
H-France Review Vol. 23 (January 2023), No. 11

Boris Bove, Alain Salamagne, and Caroline Zum Kolk, eds., *L'Itinérance de la Cour en France et en Europe: Moyen Âge - XIX^e siècle*, Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2021. 414 pp. Bibliography. €34.00 (pb). ISBN 978-2-7574-3362-1; €24.00 (eb). ISBN 978-2-7574-3373-7.

Review by Scott Miller, Northwestern University.

Although well-known to specialists of medieval culture, the phenomenon of the mobile or itinerant court is often sidelined in scholarship and subject to grand narratives that allege its inexorable decay at the onset of modernity. The eighteen essays gathered in *L'Itinérance de la Cour en France et en Europe*, edited by Boris Bove, Alain Salamagne, and Caroline zum Kolk, seek to rectify this historiographic situation and shed light on the central role that court mobility played in the economies, political development, and artistic history of Europe. The essays span western and central European history from late antiquity to the middle of the nineteenth century, a breadth that calls attention to the widespread appeal of an itinerant lifestyle to rulers facing varying political, economic, and cultural conditions, the non-linear evolution of the practice across time, its multifarious goals, and the complex logistics that sustained it.

Caroline zum Kolk and Boris Bove lay the stakes for the project in two introductory essays, after which the book is divided into four major sections. The essays in the first part, *Enjeux de l'itinérance*, propose that itinerancy helped to moderate relations between rulers and their constituents and regulated political and economic life. Sylvian Destephen characterizes itinerancy as a late antique response to classical discourses on generosity and wealth redistribution, while Martin Gravel's essay demonstrates that courtly mobility mutated in form and significance as the Carolingian dynasty rose and fell. Élisabeth Lalou and Pierre Monnet offer windows into two contrasting practices of royal itinerancy that emerged in later medieval Europe. Although the quality and survival of records makes definitive statements difficult, Lalou seeks to trace the economic liabilities and benefits of itinerancy in Capetian France, whose kings developed a highly stable region of residence orbiting the royal capitol of Paris. Monnet's investigation, by contrast, calls attention to a less stable system at work in the Holy Roman Empire, where networks of royal sites developed and collapsed with great speed thanks to shifts in dynasty, the turnover in generations, and even the changing fortunes of an individual ruler. In the final essay in this section, Éric Hassler considers the publication of royal itineraries in the *Wienerische Zeitung* as a tool to publicize the health and fitness of the Austrian royal family.

In the second section, *L'Itinérance des Courtisans*, the authors shift their focus toward its function in court politics and diplomacy. Stéphane Pequignot's essay deploys special registers, the

accounts of ambassadors, and diplomatic correspondence to demonstrate that the practice of itinerancy provided a logistical framework for special diplomatic corps, even as it simultaneously injected a factor of incertitude into the outcomes of their negotiations. In his chapter, Gergely Kiss describes a form of weaponized itinerancy within the Kingdom of Hungary, where the king and pontifical legates fled or occupied the *medium regni* or royal residential region to avoid or elicit confrontation. Jean-Baptiste Santamaria focuses on the court of Marguerite de France, allowing a consideration of the gendered nature of court mobility and its importance to personal rule, to which he appends a useful discussion of the organization and logistics of a court designed to move. Jean S ni 's discussion of the career of Ippolito d'Este in France calls attention to the court as a site of convergence for many agents, each attempting to achieve their own goals. S ni 's essay offers an instructive example of an elite man pursuing itinerancy for ends other than the consolidation of territory, in which a courtier sought to induce the king to come to him by building a ch teau.

S ni 's contribution also serves as a bridge to the next section, *Les Conditions Pratiques de L'Itin rance*, which considers the effect of mobility upon the arts, architecture, and material life within courts. Alain Salamagne opens the section with an article addressing the general trends in the design of castle space in late medieval France. He does not tether these developments to the practice of royal itinerancy but seeks to discuss the material conditions that were seen by courtiers when arriving at a ch teau during the reigns of the later Valois kings of France. Ludovic Nys, by contrast, finds court itinerancy a causal factor in the dispersal of artistic style across Europe in the late Middle Ages. The articles of Alexandra Beauchamp, B n dict-Lecarpentier-Bertrand, and Christophe Levanthal reveal with remarkable detail and precision the logistical systems that supported the daily life and motion of late medieval and early modern courts.

The final section, *La Mobilit  d'une Cour S dentaire*, calls attention to the enduring vitality of courtly mobility under the later Bourbons and the Second Empire. Pascale Moriche's article focuses on a map drawn by Pierre-Louis Daudet. Moriche characterizes the map as a representation of a historical trip of Louis XV and an imaginative trip that called upon the visual mindsets of viewers accustomed to being on the road. In his article Beno t Carr  counters Louis XVI's reputation as a "stay-at-home" king, calling attention to his often-clandestine journeys from the court of Versailles to hunt and engage in secret business. In the final article in the section, Xavier Mauduit characterizes itinerancy as a central aspect of Napoleon III's drive to reestablish a lifestyle for the French ruler that calls upon earlier precedents and on parity with those of other European royals.

Taken together, the chapters offer a broad view of the practice of motion as a political maneuver, a performance of class, a logistical apparatus, and a context for the development of the arts across sixteen centuries of European political history. The collection calls for comparison to English exempla. S ni 's description of Ippolito d'Este's construction project at Le Grande Ferrare, for instance, gestures to a shared cross-channel grammar of elite posturing and the parallel of the contemporary English "prodigy house." Now classic studies by Matthew Johnson [1], Robert Liddiard [2], and Oliver Creighton [3], have furthermore called attention to castle features designed to impress those moving through the landscape, demonstrating that inter-site motion determined the form of castles and their landscapes more than the current essays suggest. The essays share a common attention to detail and archival sources that allows for textured descriptions of patterns of motion and the logistical apparatuses that supported them. New terms such as "residential region" and "micro-itinerancy" characterize forms of elite motion--that could

be overlooked due to their quotidian nature, short term, or short distance—are welcome to researchers in the field, who have received few nuanced terms to describe different forms of travel they often encounter in our research. Taken together, the essays also open questions about the boundaries and relevancy of the term “itinerancy” itself. In his concluding remarks, Boris Bove begs the question whether the dichotomy between sedentarism and itinerancy holds if rulers as diverse as Charlemagne and Napoleon III could be characterized as “itinerant” to some extent. As the term “itinerancy” comes under increased scrutiny, the essays gathered into this volume will serve as a touchstone for further research.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Caroline zum Kolk, “Introduction”

Boris Bove and Caroline zum Kolk, “La mobilité royale au prisme des itinéraires du roi (1180-1792)”

Sylvain Destephen, “L’économie des voyages de la cour impériale d’Hadrien à Justinien”

Martin Gravel, “Un détournement des codes de l’itinérance carolingienne: les déplacements surveillés de Charles le Simple (927-929)”

Élisabeth Lalou, “L’impact économique de l’itinérance royale sous Philippe IV le Bel”

Pierre Monnet, “L’itinérance des rois et empereurs dans l’Empire, XIVe-XVe siècles”

Éric Hassler, “Voyager et communiquer: les itinérances curiales viennoises au travers de la gazette de Vienne (1703-1780)”

Stéphane Péquignot, “Diplomatie et itinérance curiale: Cinq ambassades des rois d’Aragon en France (premier tiers du XIVe siècle)”

Gergely Kiss, “Convergence ou divergence? Le problème de l’itinérance de la cour royale et des représentants pontificaux en Hongrie (XIIIe – début du XIVe siècle)”

Jean-Baptiste Santamaria, “La cour itinérante de Marguerite de France, comtesse de Flandres, d’Artois et de Bourgogne (v. 1312-1382)”

Jean Sènié, “Ippolito d’Este et l’itinérance Curiale (1536-1549)”

Alain Salamagne, “Recevoir la cour au château (1400-1550)”

Ludovic Nys, “Les mobilités curiales en Hainaut, de Guillaume Ier d’Avesnes à Guillaume IV de Bavière”

Alexandra Beauchamp, “L’itinérance des rois, reines, et infants d’Aragon de la fin du Moyen Âge et la gestion administrative et comptable de leur consommation alimentaire”

Bénédicte Lecarpentier-Bertrand, “Des campements militaires aux 'plaisirs': la gestion des déplacements de la cour de France au XVIIe siècle”

Christophe Levantal, “Brefs aperçus de l'itinérance de Louis XIV: horaires, logements, sustentation et locomotion”

Pascale Mormiche, “Un outil: la carte-itinéraire de Versailles a Fontainebleau pour l'usage du jeune Louis XV en août 1724”

Benoît Carré, “Les échappées de Louis XVI: itinérance curiale et mobilité royale (1774-1792)”

Xavier Mauduit, “L'empereur voyage: l'itinérance curiale sous le règne de Napoléon III (1852-1870)”

Boris Bove, “Conclusions”

NOTES

[1] Matthew Johnson, *Behind the Castle Gate: from medieval to Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[2] Robert Liddiard, *Castles in Context: Power, Symbolism and Landscape, 1066 to 1500* (Oxford: Windgather Press, 2005).

[3] Oliver H. Creighton, *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2009).

Scott Miller
Northwestern University
scottmiller2018@u.northwestern.edu

Copyright © 2022 by the Society for French Historical Studies, all rights reserved. The Society for French Historical Studies permits the electronic distribution of individual reviews for nonprofit educational purposes, provided that full and accurate credit is given to the author, the date of publication, and the location of the review on the H-France website. The Society for French Historical Studies reserves the right to withdraw the license for redistribution/republication of individual reviews at any time and for any specific case. Neither bulk redistribution/republication in electronic form of more than five percent of the contents of *H-France Review* nor republication of any amount in print form will be permitted without permission. For any other proposed uses, contact the Editor-in-Chief of H-France. The views posted on *H-France Review* are not necessarily the views of the Society for French Historical Studies.

ISSN 1553-9172