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## Taking Fortresses in Aquitaine. The Semantics of Conflict in the Historiographical Record of the Carolingian Conquest, 760–769 CE

### Introduction

It is a matter of great distress for all archaeologists of the non-Mediterranean Bronze Age that no written sources about this period exist. As a consequence, despite an abundance of finds, the archaeological evidence remains difficult to interpret, at least in such a way that it is possible to reconstruct societies and cultures in greater detail. This is especially true for phenomena as ephemeral as armed conflicts and the social or cultural structures linked to them. To address this problem, the LOEWE-project “Prehistorical Conflict Research” has brought together a group of researchers from very different academic disciplines – the Archaeology of the Bronze Age, Archaeobotany, Sociology, and the History of Early Medieval Europe.<sup>1</sup> To facilitate the process of gaining knowledge about prehistoric cultures of conflict from the evidence of Bronze Age fortifications, one of the tasks of this project is to study fortifications in post-Roman Europe (especially those of the Carolingian period) and the functions they had in contemporary warfare, in order to allow comparisons and to refine the interpretation of Bronze Age evidence. However, when reviewing the extant research on the subject, it turned out that things were much more difficult. Surprisingly, warfare and the military culture of Carolingian Europe in general and fortifications in particular are topics underrepresented in the historical research on the period,<sup>2</sup> although it

is common-sense for the scientific community that politics in post-Roman Europe were more often than not a matter of armed violence.

As a consequence, a lot of basic groundwork still has to be done. In order to work on this problem and to improve our knowledge about warfare in Carolingian Europe, this small study will take a closer look at one particular example: the historiographical record about the Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine. From 760 to 769 CE, the Frankish king Pippin the Short and his sons Carloman and Charles (the future Charlemagne) launched a series of attacks on the principality of Aquitaine in southwestern Gaul. The final result was the complete conquest of the region and its full integration into the Carolingian sphere of domination.<sup>3</sup> The reason why this conflict may serve as a relevant example for the questions of the LOEWE-project is the fact that most of the military operations involved settlements, often fortified ones. No less than 16 historiographical texts, all written between ca. 770 and 840 CE, mention combat events of that kind.<sup>4</sup> In this paper, these historiographical

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based however on a selection of sources, not the entire material available; for the the sieges of the Carolingian period, from Charles Martel's time until the death of Charlemagne in 814 CE, 709–764).

<sup>1</sup> A conceptual outline of the project: Hansen/Krause 2018; for the theoretical background from a sociological perspective see Sutterlüty/Jung/Reymann 2019.

<sup>2</sup> The first diagnoses of the problem are published in Föllner 2016 and Kohl 2018, the latter with special emphasis on fortifications. Apart from multiple archaeological studies, the notable exceptions concerning fortifications and siege-warfare are Purton 2009, 66–85, 98–101 and Petersen 2013, 234–254 (with a survey of all sieges known from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> centuries CE,

<sup>3</sup> The standard reference on Carolingian Aquitaine is still Auzias 1937, reprinted without alterations in 2003. More recent but shorter overviews are Dubreucq 2006 and Lauranson-Rozas/Juillet 2002. Lewis 1965, 37–175 treats the whole region of what is now southern France und northern Spain. Studies concerning the Carolingian conquest will be discussed briefly in the first part of the main argument.

<sup>4</sup> Not analysed are the *Annales Sangallenses Baluzii* from the 760s CE. Although the war in Aquitaine is mentioned for the years 760, 761, 763, 768 and 769 CE, no combat in the surroundings of settlements is described, most probably because of the brevity and generality of the text. A telling example is the entry for 760 (63): *Hoc anno Pippinus rex conflictum habuit cum Wascones*. – “In this year king Pippin has had a

accounts are analysed to understand how contemporary writers deliberated on the military role of fortifications. To achieve this, the main argument of this paper will be developed in three steps: Firstly, the historical context, the state of research and the historiographical evidence will be introduced in a few words; secondly, the general information that can be obtained from these sources will be assessed; and thirdly, a few examples will be analysed in greater detail in order to gain information on some particular problems.

### The Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine – events, research, sources

To understand the military role of fortifications in the historiographical texts properly, it seems necessary to sketch briefly the course of events as represented in current research. Originally under Frankish rule from 507 CE onwards, the former Roman provinces of Aquitania had been an independent principality since the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE.<sup>5</sup> During the first decades of the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE, the mayors of the palace, de-facto rulers of the Franks, had campaigned repeatedly in Aquitaine and interfered in internal conflicts, yet were never able to re-establish Frankish control, for they were “not in a position to invest this kind of effort in the region”, as Paul Fouracre puts it.<sup>6</sup> However, things changed in 751/752 CE, when the mayor of the palace Pippin usurped the Frankish throne.<sup>7</sup> To

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conflict with the *Wascones* (i.e. Aquitanians).” Also, general references like that in Paulus Diaconus, *Liber de episcopis Mettensibus*, 265 are not included. Einhard, *Vita Karoli magni V*, 7 describes Charlemagne’s Aquitanian campaign of 769 CE at length, but does not mention any specific places.

<sup>5</sup> The most extensive work on post-Roman Aquitaine until the Carolingian conquest is Rouche 1979. Werner 1973 developed the theory of evolving “peripheral principalities” within the Frankish sphere of domination during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries CE; the case of Aquitaine is reassessed and nuanced by Depreux 2014. An ethnogenesis of the Aquitanians is rejected by Rouche 1990, 51: “Instead of forming a *Stamm* (tribe), they were a *Kultur* (culture).” The development of Aquitanian identity from Late Antiquity into the Carolingian period is sketched by Bayard 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Fouracre 2000, 81–89 (the quote: 89); Fischer 2012, 110–122.

<sup>7</sup> As Jussen 2014, 52–56 cautiously states, the coup of Pippin cannot be dated precisely; it must have taken

place after 20 June 751 CE and before 1 March 752 CE. Research on this topic is abundant. Important contributions of the last years are Semmler 2003, Becher/Jarnut 2004 and Buc 2005. The historiographical narrative is thoroughly analysed by Goosmann 2013, esp. 151–204, but unfortunately his work stops with the coup of 751/752 CE and does not treat Pippin’s further years as king extensively.

stabilise his fresh kingship, Pippin not only established new ways of sacralised legitimation like the anointment or the consent of the pope, but also intensified his military activities, firstly by adding Langobard Italy as a target for campaigns.<sup>8</sup> By 759 CE, he had expelled the Saracens from Septimania in southeastern Gaul; Aquitaine became an obvious target.<sup>9</sup> In 760 CE, he sent a list of claims to Waiofar, the *princeps* of Aquitaine, actually a demand for submission. As Waiofar rejected, the Frankish king started a series of raids and conquered parts of the border region from 760 to 763 CE. A prolonged period of negotiations followed in 764 and 765 CE, due to internal problems in Francia. But in 766 CE, Pippin restarted the war and brought it to a new level, leading two campaigns in 767 CE and keeping his army in the field during the winter of 767/768 CE, declining every diplomatic attempt. In June 768 CE, Waiofar’s rule had eroded so much that he was murdered by one of his own retainers. After the death of Pippin on 24 September 768 CE, rebellion flared up once again, but the new Frankish king Charles subdued it quickly in the summer of 769 CE.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> After his usurpation, Pippin campaigned not only in Langobard Italy, but also in Saxony and Septimania before getting to Aquitaine. See Gobry 2001, 135–199 for a new but popular narrative. Bachrach 2001, 44–46 treats Pippin’s military activity as a king beyond the conquest of Aquitaine only shortly. The most comprehensive, but outdated accounts are Oelsner 1871, 74–79. 193–204. 254–269. 322–323 and Böhmer/Mühlbacher/Lechner 1908, 32–46.

<sup>9</sup> Lewis 1965, 24–26; Böhmer/Mühlbacher/Lechner 1908, 46; Oelsner 1871, 339–341. Rouche 1979, 120–122 claims (developing an estimation of Oelsner 1871, 339) that Pippin had been preparing the Aquitanian war since 751 CE, when his half-brother Grifo, with whom he competed for the inheritance from their father Charles Martel, had fled to Aquitaine and Waiofar refused to deliver him to Pippin.

<sup>10</sup> The general course of events is described by Gobry 2001, 199–222; Rouche 1979, 122–129; Lewis 1965, 26–28; Böhmer/Mühlbacher/Lechner 1908, 46–54. 61; Oelsner 1871, 338–353. 379–385. 398–400. 402–403. 407–413. Charlemagne’s campaign in 769 CE is treated only in passing as part of the conflict between Pippin’s

The conquest of Aquitaine is part of a larger historical phenomenon, the so-called “Carolingian expansion”, which lasted from the later 7<sup>th</sup> to the early 9<sup>th</sup> century CE and brought large parts of Europe under Frankish rule.<sup>11</sup> Like most of the armed conflicts during the “Carolingian expansion”, the Aquitanian campaigns are not extensively researched; only a few historians have studied them in some depth throughout the last decades.<sup>12</sup>

In 1974, the French historian Gabriel Fournier published a study, in which he argues that the existence of “rural fortifications” in Aquitaine was one of the main reasons why it took ten years for the Franks to subdue it. His sample case is the Aquitanian region of Auvergne, whose rural fortresses he investigated by comparing written sources and archaeological evidence.<sup>13</sup>

Also in the 1970s, the American military historian Bernard S. Bachrach published his first studies on Aquitanian military organization and fortifications in western Gaul,<sup>14</sup> leading to detailed chapters about the Aquitanian conflict in his major books *Early Carolingian Warfare* (2002) and *Charlemagne’s Early Campaigns* (2013).<sup>15</sup> The overall purpose of his work is to show that the medieval culture of war was a sophisticated continuation of its Roman predecessor, and that it is not characterized by decline and barbarization.<sup>16</sup>

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heirs Charlemagne and Carloman in the new biographies by Fried 2013a, 124 and McKitterick 2008, 79–80. Again, the most extensive history is the outdated Abel/Simson 1888, 46–50. Bachrach 2001, 207–241 gives an extensive, but highly speculative narration of the war up to 762 CE, with only short glances to later events; the same can be said about Bachrach 2013, 115–138, in his analysis of Charlemagne’s campaign of 769 CE.

<sup>11</sup> A synthesis of this process of expansion is yet to be written. For its end and a brief characterization see Reuter 1990.

<sup>12</sup> The short descriptions in the “catalogue of sieges” by Petersen 2013, 728–738 are not included here, since they only summarize two sources: the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” (the two recensions are not distinguished) and the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard. Petersen’s own account of the Aquitanian war is short (248–250) and without any further references. Purton 2009, 67–69 treats the Aquitanian war in a similarly abbreviated fashion, but more balanced and connected to current research.

<sup>13</sup> Fournier 1974.

<sup>14</sup> Bachrach 1974; 1975.

<sup>15</sup> Bachrach 2002; 2013.

<sup>16</sup> The main argument is developed most clearly on a broad scale in Bachrach/Bachrach 2017.

Bachrach’s chapters on the Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine are part of this grand narrative, postulating for example the use of advanced Roman siege technology during the capture of Bourges in 762 CE.<sup>17</sup> Although Bachrach’s accounts are always rich in detail, his use of the sources is flawed, mainly for two reasons. On the one hand, he largely neglects the literary stylisation of the historiographical texts, reading them as if they were precise reports on the events that they narrate. On the other hand, Bachrach pushes the interpretation of the vastly fragmented and scarce evidence provided by the texts of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries CE way too far, filling the gaps incautiously with other material from different periods and regions.

The third scholar investigating the Frankish-Aquitanian war of the 760s CE is Adrien Bayard, who published a study in 2013 on the semantics of violence during this conflict.<sup>18</sup> Bayard’s work is very much the opposite of Bachrach’s, being predominantly interested in the ideological use of the historical discourse on this conflict, and less in the events which are processed in the historiographical texts he analyses.<sup>19</sup>

Within the present study, the contemporary historiographical record, in which mention is made of concrete military operations during the Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine, will be analysed systematically. The record consists of 16 texts written by Frankish authors; no Aquitanian source survives, if one ever existed. With the exception of one royal charter from 823/824 CE,<sup>20</sup> no contemporary texts of other genres deal with the conquest of Aquitaine in greater detail.<sup>21</sup> Thir-

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<sup>17</sup> Bachrach 2002, 227–241.

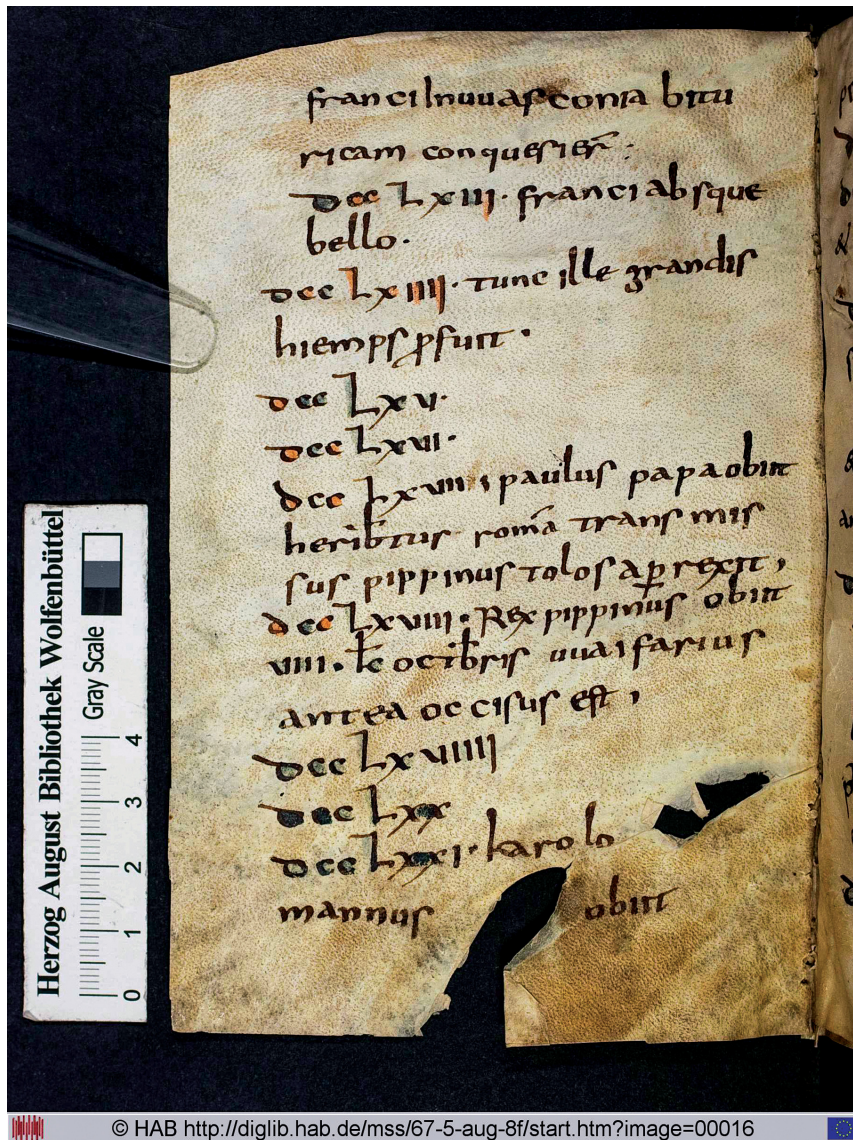
<sup>18</sup> Bayard 2013.

<sup>19</sup> His approach is developed in Bayard/de Cazanove/Dorn 2013.

<sup>20</sup> The charter is preserved as a template in a collection of sample documents: *Formulae imperiales*, No. 53, 325–326. For the collection and its genre of texts, see Rio 2009, 132–137; Patt 2016, 67–139. The date of the original document can be assumed, because the text mentions an assembly at Compiègne that began on 1 November 823 CE (Böhmer/Mühlbacher/Lechner 1908, 310–311).

<sup>21</sup> Ermoldus Nigellus, *Carmen in honorem Ludovici IV*, v. 2158–2159, 164–165 from the late 820s CE describes a picture at the palace of Ingelheim, which showed Pippin as the conqueror of Aquitaine, but obviously no battle scenes. In opposition to Fournier 1974, 127–128, a capitulary of Louis the Pious from ca. 820 CE is not included here, since the fortresses said to be taken





**Fig. 1** Herzog August Library Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Guelf. 67.5 Aug. 8°, fol. 5<sup>v</sup> – Annals of Wolfenbüttel (*Annales Guelferbytani*), early 9<sup>th</sup> century CE. The page shows the entries for the years 762 CE (beginning on the preceding page) to 771 CE; the passages relating to the conquest of Aquitaine are in lines 1–2, 11–14: “[DCCLXII]: ... The Franks conquered Bourges in Aquitaine (*Wasconia*). ... DCCLXVII: ... Pippin headed for Toulouse. DCCLXVIII: King Pippin died on September 24. Waiofar was killed before.” (<http://diglib.hab.de/mss/67-5-aug-8f/start.htm?image=00016>, last viewed 24 June 2019)

teen of these historiographical texts are annalistic, structured by an enumeration of years with accompanying historiographical information (Fig. 1),<sup>22</sup>

while the other three are chronicles with a more continuous narrative.<sup>23</sup> The most extensive texts

by Pippin some decades ago cannot be located precisely; see *Capitularia*, No. 145, § 2, 296–297.

<sup>22</sup> *Annales Alamannici*; *Annales Fuldenses*; *Annales Guelferbytani*; *Annales Laureshamenses*; *Annales Maximiniani*; *Annales Mettenses priores*; *Annales Mosellani*; *Annales Nazariani*; *Annales Petaviani*; *Annales sancti Amandi*; *Annales Sithienses*. The *Annales regni Francorum* and the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi* are counted as discrete texts, although the latter are a revised version of the former. The source-critical information about these texts is mainly taken from the standard reference works: Wattenbach/Levison/

Löwe 1953; 1957; Dunphy 2010; and the updated articles from the *Repertorium Fontium Historiae Medii Aevi* provided by the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities on the website [www.geschichtsquellen.de](http://www.geschichtsquellen.de) (last viewed 2 July 2019). In addition, some more detailed studies on the subject were consulted: Hoffmann 1958; Lendi 1971; Schröer 1975; McKitterick 2004; 2006; 2010; Garipzanov 2010; Hen 2010.

<sup>23</sup> *Chronicon Laurissense breue*; *Chronicon Moissiacense*; Ps.-Fredegar, *Chronicon*. Apart from the standard references listed in the previous footnote, the following studies have been consulted: Kettemann 2000; McKitterick 2004; 2006; Collins 2007; Kaschke 2010.

are the continuation of the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard, the two recensions of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” and the Older Annals of Metz, and in most of the cited studies, the analysis is limited to these richly detailed accounts. As far as we know, these four texts were produced either directly at the royal court (in case of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals”, as the name denotes) or under the auspices of close relatives of the Carolingian kings: The continuation of the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard was, as an inserted passage states, sponsored by a cousin of king Pippin, count Nibelung, whereas the Older Annals of Metz were most likely written at Chelles Abbey under the supervision of the abbess Gisela, daughter of Pippin and sister of Charlemagne.<sup>24</sup> Only a few smaller annals were independent of direct royal sponsorship. All texts seem to have been written retrospectively, however some of them only very shortly after the events in Aquitaine. In addition to that, the texts are connected to each other in what can be described as a complex network of intertextuality, some forming distinct sub-groups with closer relations. Nonetheless, they add, select and rewrite information on their own, describing the events from their specific point of view.

Since all of these texts were produced between ca. 770 and 840 CE by clerics within Frankish territory, according to the rules of the historiographical genre, they can be considered as a quite homogeneous corpus. In view of this, it seems possible to conduct a semantic inquiry on the whole corpus of texts and to draw some conclusions on a quantitative basis, even though the small number of samples does not allow sound statistics and therefore limits the explanatory significance of the results to a mere detection of trends. In the first part of the investigation, general structures of the vocabulary used by the authors are to be discussed: What terms were used to denote fortified settlements; how were different types of fortifications distinguished? What kind of actions are linked to them, and what does that tell us about the military functions which the authors thought they were part of? In the second part of this study, three examples will

be analysed on a micro-level to address some problems, which cannot be answered by a more general semantic study. To achieve this, a qualitative, not quantitative, approach will be used by reconstructing intertextual relations and uncovering structures, such as the internal logic of narrative sequences or strategies in argumentation.

## The vocabulary of fortifications and conflicts

Most of the places mentioned in the historiographical sources within the direct context of the Aquitanian war are qualified in one way or another by additional terms (Fig. 2). Only five out of 32 place-names are not: four of them are large fortified cities with Roman origin (Agen, Narbonne, Rodez, Tours);<sup>25</sup> only one (Yssandon) seems to have been smaller. Nonetheless, in the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE Yssandon was obviously well known as the centre of Aquitanian wine-growing. Moreover, it must have held some importance before, as coins were struck there in the 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, and in 572 CE a *castrum* was mentioned.<sup>26</sup> Unfortified settlements are either denoted as *locus*, “place”,<sup>27</sup>

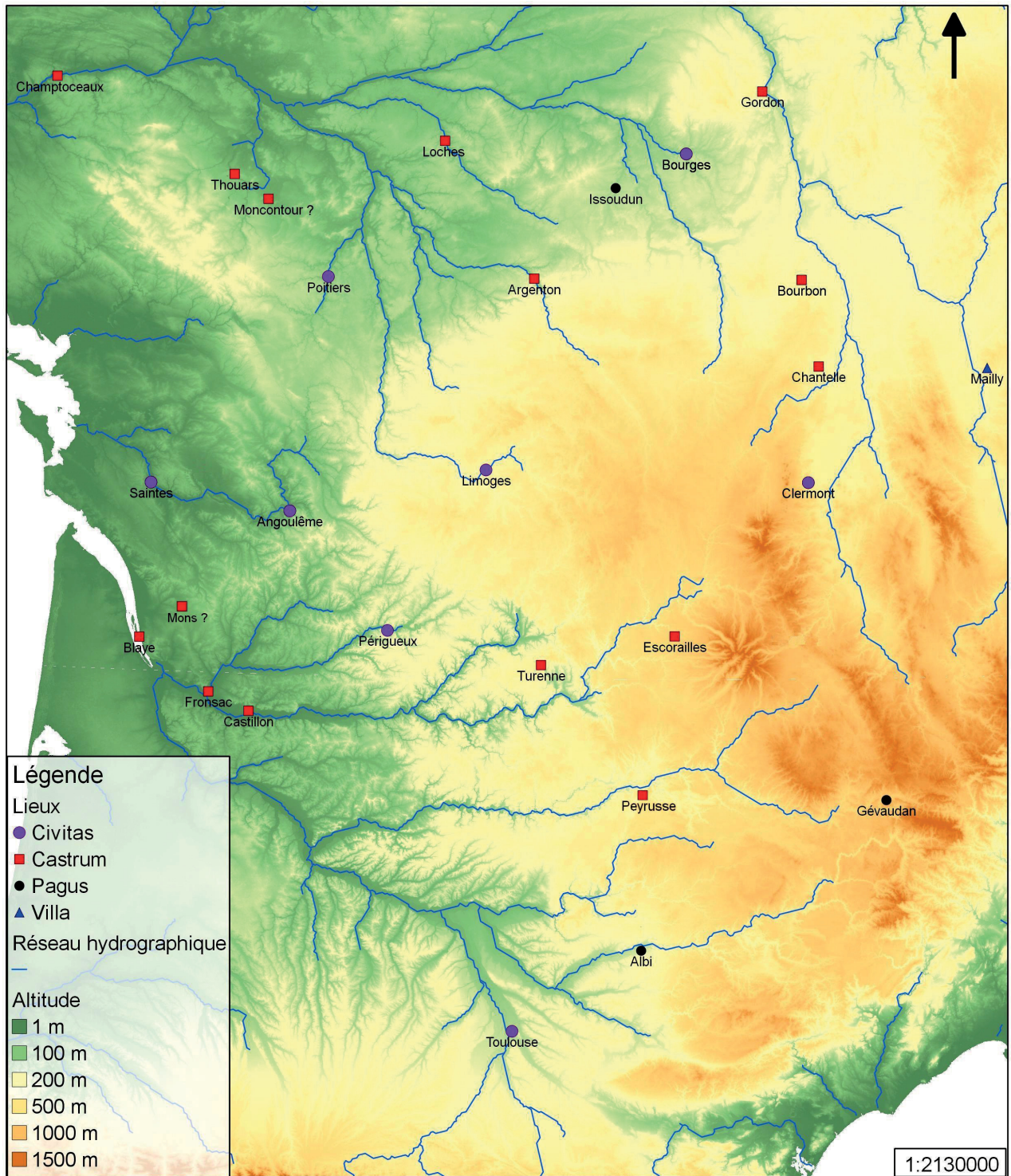
<sup>24</sup> The text in the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard: Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 34, (Krusch) 182; the current state of the debate can be found in Collins 2007, 82–92. The attribution of the Older Annals of Metz to Chelles and Gisela is discussed most extensively in Hoffmann 1958, 53–61, although it is not completely indubitable.

<sup>25</sup> Agen: Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 48, (Krusch) 190. – Narbonne: Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 44, (Krusch) 188; Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 54; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24; Chronicon Moissiacense, 294. – Rodez: Chronicon Moissiacense, 294. – Tours: Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 45, (Krusch) 188–189. The Roman fortifications of the towns are discussed in Johnson 1983, 88–90. 104. 106. 113.116. 117.

<sup>26</sup> Pippin’s attack in the 760s CE: Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 47, (Krusch) 189. Basic information about Yssandon in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries CE: Boyer 2007, 146–147. The identification of the *Hisandone* mentioned in the text with Yssandon is not completely certain, some researchers believe it to be the modern Issoudun instead.

<sup>27</sup> Three place-names are qualified as *locus*, Doué-la-Fontaine, Moncontour and Mons (Oelsner 1871, 411 fn. 7 discusses the problem of identifying the place since there are multiple homonymic localities in the region). – Doué-la-Fontaine: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 760, 50; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 760, 19; Annales regni Francorum, a. 760, 18. – Moncontour: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 769, 56; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 769, 29; Annales regni Francorum, a. 769, 28. – Mons: Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 768, 27; Annales regni Francorum, a. 768, 26.





**Fig. 2** Map of Aquitaine with the sites mentioned in the historiographical record for the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE. Not all the place-names noted on the map are referred to in the accounts of the Carolingian conquest of the 760s CE, and vice versa some of the sites mentioned in the sources are not on the map (i.e. Agen, Chalons-sur-Saône, Doué-la-Fontaine, Narbonne, Rodez, Tours); in contrast to the text of this paper, *Hisandone* is identified on the map as Issoudun, not as Yssandon (map created by A. Bayard, first published in Bayard 2013, 304)

as *villa publica*, “public estate”,<sup>28</sup> or as monasteries (*monasteria*).<sup>29</sup>

Two categories of fortified settlements are distinguished, the first one being *civitas*, *urbs* or *oppidum*, all of which denote some kind of urban settlement.<sup>30</sup> The second category is *castrum* or *castellum*,<sup>31</sup> obviously a smaller settlement, but

not necessarily a purely military facility, as becomes clear from the charter of Louis the Pious mentioned earlier:<sup>32</sup> The charter deals with the release of a man named Lambert, an inhabitant of the *castrum* of Turenne, who was given as a hostage in 767 CE, presumably as a child, since he was delivered by his father and set free several decades later in the winter of 823/24 CE. Therefore, we can assume that children regularly lived in Turenne. And since Lambert also retrieved his lands according to the charter, it is highly probable that the inhabitants also farmed there. In one case, Clermont-Ferrand/Auvergne, an *urbs* and a *castrum* forming one single settlement are differentiated, as becomes clear from the description

<sup>28</sup> Only one specific locality (in Frankish territory) is qualified as such, Mailly: Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187. Several unnamed *villae publicae* on Aquitanian territory are mentioned in Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 47, (Krusch) 189.

<sup>29</sup> Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 47, (Krusch) 189 mentions only an undetermined number of monasteries, without naming any of them.

<sup>30</sup> Angoulême (*civitas*): Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 769, 29; Annales regni Francorum, a. 769, 28. – Bourges (*civitas*): Annales Maximiniani, a. 762, 21; Annales Petaviani, a. 762, 11; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 762, 766, 21, 25; Annales regni Francorum, a. 762, 20; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 43, (Krusch) 187–188; as an *urbs* it is denoted in: Annales mettenses priores, a. 762, 52; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 43, 46. (Krusch) 187, 189; in the latter source, it is also called *caput*, “capital” (189). – Cahors (*oppidum*): Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 763, 21. – Chalons-sur-Saône (*urbs*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187; as a *civitas* it is denoted in: Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 19; Annales regni Francorum, a. 761, 18. – Limoges (*civitas*): Annales Alamannici, a. 761, 28; Annales Maximiniani, a. 761, 21; Annales Mosellani, a. 761, 495; Annales Nazariani, a. 761, 766, 29; Annales Petaviani, a. 767, 13; Annales Sithienses, a. 767, 35; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189; it is denoted as *oppidum* in Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 21. – Périgueux (*civitas*): Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189. – Poitiers (*civitas*): Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189. – Saintes (*civitas*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 768, 55; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 768, 27; Annales regni Francorum, a. 768, 26; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189. – Toulouse (*urbs*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 54. – Several of the cities are also mentioned in other sources without a proper identification – knowledge about the character of the settlements was obviously taken for granted by the authors.

<sup>31</sup> Argenton-sur-Creuse (*castrum*): Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 766, 25; Annales regni Francorum, a. 766, 24; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189. – Bourbon (*castrum*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51; Annales Petaviani, a. 761, 11; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187; it is denoted as *castellum* in: Annales regni Francorum a. 761, 18; as part of a list of *civitates et castella* it is mentioned in Annales Fuldenses, a. 762, 7 and Chronicon Lauris-

sense breve, 29, and in the case of the Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 19, *oppida atque castella* are listed. – Chantelle (*castellum*): Annales regni Francorum a. 761, 18, 20; as part of a list of *civitates et castella* it is mentioned in Annales Fuldenses, a. 762, 7 and Chronicon Laurisense breve, 29, and in the case of the Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 19, *oppida atque castella* are listed. – Champtoceaux (*castrum*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 768, 55; Annales regni Francorum, a. 768, 26; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 51, 52, (Krusch) 191–192. – Escorailles (*castrum*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 55; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24; in the Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25 it is mentioned in a list of *castella multa* and other fortifications; in the older editions, the *Scoralium* mentioned in the texts is identified with Ally. – Fronsac (*castrum*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 769, 56; Annales regni Francorum, a. 769, 30; in the Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 769, 31 it is denoted as *castellum*. – Gordon (*castrum*): Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 49, (Krusch) 190. – Peyrusse (*castrum*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 55; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24; in the Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25 it is mentioned in a list of *castella multa* and other fortifications. – Thouars (*castrum*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 762, 52 (even qualified there as *in Aquitania firmior non erat*, “in Aquitaine there was no firmer”); Annales regni Francorum, a. 762, 20; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 43, (Krusch) 188; it is denoted as *castellum* in: Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 762, 21. – Turenne (*castrum*): Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 55; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24; Formulae imperiales, No. 53, 325; in the Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25 it is mentioned in a list of *castella multa* and other fortifications.

<sup>32</sup> See above, fn. 20. The charter: Formulae imperiales, No. 53, 325–326. The capture of Turenne is described in the following historiographical texts: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 54–55; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24.



in the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard: “He (i.e. Pippin) ... advanced with his whole force to the town of Auvergne and took and burnt the fortress of Clermont”.<sup>33</sup> The assignment to one of these categories seems to have been common knowledge: no place-name is qualified with different categories in different texts; all belong exclusively to one of them, and especially cities are often not qualified as such. This categorial dichotomy can also be seen in lexical couples, such as *civitates et castella* or *oppida et castra*.<sup>34</sup> Another category of place used in the sources is the *pagus*, usually understood as the administrative district controlled by a count (*comes*). Within the texts investigated here, every *pagus* is linked to a (fortified) city, either one explicitly mentioned as such or one about which we know.<sup>35</sup> So, when the texts refer to a *pa-*

*gus*, it can be estimated that also its principal town is meant – in the case of Auvergne, the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard even explicitly speaks of “the count of this city”.<sup>36</sup> A general and more ambiguous term used to denote fortifications is *munitio* and its derivatives. While the adjective *munitus* is employed to stress the strength of urban fortifications,<sup>37</sup> the noun could obviously denote any type of fortified settlement.<sup>38</sup> A much wider variety of fortifications, which were not necessarily permanently settled, is implied by a unique expression: Both recensions of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” relate for the year 767 that Pippin conquered multiple “rocks and caves” (*petrae et speluncae* or *rocae et speluncae*) defended by Aquitanian forces. The later recension adds *castella* as a diverging category.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187, (Wallace-Hadrill) 111: ...*usque urbem Arvernam cum omni exercitu veniens, Claremonte castro captum atque succensum bellando cepit...* Auvergne is denominated here as *urbs*, Clermont-Ferrand as *castrum*. A little earlier in the same text – Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 41, (Krusch) 186 –, Auvergne is not explicitly qualified as a city, but it is again in Cont. 43, (Krusch) 187. The Annales Petaviani, a. 761, 11 describe Clermont-Ferrand as *castrum* situated in the *pagus* (county) of Auvergne, but *pagus* indicates the existence of an urban centre; the Annales regni Francorum, a. 761, 20 also understand Auvergne as a region containing multiple settlements. In three sources, Clermont-Ferrand is listed as one of several *civitates/oppida* and *castella/castra*, but it is not clear as which it was classified: Annales Fuldenses, a. 762, 7; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 19. 21; Chronicon Laurissense breve, 29. The Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51 call it a *castrum*. Three times, Clermont-Ferrand is mentioned without any denomination: Annales Guelferbytani, a. 761, 29; Annales Maximiniani, a. 761, 21; Annales s. Amandi, a. 761, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Annales Fuldenses, a. 762, 7; Annales Mettenses priores, a. 766, 54; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 19; Chronicon Laurissense breve, 29; Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189.

<sup>35</sup> The *pagi* with cities explicitly referred to are: Angoulême (Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 48 (Krusch) 190), Auvergne (Annales Petaviani, a. 761, 11; Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 41, (Krusch) 186), Bourges (Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51; Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 41. 42. 46 (Krusch) 186–187. 189), Périgueux (qualified as *partes* or *territorium*: Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 768, 29; Annales regni Francorum, a. 768, 26; Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 48. 51, (Krusch) 190. 192); the references cited here are only for the mentioning of *pagus*, for the urban denominations see above fn. 30. Albi

and Le Gévaudan are denominated only as *pagus* (if at all), but the districts were named after Roman cities (*pagus*: Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25; only names: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 54; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24; Chronicon Moissiacense, 294). The Frankish *pagi* mentioned in the texts – either as targets of Aquitanian raids or in Pippin’s itinerary – are not listed here, since their fortified centres were obviously not directly affected by the war. Furthermore, some Aquitanian counts are mentioned with their precise affiliation: Bla(n)dinus, *comes* of Auvergne (Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 42. 47, (Krusch) 187. 190; the Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51 only call him *perfidus comes*, “perfidious count” without any further designation); Unibertus, *comes* of Bourges (Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 42. 51, (Krusch) 187. 191); (C)hilpingus, *comes* of Auvergne (Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 45, (Krusch) 188; Annales Mettenses priores, a. 765, 53); Am(m)anugus, *comes* of Poitiers (Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 45, (Krusch) 188–189; Annales Mettenses priores, a. 765, 53); Gislarius, *comes* of Bourges (Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 51, (Krusch) 191).

<sup>36</sup> Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187: *Bladinus comes ipsius urbis Arvernica...*

<sup>37</sup> The Annales Mettenses priores, a. 762, 52 call Bourges an *urbs munitissima* – as Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189 does, too – and refer later (a. 766, 54) to several *civitates munitissimae*.

<sup>38</sup> The Annales Mettenses priores are not consistent in their use of the term: a. 762, 52 they refer to *castella et munitiones*; a. 766, 54 they parallelise *civitates* and *munitiones*; a. 767, 54–55 they use *munitiones* as a general term, but the places that follow are qualified only as *castra*. The Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 21 use *munitiones* as a general term for fortifications which protected the Aquitanian populace.

<sup>39</sup> Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24. Fournier 1974 takes this



Apart from general definitions on the meaning of the terms employed,<sup>40</sup> it can be deduced from the actions linked to certain categories of places whether the authors thought they were fortified or not. Fighting is described neither for the *villae publicae* nor for the monasteries nor the three *loci*: Neuilly and several *villae publicae* of Waiofar were just burned without resistance; Aquitanian monasteries were simply “depopulated”; at Montes and Montcontour, only negotiations took place, as at Doué-la-Fontaine. The later recension of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” even states that Pippin had to set up a fortified camp there.<sup>41</sup>

When considering the (military) actions described in relation to fortified settlements, the winner’s perspective becomes obvious. Fourteen out of the 27 Aquitanian settlements mentioned are said to have been captured by Pippin; for five more this can be assumed (see **Table 1**). An undetermined number of settlements has to be added, since several texts state that the Franks took “other” or “many” cities and fortresses during longer campaigns without giving their names.<sup>42</sup> This is confirmed by ar-

as a starting point for his research on “rural fortifications” in Auvergne.

<sup>40</sup> Bayard 2013, 305 points to a definition by Isidore of Seville (d. 636), whose “Etymologies” were the most important reference work of the period; there Isidore equates the city and its walls.

<sup>41</sup> The burning of Mailly: Ps.-Fredegar, *Chronicon*, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187. – The burning of several unnamed *villae publicae* of Waiofar and the depopulation of “many monasteries”: Ps.-Fredegar, *Chronicon*, Cont. 47, (Krusch) 189. – Negotiations at Montes: *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 768, 27; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 768, 26. – Negotiations at Montcontour: *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 769, 56; *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 769, 29; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 769, 28; Einhard, *Vita Karoli magni V*, (Holder-Egger) 7 describes the negotiations, but does not specify the place. – Negotiations at Doué-la-Fontaine: *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 760, 50–51; *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 760, 19 (also mentioning the *castra*); *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 760, 18.

<sup>42</sup> Undesignated fortifications as military targets of the Franks are mentioned by: *Annales Laureshamenses*, a. 767, 30 (*et alias civitates*); *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 762, 52 (*castella et munitiones*), a. 767, 54–55 (*multae munitiones*); *Annales Mosellani*, a. 767, 496 (*et alias civitates*); *Annales Nazariani*, a. 766, 29 (*et alias civitates*); *Annales Petaviani*, a. 761, 11 (*omnis pagus Alvernicus*); *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 761, 19 (*oppida atque castella*), a. 767, 25 (*castella multa et petrae atque speluncae*); *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 761, 18. 20 (*multa castella* and later *alia multa castella*),

archaeological excavations, which show that more fortified settlements existed in Aquitaine at that time than those explicitly referred to in the historiographical record.<sup>43</sup> The term employed most frequently for the capture of a settlement is *capere*, “to take”,<sup>44</sup> while others are *acquirere*, “to acquire”,<sup>45</sup> and *conquirere*, which can be translated as “to conquer”, but could also have the more neutral meaning of “to collect”.<sup>46</sup> Another verb, *expugnare* (“to conquer, storm”), has a more explicit notion of combat, as it is derived from *pugna* (“battle, fight”), but it occurs only twice within the analysed corpus as a predicate.<sup>47</sup> In contrast, particularly the term *capere* seems to have been ambiguous, for it is complemented by additional information in some cases, such as adverbial constructions like *pugnando* or *bellando capere*, “to take by combat” or “by war”,<sup>48</sup>

a. 767, 24 (*multae roccae et speluncae*); *Chronicon Laurissense breve*, 29 (*castella et civitates*).

<sup>43</sup> Fournier 1974 names for the region of Auvergne: Carlat (129) and Ronzières (129–130), and he states (130; my translation): “Further sites of the same type could be identified: Liozun, Saint-Floret, Suc de Larmu, Chastel-sur-Murat, Saint-Flour.” The reference for these latter sites is Fournier 1962, 330–335. With Purton 2009, 68 fn. 3 one could also add the fortress of Loudun. More than thirty years later, the archaeology in the region has so much advanced that Bayard 2013, 307–308 (with further references) could describe a whole system of Aquitanian fortifications and the geo-strategical concept of the Frankish campaigns, opposite the diagnosis of Purton 2009, 69 who stated that the fortresses “were not part of any scheme of regional defence”.

<sup>44</sup> *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 762, 7; *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 767, 54; *Annales Petaviani*, a. 761, 11 (*capere* refers here to the whole *pagus* of Auvergne, not to a specific settlement); *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 761. 762. 767, 19. 21. 25; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 761. 762. 767, 18. 20. 24; *Annales Sithienses*, a. 767, 35; *Chronicon Laurissense breve*, 29; Ps.-Fredegar, *Chronicon*, Cont. 42. 43. 46. 47, (Krusch) 187–189.

<sup>45</sup> *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 767, 55; *Annales Petaviani*, a. 762, 11.

<sup>46</sup> *Annales Alamannici*, a. 762. 766, 28; *Annales Guelferbytani*, a. 761. 762, 29; *Annales Laureshamenses*, a. 762. 767, 28. 30; *Annales Maximiniani*, a. 761, 21; *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 762, 52; *Annales Mosellani*, a. 762. 767, 496; *Annales Nazariani*, a. 762. 767, 29. 31; *Annales Petaviani*, a. 767, 13; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 767, 24.

<sup>47</sup> *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 762, 7; *Chronicon Laurissense breve*, 29.

<sup>48</sup> *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 762, 7 (*pugnando capere*), a. 767, 8 (*expugnans capere*); *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 761, 19 (*manu capere*); *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 761, 20 (*capere per pugnam*); *Chronicon Laurissense*

Name	Denomination	Events
Agen	–	– endpoint of a Frankish raid (766 CE)
Albi	– ( <i>pagus</i> )	– taken by or submitted to the Franks (767 CE)
Angoulême	<i>civitas</i>	– demolition of fortifications by Waiofar (762/766 CE?) – subsequent restoration by Pippin and instalment of a Frankish garrison – meeting point for Charlemagne’s army (769 CE)
Argenton-sur-Creuse	<i>castrum</i>	– destroyed by Waiofar (before 766 CE) – restoration and instalment of a Frankish garrison by Pippin (766 CE)
Auvergne (see also: Clermont-Ferrand)	<i>urbs</i>	– endpoint of a Frankish raid (760 CE)
Bourbon	<i>castrum, castellum</i>	– violently taken and destroyed/burned by the Franks (761 CE)
Bourges	<i>civitas, urbs (munitissima), caput</i>	– besieged and taken by the Franks (762 CE) – instalment of a Frankish garrison (766 CE) – Pippin erects a palace, holds an assembly and spends the winter there (767 CE) – raided by Aquitanian warlord Remistanius (767 CE)
Cahors	<i>oppidum</i>	– endpoint of a Frankish raid (763 CE)
Chalon-sur-Saône	<i>urbs, civitas</i>	– endpoint of an Aquitanian raid, suburbs ravaged (761 CE)
Champtoceaux	<i>castrum</i>	– Pippin’s wife brought there, Pippin celebrates Easter (768 CE)
Chantelle	<i>castellum</i>	– violently taken by the Franks (761 CE)
Clermont-Ferrand (see also: Auvergne)	<i>castrum, castellum</i>	– violently taken and destroyed/burned by the Franks; high number of casualties (761 CE)
Doué-la-Fontaine	<i>locus</i>	– Pippin sets up a camp, afterwards negotiations with Waiofar’s envoys (760 CE)
Escorailles	<i>castrum</i>	– acquired/taken by the Franks (767 CE)
Fronsac	<i>castrum, castellum</i>	– erected by Charlemagne, used as base of operations and for negotiations (769 CE)
Le Gévaudan	– ( <i>pagus</i> )	– taken by or submitted to the Franks (767 CE)
Gordon	<i>castrum</i>	– Franks cross the Loire River here on the way to Bourges (767 CE)
Limoges	<i>civitas, oppidum</i>	– endpoint of Frankish raid (761 CE) – demolition of fortifications by Waiofar (762/766 CE?) – subsequent restoration by Pippin and instalment of a Frankish garrison – waypoint during Frankish raid (763 CE) – violently taken by the Franks (766/767 CE) – raided by Aquitanian warlord Remistanius (767 CE)
Maily	<i>villa publica</i>	– burned down during Aquitanian raid (761 CE)
Moncontour	<i>locus</i>	– negotiations between Charlemagne and his brother Carloman regarding Aquitanian campaign (769 CE)
Montes	<i>locus</i>	– Aquitanians surrender and give prisoners to Pippin (768 CE)

**Table 1** Survey of the sites mentioned in the historiographical record about the Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine. Places outside of Aquitaine are only noted when they were directly affected by the war



Name	Denomination	Events
Narbonne	–	– Frankish garrison ambushed by Aquitanians on the way home (762/765 CE?) – waypoint during Frankish campaign/Toulouse, Albi, Rodez submitted to Pippin (767 CE)
Périgueux	<i>civitas</i>	– demolition of fortifications by Waiofar (762/766 CE?) – subsequent restoration by Pippin and instalment of a Frankish garrison – endpoint of Frankish campaign (768 CE)
Peyrusse	<i>castrum, castellum</i>	– acquired/taken by the Franks (767 CE)
Poitiers	<i>civitas</i>	– demolition of fortifications by Waiofar (762/766 CE?) – subsequent restoration by Pippin and instalment of a Frankish garrison
Rodez	–	– submitted to the Franks (767 CE)
Saintes	<i>civitas</i>	– demolition of fortifications by Waiofar (762/766 CE?) – subsequent restoration by Pippin and instalment of a Frankish garrison – prisoners are rendered here to Pippin, base during subsequent campaign (768 CE)
Thouars	<i>castrum, castellum</i>	– taken/destroyed by the Franks (762 CE)
Toulouse	<i>urbs</i>	– target of Frankish campaign, attacked/taken or submitted by contract (767 CE)
Tours	–	– target of Aquitanian raid, Frankish troops defend the city (762/765 CE?)
Turenne	<i>castrum</i>	– acquired/taken by the Franks, delivery of hostages (767 CE)
Yssandon (or Issoudun)	–	– taken and devastated by Pippin (763 CE?)

**Table 1 (cont.)** Survey of the sites mentioned in the historiographical record about the Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine. Places outside of Aquitaine are only noted when they were directly affected by the war

or more detailed descriptions of fighting.<sup>49</sup> Sometimes the opposite is implied, when for instance in the earlier version of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” *capere* is specified by adding *per placitum* (“by an assembly”), or when the Annals of Metz report for 767 CE that Pippin “acquired many fortifications ... and many *firmitates*”, a term which could mean “fortification” as well as “firm assurance” or even “contract”.<sup>50</sup> Both phrases indicate

negotiations before the take-over, and in the latter case this can be verified by the previously mentioned charter of Louis the Pious.<sup>51</sup> The comparison of sources about some other captures confirms that *capere* did not necessarily involve an open assault.<sup>52</sup> Fighting is explicitly mentioned for only one-half of the captures.

breve, 29 (*pugnando capere*); Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42. 46, (Krusch) 187. 189 (*capere bellando*).

<sup>49</sup> Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25: Toulouse is first “attacked” (*aggredi*) and then “taken” (*capere*), and some smaller fortifications are “defended” by Aquitanian forces (*defendere*), but “taken” by Pippin (*capere*). Even more detailed are the descriptions of the sieges of Bourbon and Bourges in Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42. 43, (Krusch) 187–188.

<sup>50</sup> Annales regni Francorum, a. 761, 20; Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 54–55: *In quo itinere mul-*

*tas munitiones adquisivit, castrum videlicet Scoralium, Thorinnam et Petrociam et alias quam plurimas firmitates*. The multiple meanings of *firmitas* are shown by du Cange (1883–1887), vol. 3, 509–510.

<sup>51</sup> Formulae imperiales, No. 53, 325–326.

<sup>52</sup> This is the case with Albi, Le Gévaudan and Rodez: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 54; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24; Chronicon Moissiacense, 294. Pippin obviously attacked Toulouse, and after its capture the other cities surrendered themselves.

The destruction of fortifications during or after a siege is remarkably rarely mentioned in the historiographical record. Not more than five fortifications are reported to have been destroyed, four of them being smaller fortresses.<sup>53</sup> Only once the walls of a city, Bourges, are said to have been “smashed” (the verb employed here is *frangere*) by machines during a siege, and this detail is part of a highly dubious account in the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegar.<sup>54</sup> Only once the Annals of Metz elaborate that Pippin “destroyed many fortresses and fortifications” in 762 CE before finally conquering Bourges and destroying Thouars.<sup>55</sup> Apart from the demolition of the fortifications of Bourges by “machines”, which are not specified any further in the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegar, nearly all of the destroyed fortresses seem to have been burned down,<sup>56</sup> and it suggests itself that this was the preferred method of the period to annihilate a fortification. In addition to these destructions during or directly after combat, two sources describe that Waiofar had several fortifications under his own control demolished. These particular text passages are to be discussed at length further below, within the next section.

<sup>53</sup> Bourbon: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51 (*destruere*); Annales Petaviani, a. 762, 11 (*igne cremare*); Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187 (*succendere*). – Clermont-Ferrand: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51 (*concremare igne*); Annales Petaviani, a. 761, 11 (*igne cremare*); Annales s. Amandi, a. 761, 10 (*igne cremare*); Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187 (*succendere*). – Thouars: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 762, 52 (*destruere*); Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 43, (Krusch) 188 (*succendere*). – The destruction of Argenton-sur-Creuse by Waiofar is somewhat ambiguous: the two recensions of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” use the word *destruere* (Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 766, 25; Annales regni Francorum, a. 766, 24), but it is unclear whether this happened as Waiofar was taking an enemy fortress or if he ordered the demolition of one of his own fortresses, as he is said to have done with several of his cities (to be discussed further below, within the next section).

<sup>54</sup> Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 43. 46, (Krusch) 187. 189. This account is critically interpreted further below, in the next section.

<sup>55</sup> Annales Mettenses priores, a. 762, 52: ... *destructisque castellis et munitionibus, ad ultimum Bituricam urbem munitissimam conquisivit et Toarcis castrum, quo in Anquitania firmior non erat, destruxit.*

<sup>56</sup> Only in the case of Argenton-sur-Creuse, no source mentions how the fortress was destroyed.

One of the main functions of fortifications during a military conflict was protection. This becomes clear in descriptions like that of the later recension of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals”: “The king devastated everything that he found outside the fortifications with iron and fire.”<sup>57</sup> *Vastatio*, the systematic ravaging of enemy territory, was one of the most common practices in Carolingian warfare.<sup>58</sup> Six times fortified cities are mentioned in the historiographical record as a kind of landmark to locate the raiding expeditions described,<sup>59</sup> while a smaller *locus* is mentioned only once.<sup>60</sup> Whether or not those cities were attacked during the raid is highly uncertain. The material offers examples for both: In 761 CE, an Aquitanian army raided Burgundy until Chalon-sur-Saône, and the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegar adds that its suburbs were devastated, but no attack on the *urbs* itself is reported.<sup>61</sup> Clermont-Ferrand and Limoges are each mentioned as the most advanced point of a Frankish raid, but their re-

<sup>57</sup> Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 21: *Rex tamen cuncta, quae extra munitiones invenit, ferro et igni devastans...*

<sup>58</sup> This Carolingian practice and its symbolic implications are discussed by Scharff 2002, 138–144; broader methodological reflections can be found in Halsall 2018.

<sup>59</sup> Auvergne (= Clermont-Ferrand): Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 41, (Krusch) 186, mentioned for 760 CE. – Chalons-sur-Saône: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 761, 51; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761, 19; Annales regni Francorum, a. 761, 20; Chronicon Laurissense breve, 29; Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187. – Limoges (twice): Annales Alamannici, a. 761, 28; Annales Laureshamenses, a. 761, 28; Annales Maximiniani, a. 761, 21; Annales Mosellani, a. 761, 495; Annales Nazariani, a. 761, 29; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 761. 763, 21; Annales regni Francorum, a. 761. 763, 20. 22. – Cahors: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 763, 52; Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 763, 21; Annales regni Francorum, a. 763, 22. – Agen: Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 48, (Krusch) 190. – Toulouse: Annales Alamannici, a. 767, 30; Annales Guelferbytani, a. 767, 31; Annales Mettenses priores, a. 767, 54; Annales Nazariani, a. 767, 31; Annales regni Francorum, a. 767, 24; other sources (Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 767, 25; Chronicon Moissiacense, 294) provide diverging information which will be discussed later.

<sup>60</sup> Doué-la-Fontaine: Annales Mettenses priores, a. 760, 50; Annales regni Francorum, a. 760, 18. The Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi, a. 760, 19 are less clear on the nature of Pippin’s military activity in Aquitaine.

<sup>61</sup> Ps.-Fredegar, Chronicon, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187.



spective capture is attributed to later campaigns.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard describes how the Aquitanian warlord Remistanius plundered and devastated Limoges and Bourges in 767 CE, and narrates that the Aquitanian count of Poitiers, Ammanugus, was killed with many of his men in apparently some kind of street combat around 762/765 CE after having entered Tours during a raid.<sup>63</sup>

These ambiguities – whether the taking of a fortification was violent or not, whether cities were attacked during raids or not – show the problems that arise when historians try to quantify military conflicts in post-Roman Europe. Moreover, sometimes the historical record is contradictory, with one source describing a siege that led to the capture of a fortified settlement while another source describes a nonviolent take-over after negotiations.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, general statements

about the conquest of “many cities and fortresses” add to the uncertainty in numbers.<sup>65</sup> Nonetheless, the attack on fortified settlements is – in addition to the raids – the kind of military operation most frequently mentioned in the sources, 10 to 17 times, depending on the criteria of counting.<sup>66</sup> The picture becomes even more lucid when comparing this to pitched battles and ambushes in the open landscape, of which only three or four are described during ten years of warfare.<sup>67</sup>

## Exemplary answers to general questions

In the second part of the analysis, some general issues will be addressed by looking at significant examples. The starting point will be the question

<sup>62</sup> For the conquest of Auvergne (Clermont-Ferrand): *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 762, 7; *Annales Guelferbytani*, a. 761, 29; *Annales Maximiniani*, a. 761, 21; *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 761, 51; *Annales Petaviani*, a. 761, 11; *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 761, 19, 21; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 761, 18, 20; *Annales s. Amandi*, a. 761, 10; *Chronicon Laurissense breve*, 29; *Ps-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont.* 42, 46, (Krusch) 187, 189. – For the conquest of Limoges: *Annales Alamannici*, a. 766, 28; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 767, 8; *Annales Laureshamenses*, a. 767, 30; *Annales Nazariani*, a. 766, 29; *Annales Petaviani*, a. 767, 13; *Annales Sithienses*, a. 767, 35. An exception to this are the *Annales Maximiniani*, a. 761, 21, in which Limoges is reported as having been conquered already in 761 CE.

<sup>63</sup> *Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont.* 45, 50, (Krusch) 188–189, 191. The *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 765, 53 describe that the Aquitanian count ravaged the “area of Tours” (*partes Turonum*).

<sup>64</sup> The most obvious example is Toulouse: Most of the sources state only that Pippin went there (*Annales Alamannici*, a. 767, 30; *Annales Guelferbytani*, a. 767, 31; *Annales Nazariani*, a. 767, 31; *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 767, 54; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 767, 24), while the later recension of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” clearly describes an attack (*Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 767, 25). In contrast, the *Chronicon Moissiacense*, 294 states: “As king Pippin came to Narbonne, Toulouse, Albi, and Rodez were transferred to him...” (*Pippinus rex Narbonam veniens, Tolosa, Albigis et Ruthenis illi traditae sunt ...*). This version is unique, but as the *Chronicle of Moissac* is partly based on a lost historiographical text written before 818 CE in southern Gaul (Kettemann 2000, 33–40, 485–528), the information seems plausible. Contradictory in itself is the narrative of the *Chronicon*

Laurissense breve, 29 about the campaign of 761 CE: “... he (i.e. Pippin) took fortresses and cities by combat. Bourbon, Chantelle, Clermont-Ferrand, and so many others submitted to his rule.” (... *castella et civitates pugnando cepit. Burbonem, Cantela, Clarmontem aliaque quam plurimae eius dominatui se subiciunt.*)

<sup>65</sup> For precise references see above fn. 42.

<sup>66</sup> Combat situations are explicitly and unambiguously described for: Auvergne/Clermont-Ferrand, Bourbon, Bourges (twice), Chantelle, Escorailles, Limoges (twice), Thouars, Tours, Yssandon; if Toulouse was attacked or delivered after negotiations, is unclear (see fn. 49 and 64 for references), and the same can be said about the circumstances of Waiofar’s destruction of Argenton-sur-Creuse (see fn. 53 for the discussion). Neutral terms are employed for the capture of the cities of Albi and Le Gévaudan; the fortresses of Escorailles, Peyrusse, and Turenne could be added to the fortifications “in which a very strong band of enemies defended themselves”, as the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 767, 25 state – as the only source; however, the others remain neutral, and negotiations are evident for at least Turenne and indicated for the other two (see fn. 50–51 for references).

<sup>67</sup> Two pitched battles of Frankish counts against Aquitanian raiders in the surroundings of Lyon and Narbonne are described, dated to the year 765 CE by the *Annals of Metz* (the chronology in the *Chronicle of Ps-Fredegard* remains uncertain): *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 765, 53; *Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont.* 44, 45, (Krusch) 188–189; a third one may be added if the defeat of Ammanugus (see above fn. 63) did not take place within the city of Tours but in its surroundings. The *Chronicle of Ps.-Fredegard* and the *Older Annals of Metz* give slightly different accounts here. Possibly for the year 763 CE, the only direct confrontation of Pippin and Waiofar in a pitched battle is reported by *Ps.-Fredegard, Chronicon, Cont.* 47, (Krusch) 189–190.

of what actually happened during a siege in the 760s CE. Usually, the detailed description of Pippin's siege of Bourges in 762 CE in the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard is taken as the *locus classicus* to discuss this problem. The chronicler describes at length how the Frankish forces encircled the city with a fortification and equipped it with war-machines, how they killed or wounded large parts of the garrison, breached the walls and finally took the city.<sup>68</sup> This is one of the most detailed descriptions of a post-Roman siege in Western Europe, and as such its importance can hardly be overestimated. Bernard Bachrach, for example, uses it as a key component for his theory that the Franks of the Carolingian period continued the Roman tradition of warfare without any rupture, as he saw indicated by the laborious enclosing of the whole city and the use of machines that could breach the mighty Roman walls and kill large numbers of fighters.<sup>69</sup> Yet it is dangerous to read medieval chronicles as a direct report of what happened more than 1250 years ago, especially in this case. Within the few sentences of the description, the chronicler obviously used at least two older texts. First and foremost, his account cites verbatim the description of the siege of Jericho by the people of Israel in the book of Joshua (6,1) from the Bible, and the siege of Bourges was not the first allusion to this biblical narrative within this part of the chronicle.<sup>70</sup> Secondly, the description echoes the report about the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE by the future Roman emperor Titus in the "Jewish War" of Flavius Josephus, its Latin translation and a poetic adaptation in Latin verses (Ps.-Hegesippus) being one of the most influential historiographical texts in the post-Roman west and especially

in Carolingian Europe.<sup>71</sup> The concerns about the facts presented by the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard are increased when looking at the other sources: they do not emphasize the capture of Bourges nor do they mention any special effort.<sup>72</sup> In the end, the narrative of the chronicler seems to tell more about the self-perception of the contemporary Frankish elites, stylising themselves as the New Israel and the legitimate successors of the Roman emperors at the same time.<sup>73</sup> What actually happened during a siege in the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE remains uncertain, but it was probably more resembling the images of the Golden Psalter of St. Gall (**Fig. 3**) than the relief on Trajan's Column.

The second example also deals with violence, more precisely: with the loss of human life. Usually, our sources do not give us any hint on this, but again, there is one telling exception. In 761 CE, Pippin advanced on a raid just to Clermont-Ferrand, taking several fortresses, plundering and burning the countryside on his way. In Clermont, he ravaged the city and took the citadel. What happened next is unclear, but in the end the *castrum* was burned "and a multitude of people, men as well as women and many children, perished in this fire", as the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard narrates.<sup>74</sup> The event seems to have been remarkable for the contemporaries. Several shorter annals explicate that Clermont had been burned down, even when mentioning hardly any specific events of the Aquitanian war.<sup>75</sup> The four longer

<sup>68</sup> Ps.-Fredegard, *Chronicon*, Cont. 43, (Krusch) 187: ... *Pippinus rex ... cum universa multitudine gentis Francorum Bitonicas venit, castra metatusque est undique et omnia quae in giro fuit vastavit. Circumsepsit urbem munitionem fortissimam, ita ut nullus egredi ausus fuisset aut ingredi potuisset, cum machinis et omni genere armorum, circumdedit ea vallo. Multus vulneratis plurisque interfectis fractisque muris, cepit urbem et restituit eam dicioni sue iure proelii...*

<sup>69</sup> Bachrach 2001, 228–239, followed by Petersen 2013, 248–249. 730–731.

<sup>70</sup> Bayard 2013, 310. The other instances are the sieges of Narbonne, Avignon and Pavia: Ps.-Fredegard, *Chronicon*, Cont. 20. 38, (Krusch) 177. 185. It is also possible that the chronicler refers to the Bible only indirectly by citing the late-Roman military handbook of Vegetius.

<sup>71</sup> The Carolingian reception of Josephus is discussed by Schreckenberg 1972, 110. 112–118. 120. 122; 1977, 32–37; Pollard 2015; 2018. All in all, the Latin versions of the text are under-researched.

<sup>72</sup> *Annales Alamannici*, a. 762, 28; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 762, 7; *Annales Guelferbytani*, a. 762, 29; *Annales Laureshamenses*, a. 762, 28; *Annales Maximiniani*, a. 762, 21; *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 762, 52; *Annales Mosellani*, a. 762, 496; *Annales Nazariani*, a. 762, 29; *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 762, 21; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 762, 20; *Chronicon Laurissense breve*, 29. In *Annales s. Amandi*, a. 762, 10, *Annales Sithienses*, 35, and the *Chronicon Moissiacense*, 294 the capture of Bourges is not even mentioned.

<sup>73</sup> As stated already by Bayard 2013, 310. For the Franks as the New Israel, see Garrison 2000.

<sup>74</sup> Ps.-Fredegard, *Chronicon*, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187: ... *et multitudinem hominum, tam virorum quam feminarum vel infantum plurimi, in ipso incendio cremaverunt.*

<sup>75</sup> *Annales Maximiniani*, a. 761, 21; *Annales Pataviani*, a. 761, 11; *Annales s. Amandi*, a. 761, 10.





**Fig. 3** Abbey Library of St. Gall, Cod. Sang. 22, p. 141 – Golden Psalter (*Psalterium aureum*) of St. Gall, ca. 880/900 CE. The picture illustrates Ps. 59 and shows the sack of the city of Edom by the Israelites and its surrender to Joab (<https://www.e-codices.ch/en/list/one/csg/0022>, last viewed 21 June 2019)

texts – all of them produced by authors close to the king, as already stated – are widely divergent in their dealing with the matter. Both recensions of the so-called “Royal Frankish Annals” state only shortly that Pippin took the fortress by combat, but the burning or any casualties are not mentioned at all.<sup>76</sup> The Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegar integrates the incident into a narrative of Pippin’s strategy to bring the Aquitanians to their knees by excessive cruelty, following his rightful wrath,

<sup>76</sup> *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 761, 19. 21; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 761, 20.

in retaliation to their attacks on Frankish territory and their breaching of agreements.<sup>77</sup> The Annals of Metz exculpate the king by telling that his warriors burned Clermont against his will, carried away by their bloodlust.<sup>78</sup> It can be deduced from these varying accounts that the bloodshed at

<sup>77</sup> *Ps.-Fedegar, Chronicon*, Cont. 42, (Krusch) 187 for Pippin’s *ira*.

<sup>78</sup> *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 761, 51: *Peragrataque Aquitania usque Clarum-montem castrum pervenit, quod non sua voluntate, sed bellatorum vi iniecto concrematum est igne.*

Clermont was extraordinary even in times of war, and that it was a moral problem that needed to be justified, pinned on someone else or concealed.<sup>79</sup>

The last example concerns the ideology of rulership. One aspect of fortifications which was also present in the conquest of Aquitaine was their construction. For the year 766 CE, the Annals of Metz report that the Aquitanian ruler Waiofar ordered the dismantling of the strongest fortifications of his cities and fortresses, since he was convinced that none of them could resist Pippin's attack.<sup>80</sup> The Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegar even gives a list of five such *civitates* and adds that also the fortifications of "the remaining many *civitates* and *castella*" were demolished.<sup>81</sup> Both sources agree that Pippin rebuilt these fortifications later. It is impossible to decide whether this account has a factual base or not, or to what extent the fortifications were demolished,<sup>82</sup> but it can be seen that this incident is not unique in the narratives about the conquest of Aquitaine. After having breached the walls of Bourges in 762 CE, the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegar states that Pippin ordered the ramparts to be rebuilt;<sup>83</sup> for the aforementioned year 766 CE, four sources report that Pippin re-erected the fortress of Argenton-sur-Creuse near Bourges which had been destroyed by Waiofar

before;<sup>84</sup> and in 769 CE, the principle action of Charlemagne to suppress the Aquitanian rebellion is said to have been the construction of a fortress, Fronsac, where he stayed with his army and coordinated his diplomatic efforts.<sup>85</sup> The message is clear: the Frankish king works for the common good of the Aquitanians by building or repairing fortifications, as did the Roman emperors, while Waiofar does harm to his subjects by leaving them unprotected.<sup>86</sup>

## Results and perspectives

To sum up briefly: In the historiographical record about the Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine from 760 to 769 CE, fortified settlements were described as the focal points of armed conflict, as most of the events during the war were connected with them. They protected the populace from frequent raiding; they were taken either by force or by contract; they were destroyed and rebuilt, and their garrisons helped to control the surrounding territory; they served as meeting points

<sup>79</sup> The general issue of justifying Frankish violence during the Aquitanian campaigns in the historiographical record is addressed by Bayard 2013, 311–313. Killing as a general moral problem, even during a *bellum iustum* ("rightful war"), is discussed for the Carolingian period by Föller 2019.

<sup>80</sup> *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 766, 54: *Cernens Waifaricus, quod nulla civitas nec ulla munitio Pippino rege et Francis resistere potuisset, civitates quas habuit munitissimas in Aquitania destruere iussit.*

<sup>81</sup> Ps.-Fredegar, *Chronicon*, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189; the cities listed there: Poitiers, Limoges, Saintes, Périgueux, Angoulême. The chronology here is problematic, because the chapter describing the demolition is followed by a chapter about a campaign which could be dated most probably to 763 CE, suggesting that the demolition took place in 762 CE, whereas in the *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 766, 54, it is explicitly dated to 766 CE.

<sup>82</sup> The confrontation of the textual sources with the results of archaeological excavations, as discussed by Bayard 2013, 305–307 with detailed references for the example of Périgueux, has proven difficult due to the problem of dating the destructions.

<sup>83</sup> Ps.-Fredegar, *Chronicon*, Cont. 43, (Krusch) 188.

<sup>84</sup> *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 766, 25; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 766, 24; *Annales s. Amandi*, a. 766, 10; Ps.-Fredegar, *Chronicon*, Cont. 46, (Krusch) 189. The *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 766, 54 do not explicitly mention Argenton-sur-Creuse, but it could possibly be one of the anonymous *civitates et castella* rebuilt by Pippin.

<sup>85</sup> *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 769, 56; *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi*, a. 769, 29. 31; *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 769, 30. For the most extensive discussion on the subject see Bachrach 2013, 118–120 with further references to previous research.

<sup>86</sup> The *locus classicus* for this aspect of the Carolingian ideology of rulership is Einhard, *Vita Karoli magni* XVII, 20–21, where he describes the building activity of Charlemagne. Despite an abundance of studies on Carolingian architecture (overviews are provided by Schutz 2004, 323–368 and Ciotta 2010), its use as "symbolic language of authority" is mostly underestimated, as becomes clear when consulting works like Garipzanov 2008. An exception to this are the palaces of Charlemagne, especially Aachen, for which subtle political interpretations are sketched by Fried 2013b and Bredekamp 2014, for example. As indicated above, fortifications are mostly excluded from studies on Carolingian architecture, and therefore, Bayard 2013, 307 stresses that the erection of the fortifications in Aquitaine was meant "to symbolize the domination of the kings within this area", but could not elaborate on this point any further.



for assembling larger bodies of troops; they were used as secure bases for military operations and diplomatic initiatives alike; they also were means of symbolic communication, demonstrating effective rule by their construction or restoration. Even two of the three or four pitched battles that were fought during the war had a link to fortifications:<sup>87</sup> the direct confrontation between Pippin's and Waiofar's armies in 763 CE happened, according to the Chronicle of Pseudo-Fredegard, as the Franks threatened vital parts of the Aquitanian economy and had taken and devastated Yssandon, the centre of Aquitanian viticulture;<sup>88</sup> furthermore, the Aquitanian ambush against the garrison of Narbonne (762/765 CE) was clearly an attempt to break Frankish control over the city without putting up a siege.<sup>89</sup>

It has to be emphasized that these results do not represent the reality of 8<sup>th</sup>-century warfare as such, but rather its reflection in historiographical narrative. The accounts are modelled according to literary traditions and the rules of genre, as is known from previous research and shown here using the example of the capture of Bourges in 762 CE, and without any doubt they are politically biased in favour of the Franks and their king Pippin. Nonetheless, these accounts are witness to contemporary attitudes and conceptions concerning warfare and fortifications, and apart from archaeological bonanzas with accurate dating and rich evidence, this is the closest the modern historian can get to the realities of warfare in post-Roman Europe. The most striking result of this analysis is the low frequency with which actual combat is described. Despite the multiple military functions of fortifications and their importance in the texts

as in geo-strategical patterns, acts of violence are reported only for roughly one-third of the sites which the sources mention as part of the war; not more than five of them are noted to have suffered severe damage. These numbers might not be very resilient when understood as precise data, as was already conceded above, but they can give us a hint on the extent of violence that Frankish historiographers of the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE deemed normal for a war like this. The analysis of how the massacre of Clermont-Ferrand in 761 CE was coped with in the texts reinforces the quantitative argument with a qualitative one. Moreover, the ambiguity of the central terms *capere*, *acquirere*, and *conquirere*, which could denote a violent as well as a non-violent capture of a fortified settlement, allows the conclusion that the historiographers did not consider the victorious battle, but rather the successful take-over as such essential for military prowess. This fits to the notion of a specific Carolingian heroism, which was by now elicited from other sources. It glorified military success as proof for God's grace, while bravery in itself – e.g. in defeat or shown by persons of doubtful moral standing – is not valued as heroic, this in stark contrast to contemporaneous concepts of heroism in Viking Age Scandinavia and Anglo-Saxon England or the later ideology of chivalry.<sup>90</sup>

In the end, it is due to return to the general theme of the conference, the materialisation of conflicts, and to the question of what the archaeology of Bronze Age Europe can gain from historical research on the Carolingian world. From what was said in this study, it is evident from the historiographical record of the Aquitanian war in the 760s CE that pre-modern fortifications served multiple military functions. Even when being involved into an armed conflict in which they were focal points of military activity, acts of violence at the sites themselves were only a part of this military activity, and perhaps not the most considerable one. The researcher who reconstructs cultures of conflict in prehistorical Europe by analysing fortifications is well advised to bear in mind that the absence of traces of combat does not necessarily indicate a peaceful environment, for quite a number of fortified settlements in Aquitaine seem to have been taken by Pippin and the Franks without a single arrow shot or any blood spilled.

<sup>87</sup> See fn. 67 for full references.

<sup>88</sup> Ps.-Fredegard, *Chronicon*, Cont. 47, (Krusch) 189, (Wallace-Hadrill) 115 describes Pippin's attack on Yssandon and its surroundings and continues: "At this point Waiofar came to meet King Pippin with a big army..." (*Dum haec ageretur, Waiofarius cum exercitu magno ... super praedicto rege veniens...*).

<sup>89</sup> Ps.-Fredegard, *Chronicon*, Cont. 44, (Krusch) 188, (Wallace-Hadrill) 113 tells about Waiofar's orders: "He (i.e. Waiofar) sent his cousin, Count Mantio, with other counts to Narbonne with the object of capturing and killing the garrison..." (*... nam Mantione comite, consubtrino suo, partibus Narbone cum reliquis comitibus transmisit, ut custodias... capere aut interficere eos potuissent*). The *Annales Mettenses priores*, a. 765, 53 which describe the battle as being part of *multa certamina* ("many encounters") do not give a localization.

<sup>90</sup> Stone 2011, 94–100 for a short sketch; a more thorough study on this subject is still lacking.



If we disengage ourselves from a neo-evolutionist imagination of Bronze Age Europe as being more archaic and less sophisticated than later periods and recognize the complexity and plurality of its societies and cultures, then it is self-evident that this notion also should be applied to its cultures of war and violence.<sup>91</sup> We could assume that a war in Bronze Age Europe was as varied in shape and form as the Carolingian conquest of Aquitaine, being a dynamic jumble of raiding expeditions, sieges, ambushes, pitched battles, negotiations and political intrigue of all sorts, destructions and renovations, organizational activities, rituals and less standardised performances, and the massive dislocation of people as garrisons, refugees, prisoners or hostages, and an intensified circulation of goods. Therefore, in the face of the evidence presented here, it seems to be one of the central challenges to future prehistoric conflict research to identify material evidence that hints at military activity beyond open combat. If successful, the evidence gained could be able to transform the extant grand narratives about war and violence and with them our self-perception in general.

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**Daniel Föller, Taking Fortresses in Aquitaine. The Semantics of Conflict in the Historiographical Record of the Carolingian Conquest, 760–769 CE**

The LOEWE-project “Prehistoric Conflict Research” is determined in several new ways to interpret the archaeological evidence of Bronze Age fortifications. One way is the comparison with other non-modern cultures of conflict and their use of fortifications. In this paper, the conquest of Aquitaine by the Carolingian rulers of the Franks (760–769 CE) is taken as such an example. By analysing the (near-)contemporary historiographical record, the military role of fortifications in post-Roman warfare is discussed. It turns out that in the historiographers’ view, fortified settlements were focal points of military activity, and that combat occurred around them far more often than in the open field. Nonetheless, warfare in the surroundings of fortifications signified more than only sieges: the historiographical sources show a great variety of events connected to them as part of the war. Furthermore, a semantic inquiry of the material shows a special notion in texts concerning the “capture” of fortified settlements. This could be achieved not only by force, but also with diplomatic means, and the historiographers valued success higher than bravery. Moreover, the amount of violence seems to have been limited, as is indicated by the small number of destroyed fortifications and by the debates ensuing about one particular massacre (Clermont-Ferrand in 761 CE), which obviously was at odds with contemporary ideas about appropriate warfare. These results imply that archaeological research on conflict would benefit greatly from broadening its scope beyond actual battle events, in order to disclose the conflicts of Bronze Age Europe in all their complexity.

**Daniel Föller, Burgen nehmen in Aquitanien: Semantiken des Konflikts in der Historiographie zur karolingischen Eroberung, 760–769 u. Z.**

Das LOEWE-Projekt „Prähistorische Konfliktforschung“ hat sich mehreren neuen Wegen verschrieben, die archäologischen Befunde zu bronzezeitlichen Befestigungsanlagen zu deuten. Einer von ihnen ist der Vergleich mit anderen nichtmodernen Konfliktkulturen und deren Gebrauch von Befestigungen. In diesem Aufsatz wird die Eroberung Aquitaniens durch die karolingischen Frankenkönige (760–769 u. Z.) als ein solches Beispiel dienen. Anhand der zeitgenössischen oder zeitnahen Historiographie wird die Rolle von Befestigungen in der Kriegskultur des poströmischen Europa untersucht. Es zeigt sich, dass nach Ansicht der Geschichtsschreiber befestigte Siedlungen die Kristallisationspunkte militärischer Aktivität waren, in deren Umfeld um ein Vielfaches häufiger Kampfhandlungen stattfanden als im offenen Gelände. Nichtsdestotrotz bestand der Krieg im Umfeld dieser Anlagen nicht nur aus Belagerungen, vielmehr zeigen die Quellen eine große Bandbreite verschiedenster Handlungen, die mit ihnen verbunden waren und als Teil des Krieges gesehen wurden. Darüber hinaus ergab eine semantische Analyse, dass in den Texten eine spezielle Auffassung von der „Eroberung“ befestigter Siedlungen vorherrschte, die nicht nur durch Gewalt, sondern auch durch Diplomatie gewonnen werden konnten – und die Geschichtsschreiber hielten den Erfolg als solchen für wichtiger als Tapferkeit im Kampf. Zudem scheint der Umfang der Gewalt begrenzt gewesen zu sein, wie aus der geringen Anzahl zerstörter Befestigungsanlagen und einer Debatte um ein Massaker (Clermont-Ferrand, 761 u. Z.) hervorgeht, das offenbar im Widerspruch zu den zeitgenössischen Vorstellungen angemessener Kriegsführung stand. Diese Ergebnisse legen nahe, dass die archäologische Konfliktforschung sehr davon profitieren könnte, ihren Fokus auf Befundkomplexe jenseits konkreter Kampfhandlungen zu erweitern, und damit die ganze Komplexität der Konflikte im bronzezeitlichen Europa zu enthüllen.