



# Places of Contested Power

Conflict and Rebellion in England and France, 830–1150



Ryan Lavelle

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THE BOYDELL PRESS

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Cover image: A twelfth-century depiction of a siege, perhaps of Edom, illustrating Psalm 59 in the Harley Psalter. © The British Library Board: British Library MS Harley 603, fol. 32v.

Dedicated to the rebels of Bodington Hall



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## Illustration sources and acknowledgements

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- Bernard Gauthiez: Figure 22.
- Institut Géographique Nationale 'Géoportail' site, <https://www.geoportail.gouv.fr/>; ©IGN 2019; screenshot imagery reproduced under public licence: Figure 16 (base map).
- Gaël Léon: Figure 27 (road and trackway data).
- Ordnance Survey (© Crown copyright and database right 2018): Figures 11 (rivers and Roman roads), 15 (shire boundaries), and 26(i) (riverine data).
- Regnum Francorum* Online website, <http://francia.ahlfeldt.se/index.php> (accessed 11 Nov. 2019): Figure 28 (*Pagi* boundaries).
- Julian D. Richards: Figure 20.
- Maria Angeles Utrero: Figure 3.
- Wikipedia Commons: Public Domain file under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 license. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7f/John\\_Norden%27s\\_1617\\_plan\\_of\\_Rougemont\\_Castle.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7f/John_Norden%27s_1617_plan_of_Rougemont_Castle.png) (accessed 3 Nov. 2019): Figure 5(i).
- Winchester City Council: ©Winchester City Council collections. Provided by Hampshire Cultural Trust: Figure 9.

All other images by the author.



# Preface

Historians are creatures of their environments. We are often told that works of history have as much to reveal about historians' own times as about the past. As early plans for this book began to take shape, I was therefore struck by the irony of timing as events of the Arab Spring, a manifestation of the reactions to global political change stemming from economic crisis, began to take place, followed by protests and riots in English cities. With the symbolism of demonstrative action in Cairo's Tahrir Square and the focus of opposition to Muammar Gaddafi manifesting itself in Libya's second city, Benghazi, the power of place in contemporary politics became very apparent. That power became yet more apparent at a point when the book itself was well underway in 2016 as Britain's (at least, England and Wales') relationships with Continental and Insular neighbours were thrown into confusion by a popular vote to leave the European Union, itself in part a reaction to migration in the wake of the tragic consequences of upheaval and repression following the Arab Spring. This book, however, is in part a product of my longstanding desire to be more than an 'Anglo-Saxonist' and to draw out cross-Channel links between the Anglo-Carolingian kingdom of England and its near neighbours; it was not my intention to provide medieval parallels for the modern world. But if readers wish to draw these comparisons, as indeed they are welcome to do, this sort of explanation would probably make some kind of sense.

The inspirations I have been conscious of were somewhat more prosaic, stemming from a reading of a couple of episodes of rebellion (or resistance) in the Anglo-Saxon and Norman worlds. The first is the rebellion of Æthelwold, nephew of King Alfred, whose escapades across Wessex have been part of my understanding of Anglo-Saxon England since I borrowed my parents' Suzuki Samurai jeep and took some southern English journeys in the summer of 1998, at the instigation of my thesis supervisor, Barbara Yorke, who advised me to get out and understand the places relating to the royal estates of Anglo-Saxon Wessex. Doing so, seeing something of the landscape and places – and of course, getting out and walking – helped me to better fix them in my head, and the story of Æthelwold and his cousin Edward the Elder became

very apparent to me on visits to Wimborne and Badbury Rings. Æthelwold has had a slow burn. The book of my thesis on West Saxon royal estates, which I tried to make as exciting as a study of land tenure can be, was published in 2007. Some of my ideas on Æthelwold, which drew on the parallels and contrasts between him and Carolingian and Ottonian rebels, were delivered at a conference at Southampton University held in memory of the late Tim Reuter in 2004 and subsequently published in a dedicatory volume edited by Trish Skinner, *Challenging the Boundaries of the Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2009). Points made there are evident in different chapters in this book as I continue to draw out and discuss Æthelwold's motivations.<sup>1</sup> Time has mellowed the extent to which I would consider Æthelwold an open and shut case of rebellion but he remains there, all the same. That sense of the discovery of how important the landscape could be to the political actions in the early Middle Ages is, I hope, evident in these pages.

The second episode of political dissatisfaction is that of William of Arques, the uncle of William 'the Conqueror'. This arose from teaching a Masters option on ducal Normandy, realising that William of Poitiers' description of the castle held by Count William drew on a political language of place just as Æthelwold did. William of Poitiers' attempt to dismiss Count William's cause by reference to it as 'this lair, this rampart of earthly pride and madness' drew attention to the importance of that place. Those words, which reflect a place in the landscape which I was able to better understand when I visited Arques in the spring of 2011, determine the shape of the introductory discussion, but also, like Æthelwold, provide a sustained note throughout this book.

This book has gone through a number of permutations since I first began working on it in 2010, and I am indebted to Elizabeth McDonald and Caroline Palmer of Boydell & Brewer for seeing this manuscript through to completion. John Arnold, Matthew Bennett, Patrick Geary, Simon MacLean, Katherine Weikert, and Barbara Yorke have read chapters of the book in various states of completion, as have anonymous readers. I am grateful for the comments that they have all provided; even if I have found myself unable to respond to every suggestion, I have tried to consider them all. I have also benefited from additional discussion with Mark Allen, Karl

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<sup>1</sup> Sections of my paper, 'The Politics of Rebellion: The Ætheling Æthelwold and West Saxon Royal Succession, 899–902', in *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, ed. P. Skinner (Turnhout, 2009), form the basis of some of the text in sections discussing Æthelwold in chapters 4 and 8. I am grateful to Brepols for permission to reproduce them here.

Alvestad, Robin Baker, Cathy Capel, Neil Christie, Catherine Clark, Matt Clement, Carey Fleiner, Sarah Fry, Alban Gautier, Mark Hagger, Leonie Hicks, Roger Hills, Rob Houghton, Joanna Huntington, Charlie Insley, Nick Karn, Courtney Konshuh, Chris Lewis, David McDermott, Sean McGlynn, Gordon McKelvie, Neil Murphy, Rory Naismith, Rebecca Pinner, Mandy Richardson, Simon Roffey, David Rollason, Simon Sandall, Andrew Wareham, and John Watts, as well as my research student Sue Nightingale, whose premature death meant that her pioneering work on central medieval urban communities could not be completed. Some of these discussions arose from presenting parts of this research at several seminars: at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, at Southampton University, and on two of the University of Winchester's Medieval and Renaissance research days. A number of people – Stuart Brookes, Jean-Philippe Cormier, Ollie Creighton, Julio Escalona, Bernard Gauthiez, Alban Gautier, Leonie Hicks, Gaël Léon, Julian D. Richards, and Maria Angeles Utrero – were kind enough to help me with access to images and mapping data. Their rapid responses and helpfulness made the completion of the book an easier prospect than it otherwise might have been. I also wish to give my thanks to Glyn Burgess, who kindly granted permission to reproduce the extract from his translation of Wace's *Roman de Rou* discussed in chapter 8,<sup>2</sup> and to Nicola King for compiling the index.

I remain grateful to the staff of the Martial Rose Library, University of Winchester, and particularly the Inter-Library Loans librarian, Dawn Downes, who seemed to relish the challenge of finding obscure books and articles for me. The University of Winchester has been generous in supporting this work, with the funding of research visits to Normandy and Picardy, and support for a semester's research leave when this book was at an embryonic stage in 2012, and whilst nearing completion in 2019. The University also provided a student research stipend to Lilly Cespedes at an early stage of this research, and her work on cataloguing Norman and tenth-century French royal charters, which she kindly shared with me, was helpful in establishing my own sense of the political geography of France and Normandy.

Finally, I wish to express my deep appreciation for the support of my wife, Janine Lavelle, and my parents, Don and Vee Lavelle. I have drawn on their collective patience and understanding at many times during the course of writing this book. It is something for which I will always be grateful.

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<sup>2</sup> G. S. Burgess, *The History of the Norman People: Wace's Roman de Rou* (Woodbridge, 2004).



# Chronology

While this chronology provides dates of the reigns of rulers in England and France throughout the period considered by this book, it is not a comprehensive list, particularly with regard to the period prior to the mid tenth century in England. It should also be noted that no attempt has been made to catalogue the rulers of various principalities beyond a small number of eleventh-century Norman dukes. Finally, this does not purport to be a comprehensive list of episodes of rebellion and conflict. Events have usually been included below because they are addressed in the book or because they provide some context.

- 774–814      Reign of Charlemagne in Francia (after 800, as emperor).
- 786            Cyneheard attempts to seize power in Wessex.
- 792            Failure of plot by Charlemagne's son Pippin 'the Hunchback' to seize power in Francia.
- 802            Overthrow of Beorhtric of Wessex by Ecgberht (r. 802–39), whose dynasty was to rule Wessex (and, from the 920s, England) until 1016.
- 814–40        Reign of Charlemagne's son Louis the Pious as Frankish Emperor.
- 817            Revolt of Bernard of Italy ends with Bernard's capture and death.
- 827–40        Reign of Wiglaf in Mercia, interrupted in 829–30 by a brief period of West Saxon overlordship.
- 830            Unsuccessful attempt to seize power by the sons of Louis the Pious.

- 833            Seizure of power in Francia by the sons of Louis the Pious at the 'Field of Lies', resulting in the imprisonment of Louis at Soissons.
- 838            Death of Pippin I of Aquitaine, leading to claim by his son, Pippin II.
- 839–58        Reign of Æthelwulf in Wessex.
- 840–52        Reign of Beorhtwulf in Mercia.
- 841            Battle between the sons of Louis the Pious at Fontenoy (départ. Yonne), during a civil war arising after the death of Louis the Pious in 840. *Stellinga* revolt against Louis the German in Saxony.
- 843            Partition of the Frankish Empire, resulting in the control of West Francia by Charles the Bald (r. 843–77), East Francia by Louis the German (r. 843–76), and the 'Middle Kingdom' (Lotharingia) by Lothar (r. 843–55).
- 848            Capture of Pippin II; Charles orders his imprisonment at Soissons.
- 852–74        Reign of Burgred in Mercia. His reign ends in 874 with his departure to Rome under Viking pressure.
- 856            Attempted overthrow of West Saxon king Æthelwulf on his return from West Francia, resulting in a partition of Wessex; Æthelbald becomes ruler over western Wessex.
- 858            Rebellion of West Frankish nobles against the 'tyranny' of Charles the Bald and his son, leading to Louis the German being invited to rule.
- 859            West Frankish peasants form a *coniuratio* to defend themselves against Vikings; this is suppressed by Frankish nobles.
- 860–6        Reign of Æthelbert in Wessex.
- 864            Death of Pippin II.
- 866            Vikings seize York, heralding the beginning of their control of the Northumbrian kingdom.

- 866–71 Reign of Æthelred I in Wessex.
- 871–99 Reign of Alfred ‘the Great’ in Wessex. Alfred’s reign begins during a period of intense Viking activity in Wessex and Mercia.
- 872 Rebellion against Viking rulers of York.
- 874–c.879 Reign of Ceolwulf II in Mercia.
- 876 Battle between Charles the Bald and his nephew Louis the Younger by the River Rhine at Andernach, resulting in an East Frankish victory.
- 877–9 Reign of Louis ‘the Stammerer’ in West Francia.
- 878 Battle between Vikings and West Saxons at Edington, Wilts., leading to (mid-880s?) a division of territory and the establishment of what becomes known as the Danelaw and some form of overlordship by Alfred over Mercia.
- 879 Bosco revolts, invoking a Carolingian claim.
- 879–82 Reign of Louis III in West Francia.
- 882–4 Reign of Carloman II in West Francia.
- 884 Charles the Fat (ruler of East Francia since 881) accedes to West Francia, ruling as Frankish emperor until his death in 888.
- 885–6 Count Odo leads the Frankish defence of Paris during a Viking siege.
- 888 Count Odo (r. 888–98) is elevated to the kingship of West Francia.
- 898–922 Reign of Charles ‘the Simple’ in West Francia.
- 899 Alfred the Great dies, and his nephew Æthelwold attempts to seize power. Edward the Elder accedes to Wessex.
- c.911 An agreement is made by Charles the Simple and a Viking leader, Rollo, allowing Viking control of Rouen.
- 921 Peace negotiation between Charles the Simple and the East Frankish ruler Henry ‘the Fowler’ at Bonn.

- 922            Charles the Simple is deposed, in a seizure of power by the short-lived Robert I. Charles' wife, Eadgifu and son, Louis, take refuge at the court of their kinsman, Edward the Elder.
- 923            Battle at Soissons between Charles the Simple and the followers of Robert I; Robert's forces win but Robert dies. Robert's son-in-law, the Burgundian duke Raoul (r. 923–36), accedes to the West Frankish kingdom.
- 924            Edward the Elder dies during a rebellion in Cheshire. Succession of Edward's sons: first, briefly, Ælfweard (d. 924), then Æthelstan (r. 924–39), whose control of Mercia and subjugation of Northumbria allows the emergence of a viable 'Kingdom of the English' in the late 920s/30s.
- 927            Count Heribert II of Vermandois refuses to attend an assembly at Compiègne, resulting in the king's refusal to attend a synod under Heribert's 6-year-old son, Archbishop Hugh of Reims, at Trosly-Loire.
- 933            Death of Ætheling Edwin, perhaps marking the end of opposition in Winchester to Æthelstan.
- 934            Æthelstan attempts to subjugate the Scottish kingdom with a land and naval force. Battle fought against Norman rebels in the suburbs of Rouen, at Pré-de-Bataille (c. 934).
- 936–54        Reign of Louis IV 'd'Outremer' in West Francia.
- 937            Battle between Æthelstan and a Celtic–Viking coalition at *Brunanburh*.
- 939–46        Reign of Edmund I in England; with a resurgent York dynasty, Edmund encounters strong opposition in the Danelaw.
- 942            Edmund seizes the 'Five Boroughs' of the Danelaw. Death of Count William 'Longsword' of Normandy.
- 945            Count Bernard of Senlis attacks Compiègne and the royal *castellum* at Montigny-Lengrain.
- 946            Death of Edmund I during a brawl at Pucklechurch (Glos.).

- 946 Hugh, son of Count Heribert II, is deposed as Archbishop of Reims.
- 946–55 Reign of Eadred in the English kingdom.
- 947 Erik ‘Bloodaxe’ (r. 947–8 and 952–4) gains the throne in York.
- 948 Eadred invades and seizes control of Northumbria for a period until Erik regains power in York in 952.
- 949 Bishop Roricon prevented from entry to Laon after his consecration at Reims.
- 951 The West Frankish queen mother, Eadgifu, elopes with Heribert ‘the Old’, son of Count Heribert II.
- 954–86 Reign of Lothar III in West Francia.
- 955–9 Reign of Eadwig in England (after 957, Wessex alone); Eadwig begins his reign by displacing his grandmother from a number of her estates.
- 957–75 Reign of Edgar in Mercia and Northumbria; after 959 ruler of ‘all English’.
- 969 Edgar orders an attack on the Isle of Thanet (Kent), perhaps in response to an attack on merchants from York.
- 973 An imperial-style coronation ceremony is held for Edgar and his wife, Ælfthryth, after Edgar’s triumphal procession around part of the British coast.
- 975 Edward ‘the Martyr’ is elevated to English kingship after a period of unrest following Edgar’s death.
- 978 Lothar seizes Aachen; in response, Otto II enters West Frankish territory, attacking Compiègne and Chelles. Edward ‘the Martyr’ is murdered at Corfe (Dorset).
- 978–1016 Reign of Æthelred II over English kingdom.
- 986 Æthelred II orders an attack on Rochester during a dispute with the bishop.
- 986–7 Reign of Louis V over West Francia.

- 987            Hugh ‘Capet’ (r. 987–96), a chief West Frankish magnate, is elevated to the kingship of West Francia.
- 988            Charles of Lorraine seizes Laon in a bid for the West Frankish throne.
- 991            Arrival of large Viking fleet in eastern England; a decision is made to pay tribute following a defeat at Maldon (Essex); significant Viking activities are a constant feature for the rest of Æthelred’s reign.
- 996–1026      Reign of Richard II in Normandy.
- 996–1031      Reign of Robert II (‘the Pious’) in West Francia/France.
- 1003            Siege of Auxerre by Robert II.
- 1013            Swein ‘Forkbeard’ of Denmark (d.1014) is briefly elected to the English throne, during which period Æthelred is in exile in Normandy.
- 1014–16        Cnut campaigns in England following an invasion from Denmark.
- 1015            Edmund rebels against his father in a probable attempt to seize power in England.
- 1016            Brief reign of Edmund II ‘Ironside’ in England; due to the conflict with Cnut, his reign is effectively confined to Wessex alone. In the autumn, peace is made at Olney (Glos.), resulting in the division of the English kingdom.
- 1016–35        Reign of Cnut ‘the Great’ in England (from 1019 and 1028 he is also ruler of Denmark and Norway respectively).
- 1017 or 1020    Eadwig ‘king of the ceorls’ is exiled.
- 1017×26        Conflict between Hugh of Chalon-sur-Saône and Duke Richard II of Normandy arises from the capture of Richard’s son-in-law, Count Reginald of Bourgogne-outre-Saône. The younger Richard (future Richard III) besieges Chalon, leading to the surrender of Hugh and the release of Reginald.
- 1023            Unrest in London following the translation of the body of the martyred Archbishop Ælfheah.

- 1027 Robert ‘the Magnificent’ (r. 1027–35) seizes power as duke of Normandy at Falaise, deposing his brother Richard III (r. 1026–7). Soon afterwards, William de Bellême uses Alençon to make a bid for control of this region bordering Normandy; Robert defeats what is later seen as a rebellion, as well as other actions taken by nobles, such as Bishop Hugh of Bayeux’s fortification of his castle at Ivry.
- 1031–60 Reign of Henry I in France.
- 1035–40 Reign of Harald ‘Harefoot’ in England, including a period of nominal co-rule by his half-brother Harthacnut in 1035–7.
- 1035–87 Reign of Duke William II in Normandy.
- 1040–2 Reign of Harthacnut in England.
- 1041 Harthacnut orders Worcestershire to be ravaged following the death of some of his housecarls; Waleran I of Meulan rebels against the French king (c.1041).
- 1042–66 Reign of Edward ‘the Confessor’ in England.
- 1044 Queen Emma is imprisoned by her son, Edward.
- 1047 A battle is fought between Duke William (with King Henry) and his barons at Val-ès-Dunes (dép. Calvados), resulting in William’s declaration of the Truce of God at Caen.
- 1050 Marriage of William of Normandy to Matilda of Flanders.
- 1050–2 Crisis in English kingdom between Edward the Confessor and his earls, resulting in a naval showdown on the Thames at London.
- c.1051 Sieges by William of Normandy of Alençon and Domfront; siege of Count Guy at Brionne (dép. Eure).
- c.1053 Siege and battle at Arques-la-Bataille (dép. Seine-Maritime).
- 1060 Death of Robert Giroie through poisoning.
- 1060–1108 Reign of Philip I over France.
- 1064 Rebellion of Riwallon of Dol (supported by Duke William of Normandy) against Count Conan of Brittany.

- 1065            A hunting lodge, subsequently burnt down by Welshmen, is built at Portske Witt (Monmouths.) by Earl Harold of Wessex. Assault on the earl of Northumbria's manor in York by northern rebels.
- 1066            Crisis of succession in the English kingdom after the death of Edward the Confessor, leading to battles at York and Hastings (Sussex) and the crowning of William of Normandy (r. 1066–87) as the English king.
- 1067–71        Rebellions throughout the English kingdom, culminating in William's 'Harrying of the North' in 1069–70 and a siege of English rebels in Ely (Cams.).
- 1075            Revolt by a group of Norman, Breton, and English earls, resulting in the failure of the plot and execution of the English Earl Waltheof in 1076.
- 1079            Battle at Gerberoy (dép. Oise), between Robert 'Curthose' and his father.
- 1083            Abbot Thurstan violently confronts the monks of Glastonbury Abbey.
- 1087            Oaths are given to William I by the nobles of the English kingdom at Salisbury (Wilts.), probably in the presence of returns from the Domesday survey.
- 1087–1100      Reign of William II 'Rufus' in England.
- 1087–1106      Reign of Duke Robert 'Curthose' in Normandy (interrupted 1096–1100 by Robert's participation in the First Crusade).
- 1087×8        Rebellion by the monks of Saint Augustine's Canterbury.
- 1088            Rebellion in Kent, led by Bishop Odo, against William Rufus.
- 1090            Revolt in Rouen between partisans of William Rufus and Robert Curthose.
- 1100            Surrender of Le Mans to Count Helias of Maine.
- 1100–35        Reign of Henry I in England and (after 1106) as duke of Normandy.

- 1101 Treaty made between Henry I and Robert Curthose at Alton (Hants).
- 1102 Robert de Bellême fortifies Bridgnorth (Salop.) against Henry I.
- 1106 Battle between Henry I and Robert Curthose with his ally Robert de Bellême, at Tinchebray (dép. Orne), resulting in the capture of Robert and Henry's takeover of Normandy.
- 1108–37 Reign of Louis VI ('the Fat') in France.
- 1112 Urban revolt in Laon.
- 1119 Battle between Henry I and King Louis (allied with Robert Curthose's son, William Clito) at Brémule (dép. Eure); in Normandy, Henry ousts Eustace from Breteuil (dép. Eure), which is contested by Juliana, the king's daughter.
- 1123 Hugh de Montfort orders the holding of Montfort-sur-Risle as part of a plot against Henry I.
- 1124 A rebel force led by Waleran of Meulan fights Henry's forces at Boughthéroulde (dép. Eure).
- 1127 Murder of the Count of Flanders, Charles the Good in Bruges.
- 1135–54 Reign of Stephen in England and (to 1144) in Normandy; the claim to the crown is contested by Henry's daughter Matilda. Stephen's reign soon descends into a period of civil war (the 'Anarchy'), which reached its height in the 1140s.
- 1136 Rebellion of Baldwin de Redvers in Exeter.
- 1137–80 Reign of Louis VII in France.
- 1138 Battle of the Standard, between English nobles and King David of Scotland, at Northallerton (Yorks.).
- 1139 Arrest of Bishop Roger of Salisbury, leading to confiscation of castles. The Empress Matilda, wife of Count Geoffrey of Anjou, lands near Arundel (Sussex), making clear her claim to England and Normandy.

- 1141            Battle of Lincoln, leading to the capture and imprisonment of King Stephen. Matilda arrives in London, facing opposition from the townspeople.
- 1145            Geoffrey of Anjou's seizure of the castle of Arques marks the high point of his conquest of Normandy, which had otherwise been achieved by 1144.
- 1153            A treaty agreed at Winchester provides a formal end for the civil war in England.

# Abbreviations

- AB* *Annales Bertiniani*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SRG in usum scholarum separatim editi, 5 (Hannover, 1883); trans. J. L. Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin* (Manchester, 1991)
- ANS* Various editors, *Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies* 1978 etc. (Woodbridge, 1979 etc.); cited by volume number and conference year
- ASC* *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, general eds D. N. Dumville and S. D. Keynes (Cambridge, 9 vols published, 1983–present); *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, trans. D. Whitelock, with D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker (London, 1961); cited by MS where versions differ substantially and, unless otherwise noted, corrected annal year
- ASE* *Anglo-Saxon England* [journal]
- Asser *Vita Alfredi: Asser's Life of King Alfred, together with the Annals of Saint Neots Erroneously Ascribed to Asser*, ed. W. H. Stevenson (Oxford, 1906); *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, trans. S. D. Keynes and M. Lapidge (Harmondsworth, 1983)
- Astronomer *Astronomus, Vita Hludovici Imperatoris*, MGH SRG in usum scholarum separatim editi, 64, ed. E. Tresp (Hannover, 1995); *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious: Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thégan, and the Astronomer*, trans. T. F. X. Noble (University Park, PA, 2009)

- Attenborough, *Laws*      F. L. Attenborough (ed.), *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings* (Cambridge, 1922)
- Æthelweard, *Chronicon*      *Chronicon Æthelwardi: The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. and trans. A. Campbell (London, 1962)
- BAR      British Archaeological Reports
- Bates, *Acta*      D. Bates (ed.), *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum: The Acta of William I (1066–1087)* (Oxford, 1998)
- Bede, *HE*      Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum: Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969)
- DB      Domesday Book: reference to Greater Domesday (i.e. the 'Exchequer' manuscript) unless otherwise indicated); cited according to the relevant Phillimore county edition (J. Morris [general ed.], Chichester, 1975–86) and manuscript folio
- EHD 1*      *English Historical Documents vol. 1: c. 500–1042*, ed. D. Whitelock (London, 1955; 2nd edn, 1979)
- EHD 2*      *English Historical Documents vol. 2: 1042–1189*, ed. D. C. Douglas and G. W. Greenaway (London, 1953; 2nd edn, 1981)
- EHR*      *English Historical Review*
- EME*      *Early Medieval Europe*
- Fauroux, *Recueil*      M. Fauroux (ed.), *Recueil des actes des ducs de Normandie de 911 à 1066* (Caen, 1961)
- Flodoard, *Annales*      *Les Annales de Flodoard, publiées d'après les manuscrits avec une introduction et les notes*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1905); trans. B. Bachrach and S. Fanning, *The 'Annals' of Flodoard of Reims, 919–966* (Peterborough, Ontario, 2004)
- Flodoard, *Hist. Rem.*      *Flodoard: Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, ed. M. Stratman, MGH Scriptores in folio, 36 (Hannover, 1998)
- Gesetze*      *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, ed. F. Liebermann (Halle, 3 vols, 1903–16)

- Gesta Herwardi* *Gesta Herwardi incliti exulis et militis*, in *Lestorie des Engles solum La Translacion Maistre Geffrei Gaimar*, ed. T. D. Hardy and C. T. Martin, RS 92 (London, 2 vols, 1888–9), vol. 1, pp. 339–404; *Three Lives of the Last Englishmen*, trans. M. J. Swanton, Garland Library of Medieval Literature, 10 (New York, 1984), pp. 45–88
- Glaber *Rodulfus Glaber, Historiarum Libri Quinque* ('Five Books of the Histories'), in *Rodulfus Glaber Opera*, ed. J. France, N. Bulst, and J. Reynolds (Oxford, 1989)
- GND *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigini, ed. E. M. C. van Houts (Oxford, 2 vols, 1992–5); individual authors and modifications to William of Jumièges' original chapter numbers noted where appropriate
- GS *Gesta Stephani*, ed. K. R. Potter and trans. R. H. C. Davis (Oxford, 2nd edn, 1976)
- GT, *Libri Hist.* Gregory of Tours, *Libri Historiarum X*, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum*, 1.1, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison (Hannover, 1951); trans. L. Thorpe, *Gregory of Tours, History of the Franks* (Harmondsworth, 1974)
- Guibert, *Monodiae* Guibert de Nogent, *Autobiographie*, ed. and trans. [in French] E.-R. Labande (Paris, 1981); English trans. in J. McAlhany and J. Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent: Monodies and On the Relics of Saints. The Autobiography and a Manifesto of a French Monk from the Time of the Crusades* (London, 2011)
- HSJ *Haskins Society Journal*
- JMH *Journal of Medieval History*
- JW, vol. 2 *The Chronicle of John of Worcester, Volume II: The Annals from 450–1066*, ed. and trans. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk (Oxford, 1995)
- JW, vol. 3 *The Chronicle of John of Worcester, Volume III: The Annals from 1067–1140 with the Gloucester Interpolations and the Continuation to 1141*, ed. and trans. P. McGurk (Oxford, 1998)

- LCL                    Loeb Classical Library
- LE                     *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Camden Third Series, 92 (London, 1962); trans. J. Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth* (Woodbridge, 2005)
- MGH                    Monumenta Germaniae Historia, with references to series (SRG = *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*)
- Nithard                *Nithardi Historiarum Libri IIII*, ed. G. H. Pertz, rev. E. Müller, MGH SRG in usum scholarum separatim editi, 44 (Hannover, 1907); trans. B. W. Scholz with B. Rogers, *Carolingian Chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Histories* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1970)
- OE Orosius            *The Old English Orosius*, in *The Old English History of the World: An Anglo-Saxon Rewriting of Orosius*, ed. and trans. M. R. Godden, *Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library*, 44 (Cambridge, MA, 2016)
- Orosius, Libri VII*    *Pauli Orosii Historiarum adversum Paganos libri VII*, ed. C. F. W. Zangemeister (Leipzig, 1889); trans. A. T. Fear, *Orosius, Seven Books of History Against the Pagans* (Liverpool, 2010)
- OV                     *Orderici Vitalis Historia Æcclesiastica / The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 6 vols, 1968–80)
- PL                     *Patrologia Latinae*, ed. J. L. Migne, 217 vols (Paris, 1841–55)
- Regesta*                *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, ed. H. W. C. Davis, R. H. C. Davis, H. A. Cronne, and C. Johnson (Oxford, 4 vols, 1913–60)
- Regino                *Reginonis abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG in usum scholarum separatim editi, 50 (Hannover, 1890); trans. S. MacLean, *History and Politics in Late Carolingian and Ottonian Europe: The Chronicle of Regino of Prüm and Adalbert of Magdeburg* (Manchester, 2009)

- Richer Richer of Saint-Rémi, *Histories*, ed. and trans. J. Lake, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, 10–11, 2 vols (Cambridge MA, 2011); cited by book, chapter, modern vol. and page number
- RS Rolls Series
- S P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks, 8 (London, 1968); revised version ed. S. E. Kelly, R. Rushforth *et al.*, for the *Electronic Sawyer: Online Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Charters* website, King's College London, <http://www.esawyer.org.uk>
- Simeon, *HR* Simeon of Durham, *Historia Regum*, in *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, ed. T. Arnold, RS, 75 (London, 2 vols, 1882–5), vol. 2
- Suger Suger, *Deeds of Louis the Fat*: ed. and trans. [in French], H. Wacquet, *Vie de Louis VI le Gros* (Paris, 1929); trans. R. C. Cusimano and J. Moorhead, *Suger: The Deeds of Louis the Fat* (Washington, DC, 1992)
- Thegan Thegan, *Vita Hlodowici*, ed. E. Tremp, MGH SRG in usum scholarum separatim editi, 64 (Hannover, 1995); trans. T. F. X. Noble, *Charlemagne and Louis the Pious: Lives by Einhard, Notker, Ermoldus, Thegan, and the Astronomer* (University Park, PA, 2009)
- Thietmar Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, ed. R. Holzmann, MGH SRG nova ser., 9 (Berlin, 1935); trans. D. A. Warner, *Ottonian Germany: The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg* (Manchester, 2001)
- VÆdR *Vita Ædwardi Regis: The Life of King Edward who Rests at Westminster*, ed. and trans. F. Barlow (Oxford, 2nd edn, 1992)
- Wace *Le Roman de Rou de Wace*, ed. A. J. Holden, Société des anciens textes français (Paris, 3 vols, 1970–3); trans. G. S. Burgess, *The History of the Norman People: Wace's Roman de Rou* (Woodbridge, 2004); cited by Part and line numbers

- Widukind            Widukind of Corvey, *Rerum Gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres*, ed. P. Hirsch and H.-E. Lohmann, MGH SRG in usum scholarum separatim editi, 60 (Hannover, 1935); trans. B. S. Bachrach and D. Bachrach, *Widukind of Corvey: Deeds of the Saxons* (Washington, DC, 2015)
- WJ                    William of Jumièges (see *GND*, above)
- WM, *GRA*            William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings, Volume 1*, ed. and trans. R. M. Thomson, M. Winterbottom, and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1998)
- WM, *HN*             William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella: The Contemporary History*, ed. E. King, trans. K. R. Potter (Oxford, 1998)
- WP                    William of Poitiers, *The Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poitiers*, ed. and trans. R. H. C. Davis and M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1998)

# Introduction

## Lairs and Ramparts of Earthly Pride

It seems that there were numerous groups with an axe to grind in the early and central Middle Ages. Magnates and disinherited members of royal families, minor nobles caught by the winds of change, disaffected bourgeoisie, and irritated peasants alike were rarely backward in making their feelings known. That much is clear and generally well known from the evidence of the period. Although one might look at the ninth through to the twelfth centuries and see peace, contentedness, and compassion in many quarters, this work focuses on conflicts within groups. It is the central thesis of this book that by considering the conflicts in terms of where those axe-grinders declared their sense of discontent or even where those malcontents faced the axe themselves, we can get closer to understanding the motivations behind the conflicts. And if the motivations themselves cannot be deciphered, then it can be useful to look at the ways in which certain places, both specific locations and wider landscapes, were employed to convey a particular meaning to the conflict, as is the case in other studies of ‘contested space’ from the Middle Ages and beyond.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the use of these sites could add meaning, sometimes more than one meaning, to the sites themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Two works on the notion of ‘contested space’, considering areas and periods somewhat removed from this study are C. Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy* (Oakland, CA, 2014) and B. S. A. Yeoh, *Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment* (Oxford, 1996). H. Buhaug and S. Gates, ‘The Geography of Civil War’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 39 (2002), pp. 417–33, is a practical analysis of later twentieth-century civil war, assessing duration and intensity on geographical factors. A late medieval reading of hunting grounds as ‘contested space’ is A. P. Dowling, ‘Landscape, Politics, and Identity: Countess Mahaut of Artois’ Natural Resource Management, ca. 1302–1329’ (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of

In following this line of enquiry, this book endeavours to grapple with the many different forms that political conflict could take and the many problems that arise from considering these forms. It is difficult, for example, to define what is meant by ‘rebellion’, one of my main concerns in the investigation of in-group conflict. The disparity in power between a ‘legitimate’ authority and the party contesting that authority can determine many actions as rebellion; there is some consensus that such actions as those of the northern English nobility in 1069–70 were rebellion. Of course, what determined other actions as ‘rebellion’ is open to debate. Some parties were evenly matched in terms of political and social capital, such as the ‘Leader of the Franks’ (*dux francorum*), Count Hugh the Great, and his king, Louis IV (936–54) in tenth-century West Francia. Hugh’s actions were ‘rebellious’ in so far as they competed against an acknowledged political authority but the even standing of the Count – son of King Robert I (d. 923) but also a descendant of the super-magnate Robert ‘the Strong’ – and King Louis more rightly defines the conflict between them as ‘Civil War’. This was a type of conflict which had been defined since before the time of Isidore of Seville (c. 560–636) as one step below conflict between legitimate states.<sup>2</sup> Early and central medieval authors were conscious of distinguishing between types of conflict in this manner. Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury’s seventh-century definition of public war ‘with [i.e. alongside] the king’ (*cum rege*) in reference to a particular type of penance implies that other types of conflict were also recognised; furthermore, the eleventh-century *Vita Ædwardi Regis* referred to a wish to avoid conflict in 1065 because ‘among this people there was horror at what seemed liked civil war’ (*in eadem gente horrebat quasi bellum ciuile*),<sup>3</sup> suggesting that Isidorian classifications persisted. Indeed, in his commentary on the Maccabees, Ælfric of Eynsham noted such distinctions between just and unjust war, adding that war between *ceaster-gewarum* was

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California at Santa Barbara, 2014). I am grateful to Mandy Richardson for drawing my attention to the latter work.

<sup>2</sup> *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. S. A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and O. Berghof, with M. Hall (Cambridge, 2006), XVIII.1, p. 359.

<sup>3</sup> *VÆdR*, pp. 80–1. *Liber poenitentialis Theodori archiepiscopi Cantuariensis ecclesiae*, §§ 3 and 21, in *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, ed. B. Thorpe (London, 2 vols, 1840), vol. 1, pp. 278–9 and 287–9. For the Anglo-Saxon adaptation of Isidore and the notion of ‘public war’, see J. E. Cross, ‘The Ethic of War in Old English’, in *England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 269–82.



Figure 1. Key locations discussed in the book, along with regions of England and northern France.

‘very dangerous’ (*swyðe pleolic*), and that between friends ‘is very miserable, and endless sorrow’ (*swiðe earmlic and endeleaf sorh*).<sup>4</sup>

Many such definitions are determined in part by the hostility or otherwise of contemporary sources. The title of this introduction alludes to the words of one such source, the *Gesta Guillelmi* of William of Poitiers, which damned

<sup>4</sup> *Ælfric’s Lives of the Saints*, ed. W. W. Skeat, Early English Text Soc. [original ser.], 76 (London, 2 vols, 1881–1900), vol. 2, pp. 114–15.

Count William of Arques' mid eleventh-century use of his castle at Arques-la-Bataille (dép. Seine-Maritime) as 'this lair, this rampart of earthly pride and madness'.<sup>5</sup> Given that William of Arques was the uncle of Duke William II of Normandy, this could have been defined in Isidorian terms as 'more than civil war', as the two belligerents were kindred,<sup>6</sup> but there is a paradox in William of Poitiers' text. That a place which was a hideaway could also be a 'rampart', a *visible* place, might be tacitly acknowledged by his use of 'madness', *dementia*, to describe such a rampart. But William, a former ducal chaplain writing from a perspective that emphasised what he saw as the legitimate authority of the object of his devotion, Duke William of Normandy,<sup>7</sup> does a disservice to the motivations behind the use of places like Arques by political opponents. Such sites, or indeed other places from fields to castles and cities, could never be places of madness as far as the motivations of those who used them were concerned, and so my adaptation of William of Poitiers' words is an acknowledgement of this. But at the heart of so many of the conflicts of this book was 'earthly pride' – a term which William of Poitiers used to convey intense disapproval, of course, but which helps us to understand the all-too-human motivations that propelled the many conflicts addressed in this book.

Although it is sometimes difficult to draw distinctions between types of internal conflict such as rebellion, civil war, and even 'feud', it is appropriate to begin with the premise that conflicts within groups have particular characteristics where the members of that group nominally have some form of connection. For one matter, the notion of legitimacy was at play, often from both sides; secondly, such conflicts were, by their nature, 'open', in that protagonists had to make some declarative move in order to justify their position. These might be defined as 'internal conflict', to distinguish them from the sorts of *bella publica* – external wars, even 'state'-driven wars – cited above, which are often the stock-in-trade of military historians. That does not make these internal conflicts 'insurgency' (a word, derived from the Latin *insurgentēs*, now much used in terms of modern warfare) nor does it mean to say that the sort of battles which pique the interest of military historians are not always relevant to this study.

<sup>5</sup> '[E]as latebras, id munimentum . . . elationis atque dementiae'. WP, I.24, pp. 34–5. Arques is discussed in detail in chapter 5, below, pp. 201–11.

<sup>6</sup> *Etymologies*, trans. Barney *et al.*, p. 359.

<sup>7</sup> R. H. C. Davis, 'William of Poitiers and his *History* of William the Conqueror', in *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Richard William Southern*, ed. R. H. C. Davis and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (Oxford, 1981), pp. 71–100.

Some battles are certainly very relevant, and their strategies and tactics will be of interest in the following chapters, but they are significant here where they are battles between groups with some close relationship. Thus Val-ès-Dunes (1047) is relevant because of what it says about the defiance of Duke William's (limited) authority in western Normandy; the battle of Hastings, though in many ways the culmination of the conflict *within* a royal family, is peripheral to discussion here because it called upon the resources of two distinct polities with forces whose obligations to fight stemmed from political organisation which might, were one so bold, be referred to in terms of statehood.<sup>8</sup> The West Saxons' tenth-century campaigns against Viking forces and their allies in the midlands and north of England do feature in discussion here because at one level they represented the negotiation of power between groups for whom shared elements of identity were being established, albeit not always willingly. The tenth-century poems on the battle of *Brunanburh* and, less known, on the 'Five Boroughs' in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* are redolent with the imagery of the re-imposition of authority upon groups settled in Britain for some time.<sup>9</sup> By comparison, although the West Saxon campaign against Vikings in 878 might on one level be seen in terms of 'rebellion' against a force which had imposed itself in southern England and taken hold of royal resources, these ninth-century campaigns against Viking armies are more difficult to define as rebellion or civil war because they stemmed from external invasions which had taken place so recently.

Although internal conflict itself is a subject of study and is often linked to such spatial politics as the establishment of Anglo-Norman castles,<sup>10</sup> the geographical aspects of conflicts within groups are less often appreciated by the historians who look at 'late western Carolingian' and, later, 'Anglo-Norman'

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<sup>8</sup> The notion of early medieval statehood is considered in papers in *Der Frühmittelalterliche Staat – Europäische Perspektiven*, ed. W. Pohl and V. Wiesner (Vienna, 2009). I discuss the link between 'state' and warfare in *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2010), particularly in the conclusion, pp. 335–8.

<sup>9</sup> For connections between *Brunanburh* and the 'Five Boroughs' poems, and West Saxon legitimation, see D. Scragg, 'A Reading of Brunanburh', in *Unlocking the Wordboard: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Memory of Edward B. Irving Jr*, ed. M. C. Amodio and K. O'Brien O'Keefe (Toronto, 2003), pp. 109–22.

<sup>10</sup> Two important studies are S. Prior, *A Few Well-Positioned Castles: The Norman Art of War* (Stroud, 2006) and O. H. Creighton and D. Wright, with M. Fradley and S. Trick, *The Anarchy: War and Status in 12th-Century Landscapes of Conflict* (Liverpool, 2016).

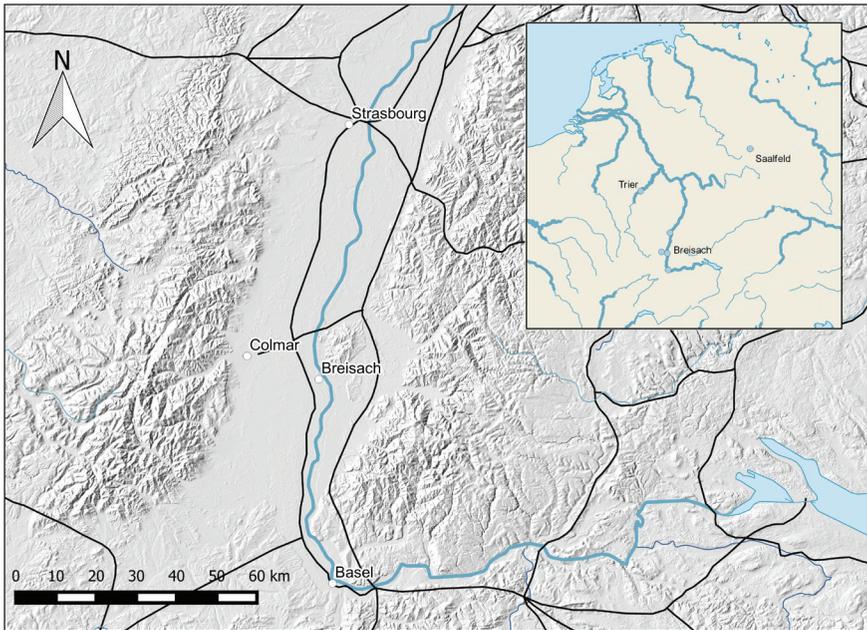


Figure 2. The Rhine-crossing site at Breisach and surrounding locations mentioned in the text. Roman roads are marked on the map, though it has not been possible to determine here which roads were still in use in the ninth and tenth centuries.

zones of influence. This may be apparent by taking a brief glance outside the core region of this book's focus, where the historiographical traditions of recognising the geographical 'meaning' of contested places are well established.

The study of political developments in eastern Francia and beyond, in the region that is now Germany, is well-supplied with sources which make conscious links between place and political action, issues which are noted by both primary sources and their modern historical commentators. Karl Leyser noted that Widukind of Corvey wrote of the departure of Liudolf, duke of Swabia, from the wedding celebrations of his father to stay in Saalfeld in Thuringia: 'in the dark place of counsels' (*in loco consiliis funesto*). Saalfeld had presumably received this dubious distinction by being the site of rebellion by Otto I's brother, Henry, in 939.<sup>11</sup> In another tenth-century case, Gerd

<sup>11</sup> Widukind III.9, p. 109 (trans. p. 104) and, for reference to 939, II.15 (trans. p. 76). My translation of III.9 is a slight modification of that of K. Leyser, 'Ritual, Ceremony and Gesture: Ottonian Germany', in his *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, ed. T. Reuter (London,

Althoff, whose paper on Breisach-am-Rhein (Baden-Württemberg) asked whether it was ‘ein Refugium für Rebellen’,<sup>12</sup> cited a number of appearances of this important Rhine-crossing point (see Figure 2) in tenth- and eleventh-century sources. One of the most significant was a description of the fortress of Breisach by the mid tenth-century author Adalbert of Magdeberg in the 953 entry of his continuation of Regino of Prüm’s *Chronicle*, as ‘always a refuge [*latibulum*] for those who rebel against king and God’.<sup>13</sup> In 953, an archbishop, Frederick of Mainz, had sided with the rebels, but his archiepiscopal standing evidently did not protect Breisach – or Frederick himself – from judgement; Adalbert’s reading of Breisach’s constant role in rebellion seems to be based on actions taken by Eberhard, the son of Duke Arnulf of Bavaria in 939, in which the ‘many heroic and warlike deeds [which] were done [in Otto’s attempted recovery of Breisach] by both sides will not be forgotten by the future succession of generations’ (*quam plura utrimque fortia et bellica gesta sint, futura posterorum successio non ignorabit*).<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, it is perhaps diagnostic of the power of location that Breisach later played a role in rebellions, in 984, and, Althoff deduces, 1002.<sup>15</sup> Evidently landscape

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1994), pp. 189–213, at p. 201, who reads it as the ‘place of dark counsels’. See also S. Airlie, Review of J. L. Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe: Alfred, Charles the Bald, and Others* (Aldershot, 1999), *Reviews in History* Review no. 150 (2000), <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/150> (accessed 24 Jun. 2019).

<sup>12</sup> G. Althoff, ‘Breisach – ein Refugium für Rebellen im früheren Mittelalter?’ in *Archäologie und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends in Südwestdeutschland*, ed. H. U. Nuber *et al.* (Ostfildern, 1990), pp. 457–71. This is discussed in English by Jinty Nelson in her response to Airlie’s review of her work, <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/150/response> (accessed 24 Jun. 2019).

<sup>13</sup> ‘[L]atibulum semper Deo regique rebellantium’. Adalbert, *Continuatio*, in Regino, *s.a.* 953, p. 167 (trans. p. 255). Althoff, ‘Breisach – ein Refugium für Rebellen im früheren Mittelalter?’, p. 461,

<sup>14</sup> Adalbert, *Continuatio*, *s.a.* 939, in Regino, p. 160 (trans. p. 244). The actions at Breisach are also recorded in Widukind, II.24 (trans. p. 84) and by Liudprand of Cremona, *Antipodosis* IV.27, in *Liudprandi Cremonensis Opera Omnia*, ed. P. Chiesa, *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*, 156 (Turnhout, 1998), pp. 115–16; trans. P. Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona* (Washington, DC, 2007), pp. 161–2 (the latter’s account of Breisach in 939 mirrors Adalbert’s melodramatic portrayal of the site in 952).

<sup>15</sup> Althoff, ‘Breisach—ein Refugium für Rebellen im früheren Mittelalter?’, pp. 462–5. The rebellion of 984 is recorded (though not specifically located) in Richer, III.98, vol. 2, pp. 168–71, and is named in a letter of Archbishop Adalbero of Reims to Bishop

and places within the landscape counted for something tangible which could be invoked by participants in political actions, and it was recognised by those who wrote about them.

Such recognition of the power of place is apparent in the record of the rebellion against Louis the Pious by his sons a century earlier, in 833, *in magnum campum* between Basel and Strasbourg. The rebellion saw the step-by-step process of groups going away from allegiance to the emperor to his son (also called emperor), resulting in the conscious remembrance of the site, ‘which to this day is called the Field of Lies’ (*qui usque hodie nominatur Campus Mendacii*).<sup>16</sup> Admittedly, without the help of other sources, Thegan alone would not allow us to place that infamous field with more certainty than just some unknown spot along an approximately 120-km stretch of the Rhine, but such imprecision may well have figured in his record of the event. Strasbourg and its environs could hardly have been outside Thegan’s worldview as a suffragan bishop of Trier, but by a broad and arguably deliberately ambiguous reference to its location – perhaps because it was outside the territory of the archdiocese of Trier – Thegan may have attempted to damn its remembrance to its infamous title alone.<sup>17</sup> Alternatively, by linking events with Strasbourg, Thegan may have wanted his audience to make an association with a battle there against the Alemanni in 357, which saw a confederation of hot-headed barbarians collapse in the face of the cool-headed assertion of legitimacy by a Roman emperor.<sup>18</sup> Such textual allusions were

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Notker of Lüttich: MGH Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit, 2, ed. F. Wegle (Berlin, 1966), no. 39, p. 67. The rebellion of 1002 is recorded in Thietmar V.12, p. 234 (trans. pp. 213–14). Breisach is deduced as the meeting site in 1002 through the context of the ducal seizure of Breisach from the bishops of Strasbourg and Basel in 1002, related in Thietmar V.21, p. 247 (trans. pp. 219–20) (cited by Althoff at p. 464).

<sup>16</sup> Thegan, ch. 42, p. 228 (trans. p. 210).

<sup>17</sup> The Astronomer is similarly reticent, observing that ‘the place which – from what happened there – has been branded with a name of perpetual infamy, the “Field of Lies”’ (*in locum, qui ab eo, quod ibi gestum est, perpetua est ignominia nominis, notatus, ut vocetur Campus-Mentitus*); Astronomer, ch. 48, p. 474 (trans. p. 280). However, in not providing a reference point and assuming the reader’s knowledge of the site, Louis’ later ‘other’ biographer is, conversely, more precise. Cf. Angelbert on the battle of Fontenoy, whose wish to expunge the day on which the battle took place from the calendar did not extend to the erasure of the memory of the place: P. Godman (ed.), *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985), pp. 264–5.

<sup>18</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *History, Books 14–19*, ed. and trans. J. C. Rolfe, LCL, 300 (Cambridge, MA, 1950), XVI.12, pp. 264–303. On the employment of stereotypes