In 1193 the rulers of Germany and England met for the first time in history. Their meeting offers an appropriate subject for a talk in memory of Tim Reuter, whose death in 2002 cut sadly short the life and career of the scholar who, choosing to work in both England and Germany, did more than any other twentieth-century English medieval historian to bridge the divides between Anglophone and German scholarship. Or does it? After all, that first meeting was hardly a propitious one. The king of England, Richard I, returning from crusade, had been seized by the duke of Austria near Vienna in December 1192 and then handed over to Emperor Henry VI. A contemporary illustration of the meeting shows Richard lying on the ground, kissing the emperor’s feet in a ceremony of submission. Whether or not he had to endure quite so humiliating a ceremony, there is no doubt that he was subsequently kept a prisoner in Germany for more than a year. Not until February 1194, when he did

This article is based on a lecture given at the GHIL on 15 Feb. 2007 in memory of Tim Reuter.

homage to Henry and a king’s ransom had been paid, was he released. The German chronicler, Otto of St Blasien, wrote: ‘I prefer not to give the exact weight [of gold and silver] that he paid because if I did, it would be thought incredible and I would be accused of lying’. Hardly surprising that it would be almost 150 years before another king of England, Edward III in 1338, visited Germany.

On the other hand, the subject of Richard I in Germany is one which can readily be related to two of Tim’s own principal fields of interest: in the first place, political structures and the conventions which shaped political action, the rules of the game (in Gerd Althoff’s phrase, ‘die Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter’); in the second place, Tim’s hope that we English might become more German. Rather than repeat what he called ‘one of the standard tropes of English medievalists: narrative sources unreliable, back to the archives’, we should stop treating ‘literary texts as low-grade archives which can be mined for “facts”’, and instead follow our Continental colleagues in paying more attention to what such sources can tell us about the attitudes and political values of the time. In this case, by paying close attention to what contemporary and near-contemporary narrative sources, chiefly German and English but also Italian and French, have to say about Richard’s captivity—and to what they do not say—we may be able to answer some fairly precisely formulated questions about the rules of the game. Did Duke Leopold VI of Austria and Henry VI play within the rules? What was the place of notions of honour within those rules? Whose rules were they anyway?

As Tim himself pointed out in his inaugural lecture when appointed to the chair of medieval history at Southampton University, the events of the 1190s used to loom large in traditional German

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4 ‘Richard’s imprisonment had much in common with the modern kidnap-ping of wealthy businessmen to raise money.’ Jean Dunbabin, Captivity and Imprisonment in Medieval Europe 1000–1300 (Basingstoke, 2002), 5.

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historiography. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ‘the Germans’ imagined past was one in which their rulers had exercised imperial hegemony over Europe’. In this view the dramatic events of 1194—when the king of England did homage and Henry VI conquered Sicily—marked the apex of the medieval empire; the succession dispute between Staufer and Welf after Henry’s death in 1197 came to be seen as the turning point from which the Reich never recovered. As late as 1986, when the English translation of Horst Fuhrmann’s *Deutschland im hohen Mittelalter* was published, the early death of Henry VI was seen as a catastrophe for Germany. In all these events, not just in his performance of homage, Richard was deeply involved. The conquest of Sicily was paid for by the money sent to Germany to secure his ransom. Hence the opinion expressed by Willi Radczun in a book published in 1933: ‘Die Zeit Heinrichs VI. bedeutet in der Geschichte der Beziehungen der beiden Staaten den Gipfelpunkt deutscher Überlegenheit über England’ (In the history or relations between the two states, the period of Henry VI represents the peak of German superiority over England). The choice of the Welf, Richard’s nephew, Otto of Brunswick, as Otto IV after Henry VI’s death was promoted and financed by Richard. In Radczun’s words: ‘Damit war England an der Schwächung und Zerschlagung der staufischen Macht und somit am Niedergang des Kaisertums und der Machtstellung Deutschlands in Europa unmittelbar beteiligt’ (In this way England was directly involved in weakening and destroying the power of the Staufer, and thus in the decline of the empire and Germany’s position of power in Europe).  

8 Horst Fuhrmann, *Germany in the High Middle Ages c.1050–c.1200*, trans. Timothy Reuter (Cambridge, 1986), 186. At the time Fuhrmann was president of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica, where Tim worked for a dozen years and which he described as ‘the heart of the German medieval tradition’. Reuter, *Medieval Polities*, 4, 14–15.
9 Radczun felt that the opinions held by Englishmen from the twelfth century onwards amounted to ‘eine[r] Unterschätzung deutschen Wesens’, which had lasted until his own day. He concluded by observing that whether the English would come to a new and better perception of Germans only time would tell. Willi Radczun, *Das englische Urteil über die Deutschen bis zur Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1933), 11–12, 115. I am grateful to Karsten Plöger for drawing my attention to this book.
In these circumstances it is not surprising that Richard’s time in Germany has been relatively intensively studied by German historians. The 700th anniversary of his capture and imprisonment, coming as it did not much more than twenty years after the creation of a new Reich in 1871, was the occasion for no fewer than three learned studies. Since then German scholars have produced a doctoral dissertation, Günther Bullinger’s ‘König Richard Löwenherz und Kaiser Heinrich VI’, and a number of articles, most recently one by Knut Görich. By contrast there has been, so far as I know, only one article by a British historian. Of the three articles by British scholars on the aftermath of the captivity, two were written in German. Richard’s early death in 1199 has never been regarded as a ‘tragedy for


11 Günther Bullinger, dissertation (University of Tübingen, 1947). I am very grateful to Hans Reither for making a copy of this typewritten thesis available to me.


Richard I in Germany

England’. As Tim pointed out, the grand narrative of England, its meta-history, was that of ‘the continuous development of a state that is supposed to have been especially advanced, that is, centralised from the tenth century onwards’. From this point of view Richard was seen as a king who neglected his duty, and what happened to him in Germany an insignificant sideshow. And this is true of local as well as of national history. There is no place in England which makes much of its connections with ‘the Lionheart’. In modern Austria and Germany there are small towns which do: Dürnstein on the Danube and Annweiler in the Pfalz.

Despite the thoroughness with which this episode has been investigated by German scholars, there still remains more that can be said. Tim coined the term ‘assembly politics’ to encapsulate an interpretation of the political life of medieval western Europe before c.1200 as being structured around assemblies, those occasions when the ruler had in his presence a substantial number of people who were not permanent members of his entourage. In this period, he wrote, the ‘public’, in Jürgen Habermas’s sense of the word, ‘did not, except perhaps at moments of great crisis and heightened tension, have a permanent


17 At Annweiler in 1993 they celebrated the 800th anniversary of his imprisonment by having his heart brought from Rouen, and displayed. Similarly in
existence: it came into being at assemblies and dissolved again when they ended’. In his fine essay on the Becket dispute he observed that high-profile conflicts could ‘only be ended face to face, and before a public’. In public arenas pieces of political theatre were staged in which ‘symbolically loaded actions’ were performed; the actors spoke in the language which Tim christened ‘Symbolic’. The appropriate stage for ‘the symbolic expression of conflict, community, subordination and reconciliation in twelfth-century political theatre’ was ‘the royally summoned assembly, the Hoftag or great court Council’. In the story of Richard’s captivity there were four such assemblies: the first at Regensburg in January 1193; the second at Speyer in March 1193; the third at Worms in June 1193; and the fourth at Mainz in February 1194, when Richard was finally set free.

But before I come on to them there is another piece of theatre to be considered, one acted out on a very different stage in Erdberg, then a suburb of Vienna: the capture itself. If the theatre at the great assemblies was meant to have been carefully prepared beforehand, what took place here was much more of a happening, a partly improvised performance. But here, too, the event was staged in the sense that when they wrote about it, contemporary chroniclers set the scene with care, knowing what message they wanted to get across to their different audiences. The four main German accounts of the arrest, three of them written in the 1190s, all insist on the demeaning circumstances in which Richard was captured. These authors were following the official line, since the emperor himself, writing to

1999, the 800th anniversary of his death was commemorated by the issue of a postage stamp by the French government, but not the British.


19 Ibid. 169–70, 182–6.


21 Contrast the absence of comment on the circumstances of the capture in the Austrian annals of Melk, Admont, and Kremsmünster, MGH SS 9, 506, 548, 587.
Philip Augustus, king of France, had said that Richard had been captured in a *domus despecta* (a contemptible house). According to the Marbach annals, this section of which seems to have been composed by an author quite close to Henry’s court, Richard was taken ‘in a little hut’. According to the annals of Magnus of Reichersberg (an Augustinian house in the diocese of Passau), ‘he was found hiding in a poor man’s hovel, in the peasant’s kitchen, preparing food for himself and his few companions’. According to the narrative which I shall refer to as Ansbert, since its account of events between November 1190 and 1197 was composed by an Austrian cleric whose name may have been Ansbert, he was found and seized *in vili hospicio*. This account is especially valuable for setting out the duke of Austria’s point of view. The king of England was humiliated, but it was exactly what he deserved, for on crusade he had humiliated the duke. His arrest was a judgement of God and Leopold treated him better than he deserved.

The longest German account, by Otto of St Blasien, was written some fifteen years later. The king of England knew that at the siege of Acre he had wronged Duke Leopold, so he decided to travel secretly through Austria. He hoped to escape recognition by helping out in the kitchen, turning the spit with his own hand, but forgetting to remove an expensive ring. He was recognized by a member of Leopold’s household who hastened to tell the duke, by chance then in Vienna. Leopold was highly amused to find the king holding a roast chicken, took him prisoner, and by placing him in close con-

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23. *Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen*, 186. The author was possibly one of Henry’s chaplains, Friedrich, provost of St Thomas’s, Strasburg.


finement, paid him back as he deserved (digna recompensatione reddens ei, quod meruit). Although many criticized the duke for this, regarding it as sacrilegious treatment of a pilgrim to the Holy Sepulchre, their condemnation was, Otto concluded drily, of little use to the captured king. Of these four accounts, Otto’s is the only one to refer to Richard as a pilgrim, but in his narrative it takes second place behind the amusing anecdote of the hapless king in the kitchen. It all made for a good story, one that was widely known. It was alluded to in the most overtly pro-imperial of all narratives, the Liber ad honorem augusti, a long Latin poem composed between 1195 and 1197, telling the story of events in south Italy and Sicily from 1189 to 1194. Its author, Peter of Eboli (near Salerno), in offering his work to Henry VI, described himself ‘as the loyal servant of the emperor’. His verses described how Richard disguised himself as a shabbily dressed kitchen servant doing menial work in the vain hope of escaping the emperor’s all-seeing eyes. From Peter of Eboli the story found its way into William the Breton’s epic poem in praise of Philip Augustus, the Philippidos.

Vivid though the story of the king in the kitchen was, we hear nothing at all about it from the four English authors writing in the 1190s who had something to say about the circumstances in which

26 Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 110–12.
27 A continuator of the Reichersberg annals, writing after the death of Magnus in 1195, observed that one of the reasons for the quarrel between Pope Celestine and Henry VI was the capture of the king of England on pilgrimage. Chronicon Magni, Continuatio, 523.
28 e.g. by Sicard of Cremona. See Salimbene de Adam, Cronica, ed. G. Scalia (Bari, 1966), 26; ‘ad ignem sedens et gallinam assans’, Annales Stadenses, MGH SS, 16, 352.
31 William the Breton, Philippidos, bk IV, ll. 343–4, borrowing verbatim the last of the three lines quoted in the previous note. H. F. Delaborde (ed.), Œuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton, 2 vols. (Société de l’histoire de France; Paris, 1882–5).
Richard was captured: Roger of Howden, Ralph of Coggeshall, William of Newburgh, and Gervase of Canterbury. They portrayed him as disguised either as a merchant on pilgrimage, or as a Templar. A fifth German account, that written by Arnold of Lübeck, perhaps as late as 1210, also had Richard and his followers dressed as Templars travelling *peregrino more*. In the light of Arnold’s sympathy for Henry the Lion and Otto IV, it is hardly surprising that he should have preferred to represent their kinsman in the honourable guise of a pilgrim rather than in the demeaning disguise of a kitchen hand. Equally, given how much importance he attached to pilgrimages to the Holy Land, it seems reasonable to interpret his comment on Richard’s captivity—‘Thus on account of our sins the Holy Land has still not been liberated’—as criticism of duke and emperor. Looked at in this light, Peter of Eboli’s work is intriguing. In the one surviving manuscript, apparently a copy on which the author himself had worked, it is lavishly illustrated. Whereas the Latin text described Richard as a badly dressed kitchen servant, the three images on the facing page all portrayed him as a pilgrim, and it was as a crowned pilgrim that he kissed the emperor’s feet.

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35 Kölzer and Stähli, *Petrus de Ebulo*, 171. Stähli noted that a piece of parchment had been cut from the top right hand corner of this page. ‘Es sollte wohl als Blattweiser dienen und auf die Darstellung des beliebten Held aufmerksam machen’, ibid. 252. Even if so, there is no telling when the cut was made.
If this meant that the message of the *Liber ad honorem Augusti* is somewhat ambiguous, the same cannot be said of the depiction of Richard’s capture by English chroniclers. All agree that he was detected only because his servant at the market was questioned under torture, and revealed his hiding-place. When arrested, he reached for his sword, not for a kitchen implement. According to Coggeshall, the king, seeing he was in no position to resist so many barbarians (*apud tot barbaros*), insisted on surrendering to the duke alone. When the duke arrived, he went to meet him and proffered his sword. This was a warrior’s honourable surrender. But—and this I want to emphasize—despite this obvious attempt to rescue their king’s reputation and honour, the English authors all recognized that the duke had a grievance, and understood that he would seek redress.

It was a good story, of a proud king brought low. The siege of Acre and the Third Crusade had been spell-binding events. There, in the words of a contemporary Templar, ‘armies from Asia and Africa fought against Christian Europe, two parts of the world against the third part.’ After the death of Frederick Barbarossa and the shameful departure of King Philip of France, Richard was left as the com-


38 ‘Richardus qui gloria omnes antieire voluit et omnium indignationem meruit’, Chrout (ed.), *Historia de expeditione*, 101; ‘Richardus rex Anglicus devicta Akkaron et aliiis triumphi titulis elatus . . . quia non Deo sed suis viribus queque circa se fortunata ascrisit’, *Continuatio Cremifanensis*, MGH SS 9, 548.

manding figure on the Christian side. He remains the only king of England who personally played a leading role on the world historical stage. In this intercontinental war his opponent was one of the greatest of all Muslim leaders, Saladin, a man much admired by his Christian enemies, just as Richard’s abilities were admired by his Muslim enemies. In one song, Walther von der Vogelweide paired Richard and Saladin together as model rulers. A contemporary Londoner called Richard stupor mundi (the wonder of the world). Although it has always been said that Frederick II of Hohenstaufen was the ruler to whom that label was applied it had, in fact, been used of Richard some forty years earlier—and of Pope Innocent III a few years earlier still. Now the king had been taken prisoner in distinctly unregal circumstances. The news of the capture and humiliation of so great a man travelled fast through neighbouring realms.

Richard was captured on 21 December 1192. A week later Henry VI wrote to King Philip of France to tell him the glad tidings.

Because our imperial majesty has no doubt that your royal highness will take pleasure in all of those providences of God


44 Chroust (ed.), Historia de expeditione, 105.
which exalt us and our empire, we have thought it proper to inform you of what happened to Richard, king of England, the enemy of our empire and the disturber of your kingdom. . . . His ship was driven by winds onto the Istrian coast and there it was wrecked at a place between Aquileia and Venice. By God’s will he and a few others escaped. A loyal subject of ours, Count Meinhard of Görz . . . calling to mind the treason, treachery and mischief of which Richard had been guilty in the Holy Land, went to arrest him. . . . [H]e escaped . . . but the roads were watched and guarded, and our dearly beloved cousin, Leopold duke of Austria, captured the king in a despicable house near Vienna. He is now in our power. We know that this news will bring you great happiness. 45

For Henry to write on 28 December that Richard ‘is now in our power’ implies that he thought the outcome of the assembly due to meet in Regensburg in January 1193 had already been fixed. As Gerd Althoff, Tim Reuter, and others have persuasively argued, this is what was expected of assemblies. We are dealing ‘with polities which collectively feared and shunned open expression of conflict or disagreement. . . . Public gatherings carried particular risks in a political culture in which rank and honour were strongly stressed. People looked for a carefully planned staging of events . . . in which the outcome sought could if possible be agreed beforehand with all participants.’46 No different, then, from party and international conferences these days. But at Regensburg, the first of my four assemblies, this was not the case.47 Richard was taken to Regensburg by the duke of Austria, but then not handed over to the emperor, as Henry had evidently anticipated. Instead Leopold took him back east again.

45 Howden, Chronica, iii. 195–6.
46 Reuter, Medieval Polities, 184, 203.
47 Early in December a curia generalis had been summoned for 6 Jan. to confirm a peace between the duke of Austria and counts of Ortenburg; this it did. ‘Ibi pax confirmata est inter principes ante inter se dissidentes’, Chronicon Magni, 519–20. Documents in Henry VI’s name were issued at Regensburg from 10 to 13 Jan., then again on 27–28 Jan. G. Baaken and Johann Friedrich Böhmer (eds.), Regesta Imperii: Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Heinrich VI. 1165 (1190)–1197 (Cologne, 1972–9), nos. 272–5, 277–8.
According to Ansbert, 'the emperor listened to evil counsellors and was minded to use violence in order to get his hands on Richard'. Henry may have seen Richard at Regensburg; but I do not think that in these circumstances we can talk of a meeting between them. It took another month or so of negotiations between Henry and Leopold before they came to terms. Ansbert inserted into his chronicle the text of the treaty they agreed on 14 February, the principal point of which was that they would share 50–50 the ransom they set at 100,000 marks. Richard was then handed over to the emperor, at Speyer, according to Ansbert, at about Easter (28 March) according to both Magnus and Ansbert.

But at this point, if we follow the German sources, Richard disappears almost completely from view and does not re-emerge until his release in February 1194. For example, the Marbach annalist, after telling the story of how Richard came to be captured by Leopold, simply said that 'he was handed over to the emperor, held captive for more than a year, until in return for 150,000 marks he obtained the freedom of going home'. In other words German sources say nothing at all about what happened at the Hoftag at Speyer in March 1193, or at the assembly at Worms in June. Indeed, we might be tempted to think that those two assemblies were just the inventions of historians writing in England, were it not for the survival of imperial charters.
Article

issued there, and their lists of witnesses. Secondly, German sources
tell us virtually nothing about where and in what circumstances
Richard was held prisoner. Thirdly, they contain not one word
about the subsequent negotiations over the ransom, or about the con-
tacts between Henry VI and the king of France in which the latter
tried to persuade Henry to keep Richard in prison for longer, or to
send Richard to him. Given the way in which Henry VI was able to
exploit the capture of Richard I in order to finance his triumphant,
and in the short run very successful, invasion of the kingdom of
Sicily, why did contemporary German narratives remain so silent
about these matters?

For the events of the assemblies at Speyer and Worms we have to
go to historians writing outside Germany, above all, to four English
historians who in their different ways were remarkably well
informed, and all of them writing in the 1190s: Roger of Howden,
Ralph of Coggeshall, Ralph of Diceto, and William of Newburgh. Roger
of Howden was the most widely travelled of all medieval
English historians; he had been a king’s clerk since the 1170s, went on
crusade in 1190–1, and was an assiduous collector of documents,
many of which we possess only because he inserted a copy into his
chronicles, both the Gesta Henrici Secundi et Ricardi once attributed to
Benedict of Peterborough, and the Chronica. The Cistercian Ralph of

53 Henry VI was at Speyer on 23 and 28–29 March, at Worms on 28–29 June,
54 Otto of St Blasien, writing after both Henry and Richard were dead, is the
only important German chronicler to say anything at all about what hap-
pened to Richard between Easter 1193 and February 1194. He noted that
Henry had Richard sent in chains to Worms and that many great men from
the king of England’s land came to visit him. Chronik Ottos und Marbacher An-
nalen, 110–12. According to a Salzburg annalist, for a whole year the emper-
or kept Richard vinctum (but this might mean little more than ‘in custody’),
MGH SS 13, 240.
55 Gervase of Canterbury must also have been well-informed about Richard
in Germany, but generally chose to concentrate on the affairs of the church
of Canterbury.
56 See John Gillingham, ‘The Travels of Roger of Howden’, Anglo-Norman
Studies, 20 (1998), 151–69, reprinted (and revised) in id., The English in the
Twelfth Century (Woodbridge, 2000), 61–91; id., ‘Writing the Biography of
Roger of Howden, King’s Clerk and Chronicler’, in David Bates, Julia Crick,
Coggeshall, who completed this part of his chronicle in 1195, claimed to have had one of Richard’s chaplains, Anselm, as an informant.57 Ralph of Diceto, dean of St Paul’s, was a friend and correspondent of two of Richard’s ministers, the chancellor, William Longchamp, and the chief justiciar, Walter of Coutances, both closely involved in the negotiations which led to the king’s release.58 William of Newburgh was able to supplement the material he found in Roger of Howden’s chronicle, thanks to his access to a uniquely well-informed source, Master Philip of Poitou, Richard’s confidential clerk who stayed with the king throughout his time in Germany.59

Roger of Howden’s is the most detailed narrative of events in Germany during those twelve months. In his version, at an assembly which had been summoned to meet on Palm Sunday (21 March), the emperor accused Richard of betraying the Holy Land, of plotting the assassination of Conrad of Montferrat, and of breaking agreements he had made with him. To this Richard was said to have replied with such force and eloquence that the charges were dropped and Henry VI gave him the kiss of peace.60 No German chronicler chose to report any such accusations levelled at Richard in 1193.61 Of the pro-impe-


59 Gillingham, ‘William of Newburgh and Emperor Henry VI’, 51–71. Philip was rewarded with the bishopric of Durham and became in effect Richard’s minister for imperial affairs.
60 Howden, Chronica, iii. 198–9; cf. William of Newburgh, Historia, i. 387–8. Coggeshall, Chronicon, 58–60. None locate the meeting.
61 Although the Marbach annalist presumably alluded to one of the charges in his account of the year 1190, where he claimed that when Richard took possession of Messina in October and made a treaty with Tancred, he broke an oath sworn to Henry VI. According to him, the kings of France and England and the count of Flanders had obtained Henry’s permission to travel through all his lands on condition that they did not infringe his rights. Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 180–2. There is no other evidence of such an oath which, in any case, Philip II would also have broken when he recognized Tancred as king and was assigned lodgings in the royal palace in Messina. For discussion of the accusation see Joseph Huffmann, The Social
rial narratives only Peter of Eboli offered something of the sort, though without specifying either date or place. Henry VI, having summoned an ‘imperial senate, as is the custom’, referred to Richard’s dealings with Tancred of Sicily as an offence in nostrum ius. According to this version, Henry was so moved by the king’s humble submission illustrated on the facing page of the manuscript (see above p. 5) that he decided to set him free—something which, Peter claimed with remarkable boldness, neither pope nor any amount of money would ever have persuaded him to do. The language of the English chroniclers also indicates that Richard made some symbolic gesture of submission, even if it is unlikely to have been the Byzantine/Sicilian proskynesis depicted in the Liber ad honorem Augusti. Their dispute over, Henry and Richard were now firm friends, and Henry offered to effect a reconciliation between Richard and Philip of France in return for an agent’s commission of 100,000 marks. According to Howden, the onlookers wept with joy. No doubt the whole scene had been orchestrated in advance, tears and all. Both Howden and Coggeshall report that before the rulers met,
intermediaries went to and fro. Nonetheless, even if both emperor and king stuck to a pre-arranged script, it seems clear that Richard put in a bravura performance. Even William the Breton, Philip’s court poet, was impressed: ‘When Richard replied, he spoke so eloquently and regally, in so lionhearted a manner, that it was as though he had forgotten where he was and the undignified circumstances in which he had been captured, and imagined himself to be seated on the throne of his ancestors at Lincoln or at Caen.’ Here, then, we have a good example of assembly politics operating as it should, culminating in ‘ritualised behaviour symbolising closure and re-affirming an order which should if at all possible be seen not to have been threatened’.

But although it symbolized closure, it did not bring it. If these were the rules of the game, then Henry broke them. There was no closure, far from it, just more negotiations during which Richard came under severe pressure. Eventually a new deal was arranged, and another imperial court, *totius Alemanniae generalis conventus*, summoned so that it could be proclaimed. It met, as imperial charters and their witness lists show, at Worms at the end of June 1193. Once again, we have only the reports of English chroniclers to go on, and, above all, Roger of Howden’s copy—the only surviving one—of the text of the new agreement made between Richard and Henry. This time Richard agreed to pay 150,000 marks (£100,000) for his freedom. There had been a 50 per cent hike in the sum demanded for his release.

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66 Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 199; Coggeshall, *Chronicon*, 58.
67 William the Breton, *Philippidos*, IV, 393–6. William placed this episode at Mainz, soon after Leopold had handed Richard over to the emperor and made the king’s release follow immediately after. Presumably he had heard about Richard’s bearing from King Philip’s envoys to the imperial court. On Richard’s eloquence see Coggeshall, *Chronicon*, 59–60.
68 Reuter, *Medieval Polities*, 203
69 It seems that Richard had expected the rules to be observed since he sent for hostages and ships, i.e. he expected to be freed as soon as sufficient hostages had arrived. Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 205–6.
70 Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 110. His date for the assembly is an obvious slip.
make him agree to these revised terms? One possibility is that he was made to endure harsh prison conditions. According to Gilbert of Mons, the former chancellor of Count Baldwin of Hainault and Flanders, when Duke Leopold had handed Richard to the emperor, it had been ‘on condition he would suffer no harm to his body’. 73 Henry already had a reputation for ferocity. The murder of the bishop of Liège by German knights in November 1192 was widely thought to have been his doing. 74 Although there is no doubt that both Leopold and Henry needed to keep Richard alive and well enough to be ransomed, he could, of course, have been made very uncomfortable. 75

According to William of Newburgh, Richard himself later said that out of respect for his royal person he had at first been treated well, and guarded with the appropriate honour, but that after the French king’s cousin, Philip of Beauvais, came to the imperial court, he was loaded down with chains so heavy that a horse or a donkey would have struggled to move. 76 In a letter which Peter of Blois wrote to Archbishop Conrad of Mainz (they had been students together), he complained that Richard was held in chains and made to go hungry, his face pale and body weak. 77 If anything like this did happen, it is likely to have been in the weeks immediately after Easter 1193 when he was imprisoned in the castle of Trifels near Annweiler in the hills west of Speyer. He evidently did not enjoy his stay on the Trifels. In a letter to his mother, Eleanor, and to the min-

73 Gislebert of Mons, Chronicon Hanoniense, ed. L. Vanderkindere (Brussels, 1904), c. 198; English translation by Laura Napran, Gilbert of Mons, Chronicle of Hainaut (Woodbridge, 2005). The text of the treaty of Feb. 1193 between Leopold and Henry states that it was ‘super incolumitate et pace regis Anglorum’. Chroust (ed.), Historia de expeditione, 103.
77 Peter Acht (ed.), Mainzer Urkundenbuch, ii. pt. 2 (Darmstadt, 1971) no. 573; Görich, ‘Verletzte Ehre’, 76–8, 89.
isters who were governing England in his absence, written on 19 April, he reported that his chancellor, William Longchamp, had been able to negotiate a move from the Trifels to Hagenau, where he was now being treated with honour (honorifice). The chancellor’s friend, Dean Ralph of London, also reported that Richard was held in the Trifels. He described it as a prison for enemies of the empire who had been condemned to life imprisonment and said that being sent there was meant to frighten Richard into agreeing to an excessive ransom.

Undoubtedly Trifels was one of Henry VI’s most secure strongholds. According to Otto of St Blasien, after Henry conquered Sicily he blinded the leaders of the Sicilian opposition, Admiral Margarit and Count Richard, and sent them as prisoners to Trifels. Otto called Trifels the treasure chamber of the state (erarium publicum confertissimum) and reported that the gold and silver removed from Sicily was stored there.

The Marbach annalist noted an apparently trivial detail: Henry set out from Trifels when he began the march south that led to the conquest of Sicily. Trifels, where for a while the imperial insignia were to be stored, was evidently already a name to conjure with.

A source of great pressure on Richard was the possibility of a deal between the emperor and the king of France. If Richard did not agree to Henry’s demands, then the latter might be persuaded either to sell him to Philip or to keep him in prison for longer while the Capetian, assisted by Richard’s brother, John, pressed on with his invasion of Normandy. But neither German nor French sources, only English sources, mention Trifels in connection with Richard’s captivity.

78 The text of the letter survives only thanks to Howden, Chronica, iii. 208–10.
79 Diceto, Opera, ii. 107
81 The association of Trifels with the medieval German Empire led to the castle’s re-building in 1938–47. H. Seebach, ‘Der Trifels—eine deutsche Burg’, Beiträge zur Trifelsgeschichte, 3 (2001).
82 In saying that Richard was taken in chains to Worms, where the king can be shown to have been for much of the summer of 1193, Otto of St Blasien was the only German chronicler to name a place where he was held captive by Henry VI. Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 110–12. See the convenient list of places and dates in Mayer, ‘A Ghost Ship’, 137–8.
Article

ones, had anything to say about contacts between Henry VI and Philip of France. According to Howden, the emperor was attracted by the idea of an alliance with Philip so that he could cope all the better with the rebellion which had been triggered by his involvement in the murder of Bishop Albert of Liège.83 Hence it was in Richard’s interest to bring about a peace between Henry and the rebels, and it may well have been his agreement to meet the emperor’s raised ransom demands that led to Henry, in his turn, acceding to the demands made by those rebels whose territories in the Lower Rhineland lay across the route along which the ransom money would have to pass.84 At any rate the emperor and the rebels from the Rhineland were reconciled in June 1193, perhaps by 8 June.85 The terms of their agreement were then made public at Koblenz.86 Contemporary comment indicates that the terms were thought to favour the rebels from the Rhineland.87 The terms amounted to a defeat for Count Baldwin of Flanders, and the reticence of his chancellor on the subject is noticeable; the best he could do was criticize his lord’s regional rivals for their abandonment of confederates, presumably chiefly the dukes

83 Howden, Chronica, iii. 214. He had an accurate list of the principal rebels: the archbishops of Cologne and Mainz, and the dukes of Limburg, Saxony, and Brabant (Louvain), the last being, as he knew, the brother of the murdered bishop.
84 Gilbert of Mons, Chronicon, c. 202.
85 In a letter written on that day Richard was evidently more at ease than he had been on 28 May when he had protested—surely too much—that letters in which he expressed his wish to have Savaric, bishop of Bath, chosen as archbishop of Canterbury had been written pura conscientia et bona voluntate. Epistolae Cantuarienses, 364. Tellingly, on 8 June he wrote: ‘You know that while we are in custody it is sometimes useful to give way to the demands of great men and appear to recommend people whom in reality we have no desire to promote.’ Gervase of Canterbury, Opera Historica, i. 517–18. On this see Kessler, Richard I. Löwenherz, 273–4.
86 Vita Alberti, MGH SS 25, 168. An imperial charter was issued at Koblenz on 14 June, Regesta Imperii, no. 302, but in the absence of other dating evidence there is no knowing where Henry was for almost the whole month.
87 Vita Alberti, 168; Howden, Chronica, iii. 214; Andreas von Marchiennes, Continuatio Aquincincta, MGH SS 6, 430. Peter Csendes, Heinrich VI. (Darmstadt, 1993), 140–1, gives a good summary of the emperor’s concessions, passed over rather too lightly in some recent scholarship on Henry VI.
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of Saxony and Bohemia. Roger of Howden gave the credit for this peace-making to Richard; William of Newburgh to 'wise men'. Immediately after this reconciliation the meeting between Henry VI and Philip II, planned for 25 June, was called off. Instead emperor, king of England, and German princes, among them, as noted by Roger of Howden, the dukes of Louvain and Limburg, assembled at Worms. On 29 June a written agreement (forma compositionis) was made between Henry and Richard, and was sworn to by the bishops, dukes, counts, and all the nobles present.

After the treaty of June 1193 all went smoothly for six months. Richard began to issue charters again. German envoys came to London to check the weight and fineness of the silver, and the transport arrangements. On 20 December 1193 Henry VI, per consilium principum imperii sui, wrote to the English, announcing that Richard would be released on 17 January 1194 at either Speyer or Worms. For the text of his letter we are, once again, dependent on Howden. Richard’s mother travelled to Germany to be at the great court which would assemble to witness the ceremonial arranged for her son’s release. By Epiphany she was at Cologne. But then Henry VI changed his mind. The assembly was postponed. King Philip of France and Prince John had written to Henry, making him a new offer. They would pay him 150,000 marks if he kept Richard for another twelve months, or £1,000 for every month he held him. Eventually Henry and Richard met on 2 February at Mainz, at the fourth of my assemblies, where Henry showed Richard their letters. Having read them,

88 Giselbert of Mons, Chronicon, c. 200. Henry VI was doubtless pleased to be able to separate the dukes of Saxony and Bohemia from the Rhineland princes, but Schmale’s translation of ‘sedavit’ in the Marbach annalist’s phrase ‘quam sedicionem imperator contra omnium opinionem facillime sedavit’ as ‘schläg nieder’ gives a misleading impression of rebellion forcibly overcome by a victorious emperor. Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 186–7.

89 Howden, Chronica, iii. 214; Newburgh, Historia, i. 397–8. See Gillingham, William of Newburgh and Henry VI’, 67.

90 Howden, Chronica, iii. 214–15, naming the dukes of Louvain and Limburg as present, as confirmed by Regesta Imperii, no. 303. Cf. ‘praestitum est ab episcopis et ducibus et comitibus iuramentum’, Coggeshall, Chronicon, 60.


92 Howden, Chronica, iii. 225–7.
wrote Howden, Richard was disturbed, despairing that he would ever be freed. But fortunately the magnates of the empire who had been the guarantors of earlier treaties—Roger listed ten of them—were able to persuade the emperor to reject the advances made by Philip and John. Walter of Coutances, archbishop of Rouen, who was there, wrote to Dean Ralph about ‘anxious and difficult discussions’, and about the parts played by the archbishops of Mainz and Cologne in bringing matters to a conclusion. All these things were reported in English chronicles, none of them in German chronicles. Why this silence about Henry’s dealings with Richard? Were they not interested? Did they not know?

Before suggesting answers to these questions, I would like to draw attention to another silence, this time the silence of the English. No sooner had the king of England been released on 4 February than, as a free man, he became the emperor’s man for all his dominions, England included. Two German authors, the Marbach annalist and an annalist from Salzburg, described this act of homage. So also did one English author, Roger of Howden. Roger’s report is worth a closer look.

So that he might escape from captivity, and on his mother’s advice, Richard resigned the kingdom of England, and granted it to the emperor as to the lord of all men, using his cap to invest him with it; but the emperor, as had been pre-arranged, in the sight of the magnates of Germany and England immediately restored it to him, to be held in return for an annual tribute of £5,000, investing him with a double cross of gold.

93 Ibid. iii. 229, 231–2. Roger’s list of German magnates included four who witnessed imperial charters a few days earlier at Würzburg, Regesta Imperii, nos. 331–2.
94 Diceto, Opera, ii. 112–13.
95 ‘Ipse liber et absolutus absque omni coactione homo factus est imperii Romani, tota terra sua Anglia et alia terris propriis imperatori datis et ab eo in beneficio receptis.’ Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 186; ‘terram propriam, quam paternis viribus expugnatam in proprietate tenebat, imperatori tradidit et a manu imperatoris sceptro investitus suscepit’, Annales Salisburgensium Additamentum, MGH SS 13, 240. Roger’s list of German princes at Mainz included the archbishop of Salzburg. Howden, Chronica, iii. 232.
A classic piece of assembly political theatre—lots of Symbolic spoken, according to a pre-arranged script, and in the sight of a big audience. But Roger’s account contains one more sentence. “The emperor on his deathbed released Richard and his heirs from this and all other agreements.”\(^96\) As these words show, Roger wrote this after he knew of Henry’s death in September 1197. As it happens, we know a great deal about Roger’s working method. He wrote up his account of each year soon after the year’s end. But he always left a few leaves blank between the end of one year and the start of the next so that he could enter any information that came to him later.\(^97\) Given how very well-informed Roger was, we can be sure he knew about the ceremony at Mainz in February 1194, but chose to remain silent about it. Only after Henry had died could he bring himself to mention it. Curiously he then entered his narrative of Richard’s grant of England to the emperor, not under the year 1194, when it happened, but as the last item in 1192.\(^98\) By implication, by late 1197 he had no space left in his working copy at the end of his entries for 1193 and 1194. Roger was the only contemporary English writer ever to mention the homage, not Ralph of Coggeshall, not Gervase of Canterbury, not William of Newburgh, not Ralph of Diceto. The dean of London did, however, allude to it. While writing about Richard’s release, he referred to something happening that was ‘the result of disgraceful pressure, bad, illegal, contrary to canon law, contrary to good custom, illegitimate, null and void’.\(^99\) He did not say what this disgraceful act was, but he evidently felt very strongly about it.

Historians and others have long felt that for Richard this was a great humiliation, for the emperor a great triumph. Some have felt that it reflected Henry’s alleged dream of ruling the world.\(^100\) Kate

\(^{96}\) Ibid. iii. 202–3.


\(^{98}\) In this way misleading many subsequent historians.

\(^{99}\) Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 113.

\(^{100}\) One of the illustrations to the *Liber ad honorem Augusti* lists twenty-four
Norgate, for example, whose first book had been published in 1887, wrote in 1924 that Henry VI had been ‘obsessed, more strongly perhaps than any other German ruler before our own day, by the German dream of world dominion’. In her short story ‘Richard Löwenherz auf dem Trifels’, published in 1941, Juliana von Stockhausen wrote: ‘Angezogen von der Gewalt des Reiches schwamm die britannische Insel, ein armseliger Fisch, in das deutsche Imperium ein’ (Attracted by the power of the empire, the British isles, that pitiful fish, swam into the German imperium). A few years later Günther Bullinger argued that doing homage to Henry actually suited Richard’s interests. By accepting his homage, so the argument runs, the emperor recognized Richard as the rightful ruler, something that mattered to Richard because King Philip of France had recognized John as the legitimate ruler. Hence this piece of Symbolic theatre was staged at Richard’s initiative, or possibly at his mother’s. Since then there have been two interpretations of Richard’s homage. Either Bullinger’s line has been accepted, or it has been written off as ‘inhaltlose Form, ohne jede reale Bedeutung’ (a form devoid of content, lacking any real significance), indeed so lacking in importance that Ralph Turner and Richard Heiser do not even mention it in their study of Richard’s reign.

But the silence of the contemporary English chroniclers suggests to me that the old-fashioned interpretation may well be the right one, though this old one also fits in well with the recent emphasis by historians such as Tim, Gerd Althoff, and Knut Görich, upon the central significance of honour and reputation, and hence also of the acts and the gestures by which rulers maintained their honour and reputa-

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101 Kate Norgate, *Richard the Lion Heart* (London, 1924), 272.
102 Juliana von Stockhausen, *Die Nacht von Wimpfen* (Strasburg, 1941), 60. For his generous gift of a copy of this I am much indebted to Hans Reither.
After all, their reputation resided in the opinions of others. As David Hume put it in the opening words of his essay ‘Of the First Principles of Government’ (1741): ‘Nothing appears more surprising to those who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye, than the easiness with which the many are governed by the few; . . . when we enquire by what means this wonder is effected we shall find that . . . [t]he governors have nothing to support them but opinion.’ In the opinion of English chroniclers, including men as close to the centre of government as Roger of Howden and Ralph of Diceto, doing homage to the emperor damaged Richard’s honour and reputation. It added to the contumelia captionis which persuaded him to agree to a confirmatory coronation, ‘eine Befestigungskrönung’, after his return to England. But the attitude of the English chroniclers, their silences and Dean Ralph’s indignation, suggests to me that it was not just the king’s honour that had suffered. In April 1193 Henry VI had written to the English, addressing his letter to the ‘archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, nobles and everyone in England to whom this comes’. In this letter he had promised that he would always act for the honour and profit of Richard’s loyal subjects (ad devotorum suorum et fidelium honorem et profectum). Evidently it was not just individuals, kings and others, who could possess honour; so, too, could a people, in this case the English people, and possessing it, they could also lose it.

107 ‘The symbolic and ritualised forms of interaction did not give expression to an underlying reality: they were that reality.’ Reuter, Medieval Polities, 189. Cf. Trautz, Die Könige von England, 88–9.

108 ‘It is therefore on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim applies to the most despotic and most military governments as well as to the most free and most popular.’ David Hume, Essays: Moral, Political and Literary, ed. E. F. Miller (Indianapolis, 1985), 32.

109 Gervase of Canterbury, Opera Historica, i. 526.

110 Howden, Chronica, iii. 211.

It is in light of this English silence that I return to the silence of German chroniclers on the subject of the emperor’s dealings with Richard from the moment he had him in his power until the moment at which he set him free in February 1194, at which point two of them, the Marbach and Salzburg annalists, evidently felt gratified that Richard had done homage for England. In 1193 Henry did make attempts, as we can see from English narratives, to justify his charge that Richard was the ‘enemy of the empire’, but no contemporary German chronicler reported these attempts, not even (except indirectly in his entry for 1190) the Marbach annalist. Of the authors writing within the newly expanded empire, only Peter of Eboli described a meeting between Henry and Richard, and he did so in extraordinarily misleading terms. So far as I can see, all modern German historians of Henry’s reign are silent on the subject of the silence of German contemporaries. They note that English authors condemned Henry—what a surprise!—but they say nothing about what German authors thought, no doubt on the straightforward assumption that since they said nothing, there is nothing that can be said. But this means they tend to give the impression that Henry’s fellow Germans tacitly approved of his treatment of the crusader-king.

It strikes me that in the early 1190s the crusade was a difficult subject for these German chroniclers. On the one hand they were immensely interested in it; on the other, for German participants, from Barbarossa downwards, it all went wrong. If only Frederick Barbarossa and his son, Duke Frederick of Swabia, had not both died on the way to the Holy Land, wrote Otto of St Blasien, then the crusade would have succeeded, thanks above all to the strength and courage of Germany.112 When a chronicler from Cologne referred to the dishonour Leopold had suffered at the siege of Acre, he associated the whole German people with that act, explaining that Richard always doubted the valour of Germans.113 There was wounded national pride here, and the belief that Richard, who played the dominating role on crusade, was very largely to blame. When Acre fell, wrote Otto, Richard arrogantly claimed all the credit for himself.

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112 Both Otto and the Marbach annalist did their best to make the German contribution to the siege of Acre a significant one. Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 100–4, 184.
113 Chronica Regia Coloniensis, 154.
Because his armed forces were greater than everyone else’s he despised all the other princes, and insulted Duke Leopold. Hence, in the end, the Germans left the crusade hating English perfidy (anglicam perfidiam) and refusing to be subject to the English.114 Similar ideas were expressed by Ansbert, Magnus of Reichersberg and by some anonymous annalists.115 On the one hand then, the king of England had it coming to him; on the other to treat a crusader-pilgrim in the way Richard was treated in Germany was sacrilege. In this dilemma, silence was a way out.

The contrasts in the ways Duke Leopold and Emperor Henry were portrayed by non-Germans are thought-provoking. For example, Rigord of St Denis, author of the deeds of Philip Augustus, reported how Richard humiliated Leopold at Acre, throwing his banner into a deep cesspit. He gave the dramatic story of Richard’s shipwreck, his flight through the Alps, his capture by Leopold and the handover to the emperor—all without any judgemental comment. But he then said that the emperor unjustly (injuste) held Richard in prison for almost a year and a half.116 An annalist of St Aubin, Angers, said nothing at all about Leopold, but wrote that the emperor of Germany acted ‘against God and justice’.117 Or consider William of Newburgh’s judgements. He condemned Leopold, referring to the ‘noble king being captured by the wicked duke’. But these few words are little indeed compared with what he had to say about Henry: a whole page of condemnation, the emperor depraved by avarice, defiling the imperium romanum, to Christians a much worse enemy than Saladin.118 What makes this comparison of opinions about

114 Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 104–6.
118 Newburgh, Historia, i. 383, 387. As Rudolf Jahncke observed in what is still one of the best studies of William in any language, he ‘vertritt weniger einen einseitigen englischen, als einen allgemein christlich-sittlichen Stand-
Leopold and Henry particularly striking is that Leopold was excommunicated by the pope, but Henry was not. It was not primarily the pope who set the standards by which these authors, all of them churchmen of one sort or another, judged political actions. Other standards mattered more, and by these other standards Leopold’s conduct was defensible, as the English acknowledged, even if only reluctantly. Henry VI’s conduct, however, was indefensible. He may have been tempted to break the rules of the game at the Hoftag in Regensburg in January 1193; he broke them immediately after the assembly of Speyer two months later; and he did so again in January 1194. Something of the atmosphere at Mainz in February 1194 is conveyed by one who was there, Archbishop Walter of Rouen, in the letter telling the dean of London that the king had been released ‘post multas anxietates et labores’. According to Roger of Howden and William of Newburgh, only the plain speaking of the assembled princes of the empire brought Henry at last to the point of setting Richard free. In William of Newburgh’s version, they told the emperor that if he did not keep the agreement of which they were guarantors, ‘it would bring an inexpiable stain upon the empire’s honour (imperiali honestati)’. Whether or not anything quite like this was ever said to Henry’s face, it seems clear that he was already regarded as capable of conduct that dishonoured the empire by his treatment of Tusculum in 1191, ‘imperium . . . non mediocriter dehones-
tavit'.

One German prince who certainly seems to have felt this way, given his record of consistent opposition to the emperor’s plans in 1195–6, was Adolf of Altena, archbishop of Cologne. Hence his decision when Richard, free at last, attended mass in Cologne cathedral in February 1194, to put off his archiepiscopal majesty and take on the office of precentor, leading the introit of the feast Ad Vincula Sancti Petri (1 August): ‘Now I know that God has sent his angel and taken me from the hand of Herod.’

Henry made a huge profit out of keeping Richard so long in captivity, but at some cost. His dealings with the king of England reinforced his reputation as a ruler who was ready to jettison conventional political morality whenever he thought he might gain advantage by doing so. According to the chronicle of Reinhardbrunn, when only a few princes attended a court at Mainz in March 1196, they were told they had either to give their free consent to the scheme of making the kingdom hereditary, or they would find themselves in custodia publica as prisoners of the empire. At first Henry believed that by such methods he had got his way, but in the face of continuing princely resistance, he eventually dropped the plan.

He had earlier suffered a similar setback. By adopting the tactic of approaching the princes one by one, he persuaded almost all of them—though not the archbishop of Cologne—to promise to elect his son Frederick as king. But when they came to the assembly to which they had been summoned, they did not do what they had promised. This is the first known case of a refusal to elect the son of a reigning ruler. Although Henry, after dropping his Erbreichsplan, was subsequently able to secure Frederick’s election as his successor, the episode is symptomatic of the distrust with which he was regarded by princes as well as by the pope.

122 Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 94. On the assumption that in this statement Otto of St Blasien was reflecting earlier opinion.
123 Diceto, Opera, ii. 114; Howden, Chronica, iii. 235.
124 Chronica Reinhardbrunnensis, MGH SS 30, 556, 558; Chronik Ottos und Marbacher Annalen, 196.
125 Marbacher Annalen, 194. This was probably the assembly which met at Worms in early Dec. 1195.
In his essay on Assembly Politics, Tim Reuter regretted that, on the basis of the relative richness of accounts of trials and meetings in Anglo-Norman and Angevin England, there had not hitherto been more analyses of how assemblies operated, including less well-recorded assemblies from other regions and periods. I certainly cannot claim that this paper has met his wish. On the other hand, the accounts of the remarkably well-informed chroniclers of Angevin England, authors such as Roger of Howden, William of Newburgh and Ralph of Diceto, both what they said and what they did not say about the German assemblies of 1193–4, do allow us to gain a better understanding of the silences of their German contemporaries. Not even understandable irritation at what they saw as the king of England’s arrogance and his part in the misfortunes that dogged the German contribution to the Third Crusade could bring them to write anything at all about Henry VI’s dealings with Richard at the assemblies of Speyer and Worms in 1193.

127 Reuter, Medieval Polities, 200.

JOHN GILLINGHAM is a Fellow of the British Academy and Professor Emeritus at the London School of Economics. He is the author of numerous books and articles on English history in the high Middle Ages. His biography of Richard I was published in the series Yale English Monarchs in 1999.