



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

College of Arts and Law
School of History and Cultures

Dr. Gianbattista Muzzi,
President, 'Associazione Longobardia',
Via del Brolo, 20 – 25136 Brescia - Italy

Dear Muzzi,

I am writing to you to express my support the designation for the proposed 'European Cultural Route' 'Longobard Ways across Europe'.

At the University of Birmingham we are proud to support a research project on one of the sites of 'Longobard Ways,' the church of Sant' Ambrogio, Montecorvino Rovella (Salerno). The church and its surviving ninth-century mural scheme preserve some of the best surviving examples of Longobard cultural and artistic heritage in Italy and would benefit from a wider public awareness and protections generated by the European Cultural Routes programme. Further studies of the church conducted by research staff at the University of Birmingham, the Università di Salerno, and the Masaryk University of Brno, are quickly revealing Sant' Ambrogio to be a site of international historical significance in the study of medieval Europe and early Christian devotion.

The commitment of faculty staff at the University of Birmingham to the exploration of the site, is demonstrated by the ongoing project 'At the Crossroads of Empire: the Longobard Church of Sant' Ambrogio at Montecorvino Rovella (Salerno)', co-directed by Drs Francesca Dell'Acqua and Daniel Reynolds (Birmingham), and Prof. Chiara Lambert (Salerno), who recently received a research grant from the British Academy-Leverhulme Trust to continue archaeological fieldwork at the site in July 2017 and July 2018. This project aims to further our understanding of the church in his historical context, as well as providing invaluable training opportunities in archaeological practice and heritage management for undergraduate and postgraduate students from the UK and Italy.

In addition, the project seeks to promote wider collaboration between European research institutions in the UK, Italy, and the Czech Republic and the Associazione Langobardia, among established and junior academic staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students. Besides a research conference, this will also include publications, in popular and academic formats, designed to disseminate the findings of this project to a wide audience. In addition, one of the key aims of the 'At the Crossroads of Empire' project is the development and support of the local cultural and tourist industry of Montecorvino Rovella. This will include working closely with local businesses of the town and the development of a training scheme for young people from the local area in heritage tourism. The opportunities and support offered by the European Cultural Routes initiative and the framework 'Longobard Ways across Europe' will prove invaluable to these endeavours and will facilitate closer collaborative ties between communities across Europe. It is for this reason that I

hope you will strongly consider the proposal for the 'Longobard Ways across Europe' cultural route and the inclusion of the Church of Sant'Ambrogio within this framework.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Sears', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Gareth Sears
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