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Trans-Regnal Kingship in the Thirteenth Century. Conference funded by the British Academy Global Professorship programme and hosted by the German Historical Institute London, 23–5 March 2023. Conveners: Jörg Peltzer (Heidelberg University/University of East Anglia) and Nicholas Vincent (University of East Anglia)

The conference 'Trans-Regnal Kingship in the Thirteenth Century' focused on the question of how changing ideas and practices of kingship in the thirteenth century (such as the redefinition of the feudal tie between two rulers, the king as emperor in his kingdom, and the emergence of the *communitas regni* — the 'community of the kingdom') impacted on the long-established practice of trans-regnal rule, and the extent to which personnel-related, organizational and material findings showed the development of ties between kingdoms. 'Trans-regnal kingship' was defined in broad terms here, referring to kings ruling over at least two kingdoms, but also to kings ruling over a kingdom and other geographically more distant territories. The organizers emphasized that their intention was not to use this term as a substitute for established terms, such as unions, composite monarchies, or empires, but to draw attention to the changing characteristics of kingship in the thirteenth century. The geographical focus was on the Angevin Empire, the lands of Charles of Anjou, France**,** the Holy Roman Empire, and the Papacy. Thirteen researchers from Europe and the USA explored these questions from different perspectives.

The topic of trans-regnal kingship is barely touched upon in the contemporary theoretical treatises examined by Frédérique Lachaud (Sorbonne University). The 'monarchical' character of kingship may have been a significant argumentative hurdle here; yet sovereignty over multiple realms was not seen in an entirely positive light either. After all, one could recognize a tyrant by his zealous attempts to subjugate other territories. As William Chester Jordan (Princeton University) argued in his evening lecture, scepticism also prevailed in the theological understanding of trans-regnal kingship at the court of the French King Louis IX. According to Jordan, this may have been one

reason why Louis himself refused to wear another crown. New lines of thought were also emerging at the papal court. Here, according to Barbara Bombi (University of Kent), emphasis was placed on the one hand—and with reference to pertinent sections in the Gospels of St Mark and St John—on the pope's sovereignty over worldly rulers, and on the other, after the publication of the decretal letter *Novit ille* by Innocent III in April/May 1204, on the pope's right to act as an arbitrator in disputes between two rulers. This created a concrete tool for legitimizing the pope's active intervention in the conflict between the Angevin and Capetian rulers.

Len Scales (Durham University) and Björn Weiler (Aberystwyth University) examined the topic of trans-regnal kingship in chronicles focusing on the Holy Roman Empire. Looking at the evidence from the Empire, Scales showed that although there was an awareness that sovereignty over several kingdoms was a distinctive feature of the realm, this awareness varied considerably by region. This meant rulers enacted imperial rule in a broad variety of ways. Weiler's examination of the English perspective on the phenomenon of empire—based primarily on the prolific writings of the St Albans monk Matthew Paris—revealed a complex, at times unclear picture. Contemporary concepts of empire were informed by more or less accurate knowledge about both the Roman Empire of antiquity and the Holy Roman Empire, but the question of trans-regnal kingship was not discussed in any detail. Was it too self-evident in this context to warrant specific focus on it?

Ruling practice in the Holy Roman Empire was the subject of papers by Martin Kaufhold (University of Augsburg) and Lioba Geis (University of Cologne). Kaufhold began by referring to a qualitative shift in the wielding of power from the twelfth to the late thirteenth century. Whereas active rule—with all its associated problems—was part of the Staufen emperors' self-understanding and practices on both sides of the Alps, it was different with the kings of the 'Interregnum'. At this time, active rule was concentrated on the lands north of the Alps, and if rulers were absent for long periods, this led to the development of new structures, in particular arbitration. Under these conditions, interlinking the territories north and south of the Alps in terms of people and administration would have been inconceivable.

According to Geis, Sicily was not integrated with the Holy Roman Empire even under the Staufen rulers; in fact, unlike his father, Frederick II emphasized the kingdom's independence from the Empire. Sicily was connected with the Empire but was not a long-standing part of it. The Sicilian administration was also run by natives, although Frederick's provisions for the rigorous separation of Sicily were toned down before the end of his reign. There was even an exchange of personnel with northern Italy. New dynamics emerged when the crown passed to Charles of Anjou, whose remarkable accumulation of titles and claims in the Mediterranean was the subject of the paper by David Abulafia (University of Cambridge). In Sicily, Charles' reign led to a succession of French administrators in the kingdom. Furthermore, as shown by Paola Vitolo (University of Naples Federico II), the new rulers clearly left their mark in architectural terms in both the style and intensity of their building activity—possibly even more so than Frederick II. But there is little evidence of a strategy focused on closer integration across his territories. Charles' trans-regnal rule manifested primarily in his person.

Charles of Anjou is perhaps the most prominent case of a French ruler who tried to acquire multiple territories in the Mediterranean, but he was not the only one. Gregory Lippiatt (University of Exeter) discussed the reigns of the Lusignans, Briennes, and Montforts, which were the result of crusader campaigns. Whereas the Lusignans kept their relatives in Poitou at a distance, so that there was little question of trans-regnal rule, the Briennes remained very much anchored in the Champagne region, a finding which is perhaps evidence of their varying strength in the kingdoms of Cyprus (Lusignan) and Jerusalem (Brienne). The Montforts' approach of keeping all options open on both sides falls between these two extremes.

Daniel Power's (Swansea University) contribution analysed another *locus classicus* of trans-regnal rule: the Angevin Empire after 1204–6, that is, after the loss of Normandy and Greater Anjou to Capetian France. Overall, little attempt was made to strengthen ties with the remaining Continental possessions by sending out administrators from England or by creating cross-Channel lordships. Nonetheless, Henry III increasingly had his eye on Gascony, and in 1252 he declared the duchy to be permanently and irrevocably part of the

English Crown and the royal demesne. His motive here was to create an appanage for his son Edward. Consequently, the seneschals usually came from England, although the lower-ranking administrative roles were still held by locals. Administrative rule was also the focus of the paper by Frédéric Boutoulle (Bordeaux Montaigne University) on the practice of inquests in Gascony. There is evidence of the practice in individual cases from the end of King John's reign onwards; it increased under Edward from the 1250s, but it was nowhere near as frequent as in England. However, inquests were widespread, including in Capetian France, so it is not clear how far we can speak of a specifically Angevin ruling practice here. Lindy Grant (University of Reading) also addressed this ambiguity in her paper on architecture—primarily church buildings—in the Angevins' (former) Continental lands. While there has never been any doubt about the political significance of Charles of Anjou's decision to rebuild the magnificent castle in Angers, the situation is much more complex with regard to church buildings. Although it is certainly the case that, from the 1240s, regional motifs were replaced with the Rayonnant style associated with the Capetians, this could hardly have been a clear political statement, for it happened not only in conquered domains but also in places where the bishops were close to the Angevin kings. Here, trans-regnal kingship interfaced with aesthetic ideas and the competition between bishops within the Church. David Carpenter (King's College London) offered conference participants a direct experience of architecture from the period by taking them on a tour of Westminster Abbey, built by the Angevin king Henry III. With its complex use of architectural forms and the tombs of Eleanor of Castile (wife of Edward I and daughter of Joan, countess of Ponthieu) and Aymer de Valence (the son of William de Valence, a Lusignan half-brother of Henry III), it impressively demonstrated some of the aspects of trans-regnal kingship in the thirteenth century addressed by the contributors. A concluding discussion rounded off the conference, and the papers will be published.

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