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The Young King and the Old Count: Around the Flemish Succession Crisis of 965

Abstract: In 965, Count Arnulf the Great of Flanders died, leaving a small child as his only heir. In the wake of his death, the West Frankish King Lothar annexed his southern lands for the crown. This paper examines how and why Lothar was able to succeed in this. By the 950s, the Flemish count was diplomatically isolated and facing threats to his southern border. Arnulf attempted to ally with Lothar to remedy this, basing his claim to alliance on their links of kinship via descent from Charles the Bald. Lothar supported Arnulf during his lifetime, but after his death sought to conquer part of his lands for himself. Moreover, he supported his own candidate for the Flemish regency, Arnulf's nephew Baldwin Baldzo, over Arnulf's candidate, his son-in-law Count Dirk II of Holland, in order to cement his position as suzerain in northern Flanders. Lothar was able to do this by appropriating Arnulf's claims to kinship with him and using them to justify his intervention in Flanders.

Le jeune roi et le vieux comte: Autour de la crise de succession flamande de 965

Résumé: En 965, le comte de Flandre, Arnoul le Grand, mourut. Son seul successeur était un petit enfant. Après sa mort, Lothaire, roi de France, prit la sud de la Flandre pour lui-même. Cette étude examine comment et pourquoi Lothaire put réussir. Dans les années 950, le comte flamand fut politiquement isolé face aux menaces sur sa frontière méridionale. Arnoul essaya d'allier avec le roi afin de changer la situation. Il fonda ses prétentions sur sa parenté avec Lothaire et sa descendance de Charles le Chauve. Durant sa vie, Lothaire soutint Arnoul. Mais, après sa mort, il essaya de conquérir une partie de ses domaines. En outre, il soutint son propre candidat pour la régence: le neveu de Arnoul, Baudoin Bauces, et oppose le candidat d'Arnoul, son beau-fils, Thiery II, comte de Frise, afin de renforcer sa suzeraineté en Flandre du nord. Lothaire put faire cela en se l'appropriant les prétentions de Arnoul concernant sa parenté avec lui. Il utilisa ces prétentions afin de justifier son intervention en Flandre.

De jonge koning en de oude graaf: Rond de Vlaamse opeenvolging crisis van 965

Samenvatting: Toen in 965 Arnulf de Grote overleed, liet hij een jong kind na als zijn enige erfgenaam. Na diens dood annexeerde Koning Lotharius van West Francie diens gebieden voor zichzelf. Deze bijdrage onderzoekt hoe en waarom Lotharius kon slagen. In the jaren vijftig van de tiende eeuws de Vlaamse graven dynastie geïsoleerd was geraakt, en dat om de isolatie op te lossen Arnulf de Grote een poging deed zich te allieren met Lothar met als basis voor de alliance de bloedverwantschap tussen hen beiden teruggaand op Karel de Kale. Gedurende het leven van Arnulf steunde Lothar hem maar na zijn dood probeerde hij een gedeelte van diens land zelf in handen te krijgen. Daarnaast steunde Lothar zijn eigen kandidaat voor het Vlaamse regentschap, Boudewijn Balzo, de neef van Arnulf, in plaats van Arnulfs kandidaat, diens schoonzoon Dirk II van Holland, met de bedoeling zijn positie als heerser in het noorden

van Vlaanderen te verstevigen. Lothar was hiertoe in staat door Arnulfs aanspraak op bloedverwantschap met hem uit te buiten ter verdediging van zijn ingreep in Vlaanderen.

Key-words: Flanders, Succession, Minority, Charters, Diplomas, Regency, Lothar, Arnulf I, Arnulf II

The Young King and the Old Count: Around the Flemish Succession Crisis of 965¹

Introduction

In 965, Arnulf I, called the Great, count of Flanders, died. Three years earlier, his only son Baldwin III had also died, leaving only a young child, Arnulf II, as his heir. This had prompted Arnulf I to drastic action: in 962, he had committed himself to the West Frankish king, Lothar, in order to secure his grandson's inheritance. Arnulf had been one of the most ruthless and powerful magnates in the West Frankish kingdom, but on his death, his territories were dismembered, largely to Lothar's profit: he annexed all of Arnulf's southern territories and firmly established himself as overlord of the child count Arnulf II².

As a key moment in tenth-century Flemish history, the events of the 960s have gained the attention of a number of historians, mostly as a part of wider treatments of the period.³ Two studies in particular, however, have dealt with the crisis in depth. The first of these, published in 1943, was written by Jan Dhondt⁴. For him, Arnulf I's reign had been marked by a generally successful expansion of Flemish influence, not least through marriage ties; by the end of his reign, Arnulf had amassed an extensive network of family connections surrounding his border⁵.

¹ The following abbreviations will be used:

MGH = *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (*DD* = *Diplomata*; *Libri Mem NS* = *Libri memoriales et Necrologia, Nova series*; *SS* = *Scriptores*; *SS rer Germ* = *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi*)

² Anton KOCH, "Het graafschap Vlaanderen van de 9de eeuw tot 1070" in Dirk BLOK, ed., *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, vol. 1, Haarlem, Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1981, p. 370.

³ See, for instance, François-Louis GANSHOF, *La Flandre sous les Premiers Comtes*, Brussels, La Renaissance du livre, 1949, pp. 28-30; KOCH, "Het graafschap Vlaanderen", *op. cit.*, pp. 369-370; Heather TANNER, *Families, Friends and Allies: Boulogne and Politics in Northern France and England, c. 879-1160*, Leiden, Brill, 2004 (The Northern World, vol. 6), pp. 38-41; Jean-François NIEUS, *Un pouvoir comtal entre Flandre et France: Saint-Pol, 1000-1300*, Brussels, De Boeck, 2005 (Bibliothèque du Moyen Age, vol. 23), pp. 32-39.

⁴ Jan DHONDT, "De Crisis van het grafelijk Gezag in Vlaanderen na den Dood van Arnulf den Eerste", in *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis en de Oudheidkunde*, 1943, pp. 47-75.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-57.

However, he also saw these neighbours and relatives as grasping and untrustworthy. Without Arnulf I's strong hand keeping them in order, they would fall upon Flanders and tear it apart. Consequently, Dhondt argued, when Baldwin III died, leaving only an infant as heir, Arnulf, out of desperation, turned to the protection of King Lothar⁶. When Arnulf died, Lothar fulfilled his end of the bargain and ensured the succession of Arnulf II, despite the opposition of a noble resistance within Flanders⁷. Dhondt's picture of these events was based fundamentally on three things: the narrative sources, and particularly the *Annales* of the Rheims chronicler Flodoard; his reconstruction of Arnulf I's extended family tree; and (as Dunbabin points out) his assumption that earlier medieval politics was inherently violent and self-serving⁸.

Dunbabin's comments were made in her own, more recent, study of the reign of Count Arnulf II, published in 1989, of which she devoted a substantial portion to an examination of the 960s⁹. Rejecting Dhondt's suspicion of the motives of Arnulf I's neighbours and relatives in favour of a methodological approach implicitly favouring the search for consensus and conflict avoidance in the source material, Dunbabin re-read the same – again mostly narrative – sources, arguing that Arnulf I spent his final years making peace among his family and negotiating with Lothar to ensure a smooth transition of power within the county¹⁰. After Arnulf's death, Lothar did just that, bolstering the new regime under Arnulf II in accordance with his agreement with the late count¹¹.

Even from this relatively brief overview of the prior historiography, it is clear that the questions the Flemish succession crisis of the 960s raises are important ones. What was the

⁶ Ibid., pp. 57-58.

⁷ Ibid, pp. 60-62.

⁸ Jean DUNBABIN, "The Reign of Arnulf II, Count of Flanders, and its Aftermath", in *Francia*, vol. 14, 1989, p. 56.

⁹ Ibid., esp. pp. 53-58.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 53-55.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 56.

importance of familial ties to political action? How far did royal authority matter to tenth-century magnates, and in what circumstances? What agency could the penultimate Carolingian ruler exert within his own kingdom? As the work of Dhondt and Dunbabin shows, the evidence can be read in a number of different ways, with strikingly different implications for our wider view of how tenth-century politics operated.

Given this, there remains a need to take a closer look at the crisis itself. Neither Dhondt nor Dunbabin made full use of the relatively-abundant Flemish documentary evidence, not simply the royal diplomas, which have already received historians' attention, but in particular the private charters. In part, this must be because the corpus of charters for the Ghent monasteries of Sint-Pieters and Sint-Baafs are famously troublesome, shot through with forgery and interpolation. A series of studies, by Oppermann, Koch, Verhulst and Declercq have come to at-times radically different conclusions about the dates and provenances of these documents, and they are extremely difficult for historians to use with any degree of confidence; Koziol recently characterised them as "reced[ing] into an Escher-like dimension where fact and fiction become indistinguishable"¹². Nonetheless, used with care, the documentary sources touching this crisis, and especially the private charters in which the protagonists of the drama feature, may shed additional light on these events, and consequently on the historical questions

¹² Geoffrey KOZIOL, *The Politics of Memory and Identity in Carolingian Royal Diplomas: The West Frankish Kingdom (840-987)*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2012 (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, vol. 19), p. 393; see Otto OPPERMANN, *Die älteren Urkunden des Klosters Blandinium und die Anfänge der Stadt Gent*, vol. 1, Utrecht, Instituut voor middeleeuwse geschiedenis, 1928 (Bijdragen van het Instituut voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis, vol. 11); Anton KOCH, "Diplomatische studie over de 10^e en 11^e eeuwse originelen uit de Gentse Sint-Pietersabdij" in Maurits GYSELLING and Anton KOCH (eds.), *Diplomata Belgica*, Brussels, Belgisch Inter-Universitair Centrum voor Neerlandistiek, 1950 (Bouwstoffen studien voor de geschiedenis en de lexicografie van het Nederlands, vol. 1), pp. 85-122; and Anton KOCH (ed.), *Oorkondenboek van Holland en Zeeland tot 1299 I: Eind van de 7^e eeuw tot 1222*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1970; Adriaan VERHULST, "Note sur deux chartes de Lothaire, roi de France, pour l'abbaye de Saint-Bavon à Gand", in *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'histoire*, vol. 155, 1989, pp. 1-23; Georges DECLERCQ, *Het "Liber Traditionum" van de Gentse Sint-Pietersabdij (10de en 11de eeuw): Een kritische bronnenstudie*, Unpublished thesis, 3 volumes paginated as 1, University of Ghent, 1993-1994, esp. vol. 2.

they raise. When integrated with the narrative evidence, it is possible to develop a better idea of how and why Arnulf the Great, once an aggressive expansionist, changed his political strategies in the last years of his life in order to align himself with Lothar; and of what factors helped the King exploit the crisis to his own advantage and emerge as the person who profited most from it.

Seeking New Allies: Flanders and its Neighbours, c. 955-962

Over the course of Arnulf I's reign, he had expanded Flemish power and territory dramatically. When Arnulf's father Baldwin II had died, he had partitioned his lands: Arnulf received the core of Flanders proper, and his brother Adalolf Boulogne and the Ternois¹³. On Adalolf's death, Arnulf had taken over his domains. He also expanded militarily towards the south. In 931, he took over eastern Ostrevant, capturing the fortress of Mortagne-du-Nord from the sons of Roger I of Laon. Artois was captured after the death of Count Adalelm of Arras in 932, and the conquest of Ostrevant was completed in the early 950s¹⁴.

Arnulf also began a long-running series of conflicts with the family of the rulers of Ponthieu¹⁵. In 939, he had invaded and captured Montreuil-sur-Mer from Count Herluin, capturing his wife and children and sending them as hostages to King Athelstan of England¹⁶. Herluin reclaimed Montreuil, and became a close ally of King Louis IV, who granted him

¹³ KOCH, "Het graafschap Vlaanderen", *op. cit.*, p. 365.

¹⁴ GANSHOF, *La Flandre sous les Premiers Comtes*, *op. cit.* p. 23; for Douai and Ostrevant, see Pierre DEMOLON, "Douai vers l'an Mil", in Michel PARISSÉ and Xavier BARRALI ALTET, eds., *Le roi de France et son royaume autour l'an mil. Actes du colloque Hugues Capet 987-1987*, Paris, Picard, 1992 (La France de l'an mil, vol. 3), p. 173.

¹⁵ See Jean-François NIEUS, "Montreuil et l'expansion du comté de Flandre au X^e siècle", in Stéphane LEBECQ, Bruno BETHOUART and Laurent VERSLYPE, eds., *Quentovic: Environnement, archéologie, histoire*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Université Charles-de-Gaulle 3, 2010, pp. 495-96.

¹⁶ FLODOARD, *Les Annales de Flodoard* ed. Phillipe LAUER, Paris, Picard, 1905 (Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire), p. 72.

Amiens in 944¹⁷. However, Herluin disappeared in the mid-940s, and Arnulf renewed his push southwards, besieging Montreuil unsuccessfully in 947 and successfully in 948, and taking Amiens in 949¹⁸.

As a result of this expansion, Arnulf ruled an extensive domain. However, by the 950s, the political climate was becoming increasingly less favourable to the Flemish count, and much of his southern border was under threat. The first rumblings of this came in 951, when Roger, son of Count Herluin, allied with the most powerful magnate in the kingdom, Hugh the Great, to try and force Arnulf out of Ponthieu¹⁹. Thanks to the mediation of Louis IV, Arnulf was able to negotiate a peace. Nonetheless, this truce was only temporary. In the late 950s, Arnulf granted Boulogne and Ternois to his son Baldwin III²⁰. Baldwin seems to have pursued an aggressive policy against his southern neighbours, and in 957, he and Roger waged war over possession of Amiens²¹.

At the same time, Baldwin became involved in a conflict with Normandy. Dudo of Saint-Quentin claims that Baldwin, Geoffrey Grisegonelle, Count of Anjou, and the Normans' main opponent Theobald the Trickster, Count of Tours, Blois and Chartres, allied with King Lothar and fought a battle with Richard the Fearless, duke of Normandy, between the Eaulne and the Béthune rivers, a little way inland from Dieppe²². In light of the conflict over Ponthieu and Amiens, Dudo's story fits with the overall political situation around 960. Roger of

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 72, 91.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 105, 109, 121.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 131-132.

²⁰ Jan DHONDT, "Recherches sur l'histoire du Boulonnais et de l'Artois aux IX^e et X^e siècles", in *Mémoires de l'académie des sciences, lettres, et arts d'Arras*, 4th ser., vol. 1, 1941, pp. 102-103.

²¹ FLODOARD, *Annales*, ed. LAUER, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

²² DUDO of Saint-Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*, ed. Jules LAIR, Caen, F. le Blanc-Hardel, 1865 (*Mémoires de la société des antiquaires de Normandie*, vol. 23), p. 471; see Eric CHRISTIANSEN in DUDO, *History of the Normans*, ed. and trans. Eric CHRISTIANSEN, Woodbridge, Boydell & Brewer, 1998, fn. 413, p. 220.

Montreuil, then, was not the only southern threat to Flemish power: Richard, whose father William Longsword had been murdered by Arnulf, could also be expected to be hostile²³. The Flemish counts were thus faced with not simply one but two threats to their southern border.

There were other considerations as well. Arnulf I's wife Adele had been a member of the powerful family of Vermandois²⁴. One of her brothers in particular, Count Albert the Pious controlled important strategic centres to the south of the Flemish possessions in Artois, particularly Saint-Quentin and Péronne²⁵. However, Adele died in 960²⁶. This would have loosened the ties between Arnulf and his brothers-in-law, potentially weakening his south-eastern frontier at the same time as the south-west was under direct military threat.

The Flemish position was thus increasingly isolated. It appears that Arnulf recognised his isolation, and sought closer ties with another of his powerful southern neighbours – the Carolingian king Lothar. Arnulf embarked on a campaign of patronising the churches of the Carolingian heartland. Almost every major centre of Carolingian power received a donation²⁷. A genealogical text from around 960 records that Arnulf distributed largess to Saint-

²³ Ferdinand LOT, *Les Derniers Carolingiens: Lothaire, Louis V., Charles de Lorraine (954-991)*, Paris, É. Bouillon, 1891 (Bibliothèque de l'école des hautes études, vol. 87), p. 35 and fn. 2.

²⁴ On this family and its relations with Flanders, see Helmut SCHWAGER, *Graf Heribert II. von Soissons, Omois, Meaux sowie Vermandois (900/06-943) und die Francia (Nordfrankreich) in der 1. Hälfte des 10. Jahrhunderts*, Kallmünz, Lassleben, 1994 (Münchener historische Studien, Abteilung Mittelalterliche Geschichte, vol. 6), pp. 359-365, esp. p. 361 on the marriage itself; Michel BUR, *La formation du comté de Champagne, v. 950-v.1150*, Nancy, Université de Nancy II, 1977 (Mémoires de l'Annales de l'Est, vol. 54), esp. pp. 97, 101-103 on Albert the Pious.

²⁵ See Dhondt, "Crisis", p. 48, on the strategic implications of the marriage.

²⁶ *Annales Blandinienses*, ed. Philip GRIERSON, in *Les Annales de Saint-Pierre de Gand et de Saint-Amand*, Brussels, Palais des académies, 1937 (Recueil de textes pour servir l'étude de l'histoire de Belgique), p. 19.

²⁷ Eckhard FREISE, "Die "Genealogia Arnulfi comitis" des Priesters Witger", in *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, vol. 23, 1989, pp. 235-37.

Corneille²⁸. At the same time, in 959, Flodoard records that Arnulf visited Rheims, giving enough precious metals to decorate the reliquaries and gospel books of the cathedral of Notre-Dame, and also giving gifts to the abbey of Saint-Remi²⁹. In the same year, presumably on the same visit, Arnulf, accompanied by Baldwin, granted the estate of Beautor to the monastery of Saint-Vincent in Laon, the main strategic centre of Lothar's power³⁰. These donations were part of a diplomatic offensive, as Arnulf showed his material support of the institutions which supported Lothar. By creating friendly relations with those churches closest to the Carolingian king, the Count of Flanders could create friendly relations with the king himself.

A fascinating insight into the Flemish dynasty's increasing stress on their ties to the Carolingian family can be found in the genealogical text mentioned above. This genealogy, tracing the descent of Arnulf I and Baldwin III was written around 960 by a priest named Witger, who was probably from the Flemish monastery of Saint-Bertin³¹. In Witger's presentation of Arnulf's descent, Arnulf's Carolingian ancestry is strongly emphasised. The genealogy is split into two halves. The first half shows the descent of King Lothar from Ansbert, grandfather of Arnulf of Metz. The second half links Arnulf and Baldwin into this descent via Arnulf's grandmother Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald. Next to Judith's name, uniquely in the Carolingian half of the genealogy, there is a large cross, signifying Judith as being particularly important; and a marginal note informing the reader that *de Iudith in prima pagina latius*

²⁸ WITGER, *Genealogia Arnulfi Comitis*, ed. Ludwig BETHMANN, *MGH SS*, vol. 9, Hannover, Hahn, 1851, p. 303.

²⁹ FLODOARD, *Annales*, ed. LAUER, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

³⁰ Printed in Alphonse WAUTERS, "Exploration de chartes et de cartulaires existants à la Bibliothèque Nationale, à Paris", in *Compte rendu des séances de la commission royale d'histoire*, 4th ser., vol. 3, 1876, pp. 93-95.

³¹ FREISE, "'Genealogia Arnulfi comitis'", *op. cit.*, p. 234 for date, p. 238 for Witger's background.

inveniens (“you will find more on Judith on the next page”)³². This next page begins the Flemish section of the genealogy, which commences with Judith’s marriage to Baldwin (I) Iron-Arm, Arnulf’s grandfather. The first line of this section, containing Judith’s name, is written in capital letters whereas the next line, containing Baldwin I’s, is not; a further indication to her importance to the genealogy³³. Moreover, Witger makes an explicit link between Arnulf’s descent from Charles the Bald and his lavish gifts to Saint-Corneille of Compiègne, the monastery which Charles had founded³⁴. Arnulf and Lothar, in Witger’s genealogy, sprang from the same kin: by his presentation, Arnulf was a member of the family whose distant ancestor, St Arnulf of Metz, was the man after whom the Count was named as a sign of their shared descent, and his interests and Lothar’s consequently overlapped. The genealogy makes a strong case for their alliance: political co-operation is presented as a necessary outcome of familial ties³⁵.

These friendly relations would soon be needed. At the very beginning of 962, Baldwin III died, and Arnulf I’s regime was left without a mature heir. His grandson, the future Arnulf II, was a young child, and the future of the Flemish county looked uncertain. Trouble arose almost immediately. In 962, Flodoard reports that Arnulf I caught one of his *nepotes* (the precise translation of this word in the *Annales*, as will be discussed below, is problematic) – whom Flodoard does not name – in an act of treachery and had him executed³⁶. This led the deceased’s brother, also called Arnulf, to rebel against the Flemish count. This is clearly

³² Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 776, fol. 33^v; indicated in the print edition at WITGER, *Genealogia Arnulfi Comitum*, ed. BETHMANN, *op. cit.*, p. 303; see FREISE, “‘Genealogia Arnulfi comitis’”, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

³³ Saint-Omer BM MS 776, fol. 34^v.

³⁴ WITGER, *Genealogia*, ed. BETHMANN, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

³⁵ KOZIOL, *Politics of Memory*, *op. cit.*, p. 391, fn. 251.

³⁶ FLODOARD, *Annales*, ed. LAUER, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

important evidence of trouble within the Flemish comital family³⁷. However, the precise import of this trouble varies according to how we identify the *nepos* Arnulf, and, as will become clear below, this is no small task.

Which Arnulf?

Flodoard's bald description of the rebel Arnulf, as Arnulf I's *nepos ipsius omonimum ejus*, creates more historical problems that might at first seem to be the case. Arnulf I had a large family, and given that *nepos* can be translated as both "nephew" and "grandson", the pool of his relatives also called Arnulf was not negligible. Nonetheless, because the identity of the rebel nephew is one of the most important signposts of the fault lines within the Flemish domains, it is necessary to lay out the possibilities as to who it could be. The four potential candidates are laid out below in something of a schematic fashion; given the potential for confusion between Arnulfs, it is hoped the reader will forgive this rather dry presentation in the name of greater clarity.

Of the four potential Arnulfs, the first two are very unlikely, and can thus be dealt with quite quickly. The first candidate is Arnulf of Cambrai, son of Count Isaac of Cambrai. Dhondt argued on grounds of onomastics and geography that this Arnulf was indeed a *nepos* – in this case a grandson – of Arnulf I³⁸. Other historians have been more sceptical of this claim³⁹. Although it is possible, such a kinship link is tenuous on chronological grounds: Arnulf of Cambrai was witnessing charters alongside his father by 941, giving him a date of birth, at the latest, probably in the late 920s, meaning his mother would have had to have been born around

³⁷ DUNBABIN, "Arnulf II", *op. cit.*, p. 54.

³⁸ DHONDT, "Crisis", *op. cit.*, pp. 51-54.

³⁹ Karl Ferdinand WERNER, "Die Nachkommen Karls des Großen bis um das Jahr 1000 (1.-8. Generation)", in Wolfgang BRAUNFELS and Percy Ernst SCHRAMM, eds., *Karl der Große. Lebenswerk und Nachkommen*, vol. 4, Düsseldorf, Verlag Schwann, 1967, p. 471.

the turn of the century⁴⁰. Arnulf of Cambrai therefore looks like a very unlikely fit for the rebel *nepos* Arnulf.

The second of the less likely candidates is Count Arnulf of Ghent, son of Count Dirk II of Holland and a woman named Hildegard. Although there is no direct evidence of Hildegard's relationship with the counts of Flanders, she has been convincingly placed as a member of that family⁴¹. The precise nature of her affiliation is unknown, but was very probably close, and so Arnulf of Ghent was almost certainly Arnulf the Great's *nepos*, although more likely his nephew than his grandson⁴². He is unlikely, however, to be the Arnulf in question. Arnulf of Ghent's family is relatively well known, and he did not have any brothers other than Egbert, Archbishop of Trier, who lived until 993. Moreover, his father Dirk was still alive in 962, and there is no indication of a rupture between him and Arnulf the Great, which there presumably would have been had Arnulf executed one of Dirk's sons⁴³.

The fourth Arnulf to be considered is Arnulf, later count of Boulogne. Since Dhondt's study of the counts of Boulogne, historians have universally accepted that Count Arnulf of

⁴⁰ GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 53, p. 146.

⁴¹ DHONDT, "Crisis", pp. 49-50; WERNER, "Nachkommen", *op. cit.*, p. 469.

⁴² Hildegard is usually argued to have been a daughter of Arnulf the Great by an unknown first wife (rather than by Adele of Vermandois). The English chronicler Æthelweard provides the names of Arnulf the Great's sisters, and Hildegard is not included (ÆTHELWEARD, *Chronicon Æthelwardi*, ed. and trans. Alistair CAMPBELL, London, Nelson, 1962, p. 2); on the other hand, her sons are too old to have been born from a marriage with Adele, given that Arnulf and Adele were only married in 934 (WERNER, "Nachkommen", *op. cit.*, p. 469). Given the lack of evidence for any first marriage, though, along with these chronological difficulties in making Hildegard a daughter of Arnulf I, it seems more probable, although not certain, that Æthelweard was not exhaustive in naming Arnulf's sisters and that Hildegard was Arnulf I's sister rather than his daughter, making Arnulf of Ghent his nephew rather than his grandson.

⁴³ Anton KOCH, "De betrekkingen van de eerste graven van Holland met het vorstendom Vlaanderen", in *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis*, vol. 61, 1948, pp. 32-33.

Boulogne, a son of Arnulf I's brother Adalolf, was the rebel *nepos* of 962⁴⁴. Dhondt argued that the most obvious way for the Count Arnulf of Boulogne known from a charter of 971 to have claimed the county was through hereditary right⁴⁵. That the rebel *nepos* Arnulf chose to rebel in 962, on the death of Baldwin III, who had governed the counties of Boulogne and Ternois, was, Dhondt suggested, an indication that Adalolf's sons, dispossessed by Arnulf I in 933, were taking advantage of the death of Arnulf's appointee as count of Boulogne (that is, Baldwin) to assert their own claim⁴⁶. The appearance of an Arnulf *nepos comitis*, who should probably be identified with the Arnulf of 962, in a 961 witness list of a grant given to Saint-Bertin by Arnulf I also hints at a link with the area⁴⁷. Onomastic indications – that the counts of Boulogne and Ternois, in place by 988, were called Baldwin and Arnulf respectively – also indicate some connection to the Flemish counts⁴⁸. Dhondt himself appears to have been unsure of this identification, advancing it as only as the most probable scenario of several⁴⁹. Certainly, the evidence can be read in different ways: the presence of Arnulf *nepos comitis* in the 961 witness list, for example, may more easily indicate a connection to the comital court rather than the geographical area of the Ternois. In particular, though, the complete lack of evidence for Adalolf having any legitimate offspring raises questions about the scenario outlined above⁵⁰. Dhondt's suggestion is certainly plausible, but whether it is the most plausible interpretation

⁴⁴ E.g. NIEUS, *Un pouvoir comtal*, *op. cit.*, p. 33; TANNER, *Friends, families and allies*, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁴⁵ The charter in question is an eleventh-century forgery: see KOCH (ed.), *Oorkondenboek van Holland en Zeeland*, *op. cit.*, p. 77, with commentary on p. 75; however, as Dhondt argued, the subscription is probably legitimate: DHONDT, "Recherches", *op. cit.*, p. 135.

⁴⁶ DHONDT, "Recherches", *op. cit.*, pp. 131-133.

⁴⁷ FOLCUIN, *Gesta Abbatum Sithiensium*, ed. Oswald HOLDER-EGGER, *MGH SS*, vol. 13, Hannover, Hahn, 1881, p. 632.

⁴⁸ NIEUS, *Un pouvoir comtal*, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

⁴⁹ DHONDT, "Recherches", *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132: "Affirmer que les deux frères... étaient les fils d'Adalolphe, est faire une supposition pure et simple..."

⁵⁰ DHONDT, "Recherches", *op. cit.*, p. 132; a point also made by Philip GRIERSON, *The Origins and Early Development of Flanders to the Death of Arnulf I (965)*, Unpublished thesis, University of Cambridge, 1934, pp. 401-02..

of the evidence is a more delicate question. In the absence of any direct indications of descent between the late tenth century counts of Boulogne and Arnulf I's brother Adalolf, the argument that Count Arnulf of Boulogne was a) a son of Adalolf and b) the rebel of 962 rests on a three-legged stool of onomastics, geography, and chronology.

However, there is another possibility for the origins of the counts of Boulogne which deserves to be explored, this being the family of Everard, advocate of Saint-Bertin⁵¹. Everard and his wife Ricsinda are known to have had a son named Adalolf, who later became abbot of Saint-Bertin⁵². A charter of 981 grants land in the Ternois to the abbey of Sint-Pieters of Ghent on behalf of an Everard and his son Baldwin; odds are very good that this is either the same Everard and another son, or a close relative⁵³. As the progenitor of a family with both links to the area and a very similar *Namengut* to the count of Flanders, Everard must be considered *a priori* at least worth considering as the ancestor of the later counts of Boulogne.

This becomes more significant in light of the chronological difficulties raised by identifying the rebel *nepos* Arnulf with a son of Adalolf of Boulogne. Flodoard states that King Lothar made peace between Arnulf the Great and the rebel Arnulf. Historians have usually interpreted this as meaning that Arnulf restored Boulogne and the Ternois to his nephew⁵⁴. This interpretation, however, fits uneasily with indications that these areas stayed under the control

⁵¹ On whom see Pierre FEUCHÈRE, "Les avoués de Saint-Bertin", in *Bulletin trimestriel de la Société Académique des Antiquaires de la Morinie*, vol. 17, 1948, p. 195.

⁵² FOLCUIN, *Gesta Abbatum Sithiensium*, ed. HOLDER-EGGER, *op. cit.*, p. 628.

⁵³ GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 69, p. 172; DECLERCQ, *Het "Liber Traditionum"*, *op. cit.*, p. 468, argues that this diploma is a forgery of the early eleventh century; but it seems more likely, following the paleographical and diplomatic arguments of KOCH in "Diplomatische studie", *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88 that it was in fact an original with later interpolations in the dispositive clauses relating to property in the *pagus* of Flanders.

⁵⁴ E.g. DUNBABIN, "Arnulf II", *op. cit.*, p. 54.

of Arnulf the Great's immediate successors⁵⁵. An early twelfth-century list of abbots compiled by Lambert of Saint-Omer in his *Liber Floridus*, possibly based on sources similar to the earlier catalogue of abbots known to have existed at the time Lambert wrote, names the immediate predecessors of Abbot Walter, known to have ruled the abbey in the 970s and 980s, as *Balduinus Pulcher comes et abba* and *Ernulfus comes abba*⁵⁶. The Arnulf here could be either Arnulf of Boulogne or Arnulf II, but *Balduinus Pulcher* is most convincingly identified, as Ugé argues, as Baldwin Baldzo, regent in Flanders after Arnulf the Great's death⁵⁷. This makes it very likely that at least the abbey of Saint-Bertin remained under Flemish control after 962⁵⁸. However, we might go further: given the important of Saint-Bertin to the government of the region, it is also very possible that the whole area remained under Arnulf II's control for at least the first few years of his reign, making it unlikely they were restored to a putative son of Adalolf in 962. We might instead speculate that the advocates of the abbey were able to become counts of the area in their own right later (as the advocates of Saint-Riquier did in Ponthieu)⁵⁹. This reading of the evidence is not without its own problems. However, by removing the need to hypothesise undocumented legitimate sons of Adalolf and substituting a relatively well-documented family with the same *Namengut* as the later counts of Boulogne and ties to the area as the potential origin of Count Arnulf of Boulogne, it is arguably a better fit than Dhondt's suggestion. This does, however, impact our understanding of the events of 962. If Count Arnulf

⁵⁵ Karine UGÉ, *Creating the Monastic Past in Medieval Flanders*, York, York Medieval Press, 2005, p. 33.

⁵⁶ On this source, see Jean-Charles BÉDAGUE, "Abbés et prévôts à Sithiu (IX^e-XI^e siècle)", in *Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de la Morinie*, vol. 26, 2008-2011, pp. 81-94, who provides a new edition of the list at p. 96.

⁵⁷ UGÉ, *Monastic Past*, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁵⁸ Steven VANDERPUTTEN, *Monastic Reform as Process: Realities and Representations in Medieval Flanders, 900-1100*, Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 2013, p. 53.

⁵⁹ See Clovis BRUNEL, *Recueil des actes des comtes de Pontieu (1026-1279)*, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1930, pp. ii-iii.

of Boulogne was not Arnulf the Great's nephew, but a more distant relative, then it is unlikely that the crisis which Arnulf the Great faced in 962 was a rebellion in the west of his dominions.

Let us, then, return to the fifth and final potential candidate for the rebel *nepos* Arnulf. This figure emerges in the 981 charter mentioned above⁶⁰. This document specifies that Baldwin, son of Everard, was the nephew of Arnulf of Ghent and another Arnulf, son of Hilduin. The name Hilduin connects this Arnulf to a line of late ninth-century counts from Tournai and Noyon: a Count Hilduin granted the fisc of Tournai to the cathedral of Noyon in the 890s in return for a benefice of land north of Noyon itself, to be held by Hilduin, along with his brother, and his son, also named Hilduin⁶¹. It is likely this son Hilduin from whom Bishop Watelm of Noyon purchased the estate of Cannectancourt in the 930s, and this Hilduin in turn may be the father of the Arnulf in the 981 charter⁶². As Baldwin's father is given in the charter and his relationship with the Arnulfs is unspecified, the connection between the three men must be through Baldwin's mother. As the Arnulfs have different fathers and thus cannot be full siblings, the only way Baldwin could be a nephew of both Arnulfs is if these Arnulfs were half-brothers through their mother, which is chronologically possible given what is known about Arnulf of Ghent's mother Hildegard. As a son of Hildegard, Arnulf son of Hilduin would thus be a *nepos* of Arnulf the Great, either a grandson or, more likely, a nephew. Although seemingly not himself a count, as a powerful, well-connected, local nobleman of illustrious descent threatening Flemish power in a southern frontier zone, Arnulf son of Hilduin could

⁶⁰ See fn. 53 above.

⁶¹ Hilduin's act ed. by Charles DUVIVIER, *Actes et documents anciens intéressant la Belgique*, Brussels, Bayez, 1898, pp. 3-5; for the date, see Henri PIRENNE, "Le fisc royal de Tournai", in *Mélanges d'histoire du Moyen-Age offerts à Ferdinand Lot*, no editor given, Paris, Champion, 1925, p. 644.

⁶² GUY THE TREASURER, *Declaration*, ed. Olivier GUYOTJEANNIN in idem, "Noyonnais et Vermandois aux X^e et XI^e siècles: la déclaration du trésorier Guy et les premières confirmations royales et pontificales des biens du chapitre cathedral de Noyon", in *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes*, vol. 139, 1981, p. 163.

have posed a reasonable threat to Arnulf the Great had he rebelled. Although by no means a certainty, Arnulf son of Hilduin fits the available evidence for the identity of the rebel *nepos* Arnulf the best of all the available candidates⁶³. If this argument is correct, moreover, this moves the locus of the threat to Flemish power from the west, an area long under their dynastic control, towards the relatively recently-conquered south, where, as we have seen, Arnulf I was already facing a threatening political situation. It is very likely, then, that, in the final years of his reign, Arnulf the Great's problems were located along the southern fringe of his territories.

Arnulf's Last Days

With Lothar's help, Arnulf the Great was able to quash his *nepos'* rebellion. Flodoard records what happened as follows:

“King Lothar, after speaking with *princeps* Arnulf, made peace between him and his nephew [...] Then, the *princeps* gave all his land into the hand of the King, so that he might thus be honoured henceforth while he was alive.⁶⁴”

This has been interpreted, probably correctly, as meaning that Arnulf acknowledged Lothar's supremacy in return for acquiring the King's support for the succession of Arnulf the Great's grandson, the future Arnulf II. We will return to the precise nature of the deal made between the two later; for now, it will suffice to note that the 962 agreement seems to have reinforced the ties between Arnulf I and Lothar.

Arnulf's act may have been one of desperation, but it was a logical new expression of the alliance which had been building for several years before Baldwin III's death, which we saw above being expressed through gifts and commemorated in Witger's genealogy. Lothar

⁶³ A view shared by GRIERSON, *Early Development*, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

⁶⁴ FLODOARD, *Annales*, ed. LAUER, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-54: *Rex Lotharius cum Arnulfo principe locutus, pacem fecit inter ipsum et nepotem ipsius [...] Tunc ipse princeps omnem terram suam in manu regis dedit, ita tamen ut in vita sua inde honoratus existeret.*

seems to have kept his promise to honour Arnulf while he was alive. The old Count and the young King can be seen to have had a close relationship for the last three years of Arnulf's life. Arnulf continued his patronage of monasteries in the royal heartlands, granting the estate of Quessy to the monastery of Homblières⁶⁵. At the same time, Arnulf received a series of royal diplomas, including two grants of immunity for Saint-Bertin and Sint-Pieters, safeguarding his gifts to the abbeys against future disturbances⁶⁶. Further indications of Arnulf and Lothar's closeness during this time comes from Flodoard's annals: from 962 onwards, Flodoard gives Arnulf the title of *princeps*, a title which his annals had used almost exclusively for Hugh the Great since 945⁶⁷. Flodoard's use of the title is not completely consistent, but usually denotes special status and power within the West Frankish kingdom. In this case, it seems likely that Arnulf was called *princeps* because of his very close relationship with the King⁶⁸. All indications, then, are that for the last few years of his life, Arnulf and Lothar were closely allied. Then, in March 965, Arnulf died.

Lothar's Intervention after Arnulf's Death

The uncontroversial outlines of the two years after Arnulf's death are as follows. In the immediate aftermath of the death, Flodoard gives Lothar's actions thus:

⁶⁵ The grant confirmed in Louis HALPHEN and Ferdinand LOT, eds., *Recueil des actes de Lothaire et de Louis V, rois de France (954-987)*, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1908 (Chartes et diplômes relatifs à l'histoire de France), no. 18, pp. 38-39.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-35, 45-49.

⁶⁷ The only exceptions are in describing Charles Constantine, *princeps* of Vienne, in 951 (FLODOARD, *Annales*, ed. LAUER, *op.cit.*, p. 129) and Boleslav, *princeps Sarmatarum* (i.e. duke of Bohemia) in 955 (p. 141).

⁶⁸ KOCH, "Graafschap Vlaanderen", *op. cit.*, p. 369.

“And, after *princeps* Arnulf’s death, King Lothar entered his land and, through the mediation of Roric, bishop of Laon, the *proceres* of that province were subjected to the King. When he returned to Laon, his mother Queen Gerberga, with her little son Charles, remained there.⁶⁹”

In addition to subjecting the nobles of Flanders to him, Lothar annexed everything south of the river Lys, including Artois, Ostrevant, Ponthieu and Amiens. Within Flanders, the regency passed to Baldwin Baldzo, the illegitimate son of Adalolf of Boulogne⁷⁰. Baldzo died in 973, and by that time Arnulf II was probably ruling in his own right⁷¹.

In understanding these events, Dhondt and Dunbabin put forth variant opinions on who supported the Flemish comital regime. Both agreed that King Lothar supported the Flemish regime, abiding by the 962 agreement mentioned above, which, it is argued, involved Arnulf I agreeing to partition his territories after his death, with Lothar receiving the south in exchange for ensuring Arnulf II’s succession in the north of Flanders⁷². However, they diverge on the question of how much support the succession had within Flanders, Dhondt arguing that Lothar faced opposition from the Flemish magnates; and Dunbabin that the Flemish political community rallied around Lothar and the new count⁷³.

⁶⁹ FLODOARD, *Annales*, ed. LAUER, *op. cit.*, p. 156: *Arnulfo quoque principe decedent, terram illius rex Lotharius ingreditur et proceres ipsius provinciae, mediante Roricone praesule Laudunensi, eidem subiciuntur regi. Quo Laudunum repetente, mater ipsius Gerberga regina, cum filio Karolo puero ibidem remansit.*

⁷⁰ Baldwin Baldzo’s descent still remains a matter of slight dispute. An eleventh-century genealogical notice (*De Arnulfo Comite*, ed. Ludwig BETHMANN, *MGH SS*, vol. 9, Hannover, Hahn, 1851, p. 304) claims that he was an illegitimate son of Adalolf of Boulogne; but the *Annales Blandinienses*, ed. GRIERSON, *op. cit.*, p. 21, claims that he was a son of Arnulf the Great’s brother Count Ralph. As Grierson points out, however (*Ibid.*, p. 21, fn. 1), Ralph died in 896, making him an unlikely fit for the father of a man active in the third quarter of the tenth century: WERNER, “Nachkommen”, *op. cit.*, pp. 470-471.

⁷¹ DUNBABIN, “Arnulf II”, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 57-58.

⁷² DHONDT, “Crisis”, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63; DUNBABIN, “Arnulf II”, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

⁷³ DHONDT, “Crisis”, *op. cit.*, p. 62; DUNBABIN, “Arnulf II”, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

Examining Lothar's actions, however, reveals that he appears to have attacked Flanders militarily after Arnulf I's death. Flodoard neutrally states that Lothar *ingreditur* ("entered") Arnulf's land⁷⁴. However, several eleventh-century sources less committed to the deliberate neutrality which characterises Flodoard's work paint a much darker picture⁷⁵. In particular, the *Annales Laubienses* (which are not otherwise hostile to Lothar) are much clearer, simply using the word *vastat* ("ravaged")⁷⁶. It would seem that Flodoard is sanitising Lothar's actions, and the King's entrance into Flemish territory was too violent for the negotiated takeover for which Dunbabin argues⁷⁷.

On the other hand, there is also no evidence of trouble in the north of Flanders during the last years of Arnulf I's life. Charter witness lists indicate that there were no major upheavals in the personnel surrounding him. The same names are found in the 960s as are found in the 940s and 950s. To give only the examples about whom more is known than their names, Arnulf

⁷⁴ See fn. 66.

⁷⁵ *Gesta Episcoporum Cameracensium*, ed. Ludwig BETHMANN, *M.G.H. SS*, vol. 7, Hanover, Hahn, 1846, p. 442: *irruens Lotharius rex, possessiones illius [...] cum omni occupatione invadit* ("King Lothar attacked, invaded, and occupied [Arnulf's] possessions"). In context, the *Gesta* is clearly confusing the events of 965 with Lothar's invasion of Lotharingia in 978; this does, however, imply that 965 was sufficiently violent to be confused with the 978 invasion.

⁷⁶ *Annales Laubienses*, ed. Georg Heinrich PERTZ, *M.G.H. SS*, vol. 4, Hannover, Hahn, 1841, p. 17.

⁷⁷ DUNBABIN, "Arnulf II", *op. cit.*, p. 56.

was consistently accompanied by the Winemar family of Ghent⁷⁸, Everard of Saint-Bertin⁷⁹, Ralph, *praetor urbanus* of Saint-Omer⁸⁰, and, most significantly, his son-in-law Dirk II, Count of Holland⁸¹, and his illegitimate nephew Baldwin Baldzo⁸². There are several new faces which appear in 960, but this probably reflects the fact that the quantity of evidence purporting to date from the early 960s increases noticeably, for these new faces are not accompanied by the disappearance of any old ones. The makeup of Arnulf's support within his heartlands remained stable, and provides no evidence of disturbance within the northern part of Flanders. This does

⁷⁸ REGINO of Prüm, *Chronicon*, ed. Friedrich KURZE, in *Reginonis Abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon cum Continuatione Treverensi*, MGH *SS rer Germ*, vol. 50, Hannover, Hahn, 1890, p. 194; *Liber Traditionum Sancti Petri Blandiniensis*, ed. Arnold FAYEN, Ghent, F. Meyer-van Loo, 1906 (Cartulaire de la ville de Gand publié par ordre de la Commission des Archives de Gand, 2nd ser.: chartes et documents, vol. 1), no. 61, p. 54; no. 71, p. 77; no. 73, p. 78; FOLCUIN, *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium*, ed. HOLDER-EGGER, *op. cit.*, p. 628; GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 53, p. 146; see also no. 57, p. 151 (forged, but may preserve traces of a genuine original: see OPPERMANN, *Die älteren Urkunden*, vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 119); on this family, see Ernst WARLOP, *The Flemish Nobility before 1300*, pt. 1 in 2 vols, Courtrai, G. Desmet-Huysman, 1975, pp. 45-46.

⁷⁹ FOLCUIN, *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium*, ed. HOLDER-EGGER, *op. cit.*, pp. 628, 632; see also GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 53, p. 146, see also no. 57, p. 151, no. 58, p. 153 (a forged charter with a real witness list: see KOCH's comment in *Oorkondenboek van Holland en Zeeland*, vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 64).

⁸⁰ FAYEN, ed., *Liber traditionum*, *op. cit.*, p. 78; FOLCUIN, *Gesta abbatum Sithiensium*, ed. HOLDER-EGGER, *op. cit.*, pp. 628, 632; GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 53, p. 146; see also no. 59, p. 155 (forged, but just possibly based on an original grant: see KOCH's comments, "Diplomatische studie", *op. cit.*, pp. 112-13).

⁸¹ FAYEN, ed., *Liber traditionum*, *op. cit.*, no. 69, p. 76; Auguste VAN LOKEREN (ed.), *Chartes et documentes de l'abbaye de Saint Pierre*, Ghent, H. Hoste, 1868, no. 32, p. 36; GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 53, p. 146 (and also no. 58, p. 153); and particularly Johanne AUTENREITH, Dieter GEUENICH and Karl SCHMID, eds., *Das Verbrüderungsbuch der Abtei Reichenau*, MGH *Libri Mem NS*, 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1979), p. 56; on Dirk, see Anton KOCH, "Grenzverhältnisse an der Niederschelde, vornehmlich im 10. Jahrhundert", in *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter*, vol. 21 (1956), pp. 201-203.

⁸² FAYEN, ed., *Liber traditionum*, *op. cit.*, no. 73, p. 78; and in particular *De Arnulfo Comite*, ed. BETHMANN, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

not suggest, contrary to Dhondt's opinion, that there was any particular fracture amongst Arnulf I's core support base during the last years of his life.

Trouble within the Flemish heartlands (as opposed to the conquered southern territories) only seems to have begun with Arnulf's death, with signs of a conflict brewing over the regency between Dirk of Holland and Baldwin Baldzo. The key evidence for this is a charter purporting to be the execution of Arnulf's will. The charter is dated to the 28 March 964; this must be a mistake for or miscopying of 965, as Arnulf was still alive in 964. The pseudo-original single-sheet as it currently exists is a forgery of the first half of the eleventh century. It is part of a group of several charters forged at that time dealing with property in Krombrugge, and seems to have been written to support Sint-Pieter's claims to land in the area⁸³. However, as both Koch and Declercq note, it appears to be based on an original document, for, despite the fact that the extant charter is issued in the name of four men – Dirk of Holland, Baldwin Baldzo, Eric and Everwin – most of the grant is written in the first-person singular⁸⁴. It begins with an *ego* and refers to *senioris mei* ("my lord") and *traditioni me* ("my donation"). Consequently, it appears that the current charter has as a base layer an original which was probably issued in Dirk's name alone⁸⁵. The day after Arnulf's death, Dirk acted as his executor, carrying out his last wishes "by the will and command of my deceased lord Arnulf", and in the presence of many of Arnulf's inner circle.⁸⁶ Baldwin Baldzo was probably not involved: Dirk moved quickly to monopolise Arnulf's legacy.

⁸³ DECLERCQ, *Het "Liber Traditionum"*, *op. cit.*, pp. 426-427, 456.

⁸⁴ GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 62, p. 159; FAYEN, ed., *Liber Traditionum*, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

⁸⁵ See KOCH's comments: *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 62, p. 159.

⁸⁶ GYSSELING and KOCH, eds., *Diplomata Belgica*, *op. cit.*, no. 62, p. 160: *ex uoluntate et iussu senioris mei Arnulfi defuncti*. The witness list includes Winemar, Eilbod, Stephen, Odoacer, Ralph, Asceric, Folbert the *vicarius*, Dodo, Manno and William, all of whom were regular witnesses to Arnulf's grants.

Dirk's claims did not go uncontested, however. The next year, 966, Lothar issued a diploma for the Ghent abbey of Sint-Baafs⁸⁷. In this diploma, Baldwin's blood relationship to Lothar and Arnulf is emphasised, and juxtaposed to his claim to the regency: Baldzo is "a kinsman of Us and [Arnulf the Great], and the *nutricius* of the boy Arnulf [II]"⁸⁸. He approaches Lothar to renew the immunity for which Arnulf the Great had originally petitioned, indicating that Baldzo was following in Arnulf's footsteps⁸⁹. The idea seems to have been to use a strategy originally intended by Arnulf to gain an alliance with Lothar to cement Baldwin's status and position within Flanders. Arnulf's strategy had been appropriated and turned back in on itself. Moreover, just as Baldzo played no role in Dirk's charter, Dirk plays no role in Lothar's diploma. In short, this diploma suggests that Lothar was backing Baldwin Baldzo as regent in Flanders over Dirk.

These diplomas are from the year after Arnulf's death, but they may help explain Lothar's actions during 965. If Lothar took advantage of a schism between Baldwin Baldzo and Dirk of Holland to invade Flanders and impose Baldwin over Dirk, making the resistance he seems to have met from the Flemish *proceres* resistance from Dirk's supporters, this fits with the indications of both the violence of Lothar's invasion and of the fundamental cohesion of most of the Flemish political community. In the end, though, through Roric of Laon's mediation, it seems a negotiated settlement was reached – the significance of Roric is unknown,

⁸⁷ The Sint-Baafs diploma is that rare and wonderful thing, a Ghent charter which is an uncontested and authentic original: VERHULST, "Deux chartes", *op. cit.*, p. 23; a diploma for Sint-Pieters purportedly issued at the same time is a forgery: DECLERCQ, *Het "Liber Traditionum"*, *op. cit.*, pp. 422-427.

⁸⁸ HALPHEN and LOT, eds., *Actes de Lothaire*, *op. cit.*, no. 26, p. 64: *noster ejusque consanguineus nutriciusque Arnulfi pueri*.

⁸⁹ See KOZIOL, *Politics of Memory*, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

although there had been links in the late ninth and early tenth centuries between Laon and Flanders⁹⁰.

The first part of this compromise was that Baldwin Baldzo was accepted as regent. In October 965, he granted his own land in Courtrai to Sint-Pieters for the soul of Arnulf⁹¹. The witness list features Charles, Lothar's brother, and it seems that his presence at Baldwin's donation was to show royal support for his regime. The rest of the witness list is also noteworthy. Out of thirteen names on the list (not including Baldwin or Charles), six were not attested during Arnulf's reign⁹². Two of the others, Eric and Everwin, are the same names as were written into Dirk's charter when the pseudo-original was forged. It is also noticeable that only one name, that of Folbert, *vicarius* of Ghent, appears as a witness to both Dirk's and Baldzo's grants⁹³. From this, it appears that Baldwin did not have the support of most of the coterie of Arnulf's followers. This suggests that the figures surrounding Baldwin at this time were outsiders in Flemish politics, possibly southerners from Baldwin's base in Courtrai or the lands which Arnulf had conquered and which were now under Lothar's rule.

This may also indicate that, contrary to later claims, Arnulf the Great had not chosen Baldzo as regent after his death. Dirk of Holland had been a distinguished figure in his court, and had the support of many of his men; by contrast, Baldzo appears as Lothar's imposition. In short, it seems that Lothar was not abiding by his agreement with Arnulf.

History was rewritten to reflect the new-found legitimacy of Baldzo's position. Dirk's charter was interpolated to include Baldwin and his allies Everwin and Eric, possibly to fit with

⁹⁰ Philip GRIERSON, "The Early Abbots of St. Bavo's of Ghent", in *Revue bénédictine*, vol. 49, 1939, pp. 55-56.

⁹¹ FAYEN, ed., *Liber Traditionum*, *op. cit.*, no. 75, pp. 79-80.

⁹² FAYEN, ed., *Liber Traditionum*, *op. cit.*, no. 75, p. 80: the names are Hengeramnus, Heimezo, Helmar, Ragenfrid, Herleus and Vorgisus.

⁹³ On whom, see KOCH, "Grenzverhältnisse an der Niederschelde", *op. cit.*, p. 206.

the view of the 960s which had become standard by the early eleventh century; but as we do not know when this interpolation was made this suggestion is purely speculative. A story was spread that Arnulf had appointed Baldzo as his grandson's regent. This account is found repeated in a note of the early eleventh century, and claims that in addition to being Arnulf's kinsman, Baldzo was Arnulf's choice of regent; it also notes that Baldzo gave his property at Desselgem to Sint-Pieters⁹⁴. Both these sources, from the late tenth or early eleventh centuries, are traces of a cover-up of Baldzo's original usurpation.

Why did Dirk accept this? To answer that question, let us look at the Ottonian connections of the Flemish succession crisis. After Lothar's first expedition into Flanders, in spring 965, he went to Cologne for Easter with his mother, Gerberga⁹⁵. At this Easter meeting, as judged from the actions of Otto the Great the following year, Lothar won the support of his uncle for his actions in Flanders. In autumn 965, Gerberga and Charles returned to Flanders to reinforce Baldzo's authority.

In January 966, Otto headed north. On the 22 January 966, he issued a diploma in Maastricht confirming Sint-Pieters' property, including "Krombrugge in the *pagus* of Brabant, which Our beloved sister Queen Gerberga restored to the monks for the salvation of the soul of her *fidelis* Count Arnulf [I]"⁹⁶. This clause in particular represents Otto's reinforcement of royal authority in Flanders: Otto chooses to emphasise the role of Gerberga, with Arnulf the Great in a subordinate role. By issuing this diploma for a Ghent monastery, Otto demonstrated his support for the new regime in Flanders, and specifically for royal actions there. By early

⁹⁴ *De Arnulfo Comite*, ed. BETHMANN, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

⁹⁵ FLODOARD, *Annales*, ed. LAUER, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁹⁶ *Die Urkunden Otto I.*, ed. Theodor SICKEL, *MGH DD*, vol. 1, Hannover, Hahn, 1879-1884, n. 317, p. 431: *Crumbriggā in pago Bragbatinse, quam villam carissima nostra soror Gerbergis regina monachis ob remedium animę fidelis comitis sui reddidit Arnulfi.*

February, Otto had moved to Nijmegen, next to Dirk's territory⁹⁷. Adalbert of Magdeburg describes his activity during early 966 as setting Lotharingia in order before an expedition to Italy, and his diplomas at this time are mostly for Lotharingian recipients; but a part of his actions also seems to have been to warn Dirk not to start any trouble in Flanders⁹⁸. If Otto provided the stick, Lothar was able to provide a carrot. In 969, he issued a diploma granting Dirk property, probably in the south of Flanders⁹⁹. Although several years later, it is likely that this represents part of an agreement made at the time of the crisis, and that it was a part of the reason why Dirk accepted Baldzo's coup¹⁰⁰. After Otto had left, Lothar went to Arras in May and issued the previously-discussed diploma, confirming and supporting Baldzo once more.

Conclusion

Arnulf I, right up until the end of his reign, had been a savvy political operator. Faced with trouble on his southern borders in the face of conflicts over Amiens, Ponthieu and Normandy, and with his Vermandois alliance weakened by the death of his wife, he began to seek an alliance with King Lothar, skilfully exploiting his relatively-distant links of kinship to justify partnership between the two men. After Baldwin III's death, Arnulf could use this link not merely to solve the problem of his rebel *nepos*, but also to attempt to secure his grandson's succession. The years 962-965 saw Arnulf using his connections to Lothar to gain the advantage over his potential enemies, through the new status which Flodoard's use of the word

⁹⁷ *Die Urkunden Otto I.*, ed. SICKEL, *op. cit.*, no. 321, p. 435.

⁹⁸ ADALBERT of Magdeburg, *Continuatio Reginonis*, ed. Friedrich KURZE, in *Reginonis Abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon cum Continuatione Treverensi*, MGH SS rer Germ, vol. 50, Hannover, Hahn, 1890, p. 177.

⁹⁹ HALPHEN and LOT, eds., *Actes de Lothaire*, *op. cit.*, no. 32, pp. 78-79; on the identification of this grant, see KOCH, "Grenzverhältnisse an der Niederschelde", *op. cit.*, pp. 203-205.

¹⁰⁰ DUNBABIN, "Arnulf II", *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.

princeps reveals him to have had, through royal diplomas of defence for Arnulf's favoured monasteries, and through the King's help in negotiating with internal opposition.

By drawing on his blood ties to Lothar and making royal authority a key part of his political strategies in these years, however, Arnulf created a situation favourable not merely to himself, but also to the King. By emphasising the king's authority within a Flemish context, Arnulf, perhaps inadvertently, ended up giving Lothar much more room for manoeuvre than he might otherwise have had. The results of this were seen after Arnulf's death. In the face of dissent between two key figures of Arnulf's court, Lothar was able to turn Arnulf's political strategies into a tool for usurping the Count's southern conquests and putting his own candidate, Baldwin Baldzo, into the Flemish regency. Lothar skilfully manipulated his ties within and around Flanders, giving him the edge over Dirk of Holland in exploiting the succession; and ultimately it was he who gained the most from the crisis.