

THE PUBLIC PENANCE OF LOUIS THE PIOUS: A NEW EDITION OF THE
*Episcoporum de poenitentia, quam Hludowicus imperator professus est,
relatio Compendiensis (833)*

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Abstract: This article offers a new critical edition of the narrative that recounts, justifies, solemnizes, and defines the consequences of the public penance of Emperor Louis the Pious in October, 833. Composed by an anonymous bishop on behalf of his episcopal peers as their collective account and decree of the proceedings, the narrative, known since the late nineteenth century by the title *Episcoporum de poenitentia, quam Hludowicus imperator professus est, relatio Compendiensis*, has long been believed to be extant only by way of its first printed edition from 1588. The recent discovery of three early sixteenth-century manuscript witnesses allows for a new edition of the text, and provides evidence that suggests a number of editorial interventions during the ninth century, accounting for its unlikely preservation. These interventions refine our understanding of the Carolingian polemics and intertextual dialogues that treat the nature of Louis the Pious's reign and inform its remembrance.

Keywords: Louis the Pious, Thegan of Trier, Ebbo of Reims, Walafrid Strabo, Reginbert of Reichenau, Konrad Peutingen, Pierre Pithou, *Relatio episcoporum*, penance, intertextuality, compilation

For centuries, the reign of Charlemagne's son and sole heir, Louis the Pious (r. 814–840), has largely been remembered and understood as one marked by controversy.¹ Yet, among the many events during his controversial career, none has proven more emblematic of Louis's problems than the affairs of 833. In June of that year, on a ferrous plain in Alsace ominously known as the Rotfeld, the three sons from his first marriage met Louis not amicably, but as foes allied against him in open revolt. Charges and recriminations of misrule, insolence, and spite flew from both camps. A series of colloquies and negotiations soon followed, but failed to defuse the hostilities between the two parties. With their forces tensed for battle, it appeared that the Gordian knot separating father and sons would be untangled only by means of the sword. Unfortunately for Louis, the crisis was resolved neither by battle nor by diplomacy, but by treachery. Abandoned by most of his men on a site later stigmatized by his steadfast supporters as the "Field of Lies," the forlorn emperor fell into the hands of his rebellious sons and their circle of courtiers, counts, and bishops, a coalition that included even Pope Gregory IV, who had come ostensibly to broker a peace between father and sons.² Three months later, Louis appeared before a great crowd in the

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¹ The standard narrative of Louis's "error-ridden reign" can be found in almost any general survey of Carolingian history, the two most frequently consulted in English being Louis Halphen, *Charlemagne and the Carolingian Empire*, trans. Giselle de Nie (1947; Amsterdam 1977); and Pierre Riché, *The Carolingians: A Family Who Forged Europe*, trans. Michael I. Allen (1983; Philadelphia 1993). Over the past half century, there has been a sustained effort to correct this narrative; see François L. Ganshof, "Charlemagne's Failure," and "Louis the Pious Reconsidered," in idem, *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy*, trans. Janet Sondheimer (1947; 1957; London 1971) 256–260, 261–272; Thomas F. X. Noble, "Louis the Pious and His Piety Re-Reconsidered," *Revue Belge de philologie et d'histoire* 58 (1980) 297–316; Peter Godman, Roger Collins, eds., *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford 1990); and Philippe Depreux, "Louis le Pieux reconsidéré? À propos des travaux récents consacrés à l'héritier de Charlemagne et à son règne," *Francia* 21, 1 (1994) 181–212.

² Many contemporary sources provide an account of this event. See the surveys by Bernhard von Sim-

church of Saint-Médard in Soissons. He announced to the ecclesiastics overseeing the ceremony that, with their assistance, he wished to undertake a penance by which he might humble himself, quell the divine anger provoked by his recent crimes, and merit reconciliation with God. Confessing to a whole host of misdeeds, the contrite emperor placed his sword-belt upon the altar, exchanged his royal attire for the sackcloth of a penitent, and welcomed the healing hands and prayers of the attendant bishops. The kingdom once entrusted to him by God had been revoked. It was now placed in the care of his eldest son, Lothar, whose responsibilities—and whose potential punishments, warned the bishops—were every bit as grave.³

The details of this infamous penance—its infamy due largely to the great skepticism long expressed over Louis's apparent free will in the proceedings⁴—are known chiefly from an anonymous narrative written by one of the bishops present at the ritual and signed by his peers as their collective account and decree.⁵ It has been edited in

son, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reiches unter Ludwig dem Frommen* (Leipzig 1876) 2.45–54; X. Boyer, “Le Champ du Mensonge: An 833,” *Revue d’Alsace*, 2nd series, 13 (1862) 49–108; and Camille Oberreiner, “Le Champ du Mensonge,” *Revue d’Alsace*, 2nd series, 56 (1905) 345–349. The best modern discussion remains Thomas F. X. Noble, “Louis the Pious and the Papacy: Law, Politics and the Theory of Empire in the Early Ninth Century” (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University 1974) 321–352; supplemented by Egon Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* (Darmstadt 1996) 182–198. On the pope’s presence, see Wilhelm Ohr, “Zwei Fragen zur älteren Papstgeschichte,” *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 24 (1903) 333–352; and Johannes Fried, “Ludwig der Fromme, das Papsttum und die fränkische Kirche,” in Peter Godman, Roger Collins, eds., *Charlemagne’s Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford 1990) 267–273.

³ On the penance of Louis the Pious in 833 and its immediate aftermath, see Mayke de Jong, “Power and Humility in Carolingian Society: The Public Penance of Louis the Pious,” *Early Medieval Europe* 1 (1992) 29–52; and Ludger Rid, “Die Wiedereinsetzung Kaiser Ludwigs des Frommen zu St. Denis (1. März 834) und ihre Wiederholung zu Metz (28. Februar 835),” in Heinrich M. Gietl, Georg Pfeilschifter, eds., *Festgabe Alois Knöpfler zur Vollendung des 70. Lebensjahres* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1917) 265–275. Louis had performed penance twice before—once in 822 and again in 830—but in each instance did so without the consequence of forfeiting the throne. See Olivier Guillot, “Autour de la pénitence publique de Louis le Pieux (822),” *Cahiers de l’Institut d’Anthropologie Juridique* 3 (1999) 281–313; Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* (n. 2 above) 148–150, 184; Noble, “Louis the Pious and His Piety” (n. 1 above) 312–313; Rudolf Schieffer, “Von Mailand nach Canossa: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der christlichen Herrscherbusse von Theodosius der Grosse bis zu Heinrich IV.,” *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 28 (1972) 354–355; Simson, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reichs* (n. 2 above) 1.177–182, 352–354. On the rather obscure penance of 830, note also the remarks of the bishops themselves in the *Relatio* below, 15 l. 16–22; 16 l. 1–2.

⁴ Louis Halphen, “La pénitence de Louis le Pieux à Saint Médard de Soissons,” *Bibliothèque de la Faculté des Lettres de Paris XVIII, troisièmes mélanges d’histoire du Moyen Age* (Paris 1904) 177–185; repr. in idem, *A travers l’histoire du Moyen Age* (Paris 1950) 58–66. Cf. Charles Barthélemy, “La déposition de Louis le Débonnaire,” in idem, *Erreurs et mensonges historiques*, 4th series (Paris 1873) 110–148; Mayke de Jong, “Monastic Prisoners or Opting Out? Political Coercion and Honour in the Frankish Kingdoms,” in Mayke de Jong, Frans Theuws, Carine Van Rhijn, eds., *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden 2001) 293, 315–316; eadem, “*Sacrum palatium et ecclesia*: L’autorité religieuse royale sous les Carolingiens (790–840),” *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 58 (2003) 1266.

⁵ The *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the episcopal *Relatio* is likely 1 March 834, when Louis the Pious was released by Lothar at Saint-Denis and subsequently reinvested with his regalia. In his prologue to the text, appended in the early 840s (on which, see Courtney M. Booker, “A New Prologue of Walafrid Strabo,” *Viator* 36 [2005] 83–105), Walafrid Strabo states that Archbishop Ebbo of Reims was the “author of this evil”; however, it is unclear whether Walafrid means that Ebbo authored the plot against Louis, or the narrative that documents it, or both. Jane S. Ourand, “Louis the Pious and Judith Augusta: In Defense of Sacral Kingship in the Imperium Christianum of the Early Ninth Century” (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst 1998) 161, 168, names Ebbo as author of the text. On the other hand, Michel Rubellin, “Le pape et l’église de Rome vus de Lyon dans la première moitié du IX^e siècle,” *Cahiers d’histoire* 30 (1985) 229, identifies Archbishop Agobard of Lyons as its author. Unfortunately, neither

print six times and has appeared in no fewer than fifteen additional reprintings, beginning with the *editio princeps* of Pierre Pithou in 1588 and ending in 1897 with the work of Alfred Boretius and Victor Krause for the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*—this last being the most meticulous edition to date.⁶ However, all editions and reprintings of the episcopal text ultimately derive solely from the *editio princeps* of Pithou (= *Pi*).⁷ The particular manuscript that Pithou perhaps took from his personal library⁸—what he described in the introduction to his edition as a “chartaceum exemplar,” a paper, hence late medieval, manuscript⁹—was lost shortly after he employed it for his edition in 1588; since that time, no other witnesses of the *Relatio* apart from Pithou’s printed text were acknowledged to be extant by later editors.¹⁰ This paucity of textual

scholar provides any evidence to support their claim. On stylistic grounds alone, I would suggest that Ebbo was not the author of the account; cf. the Latinity of the *Relatio* with that of Ebbo’s extant texts, listed in Marie-Hélène Jullien, Françoise Perelman, eds., *Clavis scriptorum Latinorum medii aevi: Auctores Galliae 735–987* (Turnhout 1994) 327–333.

⁶ For the editions, see Pierre Pithou, *Annalium et historiae Francorum ab anno Christi DCCVIII. ad ann. DCCCCXC. scriptores coaetanei XII*. (Paris 1588) 2.136–148; and Alfred Boretius, Victor Krause, MGH, *Capitularia regum Francorum* (Hannover 1897) 2.51–55. See the *Conspectus siglorum* for other editions and the Appendix for a list of reprints.

⁷ Note, however, that the edition of Boretius and Krause is explicitly based on the text of the 1629 edition of Jacques Sirmond, without acknowledgment of the *editio princeps* by Pithou in 1588 (likely because they followed the earlier MGH edition of 1835 by Georg Pertz, who had relied on Sirmond’s edition). Cf. Boretius, Krause, MGH, *Capitularia* (n. 6 above) 2.51, “Repetimus ipsam relationem, cum codices manuscripti haud amplius exstare videantur, secundum Sirmondi editionem.” For biographical studies on Pithou, see Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 93 n. 50; to which should be added Klaus Malettke, “Pierre Pithou als Historiker,” in August Buck, ed., *Humanismus und Historiographie* (Weinheim 1991) 89–103. See also Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship* (Oxford 1993) 2.532, for Pithou’s editorial method.

⁸ The title page of Pithou’s work, *Annalium et historiae Francorum* (n. 6 above), notes that the texts contained therein are “ex bibliotheca P. Pithoei.” However, not all the texts in his source collection were derived from manuscripts belonging to his library. For a study of Pithou’s library and its fate, see Françoise Bibolet, “Les Pithou et l’amour des livres,” in Marie-Madeleine Fragonard, Pierre-Etienne Leroy, eds., *Les Pithou: Les lettres et la paix du royaume: Actes du colloque de Troyes, 13–15 avril 1998* (Paris 2003) 295–303; eadem, “Bibliotheca Pithoeana: Les manuscrits des Pithou: Une histoire de fraternité et d’amitié,” in Donatella Nebbiai-Dalla Guarda, Jean-François Genest, eds., *Du copiste au collectionneur: Mélanges d’histoire des textes et des bibliothèques en l’honneur d’André Vernet* (Turnhout 1998) 497–521.

⁹ Pithou, *Annalium et historiae Francorum* (n. 6 above) praefatio (a preface which, according to Louis de Rosanbo, “Pierre Pithou,” *Revue du seizième siècle* 16 [1929] 306, was written in 1581, seven years earlier than its publication date), where Pithou notes that he took at least the texts of Thegan and the *Divisio regnorum* of 806—the latter of which was written in a later hand—from a paper manuscript: “partitio ... regnorum Karoli imperatoris ... in chartaceo exemplari Thegani vere Franci hominis operi recentiore manu subiuncta fuit.” Ernst Tremp, *Studien zu den Gesta Hludowici imperatoris des Trierer Chorbischofs Thegan* (Hannover 1988) 172, suggests that Pithou’s source for the episcopal account was also this “chartaceum exemplar.” The argument that it came from the region of Chartres, advanced by Hans-Gert Oomen, Ingelore Oomen, “Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte von Thegans Vita Hludowici imperatoris,” in Karl Hauk, Hubert Mordek, eds., *Geschichtsschreibung und geistiges Leben im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Heinz Löwe zum 65. Geburtstag* (Cologne 1978) 163–164, was shown to be erroneous by Tremp, *Studien zu den Gesta*, 169–170. However, Tremp’s comments on this paper manuscript have now been superseded by the work of Matthias M. Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli: Studien zur Entstehung, Überlieferung und Rezeption* (Hannover 2001) 1.874–877, on which see below.

¹⁰ Although cf. the comments of Claude Fauchet, *Fleur de la maison de Charlemaigne, qui est la continuation des Antiquitez françoises, contenant les faits de Pépin et ses successeurs depuis l’an 751 jusques à l’an 840, ...* (Paris 1601) 232 (lib. 3, c. 11); and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Annales imperii occidentis Brunsvicensis*, ann. 833, c. 28; ed. Georg H. Pertz, *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: Gesammelte Werke*, vol. I/1 (Hannover 1843; repr. Hildesheim 1966) 428. See Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 87 nn. 25–26.

witnesses is unsurprising, given the great infamy long attached to the events.¹¹ Indeed, when one considers that Louis was rescued by his supporters in March 834, ceremoniously restored to the throne in February 835, and the rebel bishops formally condemned and exiled in quick succession, it is a wonder that any witnesses of the bishops' account survive at all.¹²

In an earlier article, I demonstrated the reasons for the preservation of the bishops' damning narrative, revealed the existence of three additional manuscript witnesses of the text, and underscored the need for a new critical edition that takes these witnesses into account.¹³ The aim of the present study is to supply that critical edition. To this end, it will be useful to summarize my earlier conclusions, which in many ways serve as a prolegomenon to the present edition. In 2001, following a lead provided by Ernst Tremp, Matthias Tischler noted the presence of the bishops' *Relatio* in an early sixteenth-century manuscript, Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka Akc. 1949/397 (*olim* Steinw. II Fol. 3) (= *W*).¹⁴ Thanks to some remarkable detective work, Tischler deter-

¹¹ For instance, between the late 9th and the early 12th c., numerous annals, which record little else of Louis the Pious's reign, placed just two synoptic, striking words beside the year DCCCXXXIII—"francorum dedecus," the shame of the Franks. See the *Annales Alamannici*, ed. Walter Lendi, *Untersuchungen zur frühalemannischen Annalistik* (Freiburg 1971) 176. The entries in this work for the years 802–856, which are very sparse, were likely recorded at one go by a single annalist working at Reichenau in the third quarter of the 9th c.; for the manuscript, Stiftsarchiv St. Gallen, Zürcher Abt. X, Nr. 1, fols. 90v–91r, see Lendi, *Untersuchungen*, 83–84, and for a 10th-c. copy, 134–135. The *Annales Alamannici* are the source for the 833 entry in the *Annales Weingartenses*, ed. Pertz, MGH, SS, 1.65; *Annales Einsidlenses*, ed. Pertz, MGH, SS, 3.139; and *Annales Formoselenses*, ed. Pertz, MGH, SS, 5.35. Such ill feelings towards the events of that year are still evident in the title given to the bishops' account by Pithou in his *editio princeps*: "Proceedings of Emperor Louis the Pious's shameful and impious deposition" (*Acta impiae et nefandae exauctorationis Ludovicii Pii imperatoris*). Moreover, legends of the Rotfeld as an accused place were reported as late as the 19th c.; see Auguste-Marie-Pierre Ingold, "L'Ochsenfeld: Ses antiquités, ses traditions," *Bulletin de la société pour la conservation des monuments historiques d'Alsace*, second series, 1 (1863) 138–143; Gabriel Gravier, *Légendes d'Alsace* (Belfort 1986) 1.69–72. For a survey of the remembrance of the events of 833, see Courtney M. Booker, "Histrionic History, Demanding Drama: The Penance of Louis the Pious in 833, Memory, and Emplotment," in Helmut Reimitz, Bernhard Zeller, eds., *Vergangenheit und Vergegenwärtigung: Frühes Mittelalter und Europäische Erinnerungskultur*, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters* 14 (Vienna, forthcoming).

¹² See Rid, "Die Wiedereinsetzung Kaiser Ludwigs des Frommen" (n. 3 above) 265–275; Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* (n. 2 above) 203–212; and Booker, "A New Prologue" (n. 5 above) 87 n. 22. Of the ecclesiastics known to have participated in the rebellion—Agobard of Lyons, Bartholomew of Narbonne, Bernard of Vienne, Ebbo of Reims, Helias of Troyes, Heribald of Auxerre, Hilduin of Saint-Denis, Jesse of Amiens, and Wala of Corbie—several were later allowed to return to their offices. Agobard and Bernard returned in 838/839 (Philippe Depreux, *Prosopographie de l'entourage de Louis le Pieux [781–840]* [Sigmaringen 1997] 406–408; Astronomer, cap. 57; Ado of Vienne, *PL* 123, col. 135), Heribald in 838 (Depreux, *Prosopographie* 241–242), and Hilduin perhaps as early as 834 (Depreux, *Prosopographie* 250–256). Jesse, Helias, and Wala (who was formally pardoned by Louis) all died from a plague in Italy late in 836 (Depreux, *Prosopographie* 408–409; Astronomer, cap. 56). Bartholomew and Ebbo were both utterly banned from office (Depreux, *Prosopographie* 169–174; Simson, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reichs* [n. 2 above] 2.138 n. 3), though after Louis's death Ebbo persisted in his attempts to regain his see, acquiring it again briefly in 840. In 835, Hildemann of Beauvais cleared himself of accusations alleging his disloyalty to the emperor during the days of the rebellion (Simson, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reichs* [n. 2 above] 2.137 n. 3). Among those bishops remaining loyal to Louis, Noble, "Louis the Pious and the Papacy" (n. 2 above) 329 n. 17, has identified Drogo of Metz, Modoin of Autun, Willeric of Bremen, Aldric of Le Mans, Otgar of Mainz, Hildi of Verdun, Bernold of Strasbourg, Verendarius of Chur, Heriric of Saint-Laumer de Blois, Christian of Saint-Germain d'Auxerre, Hrabanus Maurus, and Jonas of Orléans.

¹³ Booker, "A New Prologue" (n. 5 above) 83–105, and 88 n. 27 for the call for a new edition.

¹⁴ Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli* (n. 9 above) 1.873–883; Booker, "A New Prologue" (n. 5 above) 88 n. 27. In his description of the Wrocław manuscript's contents, Gabriel G. Bredow, *Karl der Grosse, wie Eginhart ihn beschreiben, die Legende ihn dargestellt, Neuere beurtheilt haben* (Altona 1814) 178–186,

mined that this manuscript, which contains a number of texts on the history of the Franks,¹⁵ was copied by the German humanist Konrad Peutinger (1465–1546) in 1508.¹⁶ Pursuing this lead further, Tischler ascertained that Peutinger’s source for his manuscript copy (*W*) was likely a late medieval copy of a ninth-century manuscript from the library of the learned Carolingian monk Reginbert of Reichenau.¹⁷ Reginbert preserved the rebel bishops’ text probably because he considered it, together with Thegan’s *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris* (composed in 836/837), relevant source material for a history book he was compiling sometime between 841 and 842. Following Tischler’s lead, and using some new manuscript evidence, I argued that, prior to their inclusion in his compilation, Reginbert had found these two texts already collected together in another, small compilation, one only recently assembled by a friend, the scholar and poet Walafrid Strabo. While at Reichenau, Walafrid, a loyal courtier of Louis the Pious, had edited the two texts between late 840 and early 841, giving prologues to each, dividing and enumerating Thegan’s text into chapters, and providing the chapters with descriptive titles. As part of this didactic dossier, Walafrid preserved the bishops’ inimical narrative in order to expose its fraudulence, to support the claims made by Thegan about the iniquity of those responsible for it, and to serve as a reminder of the cunning and malevolence of Archbishop Ebbo of Reims, the alleged architect of the plot.¹⁸

This was as far as I went with Tischler’s lead and its implications with respect to Walafrid and the rebel bishops’ *Relatio*. Now, however, I would emend this position and allow for the possibility that, even prior to Walafrid’s editorial interventions (which seem to have been made in response to the release and reinstatement of Ebbo in late 840), Thegan himself may have first paired the bishops’ text together with his own work (as evidence to support his strident claims about the iniquity of lowborn bishops), and it was this initial collection that Walafrid would come to edit and re-issue as a reminder of Ebbo’s guile and deceit.¹⁹ Certainly my prior claims in support of

silently passed over the episcopal text, making no mention of its presence.

¹⁵ Grouped together are a series of annals running from the beginning of the world to the year 818 (the *Chronicon de sex aetatibus mundi*, *Annales Laureshamenses* 703–770, *Annales regni Francorum* 771–818), followed by Thegan’s *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris* bearing Walafrid Strabo’s chapter divisions, and then the episcopal narrative of Louis’s penance with a prologue by Walafrid Strabo. See Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli* (n. 9 above) 1.870–883; Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 88 n. 30.

¹⁶ Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli* (n. 9 above) 1.873–883; Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 88 n. 28.

¹⁷ Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli* (n. 9 above) 1.428–429, 431 n. 603, 874–877; Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 89 n. 31.

¹⁸ Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 91–98.

¹⁹ This hypothesis extends the previous claims made in Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 94–97. Johannes Fried, “Mündlichkeit, Erinnerung und Herrschaft: Zugleich zum Modus ‘De Heinrico,’” in Joseph Canning, Otto Gerhard Oexle, eds., *Political Thought and the Realities of Power in the Middle Ages* (Göttingen 1998) 16–17, stated that Thegan possessed a copy of Louis’s confession from the 833 penance, and with his biography was attempting to mitigate its charges; unfortunately, Fried provided no support for this claim. On Thegan’s text, see Tremp, *Studien zu den Gesta* (n. 9 above); and Thegan, *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris*, ed. Ernst Tremp, *Thegan: Die Taten Kaiser Ludwigs; Astronomus: Das Leben Kaiser Ludwigs*, MGH, *SRG, separatim editi* 64 (Hannover 1995). Note that the hypothesis of Thegan as compiler of the *Gesta Hludowici* and the *Relatio* has the corollary that several (lost) 9th-c. manuscript witnesses of Thegan’s text, as identified by Ernst Tremp, *Thegan: Die Taten Kaiser Ludwigs*, 52, may also have contained the compilation, which was then selectively copied and re-compiled in later manuscripts without the bishops’ “fraudulent” *Relatio*. On Ebbo, see Peter R. McKeon, “Archbishop Ebbo of Reims (816–835): A

Walafrid as the compiler of the two texts—a compilation made in order to provide a loyalist rebuttal to the numerous charges of Louis’s iniquity in the *Relatio*—can just as easily apply to the fiercely loyal Thegan. It was Thegan who has Louis explain, using vivid, direct speech, that he did not assemble his people together on the Field of Lies for the purpose of their mutual destruction—an act which the bishops claimed in the *Relatio* to have been the emperor’s greatest sin—but rather sent his own faithful men away out of concern that they not lose their lives or limbs on his account.²⁰ Moreover, Thegan may have attached the *Relatio* to his biographical work on Louis as textual evidence to support his famous *ad hominem* attack on Ebbo for the many cruelties that the lowborn bishop had inflicted upon the emperor.²¹ Another intertextual dialogue between the two works seems to suggest as much. In the *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris*, when Thegan says to Ebbo, “Unless I had an iron tongue and bronze lips, I could not enumerate (*enumerare*) or explain all your wrongs,” he may be laying emphasis on the word “your,” responding to and refuting the accusations made and similar language of enumeration used by Ebbo and the other bishops in their *Relatio* of Louis’s wrongs: “Indeed, many things were enumerated (*enumerare*) which happened in this empire through [Louis’s] negligence”; “That so many evils and disgraces, which are not able to be enumerated (*enumerare*), were not enough for [Louis] ...”²²

In sum, while the *Relatio* has been edited six times in print since Pithou’s *editio princeps* in 1588, it had already been edited perhaps as many as three times in manuscript just in the ninth century alone. To what extent these three early medieval editors—Thegan, Walafrid Strabo, and Reginbert—modified the rebel bishops’ text as it has come down to us is uncertain, other than that Walafrid added an inimical, didactic prologue, and that the signatures of the attendant bishops attesting to the text were missing by the time of Peutingier’s copies in the early sixteenth century.²³

Study in the Carolingian Empire and Church,” *Church History* 43 (1974) 437–447; and Stuart Airlie, “Bonds of Power and Bonds of Association in the Court Circle of Louis the Pious,” in Peter Godman, Roger Collins, eds., *Charlemagne’s Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford 1990) 191–193, 200–204.

²⁰ Cf. *Relatio*, 18 l. 25–26; 19 l. 1–3; and Thegan, *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris* (n. 19 above) cap. 42, ed. Tremp 228–230. See Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 94. Note that the bishops make this same claim—“novissime omnem populem ... ad communem interitum contraxerit”—earlier in the *Relatio*, 14 l. 4–5.

²¹ Thegan, *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris* (n. 19 above) cap. 44, ed. Tremp, 232–238; Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 95 and nn. 58–60.

²² Thegan, *Gesta Hludowici imperatoris* (n. 19 above) cap. 44, ed. Tremp, 236 (alluding to Virgil, *Aeneid* VI, 625–627), “Nisi linguam habuisse ferream et labia aenea, omnis nequicias tuas explanare nec *enumerare* potuisse.” Cf. *Relatio*, 13 l. 7–8, “*Enumerata* quippe sunt multa, quae per negligentiam in hoc imperio contigerunt”; *Relatio*, 18 l. 23–24, “Quod non suffecerint ei tot mala et flagitia per suam negligentiam et improuidentiam in regno sibi commisso perpetrata, quae *enumerari* non possent...”

²³ In addition to placing their signatures at the end of the *Relatio* (cf. 19 l. 16–21), the bishops each drew up individual attestations of their presence at, participation in, and endorsement of Louis’s penance in 833. These attestations were then appended to (and perhaps bound with) the *Relatio*; unfortunately, only a copy of one (by Archbishop Agobard of Lyons, in a late 9th-c. manuscript of his collected works) is extant. See Agobard of Lyons, *Cartula de Ludovici imperatoris poenitentia*, ed. Lieven Van Acker, CCCM 52 (Turnhout 1981) XLVI, 323–324; Egon Boshof, *Erzbischof Agobard von Lyon: Leben und Werke* (Cologne 1969) 247–251; and Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 96. For still another contemporary compilation of texts regarding the events of 833, one comprised largely of works by Agobard, see the remarks of Van Acker, XXI.

PRINCIPLES OF THE EDITION

Although both the ninth-century Reginbert manuscript and its late medieval copy are now lost—Reginbert’s manuscript was last noted in a late seventeenth-century library catalog²⁴—Tischler suggested that the late medieval copy used by Konrad Peutinger in 1508 was employed subsequently by Pierre Pithou for his published source collection in 1588 (i.e., that it was Pithou’s mysterious *chartaceum exemplar*).²⁵ Moreover, nearly a century prior to Tischler’s observations, Paul Joachimsen pointed out that the rebel bishops’ narrative is also extant in two other manuscripts of assorted historical material compiled by Peutinger: Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. hist. F 243, fols. 17r–21v (= *S*); and Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek, 2° Cod. 145, fols. 28r–33r (= *A*).²⁶ While it is unclear when Peutinger made these two copies, the text of the bishops’ narrative preserved within them appears to be independent of that found in the Peutinger Wroclaw manuscript (*W*); i.e., the *S* and *A* witnesses of the text were not simply copied verbatim from *W*, nor *W* from *S* or *A* (*S* and *A* provide text that is frequently absent from *W* and vice versa).²⁷ In other words, it appears that all three of Peutinger’s copies most likely derive not from one another, but from a mutual source—the lost late medieval copy of the Reginbert manuscript. And if Tischler is right, Pithou’s *editio princeps* of the bishops’ text is based on this lost late medieval copy as well. (Ernst Tremp had previously shown that Pithou did not use Peutinger’s Wroclaw copy as the basis for his printed text.²⁸) As R. H. C. Davis and Françoise Bibolet noted, several unidentified manuscripts from Pithou’s library were sold from—while others yet remain in—the private collection of Pithou’s descendants, the de Rosanbos.²⁹ Perhaps the lost late medieval paper copy of Reginbert’s manuscript was once, and is still, part of Pithou’s remarkable bequest to his heirs.

The following edition of the episcopal narrative is based on the text as published by Pierre Pithou in his *editio princeps* of 1588 (*Pi*), which, despite a number of misprints,

²⁴ It was mentioned in a library catalog from the monastery of Engelberg, 100 kilometers south of Reichenau. See Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli* (n. 9 above) 1.429, 876–877; Albert Bruckner, *Scriptoria medii aevi helvetica: Denkmäler schweizerischer Schreibkunst des Mittelalters* (Genf 1950) 8.99; and above all, J. Werner, “Die Reichenauer Reginberthandschrift XXXVI war in Engelberg,” *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 37 (1920) 84, who made the discovery. On the same page, Werner also observes that the Reginbert codex does not appear in an Engelberg library catalog from 1891.

²⁵ Peutinger discovered the late medieval copy of Reginbert’s “codex 36” in the monastery of Petershausen near Constance (as he notes at the end of his copy of Thegan’s text in both Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. hist. F 243, fol. 17r; and Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek, 2° Cod. 145, fol. 28r: “Ex Historia Thegani Corepiscopi Treverensis apud Monasterium Domus Sancti Petri prope Constantiam comperta”). For its resemblance to the “chartaceum exemplar” later used by Pithou, see Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli* (n. 9 above) 1.874–877. Tischler makes a convincing argument that Peutinger’s Petershausen codex and Pithou’s “chartaceum exemplar” were the same late medieval manuscript, but is careful to note that this identification cannot be determined with absolute certainty (although he ignores his own caveat at 431 n. 603). The fate of this lost Petershausen codex is unknown.

²⁶ Paul Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland unter dem Einfluss des Humanismus* (Leipzig 1910) 292 n. 46.

²⁷ This observation revises the previous claim made in Booker, “A New Prologue” (n. 5 above) 88 n. 28, that *S* and *A* are merely copies of *W*.

²⁸ Tremp, *Studien zu den Gesta* (n. 9 above) 172, 199.

²⁹ See R. H. C. Davis, “William of Poitiers and His History of William the Conqueror,” in R. H. C. Davis, John Michael Wallace-Hadrill, eds., *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1981) 95–98; Bibolet, “Bibliotheca Pithoana: Les manuscrits des Pithou” (n. 8 above) 510–512, 519–520. The private library of the de Rosanbos remains uncataloged.

contains fewer errors and is in general still more reliable than Konrad Peutinger's three early sixteenth-century witnesses (*W*, *S*, *A*). However, I have also made use of Pithou's *Handexemplar* (= *Pi_H*) of his published edition, which contains many *corrigenda* entered by his own hand at some time between the book's publication in 1588 and his death on 1 November 1596.³⁰ This is not to say that the present edition is simply a corrected version of Pithou's published text, for I have frequently adopted readings found only in the new manuscript witnesses (examples worthy of special mention being "correctione," 12 l. 9; "sub imperio,"³¹ 12 l. 13; "adiuimus," 12 l. 17; "enumerata," 13 l. 7; "mulieris," 18 l. 5). In addition to presenting the text for the first time with a critical apparatus, I have included several source identifications that were not provided in the previous editions (e.g., the references to Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, Pope Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*, and a decretal of Pope Leo the Great).

Finally, for the sake of comparison, and where appropriate, I have noted in the *apparatus criticus* the emendations offered by the text's six later editors, Caesar Baronio (= *Pi_{Ba}*), Melchior Goldast (= *Pi_{Gl}*), Jacques Sirmond (= *Pi_{Si}*), Georg Pertz (= *Pi_{Pz}*), and Alfred Boretius and Victor Krause (= *Pi_{B-K}*). Where all these editors follow the text of Pithou, I supply the siglum *Pi et al.*

³⁰ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Réserve des Livres rares, Res. L45.1: Pierre Pithou, *Annalium et historiae Francorum ab anno Christi DCCVIII ad annum DCCCCXC scriptores coetanei XII ...* (Paris 1588). The book was later owned in succession by Pithou's nephew Charles Labbé, Étienne Baluze, and Abbé Louis de Targny, according to a note on the title page; see Booker, "A New Prologue" (n. 5 above) 91 n. 40.

³¹ On this reading, see Booker, "A New Prologue" (n. 5 above) 92–93 nn. 45–47.

APPENDIX

REPRINTS OF PITHOU'S TEXT NOT INCLUDED IN THE *APPARATUS CRITICUS*

1. Pithou, P. *Annalium et historiae Francorum ab anno Christi DCCVIII. ad ann. DCCCCXC. scriptores coetanei XII. Nunc primum in lucem editi ex bibliotheca P. Pithoei ...* (Frankfurt 1594) 322–330.
2. Binius, S. *Concilia generalia et provincialia* (Cologne 1606) III/1.573–575.
3. Baronio, C. *Annales ecclesiastici* (Rome 1624) 9.871–875 (ann. 833).
4. Duchesne, A. *Historiae Francorum scriptores coetanei: ab ipsius gentis origine, ad Pipinum usque regem* (Paris 1636) 2.331–334.
5. *Conciliorum omnium generalium et provincialium collectio regia* (Paris 1644) 21.278–285.
6. Vorburg, J. P. *Historiarum volumen ... historiae Romano-Germanicae* (Frankfurt 1660) 11.251–255.
7. Labbe, P. and Cossart, G. *Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta* (Paris 1671) 7.1686–1691.
8. Hardouin, J. *Acta conciliorum et epistolae decretales, ac constitutiones summorum pontificum* (Paris 1714) 4.1377–1382.
9. Lünig, J. C. *Reichsarchiv* (Leipzig 1716) 15.111–114.
10. Labbe, P., Cossart, G., and Coleti, N. *Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta* (Venice 1729) 9.801–806.
11. Baronio, C., and Pagi, A. *Annales ecclesiastici* (Lucca 1743) 14.186–191 (ann. 833).
12. Bouquet, M. *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France* (Paris 1749) 6.243–246.
13. Mansi, J. D. *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Venice 1769) 14.647–651.
14. Migne, J.-P. *Patrologia Latina* (Paris 1851) 97.659–664.
15. Baronio, C. and Theiner, A. *Annales ecclesiastici* (Paris 1868) 14.179–182 (ann. 833).

EDITION

CONSPECTUS SIGLORUM:

W = Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka Akc. 1949/397 (*olim* Steinw. II Fol. 3) fols. 8r–9v (C.E. 1508).

S = Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. hist. F 243, fols. 17r–21v (Saec. XVIⁱⁿ).

A = Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek, 2° Cod. 145, fols. 28r–33r (Saec. XVIⁱⁿ).

Pi = PITHOU, P. *Annalium et historiae Francorum ab anno Christi DCCVIII. ad ann. DCCCCXC. scriptores coetanei XII. Nunc primum in lucem editi ex bibliotheca P. Pithoei* ... (Paris 1588) 2.136–148.

Pi_H = Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Réserve des Livres rares, Res. L45.1: PITHOU, P. *Annalium et historiae Francorum ab anno Christi DCCVIII. ad ann. DCCCCXC. scriptores coetanei XII. Nunc primum in lucem editi ex bibliotheca P. Pithoei* ... (Paris 1588) 2.136–148.

Pi_{Ba} = BARONIO, C. *Annales ecclesiastici* (Mainz 1601) 9.997–1001 (ann. 833).

Pi_{Gt} = GOLDAST, M. *DD. NN. imperatorum Caesarum augustorum, regum, et principum electorum s. Romani imperii, recessus, constitutiones, ordinationes, et rescripta, in publicis comitiis promulgata* (Hannover 1609) 2.16–18.

Pi_{Si} = SIRMOND, J. *Concilia antiqua Galliae, cum epistolis pontificum, principum constitutionibus, et aliis Gallicanae rei ecclesiasticae monumentis* (Paris 1629) 2.560–564.

Pi_{Pz} = PERTZ, G. H. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Leges*, in quarto (Hannover 1835) 1.366–369.

Pi_{B-K} = BORETIUS, A. and KRAUSE, V. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Capitularia regum Francorum* (Hannover 1897) 2.51–55.