

Stéphane BLOND, « L'Atlas de Trudaine. Pouvoirs, administrations et savoirs techniques, vers 1730-vers 1780 » (The Atlas of Trudaine. Powers, administrations and technical knowledge, around 1730-around 1780), Ph. D Thesis of modern history directed by Daniel Nordman, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2008, 5 volumes.

This thesis studies a source neglected by historiography: the atlas of Trudaine. This cartographic inventory dedicated to the royal roads is ordered at the end of the years 1730 by Philibert Orry (1689-1747), a controller general of finances who tries to cure at the catastrophic state of the French roads. The atlas owes its name with two administrators in charge of his realization and whose role deserved to be evaluated: Daniel-Charles Trudaine (1703-1769) and his son, Jean-Charles-Philibert Trudaine de Montigny (1733-1777).

The atlas forms a vast corpus which 2 500 roadmaps and more than 900 plans of structures. Handwritten sources preserved in a hundred deposits are mobilized to describe the role of the various actors and the technical knowledge implemented. The analysis is led around two objectives: the examination of the methods of making of the atlas and a better knowledge of its stakes for the Power. For that purpose, three great parts are devoted to strong times of its history: its origins, its development and its uses.

This study reveals a singular relationship between the Power and the cartographic tool which constitutes the principal support of a vast politics dedicated to the regional planning. With this vast collection of maps, the administrators have at their disposal a very detailed source which makes it possible to evaluate and to plan road work and their incidences. From the broader point of view, it also appears that this investigation rests on precise procedures and that it influences the parallel or later cartographic productions.

