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0521854415 - Politics and Power in Early Medieval Europe: Alsace and the Frankish Realm, 600-1000

Hans J. Hummer

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POLITICS AND POWER IN EARLY  
MEDIEVAL EUROPE

How exactly did political power operate in early medieval Europe? Taking Alsace as his focus, Hans Hummer offers an intriguing new case study on localized and centralized power and the relationship between the two from c. 600 to 1000. Providing a panoramic survey of the sources from the region, which include charters, notarial formulas, royal instruments and Old High German literature, he untangles the networks of monasteries and kin-groups which made up the political landscape of Alsace and shows the significance of monastic control in shaping that landscape. He also investigates this local structure in light of comparative evidence from other regions. He tracks the emergence of the distinctive local order during the seventh century to its eventual decline in the late tenth century in the face of radical monastic reform. Highly original and well balanced, this work is of interest to all students of medieval political structures.

HANS J. HUMMER is Assistant Professor of History, Wayne State University. He has published articles in a number of journals, including *Early Medieval Europe*, *Francia* and *Deutsches Archiv*.

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For Sara, Genevieve and Peter

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book examines the operation of political power in early medieval Europe, with Alsace as a focus. It explores the networks of monasteries and kin-groups that formed the basis of the local political order, and the connections between local power and the political centre between approximately 600 and 1000. The study draws upon a variety of sources primarily from Alsace, namely charters, notarial formulas, royal instruments, hagiography and Old High German literature, but also upon comparative evidence from other regions, to show how this distinctive local order took shape during the seventh century and came to an end in the late tenth century with the emergence of radical monastic reform. These basic local networks provide the backdrop for interpreting the progress of Carolingian consolidation in the eighth and ninth centuries, the processes of political fragmentation in the latter half of the ninth century and the transformation of aristocratic power during the Ottonian period.

Academic studies are never exclusively the result of one's own effort, and this book is no exception. As is perhaps fitting for a study that deals with issues of kinship, associative alliances and institutions, this one rests on the kind support of a wide network of family, friends and funding agencies. I owe the deepest gratitude to my spouse, Sara, and two children, Genevieve and Peter. It goes without saying that I asked for much, and they willingly gave, although importantly not without insisting that the personal relationships that invest study, work and career with meaning continue to develop and grow. I thank the members of my family of origin, who contributed to who I am: my parents, Lloyd and Mardeane Hummer, my late mother, Dorothy Hummer, and my four sisters and two brothers, and their families. I am also grateful for the encouragement and understanding of my wife's parents, Bill and JoAnn Drews, and her five sisters and their families. Then there is the family of Pat and Mary Geary, who have become like extended relatives to us.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

a.	anno
a. (in maps and tables)	ante
<i>AB</i>	<i>Annales Bertiniani</i>
<i>AF</i>	<i>Annales Fuldenses</i>
<i>ARF</i>	<i>Annales Regni Francorum</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>Diplomata</i>
<i>KIII</i>	<i>Karoli III</i>
<i>Karol.</i>	<i>Karolinorum</i>
<i>LG</i>	<i>Ludowici Germanici</i>
<i>LoI, LoII</i>	<i>Lotharii I, Lotharii II</i>
<i>Merov.</i>	<i>Regum Francorum e Stirpe Merowingica</i>
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
<i>OI, OII, OIII</i>	<i>Ottonis I, Ottonis II, Ottonis III</i>
<i>SS</i>	<i>Scriptores</i>
<i>SRG</i>	<i>Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum</i>
<i>SRM</i>	<i>Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum</i>
<i>Trad. Freising</i>	<i>Die Traditionen des Hochstifts Freising</i>
<i>Trad. Wiz.</i>	<i>Traditiones Wizenburgenses</i>