean and Felice Stampfle, *Seventeenth-Century Italian Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979).

sketch, *The Construction and Restoration of Churches under Countess Matilda* (Figure 94) was made for the fresco on the southernmost of the two central panels of the Sala's ceiling vaults.

Matilda is depicted in classicizing garments and appears similarly to her likeness in the Bernini monument. She is positioned centrally and in the foreground of the composition. She gestures towards the elaborate Corinthian capital on the ground while simultaneously engaging with the man on the right. In the background are workers doing various construction tasks: the scene makes clear that this is an active building site. On the right side of the sketch appears the façade of a church, marked by a cross, and a tower. The inscription on the back of the print indicates that Matilda was responsible for building and restoring many churches.⁷⁰⁴

Jakob Hess identified the completed structures of the background as the cathedral and campanile of Modena; in the foreground, he assumes the same buildings are shown under construction.⁷⁰⁵ While the incomplete nature of the sketch's background makes it difficult to assess this claim, it is true that there is a passing likeness to the facade of the cathedral and the Torre della Ghirlandina, though the proportions are skewed. The building's façade appears to have the two-pointed turrets at the roofline, a rose window—though it appears in a different location than at Modena—and the appearance of a rounded blind arcade on the lateral sides of the cathedral (Figure 95). However, the tower is missing the same tapered roof as the Torre; this may have been artist's attempt at recreating the tower as it might have appeared during Matilda's lifetime. It is also possible that Romanelli was simply recalling a general Romanesque style which was common throughout Northern Italy, as there are similar structural arrangements in Verona, Prato, and Siena.

If this scene was meant to illustrate Modena and its cathedral as Hess suggests, it may be that the scene is attempting to retell the foundational story of the Modena cathedral with Matilda in a greater role. An account of the 1106 reconstruction of the cathedral survives in the *Relatio de Innovatione Ecclesie Sancti Geminiani ac de Translatione Eius Beatissimi Corporis* (Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11, fols. 1v-9v). As we have seen in Chapter Two, though Matilda was involved in the decision-making regarding the patron-saint's remains, she was not documented to have been involved in the actual construction

⁷⁰⁴ Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, *The Construction and Restoration of Churches under Countess Matilda*, mid-17th century, Pen and brown ink, with brown wash, over traces of black chalk, on paper; framing line in black ink, 187 x 200 mm, mid-17th century, No. IV, 173b, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. The inscription reads: 'La contessa Matilda fabricò diverse chiese e molte ne ristaurò tutti gli autori lo affermano che di lei anno scritto.'

⁷⁰⁵ Jakob Hess, 'Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, Ban Des Doms von Modena', *L'Illustrazione Vaticana* VI, no. 5 (1935): 241–5.

efforts of the new cathedral.⁷⁰⁶ The *Relatio* credits an architect named Lanfranco with the construction efforts, and though Matilda is depicted in the text's other illumination, she does not appear alongside the architect during construction (Figure 96).

Romanelli's version diverges from this account. Here Matilda appears to direct all activity. It is possible that the male figure on the right is intended to be Lanfranco himself; as in the *Relatio*, he too gestures to the *operarii* toiling away. It is unclear whether Romanelli himself knew the manuscript to be able to make such a reference, though if he was familiar with the cathedral it is possible that he was also familiar with the sources documenting its history. Like Matilda's monument at St Peter's, this image has adjusted history so that Matilda is depicted as being solely responsible for reconstructing churches throughout her patrimony.

Though Romanelli's Matilda resembles Bernini's monument, the focus of this scene is markedly different. Where Bernini's Matilda is reminiscent of antiquity and adorned with elements suggesting her military leadership, Romanelli's Matilda takes on a civic role. Whereas the images in the *Sala della Contessa Matilda* were exclusively intended for the clergy, and indeed, the pope, the monument in Saint Peter's was more widely available, both to lower levels of the clergy and the lay public. In public, to the laity, Matilda's life was simplified. She was rendered as a military hero in order to assure the devout masses of the papacy's past, present, and future dominance. In private, to the clergy, her role was more nuanced and complex and acknowledged the various ways she assisted the Church. This role depicted her as a patron and drew on her donations to the church, including that of the '*terra Mathildis*' which would later be integrated into the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*.

4.4.3 Matilda, the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*, and Francesco Maria Fiorentini

The *Patrimonium Sancti Petri* was a collection of territories historically claimed as part of the Papal States. By Urban VIII's tenure in the seventeenth century, this doctrine had become enshrined as part of the Church's claim to lands in Italy. The interest in Matilda's previous donation to the church (the *terra Mathildis*) may have been rekindled in the sixteenth century with Pope Gregory XIII's response to the dissemination of a fifteenth-century text by Lorenzo Valla that proved the *Constitutum Constantini* (Donation of Constantine) was an early medieval forgery.⁷⁰⁷ Supposedly based on a fictional exchange between Constantine and Pope

⁷⁰⁶ For a longer discussion on Matilda's involvement as documented in the *Relatio*, see § 2.2.3 *Matilda and Gifts of Persuasion: Documenting Matilda's Role in the Spread of the Reform*.

⁷⁰⁷ Lorenzo Valla, *On the Donation of Constantine*, trans. Glen Warren Bowersock, The I Tatti Renaissance Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), i–xiii.

Sylvester I, the *Constitutum Constantini* dictated that after being cured of his leprosy by Sylvester, Constantine declared the primacy of the church and donated to the Pope and his successors the lands of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and all the churches in the world.⁷⁰⁸ The donation was considered integral to the formation of the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*, the lands possessed and administered by the church.⁷⁰⁹ Though the validity of the *Constitutum* had long been scrutinized, translations of Valla's work were weaponized by reformers, notably Martin Luther, to launch invectives against the church and the papacy.⁷¹⁰

According to Pauline Moffitt Watts, by the late sixteenth century, the donation's invalidation was still being integrated into the dogma surrounding the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*.⁷¹¹ In order to maintain a claim to the lands which constituted the *Patrimonium*, contemporary Catholic scholars had to make a compromise: they deemed that though the document was indeed false, the land transfer had occurred. At the heart of this rationale was the de-emphasis on the Constantinian donation as a historic event, and an emphasis on other events wherein other patrons made similar endowments to the church. This intellectual shift was reflected in the decoration of the *Galleria delle carte geografiche*, commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII in 1580, which included a prominent scene of Matilda's property donation to Gregory VII (Figure 97).⁷¹² Entitled *Countess Matilda of Canossa Donating Her Possessions to the Church*, the fresco appears as part of an iconographic programme meant to both oppose contemporary Protestant polemics and to reaffirm the pope as *Vicarius Christi*.⁷¹³ Announced by the inscription 'Mathilda multa bona Romanae Ecclesiae obtulit,' the fresco illustrates Matilda on bended knee making the donation to the pope. Her appearance is vastly different from how Bernini would depict her fifty years later; she appears meeker and more deferential, less like a commander going into battle. The vault scenes demonstrate periods of threat to and defence of the church, emphasizing the sacrifices necessary to keep the domain intact.⁷¹⁴ The iconographic programme pairs positive and negative scenes to describe the relationship

⁷⁰⁸ Valla, 43–7.

⁷⁰⁹ Pauline Moffitt Watts, 'A Mirror for the Pope: Mapping the "Corpus Christi" in the Galleria Delle Carte Geografiche', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 10 (2005): 182–3.

⁷¹⁰ Valla, *On the Donation of Constantine*, viii; Pauline Moffitt Watts, 'The Donation of Constantine, Cartography, and Papal "Plenitudo Potestatis" in the Sixteenth Century: A Paper for Salvatore Camporeale', *MLN* 119, no. 1 (2004): S94.

⁷¹¹ Watts, 'A Mirror for the Pope: Mapping the "Corpus Christi" in the Galleria Delle Carte Geografiche', 182.

⁷¹² Lucio Gambi and Antonio Pinelli, eds., *La Galleria delle Carte geografiche in Vaticano*, vol. 1–3 (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2008), 125; Watts, 'A Mirror for the Pope: Mapping the "Corpus Christi" in the Galleria Delle Carte Geografiche', 183; Watts, 'The Donation of Constantine, Cartography, and Papal "Plenitudo Potestatis" in the Sixteenth Century: A Paper for Salvatore Camporeale.'

⁷¹³ Watts, 'A Mirror for the Pope: Mapping the "Corpus Christi" in the Galleria Delle Carte Geografiche', 175.

⁷¹⁴ Watts, 180–84; Gambi and Pinelli, *La Galleria delle Carte geografiche in Vaticano*, 1–3:214–16.

between the church and earthly rulers. Matilda's donation is paired with the negative scene of St Ambrose denying Emperor Theodosius' entry to the church until he atoned for the massacre at Thessalonica.⁷¹⁵ The vault frescoes are accompanied by a series of large-scale maps of the *Patrimonium* and a now-amended inscription that was recorded in Cod. Barb. Lat. 1803:

Patrimonium Domini Petri. Hanc Etruriae partem ab Tyrrheno mari Tiberi Flore et Pallia amnibus interclusam quod Matilda Comitissa Romanae Ecclesiae obtulit Sancti Petri Patrimonium appellatam constat.⁷¹⁶

This inscription makes it clear that the church assumed ideological ownership over Matilda's territory and explicitly considered it part of the *Patrimonium*. Urban's own ideas of Matilda were likely influenced by this depiction and her credited role in the ideological reconstitution of the *Patrimonium*. Given that Urban ordered the *Galleria's* restoration in 1631, he must have been aware of its iconographic contents and their importance.

As a result of this desire to reattribute and re-legitimize the *Patrimonium*, Matilda's donation to Gregory VII came under new scrutiny as a potential alternative source, attracting the attention of Urban VIII and subsequently his associate Francesco Maria Fiorentini. In 1642 Fiorentini published a biography on the countess entitled *Memorie di Matilda la gran Contessa propugnacolo della Chiesa con le particolari notizie della sua vita e con l'antica serie degli antenati da Francesco Maria Fiorentini Restituita all'origine della patria Lucchese*.⁷¹⁷ Fiorentini worked as Urban's physician and may have intended his work to solicit further work from Urban's family, the Barberinis.⁷¹⁸ This relationship is likely to have influenced both the purpose and construction of the text, further shaped by Urban's interpretation of the countess's legacy. Given the proximity of the text's publication to the completion of Matilda's tomb, it is probable that Fiorentini was consulting literature for the publication at the same time as Bernini was designing her burial monument and Romanelli was painting the *Sala della Matilda*.⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁵ Gambi and Pinelli, *La Galleria delle Carte geografiche in Vaticano*, 1–3:135.

⁷¹⁶ Gambi and Pinelli, 1–3:216. Milanese translated it as: 'The Patrimony of St. Peter. We know this part of Etruria, bounded by the Tyrrhenian Sea and by the Rivers Tiber, Fiora and Paglia, and donated to the Roman Church by the Countess Matilda, was called the Patrimony of St. Peter.'

⁷¹⁷ Francesco Maria Fiorentini, *Memorie Della Gran Contessa Matilda: Restituita Alla Patria Lucchese*, 2nd ed. (Lucca: Stamperia di Vincenzo Giuntini, 1756).

⁷¹⁸ Enrico Coturri, 'La vita e l'opera di Francesco Maria Fiorentini medico lucchese del Seicento', *Minerva Medica* 50, no. 46 (June 1959): 11–52.

⁷¹⁹ Raoul Manselli, 'Francesco Maria Fiorentini storico della contessa Matilde', in *Studi matildici II: Atti e memorie del II Convegno di studi matildici, Modena – Reggio Emilia, 1-2-3 maggio 1970* (Studi matildici II: Atti e memorie del II Convegno di studi matildici, Modena – Reggio Emilia, 1-2-3 maggio 1970, Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1971), 385–98; Stefano Martinelli, 'La regalità di Cristo. La corona trecentesca del Volto Santo di Lucca nelle note manoscritte di Francesco Maria Fiorentini', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 54, no. 3 (2010): 411–2.

Though not the only post-Donizo biography of the countess, Fiorentini's work encapsulated the post-Reformation perceptions of Matilda promoted by Urban VIII, both describing her as a military symbol and exploring the status of her land donations to the church (*terra Mathildis*). Urban's conceptualization of Matilda and its influence on Fiorentini is first apparent in the title of the text: Fiorentini describes her here in militaristic terms; as *propugnacolo* refers to a military defender, it is likely a direct reference to the inscription which adorns Bernini's monument to the countess. Beyond this conceptualization of Matilda as a combatant, the text explores the then-most valuable aspect of Matilda's legacy: her patrimony. Fiorentini devoted the final ten pages of the second book to Matilda's patrimony, tracing its ownership after the countess's death, and explaining how it was wrongfully alienated from the church by Frederick Barbarossa.⁷²⁰ However, his account of Matilda's landholdings was vague and may have been intentionally so. Fiorentini asserts Matilda's ownership over a great amount of land (and all appurtenances therein) while simultaneously claiming that her possession could not be proved, both because of the extensive nature of the claim but also because too much was lost:

I Castelli ristorati, ò di nuovo edificati da lei sono in Italia per la tradizione numerosissimi; ma le foundationi delle Chiese, i reattamenti, l'assegnationi delle rendite, i doni de' sacri vasi, e vestimenti stimo, che siano stati innumerabili, e che solo quegli i potesse ricordarne qualche parte, che cercando minutamente per l'Italia rivedesse tutti Archivii, e con fatica impossibile investigasse tutti gli avanzi dell'ingiurie de' tempi.⁷²¹

This generalizing statement may have been intended to comment on the countess's seemingly ubiquitous presence but when paired with an extended discussion of the status of her territorial donation, it instead appears to be subterfuge. While it does evoke the different types of patronage Matilda may have engaged in, Fiorentini fails to provide specific evidence to these claims. Furthermore, Fiorentini rationalises that Urban's reburial of the countess was a fitting reward for her donation, one that should have been given to her upon her death.⁷²² He frames

⁷²⁰ Fiorentini, *Memorie Della Gran Contessa Matilda: Restituita Alla Patria Lucchese*, 343–55.

⁷²¹ Fiorentini, 330; Spike and Poggi, *An Illustrated Guide to the 'One Hundred Churches' of Matilda of Canossa, Countess of Tuscany*, 10. 'By tradition she built or restored numerous castles [fortified settlements] in Italy and founded innumerable churches, restoring and assigning to them the income from property and donating sacred vessels and vestments. To record even a part would require minute and painstaking research through all of the archives of Italy and even then, it would be impossible to investigate all that has been lost to the ravages of time.'

⁷²² Fiorentini, *Memorie Della Gran Contessa Matilda: Restituita Alla Patria Lucchese*, 343. 'Per che quel Vaticano tante volte da lei sostenuto, e defeso vedesse in se medesimo eretta insieme la statua all'eterna ricordanza di Matilda, & alla Gratitude immortale d'Urbano Ottavo. Che se vivendo in testimonio di religiosissimo affetto verso la Chiesa dichiarò ella se medesima, non men serva, che figlia di San Pietro, ben conuveniva, che nell'istessa Chiesa di S. Pietro ella trovasse una volta ricetto; e s'al Padre sopravvivate s'aspettava con giusto titolo l'heredita della figlia, ben à lei si doveva per ragion di succedere la sepoltura paterna.'

the reburial of Matilda as the rightful papal response to her original donations to the church. This intellectual manoeuvre effectively closes the patronage circuit initiated by Matilda's innumerable gifts to the Church: though long-delayed, her reburial in the Vatican was intended to repay the countess for her munificence.

Thus, Fiorentini's writings appear to have been highly political in nature, written in agreement with Urban's own assessments of the countess and the status of her posthumous donations. While Urban himself was not the originator of the dogmatic rearrangement required to stabilize the *Patrimonium*—that is, swapping Constantine's donation for Matilda's—he may have intended to legitimize this ideological shift by commissioning her reburial and other works featuring the countess. Romanelli's fresco of Matilda's participation in the construction efforts of buildings within her domain suggests Urban was both aware of and interested in this issue regarding the *Patrimonium*. Subsequently, Fiorentini absorbed and repeated this concept in his biography. Fiorentini may have further dispersed these claims amongst the public—the Italian-reading masses rather than the Latin-reading clergy—in order to help promote the papacy's claim to the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*. Though written under the guise of historical accuracy, Fiorentini asserted that Matilda's lands rightfully belonged to the Church and claimed an alternative source for some of the other Italian lands lost following the invalidation of the *Constitutum Constantini*. Intentionally or not, Fiorentini participated in the spreading of papal propaganda.

Furthermore, he supported the Church's entitlement to these vast territories while lamenting the impossibility of proving their rights. In 1980, Carl Sagan popularized the adage: extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence. Because Fiorentini admitted that he lacked evidence, his styling of the countess as an extremely active architectural patron reads as hyperbolic legend. Fiorentini's ambiguousness may have acted as the main thrust behind the myth of Matilda's 'one hundred churches' which exists as an oral tradition of local history, particularly around Matilda's former territories in Tuscany, Reggio Emilia, and parts of Lombardy. In describing Matilda's lands and her subsequent donation to the church, Fiorentini used an ambiguous non-numeric descriptor (*numerosissimi*) to characterize its large scale. Though the myth may have simultaneously developed elsewhere, it is possible that Fiorentini's description was subsequently conflated with the use of a large number such as 'one hundred' to represent abstract or unknowable quantities by using a scale that seemed impossibly large within the period's limited conceptualization of patronage. Such a grand attribution and its subsequent mythologization has had a dampening effect on research on Matilda's patronage. The legend itself has not received much serious scholarly attention though recently Michèle K.

Spike has attempted to document Matilda's numerous constructions, arriving at a total of over 130 structures built or rebuilt by the countess.⁷²³ More typically, the legend has been dismissed out of hand as hyperbolic or impossible and historians have recently claimed Matilda's influence itself is over-estimated.⁷²⁴ While Fiorentini's text was useful to the seventeenth-century papacy, it may have inadvertently muddled the emergent scholarship on Matilda's patronage.

This chapter has spanned both Matilda's life and afterlife, and has used aspects of her material patronage, namely burial-related objects, to link the two. Beatrice's tomb may have constituted one of the first choices Matilda had to make on her own regarding the Canossan legacy. During her lifetime, Matilda selectively used burial objects such as sarcophagi to demonstrate key aspects of her own tastes and political views. Consciously or not, Matilda also understood that her own legacy was partially shaped by those in her closest social, political, and religious circles. Thus, by shaping the post-mortem lives of Beatrice and Anselm, she was also shaping her own. This pattern probably extended to her own burial. Though it is unclear the extent to which Matilda directed her own burial imagery, what is clear is how much influence she exerted over San Benedetto during her lifetime in the form of ideological and material support. The ideals that she nurtured in the monastery may have subsequently been reflected in the pavement of her burial chapel. Though shaped by the papal/*regnum* dispute regarding the *terra Mathildis*, the pavement appears to reflect both the monastery's and Matilda's values regarding the eleventh-century papal reform. Without any later interventions, it is possible that this burial location would have largely guided the posthumous understanding of the countess's life and principles.

However, Urban's reburial of the countess broke the link between her own ideals and posthumous life which, until the seventeenth century, centred around the Abbey of San Benedetto al Polirone. Urban's translation of her body to the Vatican and his revival of the countess was motivated by his own political desires, effectively rendering her a symbol. Though accompanied by scenes of her life, she was no longer telling her own story. Rather, she became a player in a larger discourse surrounding the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*, a dispute which only began after her death. In fashioning Matilda for this role, aspects of her life—including her patronage both generally and for the Church, and her presence as a warrior—were purposefully overestimated. It is this conception of Matilda that muddled the waters and

⁷²³ Spike and Poggi, *An Illustrated Guide to the 'One Hundred Churches' of Matilda of Canossa, Countess of Tuscany*, 7.

⁷²⁴ Valerie Eads and Tiziana Lazzari, 'Raising Matilda from the Footnotes', *Storicamente* 13 (2017).

rendered her a propagandistic tool to serve a purpose, the effects of which are still being navigated in modern scholarship on the countess's material patronage.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to do three things: first, to examine objects and buildings as acts of Matilda's patronage. Second, to investigate Matilda's role within the wider social, religious, and political changes of the eleventh-century papal reform, and how it subsequently impacted the material culture—including objects sponsored by her and those which she gifted—within her domain. And third, to scrutinize the effects of Matilda's patronage on both her living legacy and her posthumous reputation. Central to the goals of this thesis has been an examination of Matilda's agency as a ruler, and how she used her patronage strategically to carry out her goals.

The largest hurdle that this thesis had to overcome was the lack of dedications and records of commissions. Being mindful of June Hall McCash and Madeline H. Caviness's conceptualization of female patronage in the Middle Ages, this thesis addressed this issue by scrutinizing the indirect evidence for Matilda's patronage. Alongside documentary evidence of Matilda's influence on cities and institutions, this thesis has also considered means and opportunities as criteria for making attributions. Collectively this secondary evidence can reasonably imply her role as a patron, especially as few other persons could have exerted such influence and mustered the necessary resources within her region at the time.

Once an attributive case was made for each of these objects and structures, there remained further questions of motivation. By examining both the text and the illuminations of the *Vita Mathildis* across Chapters One and Two, it became clear that the manuscript was not only a tool for Matilda to craft her own self-image but that it was also intended to make clear statements of her religious and political beliefs. In this thesis, the manuscript has been interpreted as an expression of her authority outside Henry IV's *regnum*. The manuscript included imagery appropriated from past rulers, both in the depictions of her own ancestry and in the repetition of the *laubia* motif, to make clear Matilda's legitimacy in her titles and her defiance of Henry IV's revocation of her lands.

Chapter Two connected objects made within Matilda's patronage to the objectives and implementation of the eleventh-century papal reform, with Matilda acting as the instigator for these objects and their iconographic contents. Furthermore, it demonstrated that Matilda likely used her patronage and the gifting of objects as part of a diplomatic programme. The *Relatio* recounts Matilda's role in mediating a city-wide dispute regarding the reconstruction of the Modena Cathedral and the reburial of the remains of their patron saint. The chapter explores how Matilda utilized the situation to deploy strategic gift-giving as a form of regional diplomacy in order to sway the city towards the papacy during a period of papal/*regnum*

tension. These objects were themselves usually laden with pro-papal imagery. The *Relatio* suggests that Matilda gave opulent gifts such as golden *pallia* to the patron-saint's body in front of a crowd of Modenese citizens. This thesis suggests that this act was intentional in its performance and was aimed at inducing favour amongst the laity rather than simply installing pro-reform clergy. Similarly, Matilda gave the *Gospels of Matilda* to San Benedetto as part of a patronage relationship where she used material support and protection for the abbey as a reward for their continued support of the papacy. The *Gospels of Matilda* was shown to be an exegetical tool for Matilda to convey her beliefs regarding papal supremacy, Christian warfare, and the punishment for insubordination to the church, utilizing the Bible as a framework for which a reform-minded interpretation could be overlaid.

Chapter Three inspected Matilda's motivations regarding the construction of the Mantuan rotunda church, San Lorenzo. The church may have simultaneously expressed Matilda's unfulfilled desire to attend a crusade, as well as a desire to undermine the authority of Henry IV by connecting herself to Charlemagne. Matilda's self-fashioning is further assessed in Chapter Four. This focused on the tombs of Beatrice and Anselm II, examining how Matilda used her material patronage for others in her circle to make reflexive statements about herself, her family, and her support for the papal reforms. Chapter Four also focusses on Matilda's posthumous life by examining the pro-papal dimensions of the iconography of the mosaic which serves to commemorate her reburial at San Benedetto. Though completed after her death, the imagery within the pavement was probably influenced by the pre-existing patronage relationship between Matilda and the abbey, as well as the posthumous resolution of the *terra Mathildis* dispute between the *regnum* and the papacy. The *terra Mathildis* dispute would prove to be the mitigating factor between Matilda's lingering influence and the external forces which would shape her posthumous legacy. Her afterlife is further examined via the seventeenth-century revival by Pope Urban VIII who sought to use Matilda as a symbol of papal might. The seventeenth-century papacy was also focused on proving papal ownership over Matilda's lands so that they could be integrated into the *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*. This revival inspired Francesco Maria Fiorentini to write a biography of the countess that exaggerated the *terra Mathildis* in order to reflect Urban's conceptualization of it and may have led to the mythologization of her material patronage, and subsequently, her dismissal by historians as a serious patron.

While the question of her status as a patron has been previously examined in relation to her ideological support for the political and religious movements of her lifetime, relatively few works have set out to explore whether Matilda's patronage ever included the creation of objects

and buildings. By utilizing a more appropriate description of female patronage in the Middle Ages—including various manifestations of patronage and reflecting the absence of direct documentary evidence in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries—the material impact of Matilda’s patronage, and thus her status as a patron of art and architecture has been more accurately described in this thesis than previously.

This thesis has further contextualized Matilda’s patronage decisions by assessing her role as an active participant within the major social, political, and religious developments of her lifetime. It has demonstrated Matilda’s role was not just that of a supporter but rather as a facilitator and at times, an enforcer of the eleventh-century papal reform. By interrogating her as a figure with agency, Matilda’s patronage becomes open to new avenues of inquiry. This thesis’s examination of Matilda’s relationships to institutions and cities—evident in both her own documents and as recounted by others—has been crucial in unpacking how Matilda used her patronage and in hypothesizing her potential motives. Rather than repeating the ideologies of the reforming papacy, this thesis argued that Matilda consciously propagated these ideals for her own needs. This is reflected both within the iconography used within the objects and structures, and how they were used by Matilda. Furthermore, implicit within Matilda’s efforts to spread the papal reform was the goal of establishing her authority outside the *regnum*. This thesis has put forth evidence that Matilda used her material influence over institutions and cities to create an atmosphere which both supported the papacy (and their pro-reform goals) and disavowed the *regnum*.

By shedding light on the dramatic impact that Urban VIII’s revival had on Matilda’s reception as a patron, this thesis has given some much needed historic context to the common perceptions of the countess. Rather than suggesting that Urban’s deployment of the countess stands alone, this thesis asserts that Urban’s relocation of the countess’s remains, and commission of public memorial sculpture served to amplify Matilda’s reputation. This new prominence elevated Matilda from a local figure to a central position within the Church’s history, both literally as a monument in Saint Peter’s, and figuratively, as a major contributor to the *Patrimonium*. This renewed attention was skewed to benefit the Church, the effects of which may have been unconsciously absorbed into later studies of the countess’s patronage. However, this thesis did not intend to provide a definitive examination of Matilda’s posthumous reputation: rather, it linked Matilda’s own goals as a patron to her posthumous transformation into an emblem for the papacy.

As Therese Martin has thoughtfully suggested, ‘Studying the reception history of an object or structure can also bring us a more in-depth understanding of the work and help to

complete the circle that began with its conception and manufacture.⁷²⁵ Though functionally different from a material object, further investigation of Matilda's reception would also allow for yet a deeper understanding of the countess herself and shed more light on historiographical blind spots. Following on from this dissertation, future research might usefully provide a more exhaustive assessment of how Matilda was received into history and appropriated by figures beyond Urban VIII. It might also look at Matilda's standing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly at Matilda's reappearance during the Risorgimento and rise of Fascism under Mussolini. Today, nine centuries after her death, the permutations of her life as they have been used by others still continue to multiply.

⁷²⁵ Martin, 'Exceptions and Assumptions: Women in Medieval Art History', 6.

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Illustrations



1. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 19r.



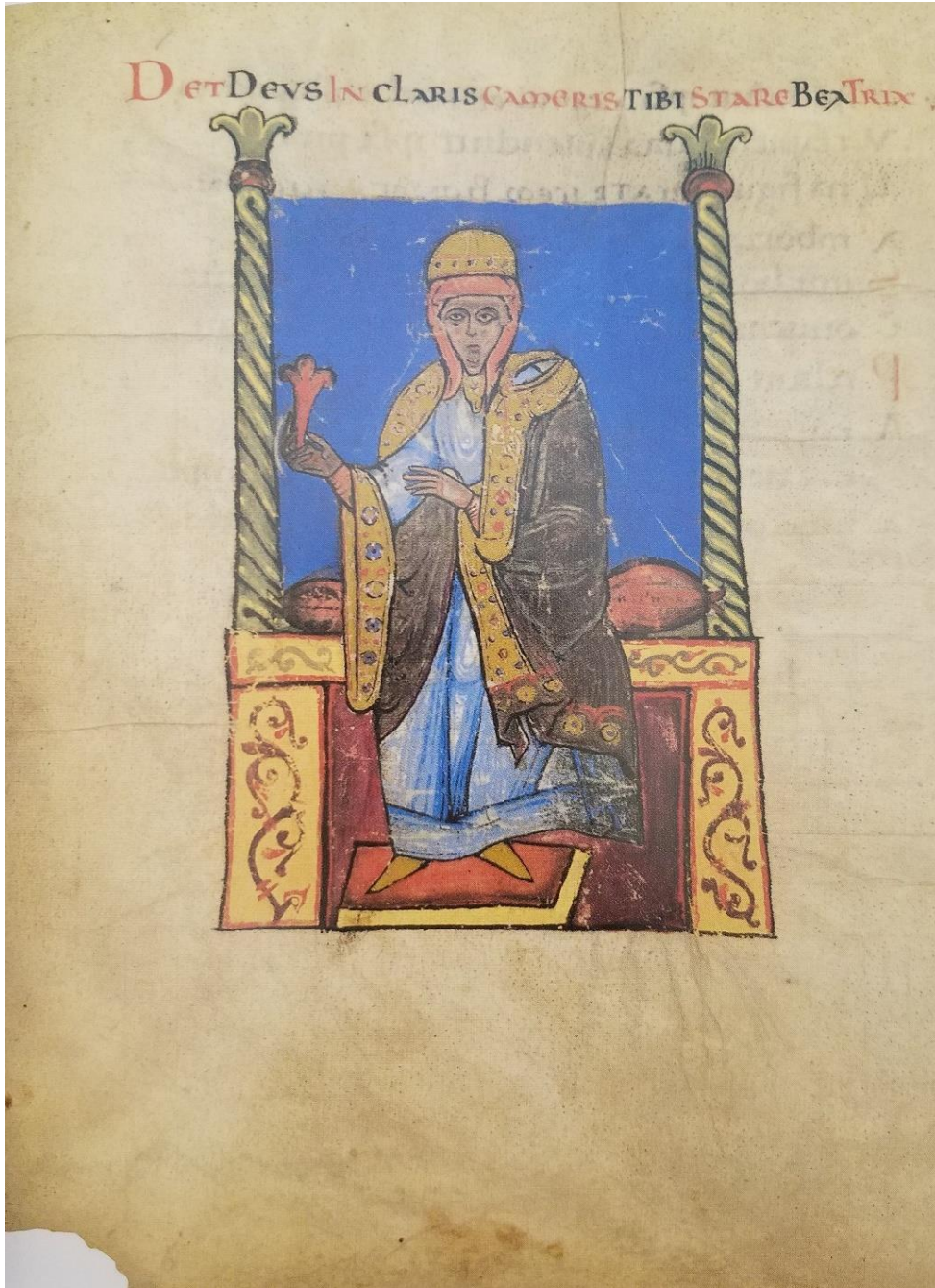
2. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 20v.



3. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 21v.



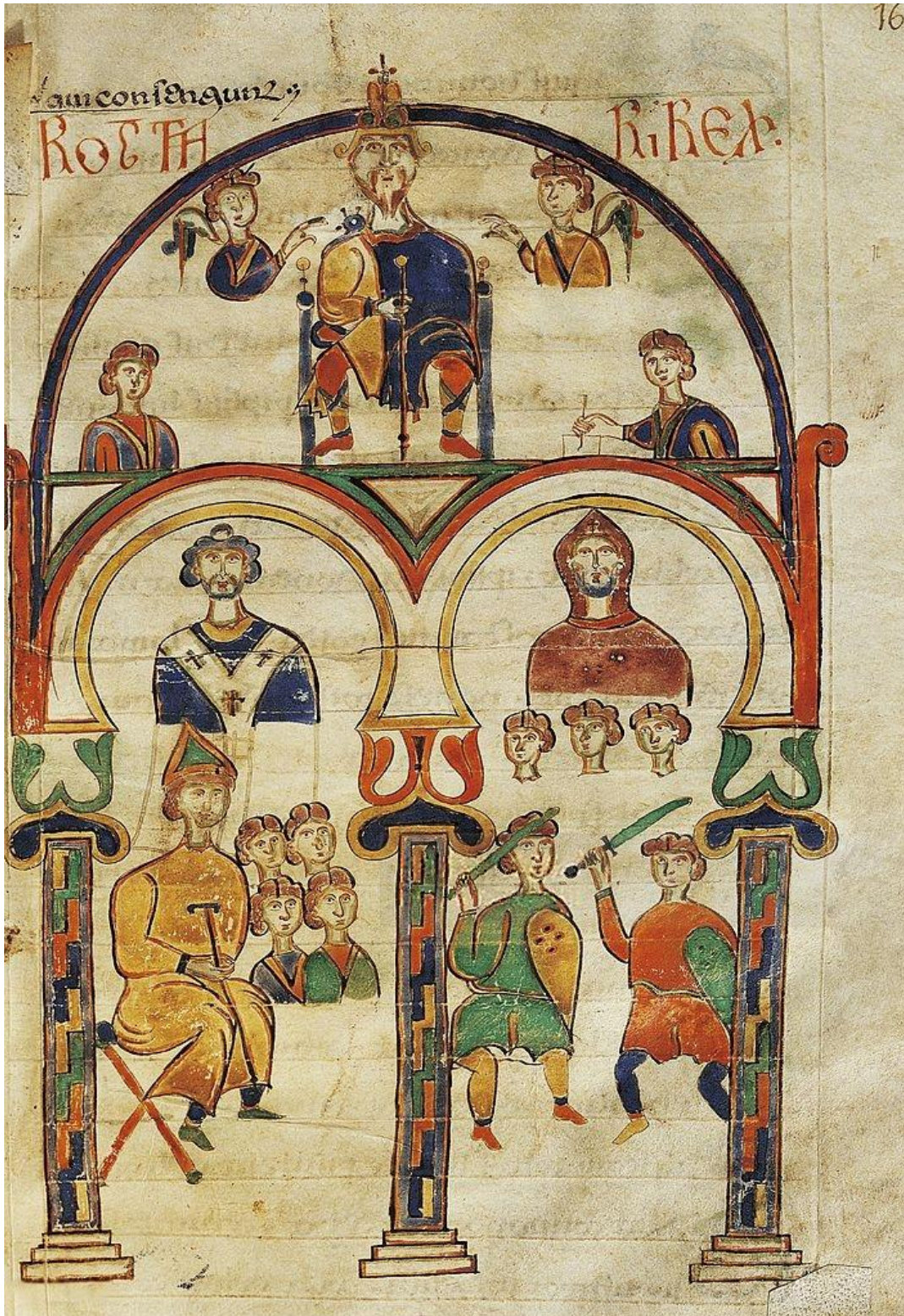
4. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 28v.



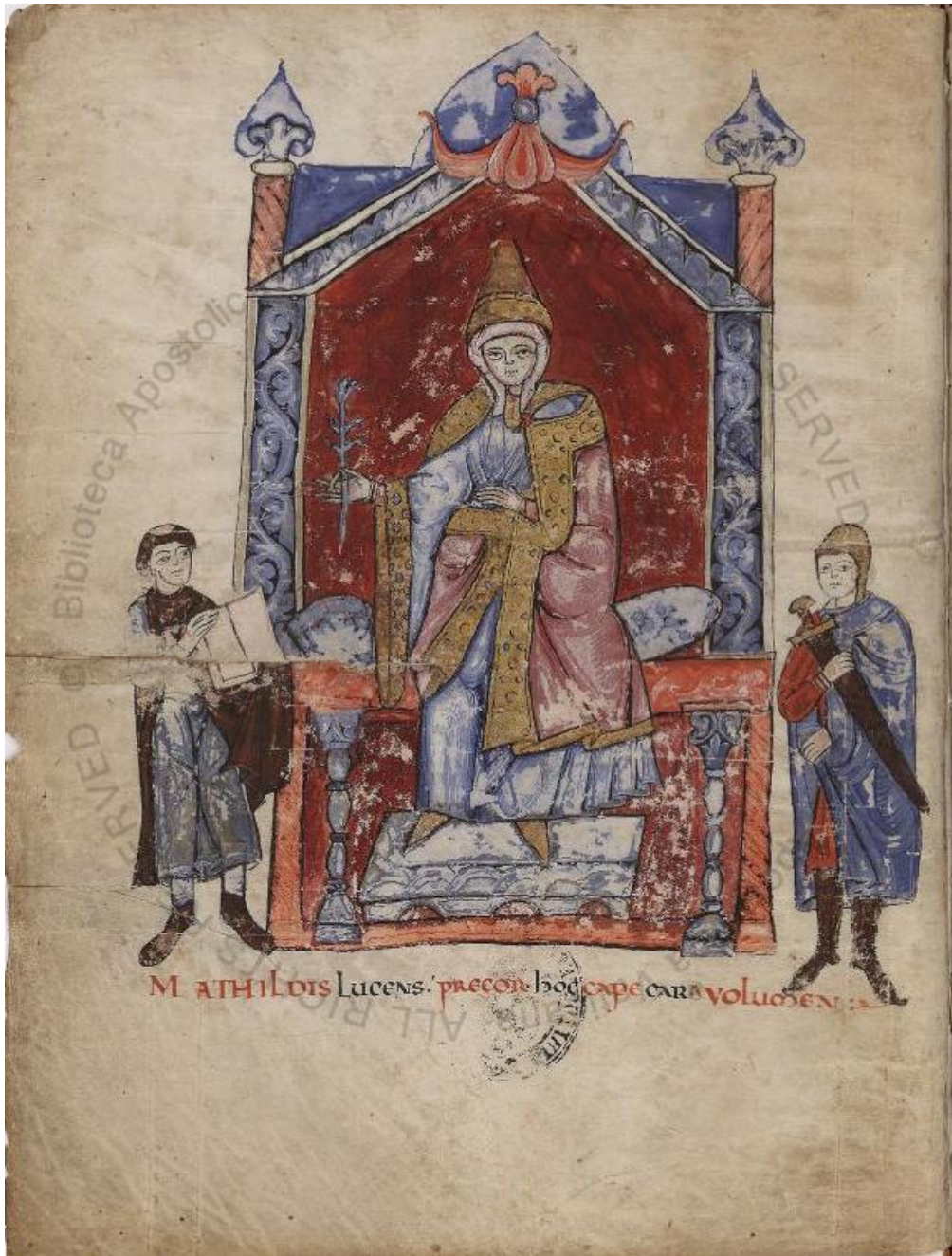
5. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 30v.



6. Portrait of Otto II, excerpted from *Registrum Gregorii* (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS. 171/1626), ca. 985. MS. 14 bis, Musée Condé, Chantilly.



7. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS. 413 (*Codex Matritensis Leges Langobardorum*) fol. 16r.



8. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 7v.



9. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS. 24 (*Codex Egberti*), fol. 2r.



10. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 1202 (*Lectionarium in festis Sanctorum Benedicti, Mauri, et Scholasticae*), fol. 2r.



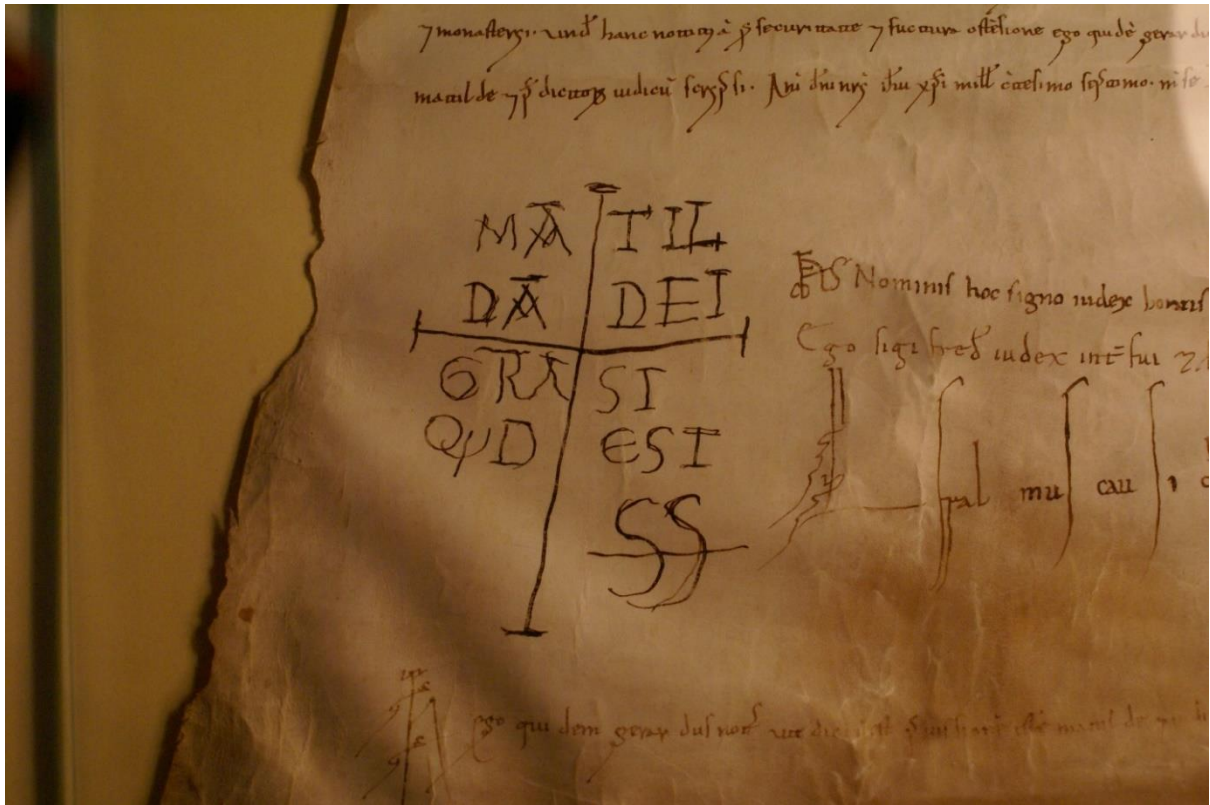
11. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 49r.



12. Sovana, Santa Maria Maggiore, 12th century, 9th century ciborium in the apse. Photograph by author, 2018.



13. Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.I.2 (*Liber Legum: Leges salicae, ripuariae, langobardorum, baioariorum, Caroli Magni*), fol. 154v.



14. Lucca, Archivio Storico Diocesano, Diplomatico Arcivescovile, Signature of Matilda of Canossa, Notitia Confirmationis, Prato, June 1107.



15. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 76r, detail.



16. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 19r, detail.



17. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 20v, detail.



18. Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 4922 (*Vita Mathildis*), fol. 21v, detail.

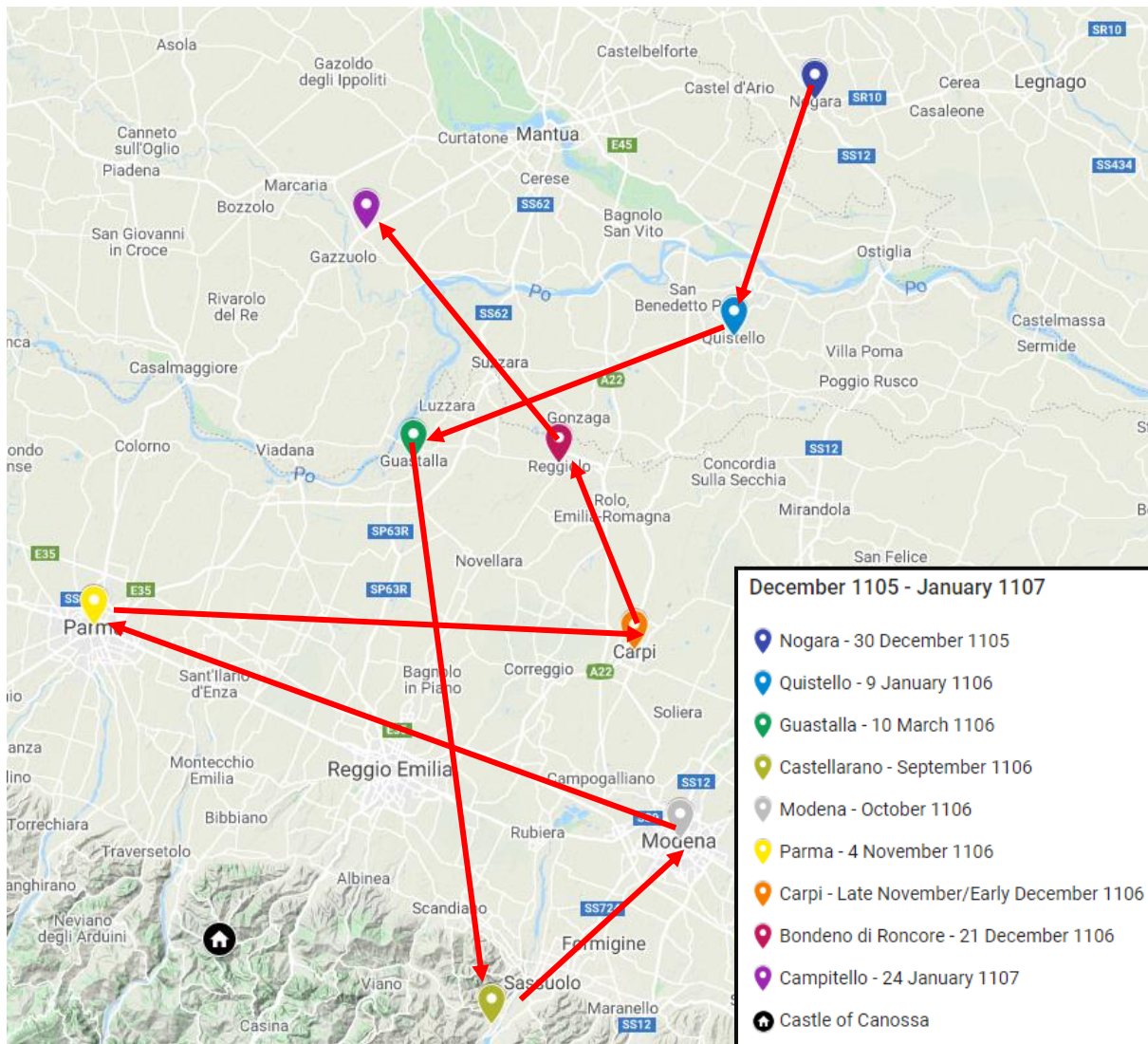
Anno dñi mcccc. c. vij. kal. may. facta translacio patroni sancti
in Geminian.



19. Top, Matilda meeting with Modenese citizens; bottom, consecration of Geminianus's body. Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11 (*Relatio de Innovatione Ecclesie Sancti Geminiani*), fol. 9r. Photograph courtesy of Il Bulino, Art Editions.



20. Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11 (*Relatio de Innovatione Ecclesie Sancti Geminiani*), fol. 9r, detail. Photograph courtesy of Il Bulino, Art Editions.



21. Google Inc. *Matilda's charters from 30 December 1105 to 24 January 1107*. Created 20 June 2020.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1ODJgzVqV-l099O5tALYhv1cEyS6o8gFw>



22. Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11 (*Relatio de Innovatione Ecclesie Sancti Geminiani*), fol. 9r, detail. Photograph courtesy of Il Bulino, Art Editions.



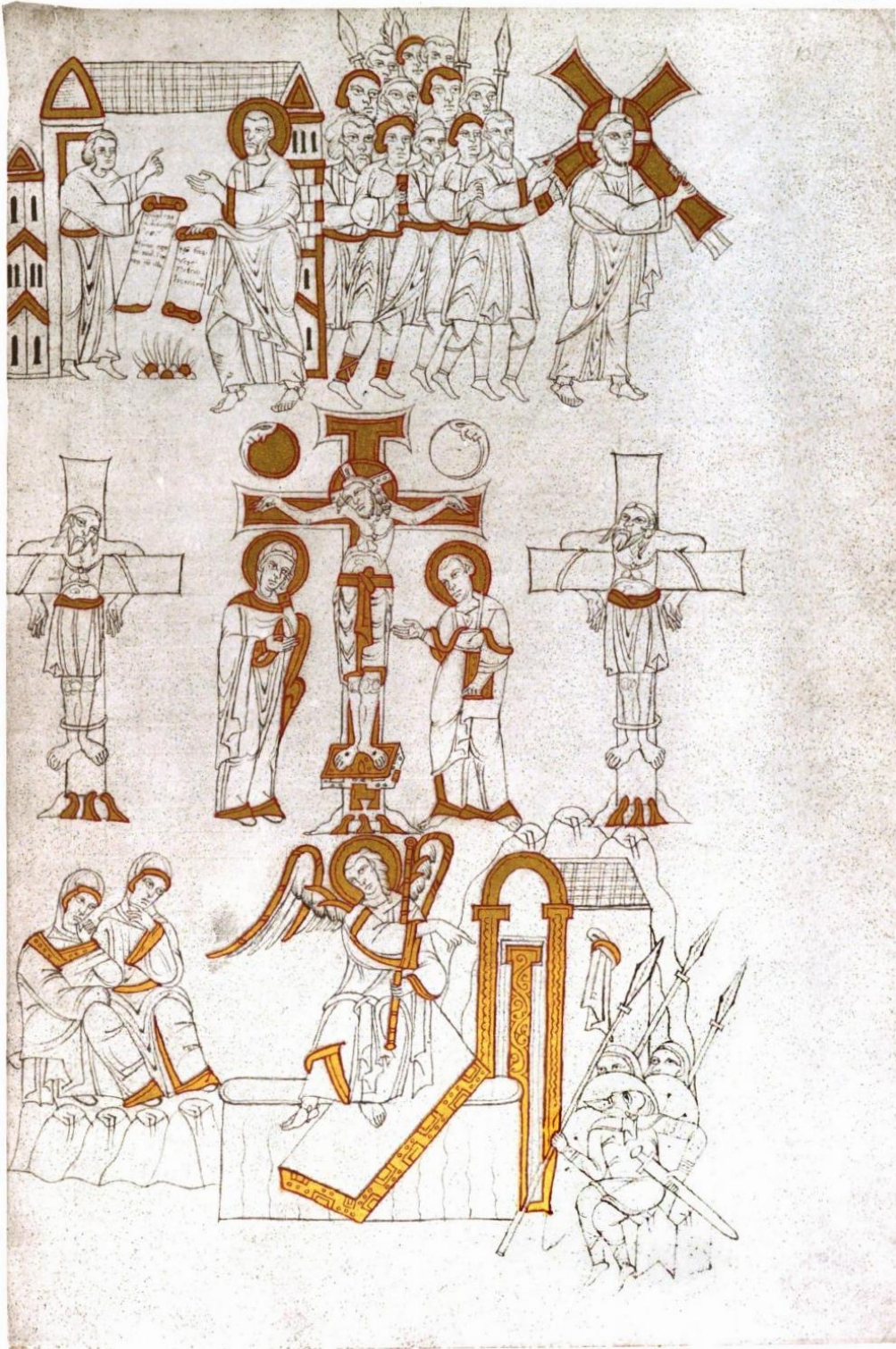
23. *Three Holy Women at the Tomb*. London, British Library, Lansdowne MS. 381/1 (*Psalter of Henry the Lion*), fol. 11r.



24. *The Women at the Tomb*. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS. 64 (*Stammheim Missal*), fol. 111r.



25. *The Three Marys at the Sepulchre*. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, MS. 101 (Illustrated Vita Christi, with devotional supplements), fol. 81r.



26. *Peter's Denial, Crucifixion, and Holy Women at the Sepulchre.* New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 101.

sunt inueniant. Cum itaq; canones legeris qui subiecti sunt confu-
sionis errore sublati. et similia omnia. scilicet. et singulis suis quoq;
restitues. In canone primo concordant quatuor. **M**attheus **M**arcus
Lucas **I**ohannis. In secundo tres. **M**attheus **M**arcus et **I**ohannis. In tertio
tres. **M**attheus **L**ucas **I**ohannis. In quarto. tres. **M**attheus **M**arcus **I**ohannis. In quinto
duo. **M**attheus **L**ucas. In sexto duo. **M**attheus **M**arcus. In septimo duo. **M**attheus **I**ohannis.
In octavo duo. **L**ucas **M**arcus. In nono duo. **L**ucas **I**ohannis. In decimo prope
unus cuius que non habentur in aliis ediderunt. Singulis euangelis ab
uno incipient usq; ad fine librorum. dispari numero in ore scilicet. Hic nigro
colore prescriptus. sub se habet aliam eodem numero uel discoloris. Quia
ad decem usq; pedent. indicat prior numerus in quo sit canone requirendus.
Cum igitur apud codices uerbi gratia illud siue illud capitulum siue uolueris.
cui canone sit statim ex subiecto numero discerneris. Et recurrens ad
principia in quibus canonum est distincta congeries. eodem statim canone
extitit frontis inuenio. illa que querelis numeri eiusdem euangelis. q
et ipse ex inscriptione signatur. inuenies. atq; euenio. ceterorum tractatibus
inspectis. quos numerus eregione habeat ad notabis. Et cum scieris
recurres ad uoluntatem singulorum. et sine motu reperis numeris quos ante
signaueris. reperies et loca in quibus uel eadem uel uicinia dixerunt.
O pio ut in xpo ualeat et mei memineris papa beatissime.



27. *Evangelist Matthew*. New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 14v.

xpi filius dauid: monet cauendu a scribis de iuda et gazophylato et de templi structura.

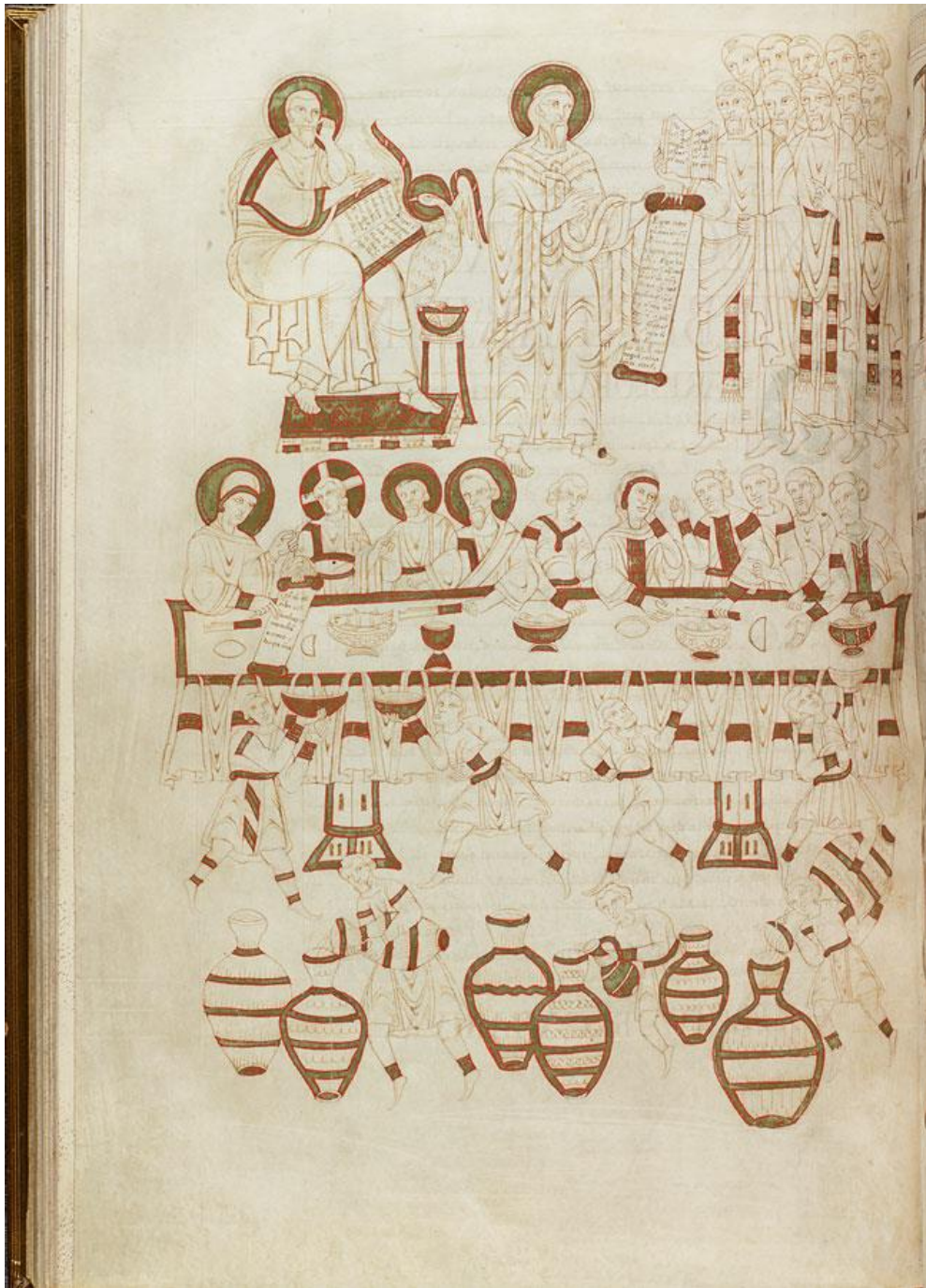
De pseudo xpi et passione martiri et oratione scti et aduentu xpi de arbore ficus parabolis. ut qd diem iudicis nemo scit. ppter qd docet uigilare et unguento sup caput xpi effuso iuda sacerdotibus dnm pdict. apparuit palce dnm dicit ab uno eor se tradendu. oblato petro pdicit negaturum orationes xpi traditio iude iudeis.

Principes interrogant dnm et condepiant eu. petrus tertio negat. discipulus traditur. pylatus dimisso barabam dnm flagellatu crucifigendu tradidit. passio xpi et sepultura et resurrectio ei et ex mortuis. Post resurrectione mandata et ascensio eius in celis. **EXPLICIT VNT CAPITVLA.**

28. *Evangelist Mark, Baptism of Christ.* New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 42v.



29. *Evangelist Luke, Annunciation.* New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 58v.



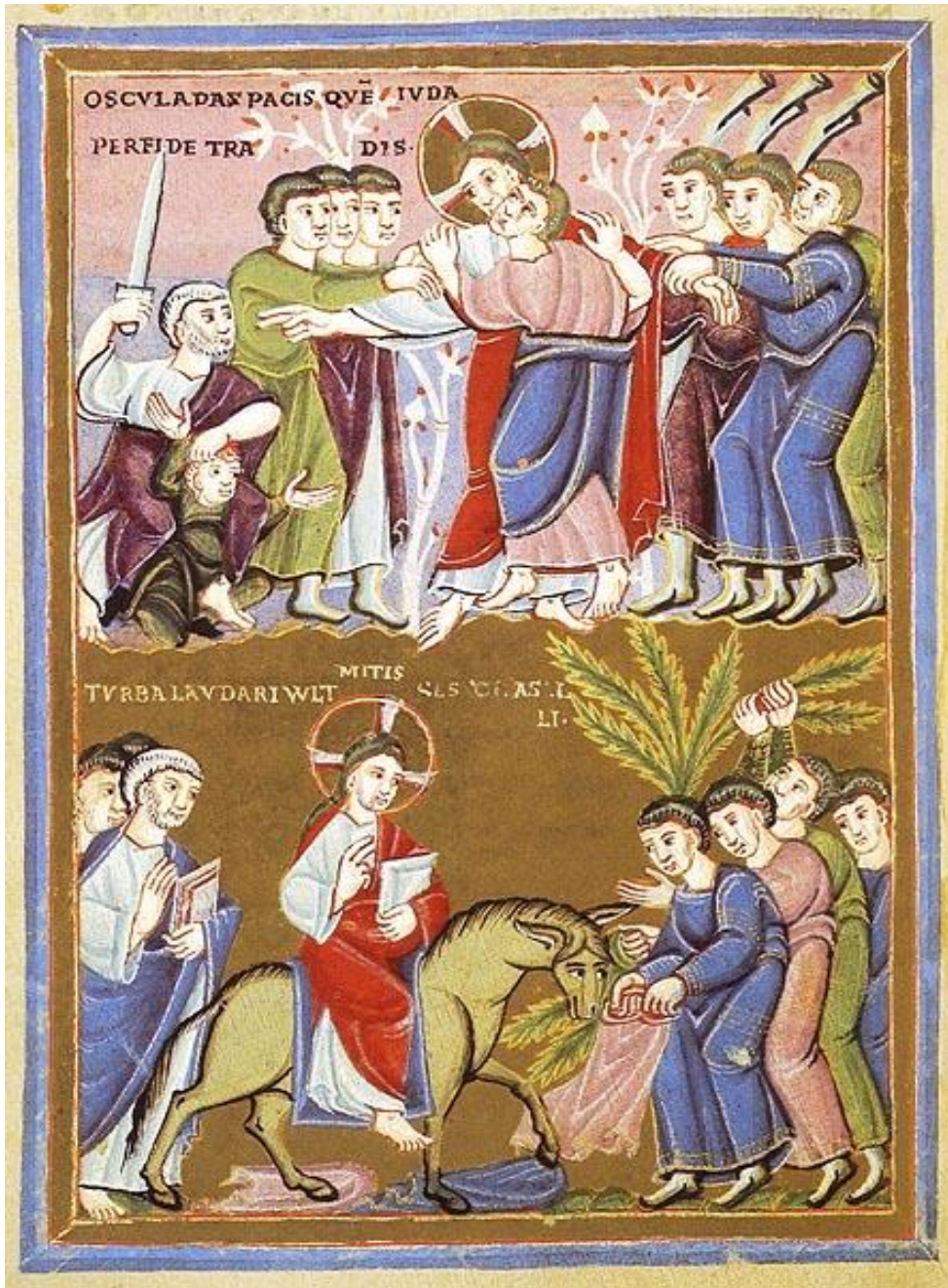
30. *Evangelist John, John the Baptist*. New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 83v.



31. *Washing of feet, Last Supper, Betrayal and Arrest, Apostle Peter cutting off ear of Malchus.* New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 100v.



31a. *Betrayal and Arrest, Apostle Peter cutting off ear of Malchus.* New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 100v, detail.



32. Bremen, Stadtbibliothek Bremen, MS. B. 21 (*Das Evangelistar Kaiser Heinrich III*), fol. 43v.

Top, Christ's Betrayal and Arrest; *bottom*, Christ's Entry into Jerusalem.



33. *Cleansing of the Temple*. New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, MS. M.492 (*The Gospels of Matilda*), fol. 42v.



34. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, exterior. Photograph by author, 2017.



35. *Mantua*, published in Matthäus Merian, *Itinerarium Italiae* (1640). Copper engraving 25x35 cm.

Indicated:

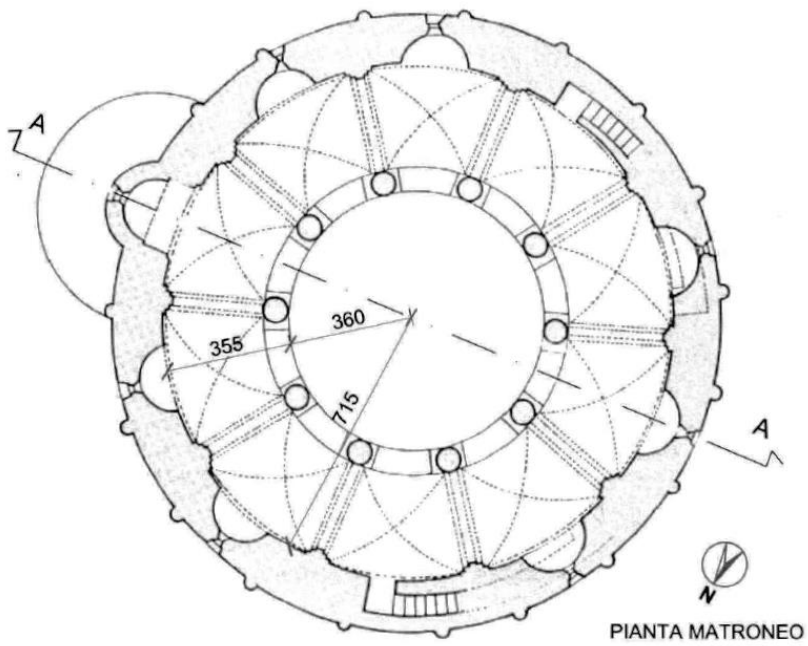
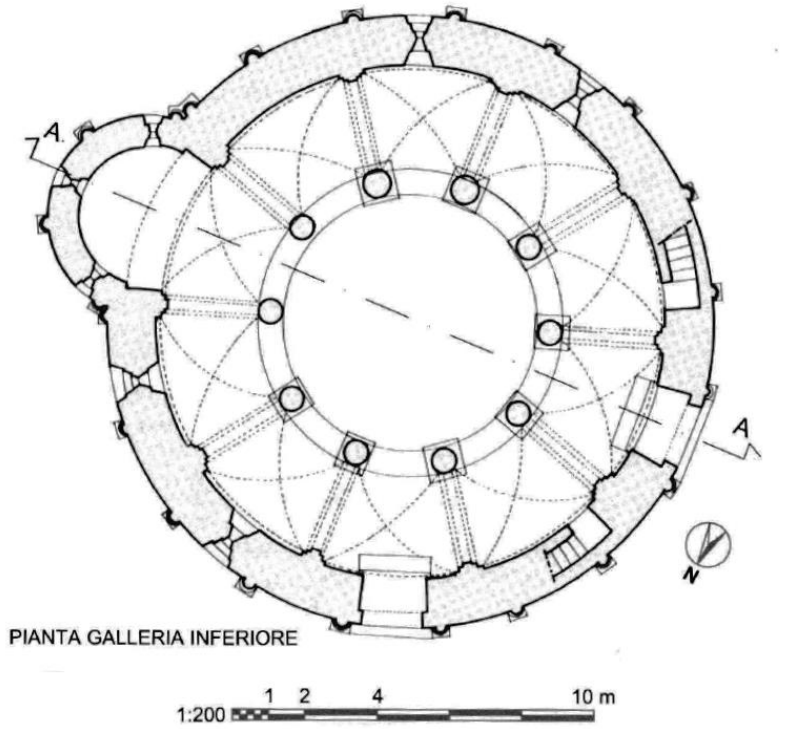
San Lorenzo (red)



36. Padua, Santa Sofia, 1123, exterior. Photograph by author, 2018.



36a. Padua, Santa Sofia, 1123, exterior, detail of Lombard band, applied colonettes, and trapezoidal capitals on west façade. Photograph by author, 2018.



37. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, floorplan, published in Massimo De Paoli, 'San Lorenzo' In *Rotonde d'Italia*, (Milan: Jaca Book, 2008), 70.



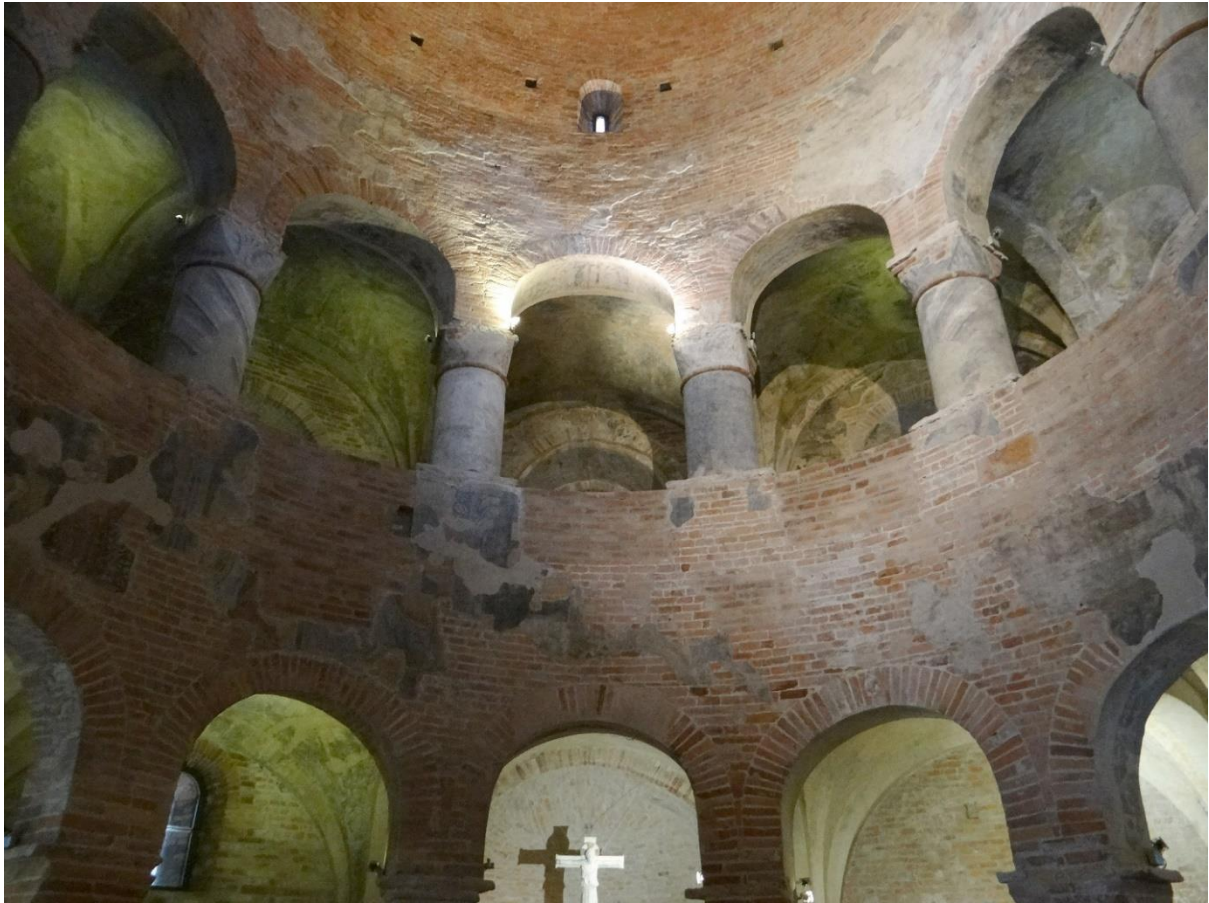
38. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, two spoliated columns in front of the apse, ground floor. Photograph by author, 2017.



39. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, granite column, of Roman origin, right of main altar, ground floor. Photograph by author, 2017.



40. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, detail of column, of Roman origin, left of main altar, ground floor. Photograph by author, 2018.



41. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, view of smaller columns in gallery. Photograph by author, 2017.



42. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, view of terracotta fragments in relation to apse, ground floor. Photograph by author, 2017.



43. Detail of terracotta fragment, published in Arturo Calzona, *La rotonda e il palatium di Matilde* (Parma: Università degli studi di Parma, Istituto di storia dell'arte, Centro di studi medioevali, 1991), fig. 250.



44. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, Adoration of the Magi. Photograph by author, 2017.



45. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, six angels holding globes and palms, ground floor ambulatory vault. Photograph by author, 2017.



46. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, four angels surrounding a chalice/dove (?), ground floor ambulatory. Photograph by author, 2017.



47. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, four angels surrounding a chalice/dove (?), ground floor ambulatory. Published in Giannino Giovannoni, 'Interpretazione iconografica degli affreschi della rotonda di S. Lorenzo a Mantova,' in *Sant'Anselmo, Mantova e la lotta per le Investiture: convegno internazionale di studi (Mantova, 23-24-25 maggio 1986)*, edited by Paolo Golinelli. Bologna: Patron Editore, 1987, fig. 3.



48. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, view of gallery columns. Photograph by author, 2017.

Indicated in yellow are fresco fragments depicting architectural elements.

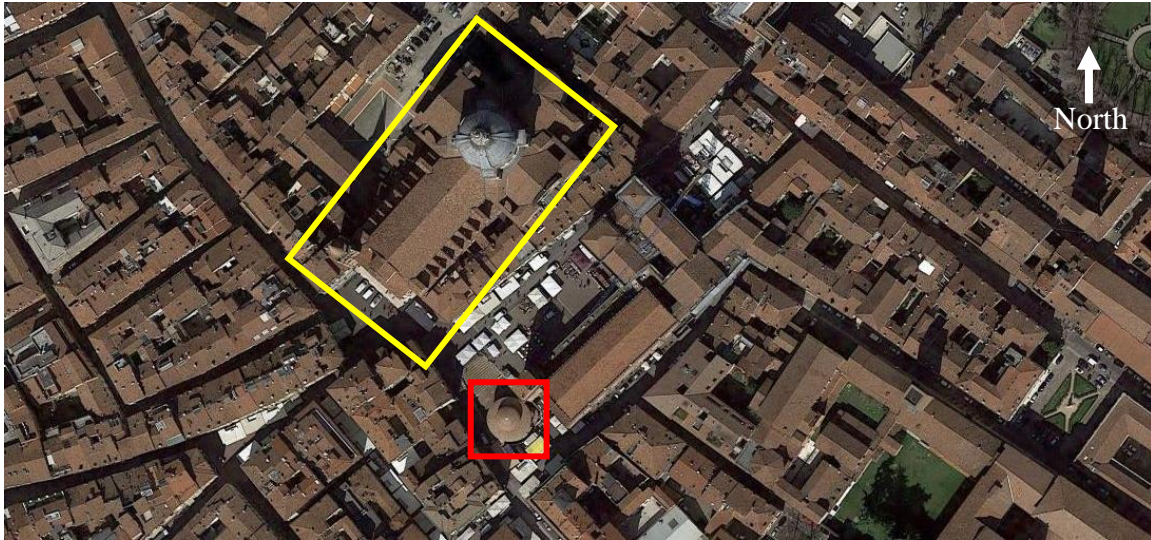


49. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, detail of eleventh century fresco on gallery column. Photograph by author, 2017.



50. Mantua, San Lorenzo, c. 1083, detail of frescoed architectural elements. Photograph by author, 2017.

Note the rosettes in the foreground, on the soffit of the arch, and the differently painted columns of the gallery.

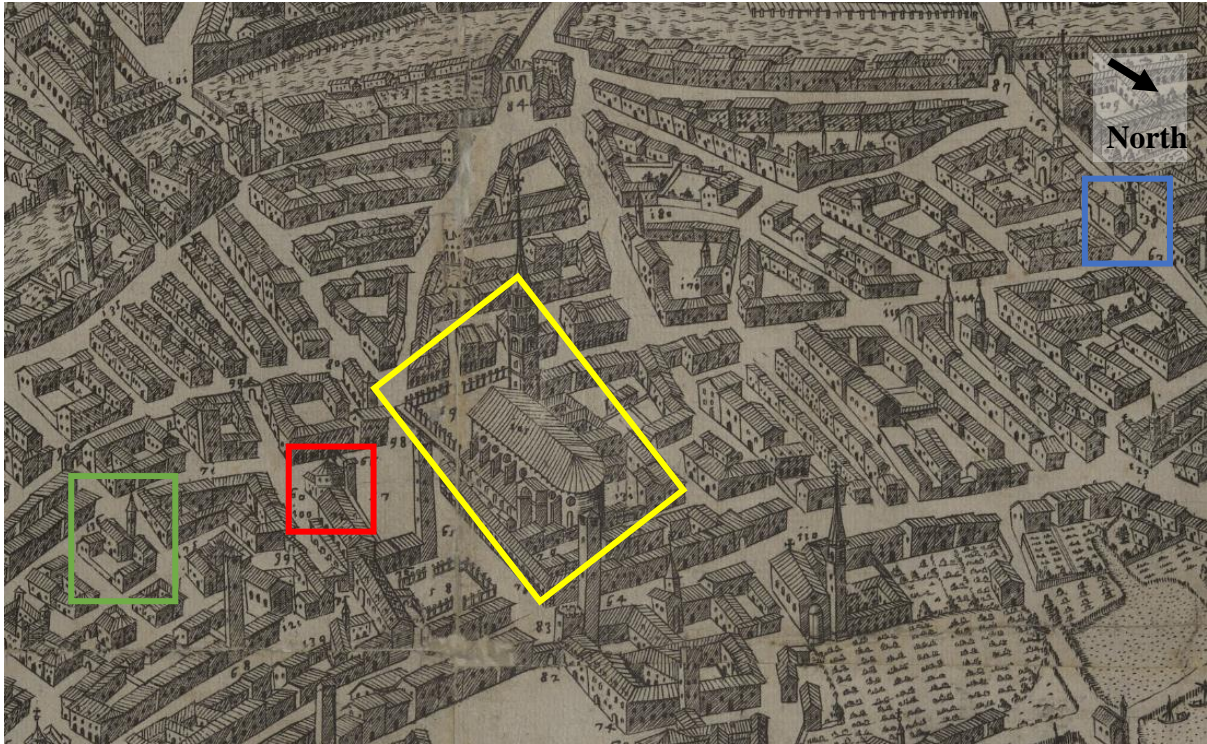


51. Google Inc. *Mantua, Italy* [aerial]. 1:3,333 scale. Accessed 1 July 2020.
<https://www.google.com/maps/place/45.158426,10.794315>.

Indicated:

San Lorenzo (red)

Sant'Andrea (yellow)



52. *Mantua*, published in Gabriele Bertazzolo, *Urbis Mantua Descriptio* (Ludovico Delfichi: 1628). Copper engraving 76.8x115.6 cm.

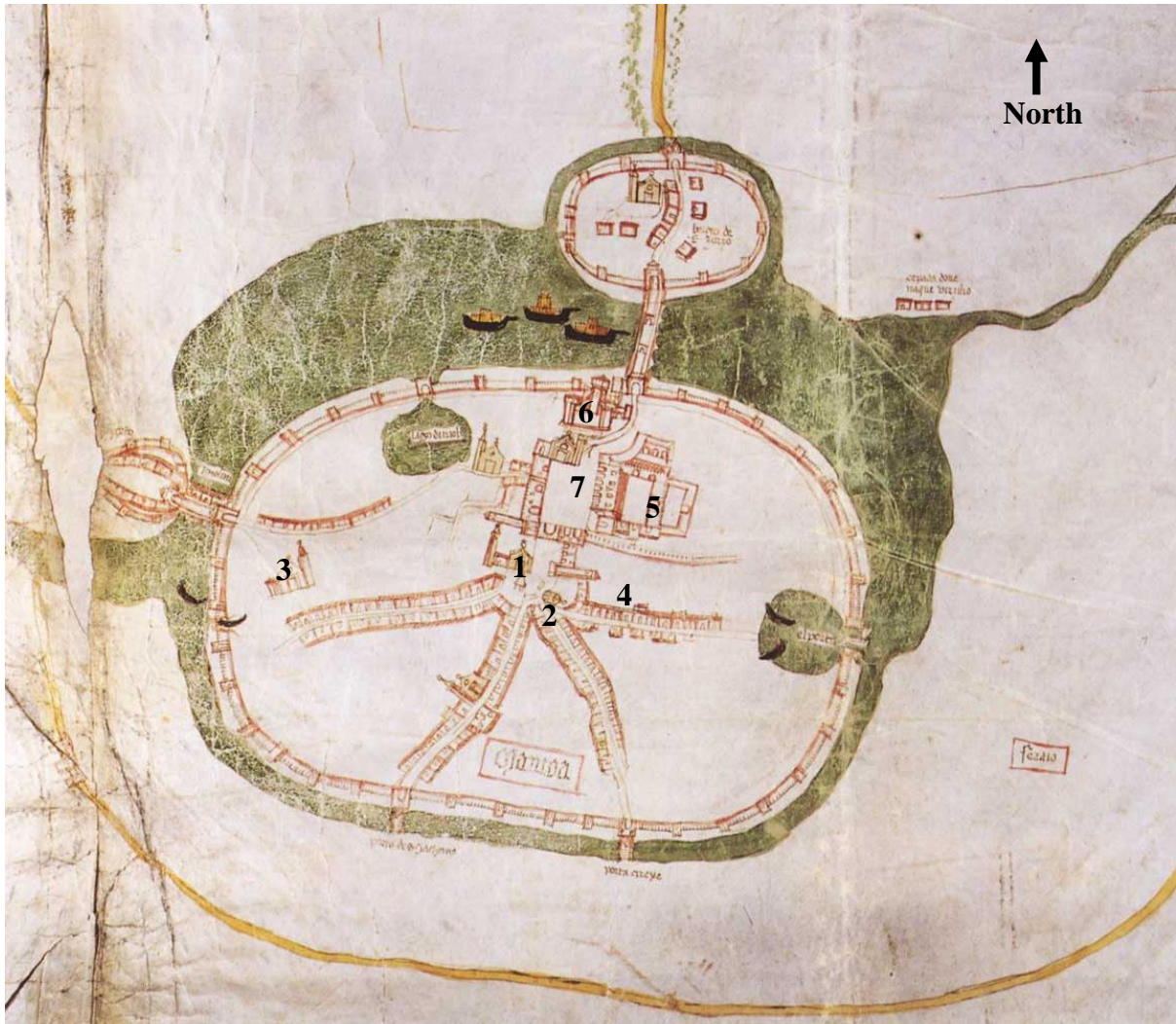
Indicated:

San Lorenzo (red)

Sant'Andrea (yellow)

San Salvatore (green)

and Sant'Ambrogio (blue)



53. Venice, Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Miscellanea mappe, dis. 1438, no. 1. *Detail of Mantua from Topographic map of Veronese territory, 1437-1439.*

Indicated:

1. Sant'Andrea
2. San Lorenzo
3. Sant'Ambrogio
4. San Salvatore
5. Palazzo Ducale
6. Castello di San Giorgio
7. San Pietro



54. Pisa, Pisa Baptistery, 1153-1265, exterior. Photograph by author, 2019.



55. *Beatrice of Lorraine's sarcophagus*, 2nd century C.E., Roman, marble. North corridor, Camposanto Monument, Pisa. Photograph by author, 2018.



56. *Hippolytus and Phaedra sarcophagus*, c. late 3rd century C.E., Roman, marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photograph by author, 2018.



57. *Beatrice of Lorraine's sarcophagus; right side*, c. 2nd century C.E., Roman, marble. North corridor, Camposanto Monument, Pisa. Photograph by author, 2018.



58. *Beatrice of Lorraine's sarcophagus; left side, c. 2nd century C.E., Roman, marble. North corridor, Camposanto Monument, Pisa. Photograph by author, 2018.*



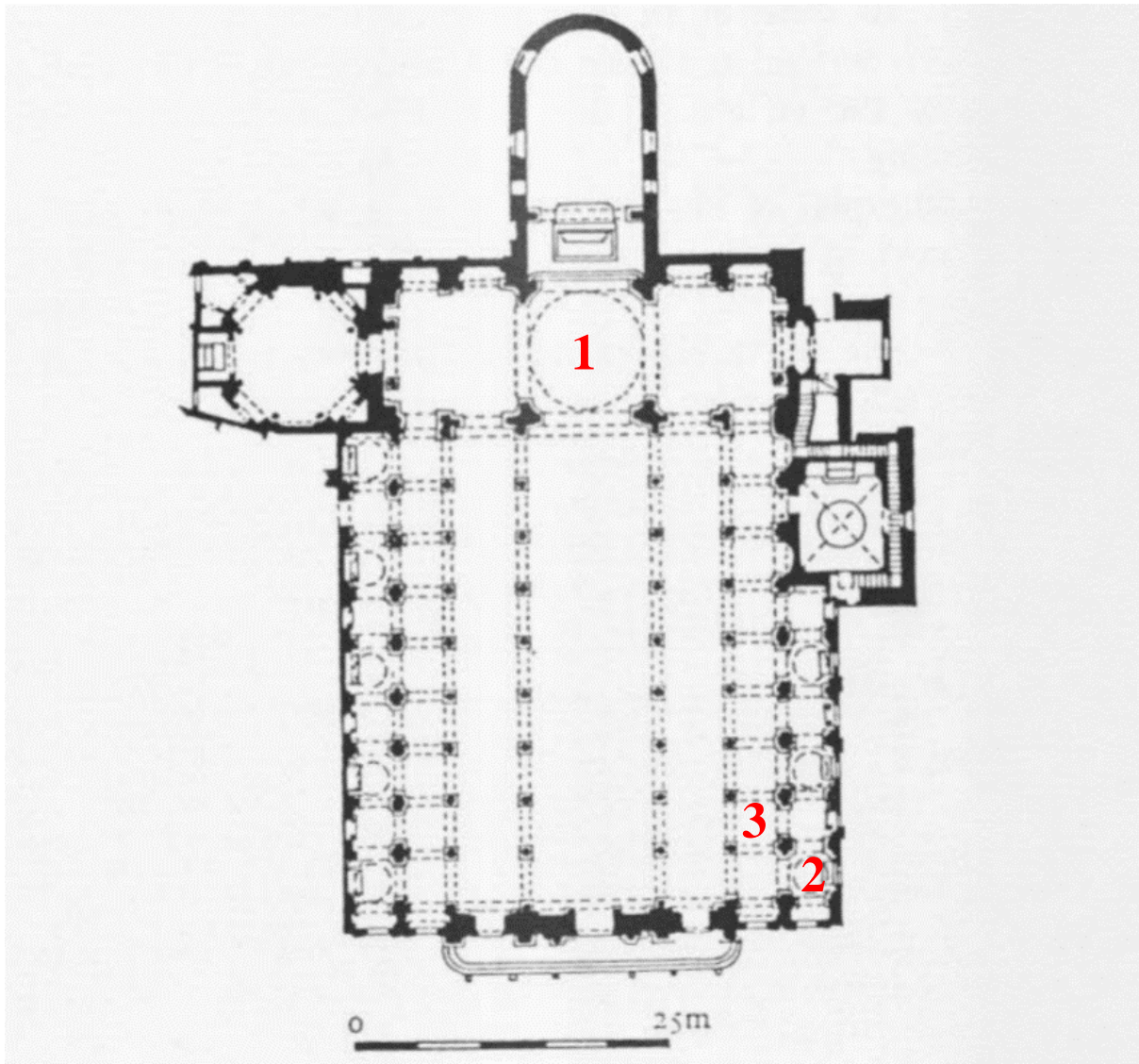
59. *Marble sarcophagus with myth of Adonis and cover (non-pertinent) with myth of Oedipus, 220 C.E., Roman, marble. Museo Gregoriano Profano, Vatican City.*



60. *Marble sarcophagus with myth of Aphrodite and Adonis*, late 2nd century C.E., Roman, Parian marble. Mantua, Palazzo Ducale, Mantua.



61. *The main altar with the body of Saint Anselm II underneath, Cathedral of San Pietro, Mantua. Photograph by author, 2017.*



62. Giulio Romano: Mantua, San Pietro Cathedral, after 1540, floorplan. Published in Wolfgang Lotz, *Architecture in Italy 1500-1600* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), fig. 118.

Indicated:

1. Current location of S. Anselm's body
2. Medieval location of Anselm's chapel
3. Current location of 'City Gates' sarcophagus



63. *'City Gates' Sarcophagus*, 4th-5th century, 12th century refinishing, Roman marble. Cathedral of San Pietro, Mantua. Photograph by author, 2019.



63a. *'City Gates' Sarcophagus, detail of front left, 4th-5th century, 12th century refinishing, Roman marble. Cathedral of San Pietro, Mantua. Photograph by author, 2019.*



63b. *'City Gates' Sarcophagus, detail of front right, 4th-5th century, 12th century refinishing, Roman marble. Cathedral of San Pietro, Mantua. Photograph by author, 2019.*



64. *Sarcophage de la Remise de la Loi*, late 4th century, Roman, marble, 111 cm x 252 cm x 146 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photograph by author, 2014.



64a. *Sacrifice of Abraham, Sarcophage de la Remise de la Loi*, late 4th century, Roman, marble, 111 cm x 252 cm x 146 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photograph by author, 2014.



64b. *Ascension of Elijah, Sarcophage de la Remise de la Loi*, late 4th century, Roman, marble, 111 cm x 252 cm x 146 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photograph by author, 2014.



65. *Sarcophagus of Stilicho*, 4th-5th century, Roman, marble. Sant' Ambrogio, Milan. Photograph by author, 2014.



65a. *Sacrifice of Abraham, Sarcophagus of Stilicho*, 4th-5th century, Roman, marble. Sant' Ambrogio, Milan. Photograph by author, 2014.



65b. *Elijah's ascension, Sarcophagus of Stilicho*, 4th-5th century, Roman, marble. Sant' Ambrogio, Milan. Photograph by author, 2014.



66. *Sarcophagus of Flavius Gorgonius*, 4th-5th century, Roman, marble. Museo diocesano di Ancona, Ancona.



66a. *Left lateral face, Sarcophagus of Flavius Gorgonius, 4th-5th century, Roman, marble. Museo diocesano di Ancona, Ancona.*



66b. *Right lateral face, Sarcophagus of Flavius Gorgonius, 4th-5th century, Roman, marble. Museo diocesano di Ancona, Ancona.*



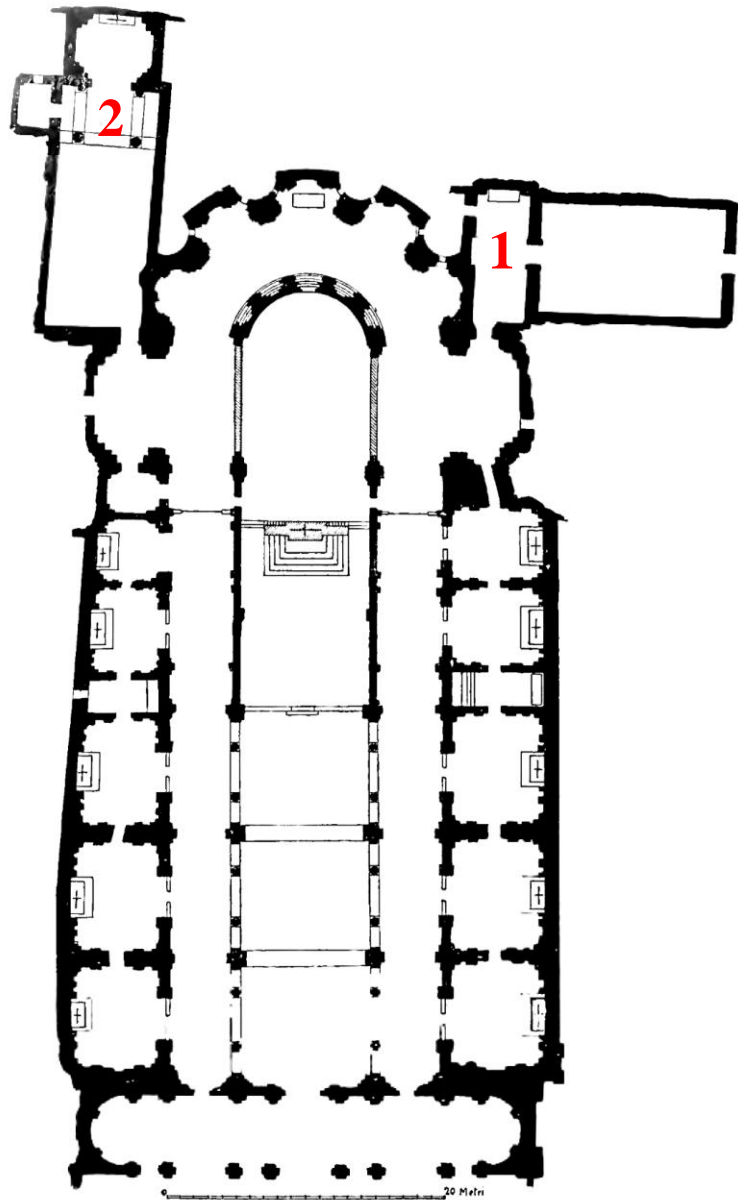
67. *Left lateral face, 'City Gates' Sarcophagus, 4th-5th century, 12th century refinishing, Roman, marble. Cathedral of San Pietro, Mantua. Photograph by author, 2019.*



68. *Right lateral face, 'City Gates' Sarcophagus, 4th-5th century, 12th century refinishing, Roman, marble. Cathedral of San Pietro, Mantua. Photograph by author, 2019.*



69. Polirone, *Abbey of San Benedetto*, 11th century foundation, 16th century reconstruction, exterior, Photograph by author, 2019.



70. Giulio Romano: Polirone, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, 1539-1544, floorplan. Published in Rosolino Bellodi, *Il Monastero di San Benedetto in Polirone nella storia e nell'arte* (San Benedetto Po: Accademia Polironiana, 1974) fig. 69.

Indicated:

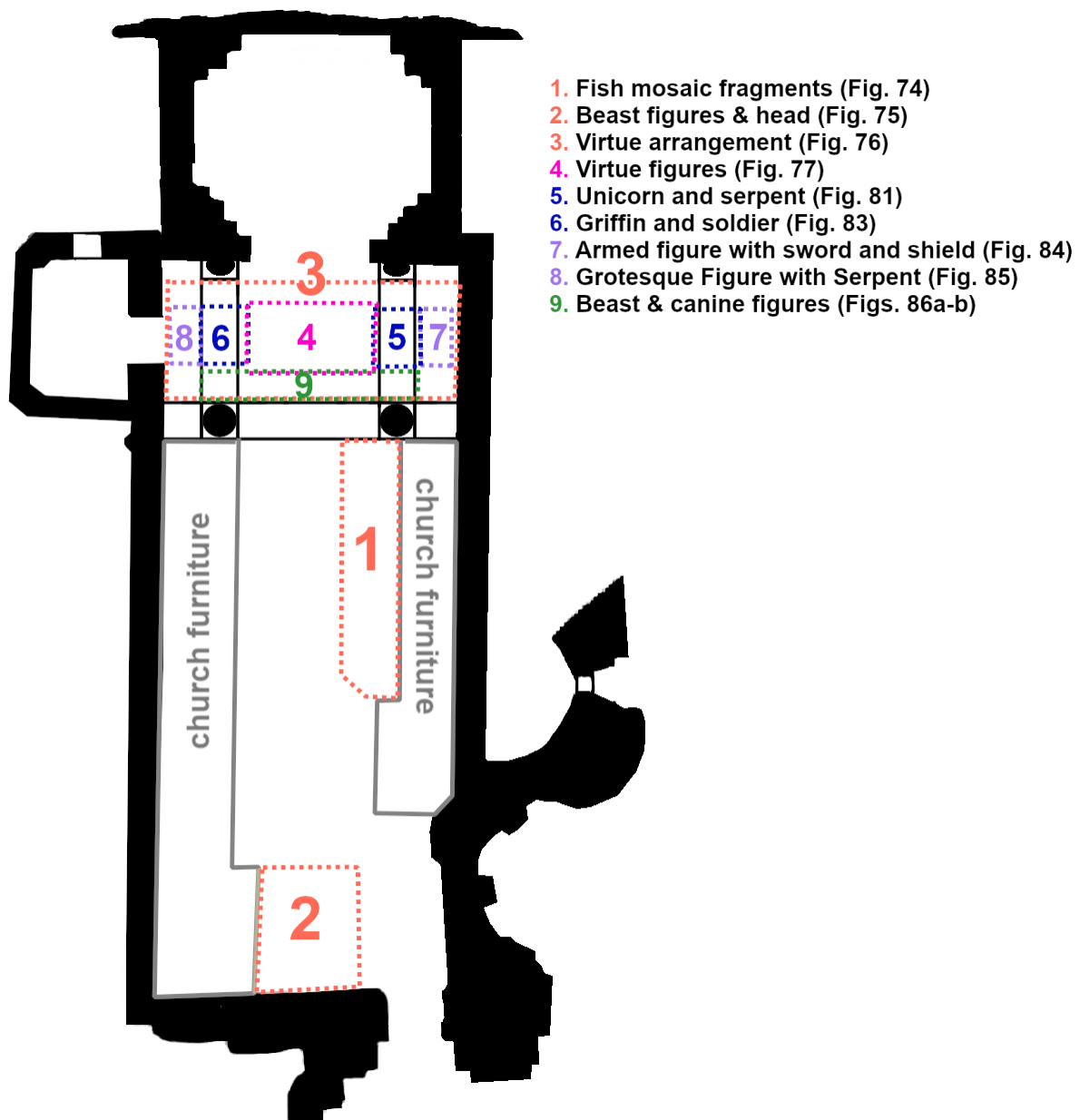
1. Present location of Matilda's tomb (Sacristy Vestibule)
2. Location of pavement (Santa Maria Chapel)



71. *Tomb of Matilda*, Sacristy Vestibule, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.



72. Polirone, San Benedetto al Polirone, Santa Maria chapel (view from entrance).
Photograph by author, 2019.



73. Diagram of mosaic fragments. Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Indicative plan, not made to scale. Diagram by author, 2021.



74. *Mosaic fragments*, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.



75. *Mosaic fragments*, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.



76. *Extant Mosaic pavement, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*



77. *Detail of Virtue Figures, Mosaic pavement, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*



78. *Roman Sarcophagus with the muses*, mid-3rd C.E., Roman, marble. North corridor, Camposanto Monument, Pisa. Photograph by author, 2019.



79. *Roman Sarcophagus depicting the muses*, late-3rd century C.E., Roman, marble. National Roman Museum of Palazzo Massimo, Rome. Photograph by author, 2019.

31
gratia uires hostias eueruantium. quid iudith in holoferne. quem di-
cere possumus totum infernum. quasi qui nichil superm̄ habeat.
quid iabel in sifara madianitarum principe fecerit. que ualentia
ferus infirmioris nichil aliud est. nisi quod humilitas semper pre-
ualet superbie in quacumq; scōrum professione.



80. Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, Ms. W.72 (*Speculum virginum*), fol. 31r.



81. *Unicorn & Serpent, detail. Detail of Virtue Figures, Mosaic pavement, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*



82. *Detail of Virgin and Unicorn, Mosaic Pavement, ca. 1107, Crypt of the Basilica of San Savino, Piacenza. Photograph by author, 2018.*



83. *Detail of Griffin being wounded by soldier, Mosaic pavement, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*



84. *Detail of Armed Figure wielding a shield and sword, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*



85. *Detail of Grotesque Figure with Serpent*, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.



86a. *Detail of canine figures (view corrected), Mosaic pavement, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*



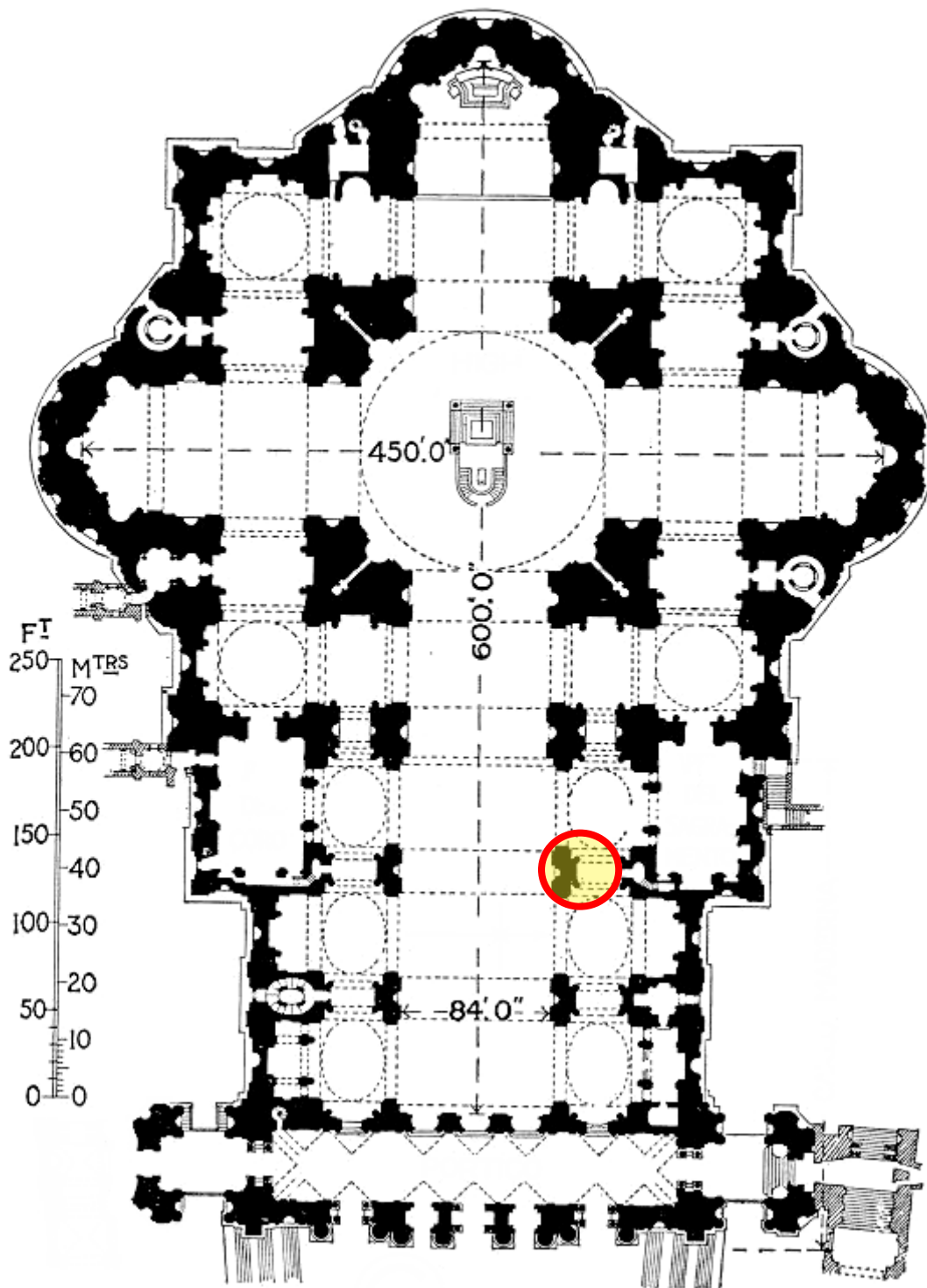
86b. *Detail of beast figures (view corrected), Mosaic pavement, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*



86c. *Detail of beast figures (view corrected), Mosaic pavement, 1151, Santa Maria Chapel, San Benedetto al Polirone Abbey, Polirone. Photograph by author, 2019.*

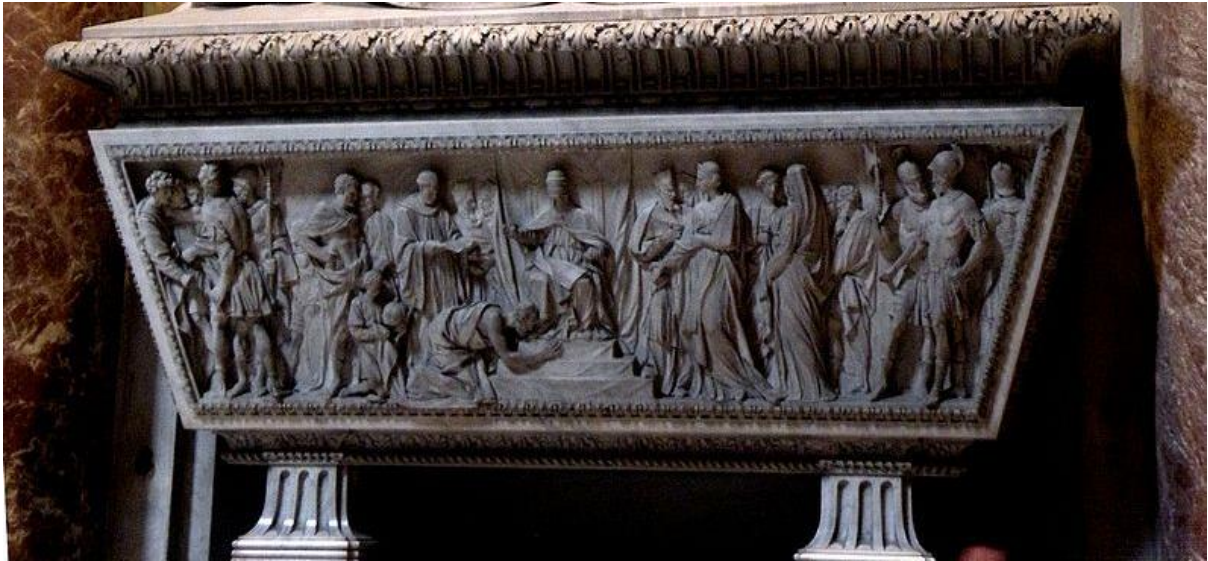


87. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Tomb of Matilda of Tuscany*, 1633-1644, marble. St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.



88. Michelangelo, Maderno: Vatican City, Saint Peter's Basilica, 16th-17th centuries, floorplan. Adapted from A. Rosengarten, W. Collett-Sandars, *A Handbook of Architectural Styles* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), fig. 563.

Marked to indicate location of Matilda's burial monument by Bernini.



89. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Tomb of Matilda of Tuscany*, 1633-1644, marble. St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.

Detail of sarcophagus front.



90. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Tomb of Matilda of Tuscany*, 1633-1644, marble. St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.

Detail of dedicatory inscription.



91. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Tomb of Matilda of Tuscany*, 1633-1644, marble. St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.



92. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Countess Matilda of Tuscany*, 1633-1634, bronze model, 40 x 22.4 x 12.1 cm. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum.



93. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Sketch for the tomb of Countess Matilda of Canossa*, 1633, pen and brown ink, on paper, 21.2 x 13.9 cm. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.



94. Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, *The Construction and Restoration of Churches under Countess Matilda*, 1637, pen and brown ink, with brown wash, over traces of black chalk, on paper, 187 x 200 mm. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City.



95. Modena, Cathedral of San Geminiano, first quarter of the 12th century, west façade. Image courtesy of Artstor, 2006, Scala, Florence /Art Resource, N.Y.

Anni dñice incarnat dñi nri ihu xpi. m. cc. viij. Indict. viij. sub die deci
mo kal. Junij. Incepta est fossio fundamti. huius nre ecclesie murinens.



96. Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena-Nonantola, MS. O.II.11 (*Relatio de Innovatione Ecclesie Sancti Geminiani*), fol. 1v. Photograph courtesy of Il Bulino, Art Editions.

Top, construction ground-breaking; *bottom*, construction of new cathedral.



97. Ignazio Danti, Cesare Nebbia, Girolamo Muziano. *Countess Matilda of Canossa donating her possessions to the Church*, 16th century, 17th century updates, Galleria delle carte Geografiche.