

*Borders and Freedom of Movement in the Holy Roman Empire*

By Luca Scholz. Studies in German History. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN 9780198845676. Pp. 288

This is not a cartographic study, but maps of the period do not play the role in this book that might be hoped. It is possibly disappointing for example not to find a discussion of such cartographers as the Homann family. Nevertheless, this valuable scholarly study, mostly of the seventeenth century, uses the regulation of travel to throw much light on the practical understanding of boundaries and therefore the territories within the Empire. Dr Scholz, a Lecturer at the University of Manchester, argues that the very idea of stable territorial borders was not self-evident before the late eighteenth century. Indeed, as he demonstrates, different, and even contradictory, conceptions of boundaries coexisted in the same areas for extended periods. Related to this, borders were frequently seen as zones not lines, and Scholz profitably analyses them accordingly. He ably assesses how movement was promoted, restricted and negotiated through safe-conduct and what practical impact boundaries had, if any, on the channelling of mobility.

Scholz argues that a key form of territoriality arose with what he terms staging the border, with safe-conduct processions forcing escorts to agree on the location where the conductees were handed over to the escorts of another ruler. Linked to this, 'mobility controls' generally took place not at the boundaries of homogenous territories but, instead, at bottlenecks and, often related, toll stations along roads and rivers. He argues that it was not until the second half of the eighteenth century that the levy of duties moved more to the outer borders of territories, becoming increasingly, as with Bavaria from the 1760s, a matter of border tolls, and not passage tolls. An impressive series of maps of customs stations drawn by Scholz chart this process from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, with particular attention to Bavaria, Saxony, and the eastern Alps. His useful maps focus on points, rather than lines and polygons, in order to demonstrate his thesis about territoriality. These maps are a deliberate contrast to modern maps of the Holy Roman Empire that emphasise political and jurisdictional boundaries. Unfortunately, no contemporary maps are offered of this process. In large part, this reflects Scholz's understandable determination not to repeat material from Andreas Rutz's very lengthy *Die Beschreibung des Raums* (2018), which offers much material on differing forms of contemporary mapping of the Holy Roman Empire. Rutz does not deal, as Scholz does, with the actual control of movement.

Instead, the very few contemporary manuscript maps and drawings that are deployed seek to reconstruct the complex spatial settings in which disputes over passage rights arose, with the example chosen being Mühlendorf, a city-enclave of the Prince-Bishopric of Salzburg within the Electorate of Bavaria. A 1653 drawing of the reception of the Emperor Ferdinand III at the city gate, and paintings

of the gate in 1636 and 1654, provide an instructive demonstration of the extent to which safe-conduct rituals were located in closely delineated spatial contexts. As Scholz argues, pictorial records of safe-conduct privileges were an important adjunct to written ones. Although not reproduced here, Scholz also makes reference to a large map produced in about 1534 during a safe-conduct dispute between the Duke of Württemberg and the Imperial Free City of Ulm. Commissioned by the latter, this map offered much detail on the geographic details of the valley in dispute.

Scholz's impressive and wideranging book offers much to those interested in understanding early-modern boundaries in the Holy Roman Empire. The book would benefit from the newly-published volume of the *History of Cartography*, and, possibly, with a wider engagement with important non-German scholarship on frontier studies, but it is nevertheless a very welcome one in illuminating ideas of territorial practice. Hopefully, the same thesis can be assessed for other areas such as the Italian states.

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