

PATHS TO KINGSHIP IN MEDIEVAL
LATIN EUROPE, c. 950–1200

Medieval Europe was a world of kings, but what did this mean to those who did not themselves wear a crown? How could they prevent corrupt and evil men from seizing the throne? How could they ensure that rulers would not turn into tyrants? Drawing on a rich array of remarkable sources, this engaging study explores how the fears and hopes of a ruler's subjects shaped both the idea and the practice of power. It traces the inherent uncertainty of royal rule from the creation of kingship and the recurring crises of royal successions, through the education of heirs and the intrigue of medieval elections, to the splendour of a king's coronation, and the pivotal early years of his reign. Monks, crusaders, knights, kings (and those who wanted to be kings) are among a rich cast of characters who sought to make sense of and benefit from an institution that was an object of both desire and fear.

BJÖRN WEILER is Professor in History at Aberystwyth University in the UK, with visiting stints at Cambridge, Bergen (Norway), Freiburg (Germany), Harvard and Chapel Hill. He has received grants, among others, from the AHRC, the British Academy, the Huntingdon Library and the Leverhulme Trust. Publications include *Political Culture in the Medieval West, Byzantium and the Islamic World* (2021) (with Catherine Holmes and others); *Representations of Power in Medieval Germany* (2006) (with Simon MacLean); and *Kingship, Rebellion and Political Culture* (2007; rev. edition 2012).

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-51842-7 — Paths to Kingship in Medieval Latin Europe, c. 950–1200
Björn Weiler
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

PATHS TO KINGSHIP IN
MEDIEVAL LATIN EUROPE,
c. 950–1200

BJÖRN WEILER
Aberystwyth University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-51842-7 — Paths to Kingship in Medieval Latin Europe, c. 950–1200
Björn Weiler
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316518427
DOI: 10.1017/9781009008853

© Björn Weiler 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ Books Limited, Padstow Cornwall
A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Weiler, Björn K. U., author.

Title: Paths to kingship in medieval Latin Europe, c. 950–1200 / Björn Weiler, University of
Wales, Aberystwyth.

Description: First edition. | New York : Cambridge University Press, 2021. | Includes
bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020058383 (print) | LCCN 2020058384 (ebook) | ISBN 9781316518427
(hardback) | ISBN 9781009009218 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009008853 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Kings and rulers, Medieval. | Monarchy – Europe – History – To 1500. |
Legitimacy of governments – Europe – History – To 1500. | Europe – Politics and
government – 476–1492.

Classification: LCC D131 .W45 2021 (print) | LCC D131 (ebook) | DDC 321/.609409021–dc23
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020058383>
LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020058384>

ISBN 978-1-316-51842-7 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of
URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication
and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain,
accurate or appropriate.

CONTENTS

<i>List of Maps</i>	page vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	viii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	x
<i>Timeline</i>	xi

Introduction 1**PART I Foundations**

- | | | |
|---|--|----|
| 1 | Politics and Power in High Medieval Europe, c. 1000–1200 | 25 |
| 2 | Foundational Texts | 39 |

PART II Creating Kingship

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|----|
| 3 | Becoming King | 67 |
| 4 | Conferring Kingship | 95 |

PART III Succession

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----|
| 5 | Duties, Norms and Process | 121 |
| 6 | Designating an Heir | 165 |

PART IV Election

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----|
| 7 | Unanimity and Probity | 233 |
| 8 | Choosing a King | 259 |

PART V Inauguration

9	Enthroning the King	309
10	Beyond Enthronement	351
	Conclusion	399
	<i>Select Reading</i>	412
	<i>Index</i>	464

MAPS

- 1 High medieval Europe, c. 1100 *page* xiv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many more years ago than I now dare to admit, this book began as a footnote to a footnote in my PhD. Other projects intervened, and I returned to kings only during a fellowship at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies at Harvard (2008–9), and a Senior Fellowship at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (2010–11). Generous funding from the AHRC and research leave from Aberystwyth allowed for the completion of a first draft.

Too many friends and colleagues now know more about medieval kingship than they may have thought possible, let alone desirable. I offer my sincere apologies, and my deepest gratitude, at Harvard, to David Fischer, Eric Goldberg, Mario Gonzalez, Ilana Gershon, Jim Haber, Hap, Mona Krook, Sarah, Pip and Soci Messer, Joanne Rappaport, Steve Zipperstein and the much missed David Warner for their questions, companionship and counsel; to Zac Smith, Dan Smail and the ‘Gang’ for their welcome and hospitality; and to Matias Vera for all of the above and the communal exorcising. At Freiburg, Patrick Bernhard, Mark Greengrass, Leonhard Horowsky, Heinz Krieg, Lucy Riall and Till Van Rahden made for another wonderful year and equally inspiring company. Haki Antonsson first set me thinking about concepts and representations of royal authority; Stephen Church gave me the idea to use overlapping stages as a means of structuring the book; Johanna Dale and Thomas Foerster generously shared manuscripts of their then still forthcoming books; and Peter Lambert kept asking about how ideas could drive actions. He and Richard Rathbone also kindly read the manuscript in full, while Nora Berend, Piotr Górecki, Lars Kjaer and Mia Münster-Swendsen offered welcome feedback on individual chapters and sections. The book is a much better one because of their help, advice and criticism.

Gerd Althoff, Jack Bernhardt, Thomas Foerster, Helmut Hughes, Ryan Kemp, Konstantin Klein, Stephan Patscher, Martyn Powell, Tim Reuter, Stephan Schmuck, Simon Taylor, David Trotter, Alex Woolf and Thomas Zotz are only some of the colleagues and friends whose questions, suggestions and criticisms fed into the book. I have learned much from them. Peter Lambert and Patricia Duncker put me even further in their debt by coming up with a title for this book that did not rival a seventeenth-century treatise on alchemy in length. Friends and colleagues at Harvard, in Freiburg, Berlin and

Aberystwyth also provided much needed routes of escape. Writing would have been much less enjoyable without the Kaiser Schnitzel, the Casablanca Burger or the culinary delights of Sissi, April, Jayz and the Ship & Kennel.

Sections, drafts and offshoots were presented at Aberystwyth, Bergen, Bonn, Bristol, Cambridge (both UK and MA), Cardiff, Coburg, Düsseldorf, Freiburg, Glasgow, Heidelberg, Kraków, Kyoto, Leeds, London, Madrid, Minneapolis, Münster, Nicosia, Osaka, Oxford, Palo Alto, Pasadena, Riverside, San Jose, Sofia and Warsaw. I have learned much on these occasions, and am immensely grateful for the opportunity to test several of the ideas underpinning this book.

For permission to reprint previously published materials I am grateful to Caroline Palmer and Boydell & Brewer for ‘Kingship, usurpation and propaganda in twelfth-century Europe: the case of Stephen’, *Anglo-Norman Studies* 31 (2000), 299–326; and to Allison McCann and the UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies for ‘The *rex renitens* and medieval ideals of kingship, c. 950–1250’, *Viator* 31 (2000), 1–42; ‘Crown-giving and king-making in the west, c. 1000–c. 1250’, *Viator* 41 (2010), 57–88; and ‘Tales of first kings and the culture of kingship in the west, c. 1050–1200’, *Viator* 46/2 (2015), 101–28.

Liz Friend-Smith at Cambridge University Press deserves manifold thanks for her trust and patience: I am sorry that the manuscript nearly became a mythical promise, always just beyond the horizon, seemingly forever out of reach. But, as a popular beat combo put it: *nun das Warten hat ein Ende*. I would also like to thank Atifa Jiwa for her help, and, above all, Kathleen Fearn, who has been a wonderfully eagle-eyed and patient copy-editor. At Freiburg, Jan Wacker was the perfect *Mitarbeiter*. He also compiled a list of royal successions that made writing the book so much easier. I would furthermore like to thank the librarians at Harvard’s Widener Library, their colleagues at Cambridge, Freiburg, the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin, the Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut at the Freie Universität Berlin, and in the Inter Library Loans department at Aberystwyth, without whose assistance this book would have taken even longer to complete. Despite its best efforts, Microsoft Word could only *delay* the manuscript’s completion. And special mention must, of course, be made of Juggles, Coco, Dilys, Lola, Sergej, Suki, Ted, Wolfie and their fellow shipmates. Needless to say, any remaining mistakes are their responsibility, not mine.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AfD</i>	<i>Archiv für Diplomatik und Urkundenforschung</i>
<i>AKG</i>	<i>Archiv für Kulturgeschichte</i>
<i>ANS</i>	<i>Anglo-Norman Studies</i>
<i>CCCM</i>	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis
<i>CCSL</i>	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
<i>CSEL</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
<i>DA</i>	<i>Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>EME</i>	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
f.	folio
<i>FmSt</i>	<i>Frühmittelalterliche Studien</i>
<i>HSJ</i>	<i>Haskins Society Journal</i>
<i>HZ</i>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>JEGP</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>JMedH</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
<i>MGH</i>	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
<i>MGH</i>	Diplomata Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser
<i>MGH SS</i>	Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum rerum Germanicarum
<i>MGH SS sep. ed.</i>	Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptorum rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi
<i>MIÖG</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung</i>
<i>PL</i>	Patrologia Latina
<i>RI</i>	Regesta Imperii
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>ZSRG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte</i>

TIMELINE

- 918 Death of King Conrad I of east Francia; succession of Henry I (919)
- 983 Death of Emperor Otto II; regency of Theophanu
 Failed plot of Henry of Bavaria
- 987 Succession of Hugh Capet as king of west Francia
- c. 999/1000 Meeting at Gniezno between Boleslaw I of Poland and Emperor Otto III
- c. 1000 Conversion of Hungary, kingship of St Stephen
- 1002 Death of Emperor Otto III; succession of Henry II
- 1024 Death of Emperor Henry II; succession of Emperor Conrad II
- 1024–5 Abortive bid for the Lombard (and the imperial) throne by William of Aquitaine
- 1031 Succession of King Henry I of France
- 1037 Death of Duke Oldrich of Bohemia
- 1042 Melfi: the Normans choose a leader to coordinate their campaigns in Sicily
 Succession of Magnus as king of Denmark
- 1055 Succession of Spitihnev as duke of Bohemia
- 1059 Philipp I crowned king of France during his father's lifetime
- 1063 King Fernando I of León settles his succession
- 1066 Kingship of Harold II in England (January–October)
 Norman Conquest and coronation of William I
- 1072 Succession struggle in Castile
- 1076 Election of Harald as king of Denmark
- 1077 Election of Rudolf of Rheinfelden as challenger to Emperor Henry IV (r. 1056–1105)
- 1079 Murder of Stanislas of Kraków
- 1087 Death of King William I of England; succession of William II
- 1092 Brestislav II becomes duke of Bohemia
- 1099 Godfrey becomes first ruler of the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem
 Wladyslaw Herman tries to settle the Polish ducal succession
- 1100 Death of King William II of England; succession of Henry I
 Death of Godfrey of Jerusalem; succession of Baldwin I, who assumes the title of king
- 1102 Succession crisis in Poland
- 1103 Death of King Erik the Good of Denmark

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1106 | Death of Emperor Henry IV |
| 1107–10 | Crusade of King Sigurd of Norway |
| 1108 | Coronation of Louis VI of France |
| 1111 | Alfonso VI crowned king of Galicia |
| 1118 | Death of King Baldwin I of Jerusalem; succession of Baldwin II |
| 1125 | Death of Emperor Henry V; succession of Lothar III
Self-coronation of Alfonso I of Portugal |
| 1130 | Roger II becomes king of Sicily |
| 1131 | Murder of Knud Lavard
Fulk of Anjou chosen as king of Jerusalem |
| 1134 | Death of King Niels I of Denmark; succession of Erik the Memorable |
| 1135 | Death of King Henry I of England; succession of Stephen |
| 1136 | Siege of Exeter |
| 1137 | Death of King Erik the Memorable of Denmark |
| 1141 | King Stephen of England captured at the Battle of Lincoln |
| 1152 | Death of King Conrad III of Germany; succession of Frederick Barbarossa
King Stephen of England attempts to have his son Eustace installed as king |
| 1153 | Treaty of Winchester
Frederick Barbarossa appoints Wichmann as archbishop of Magdeburg |
| 1154 | Death of King Stephen of England; succession of Henry II
Valdemar I becomes co-ruler of Denmark |
| 1157 | Valdemar I becomes sole ruler of Denmark; riots in Roskilde |
| 1158 | Frederick Barbarossa grants a royal title to Vladislav of Bohemia |
| 1161 | Magnus Erlingsson crowned king of Norway
First recorded coronation in Norway |
| 1165 | King Valdemar I of Denmark ensures the election of his son Knud VI as king during his lifetime |
| 1166 | Death of William I of Sicily |
| 1170 | King Knud VI crowned king of Denmark during his father's lifetime
First recorded coronation in Denmark
Henry the Young King crowned king of England during his father's lifetime |
| c. 1177 | Birkibeinar choose Sverrir as their leader and claimant to the Norwegian throne |
| 1182 | Death of King Valdemar I of Denmark; succession of Knud VI |
| 1184 | Mainz diet; knighting of Henry VI, king of the Romans
Death of Magnus Erlingsson |
| 1189 | Coronation of Richard I as king of England
Death of King William II of Sicily |
| 1194 | Imperial coronation of Henry VI |
| 1195 | King of Cyprus requests a crown from Emperor Henry VI |

TIMELINE

xiii

1195–6	Emperor Henry VI seeks to ensure the succession of his son Frederick
c. 1196	King Lewon II of Armenia receives a crown from emissaries of Emperor Henry VI
1198	Imperial Double Election in Germany
1199	Death of King Richard I of England; succession of John
1202	Death of King Sverrir of Norway
1204	Ioannitsa of Bulgaria requests a crown from the army of the Fourth Crusade
1208	Ioannitsa receives a crown from Pope Innocent III
1214	Death of William the Lion of Scotland; succession of Alexander II
1215	Emperor Frederick II crowned at Aachen Magna Carta in England
1222	Golden Bull of Hungary
1249/51	Inauguration of Alexander III as king of Scotland



Map 1 High medieval Europe, c. 1100



Map 1 (cont.)

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-51842-7 — Paths to Kingship in Medieval Latin Europe, c. 950–1200
Björn Weiler
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)
