



Forgotten Queens in Medieval and Early Modern Europe

Political Agency,
Myth-Making,
and Patronage

Edited by
Valerie Schutte and
Estelle Paranque

ROUTLEDGE



FORGOTTEN QUEENS IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Forgotten Queens in Medieval and Early Modern Europe examines queens dowager and queens consort who have disappeared from history, or have been deeply misunderstood in modern historical treatment.

Divided into eleven chapters, the book covers queenship from 1016 to 1800, demonstrating the influence of queens in different aspects of monarchy and furthering our knowledge of the roles and challenges that they faced. It also promotes a deeper understanding of the methods of power and patronage for women who were not queens regnant, many of whom have since become mythologized into what historians have wanted them to be. The chronological organization of the book allows the reader to see more clearly how these forgotten queens are related by the power, agency, and patronage they displayed, despite the mythologization to which they have all been subjected.

Offering broad geographical coverage and providing a comparison of queenship across a range of disciplines, such as Religious History, Art History, and Literature, *Forgotten Queens in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* is ideal for students and scholars of pre-modern queenship and of medieval and early modern history more generally.

Valerie Schutte earned her Ph.D. in History from the University of Akron. She is author of *Mary I and the Art of Book Dedications: Royal Women, Power, and Persuasion* and has edited several collections on early modern kings and queens.

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First published 2019
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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individual chapters, the contributors

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Schutte, Valerie, editor of compilation. | Paranque, Estelle, editor of compilation.

Title: Forgotten queens in medieval and early modern Europe : political agency, myth-making, and patronage / edited by Valerie Schutte and Estelle Paranque.

Description: 1st edition. | Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon : New York, NY : Routledge, [2018] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018022862 | ISBN 9781138085459 (hardback : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781138085466 (pbk. : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781315111339 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Queens--Europe--History. | Monarchy--Europe--History.

Classification: LCC D107.3 .F67 2018 | DDC 940.1092/52--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018022862>

ISBN: 978-1-138-08545-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-138-08546-6 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-11133-9 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo
by Taylor & Francis Books

For Carole, who loves all queens, the famous ones and the forgotten ones.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Born out of Routledge's *History of Monarchy* (edited by Elena Woodacre *et al.*), this volume is the result of the abundance of possible chapters explicating queenship that were submitted to that collection. We were happy to take so many well-researched pieces exploring some of the newest facets of queenship alongside illuminating some more traditional aspects of queenship and form a collection that spans the medieval and early modern periods. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Elena Woodacre for supporting our queenship volume while she oversaw the massive project of her own collection. We also want to thank our editor, Laura Pilsworth, and editorial assistant, Morwenna Scott, for their support and answering our seemingly never-ending emails.

Our contributors range from graduate students to early career researchers to established scholars, and we are proud of all of their contributions. We thank them for their hard work and know that our collection would not be as well rounded if not for all of their perspectives being united in the support of queenship studies. We also want to thank all of our anonymous outside reviewers who read drafts in various stages of the included chapters and gave much-needed, positive feedback.

Finally, Valerie would like to thank her family for all of their love and support and babysitting services during research trips. Bates particularly facilitated the success of this volume by holding numerous Facetime meetings for Valerie and Estelle.

Estelle is incredibly indebted to her family, friends, and colleagues, especially Dr Lars Kjaer, Dr Oliver Ayers, and Dr Edmund Neill at New College of the Humanities, who have shown an interest in her research and in this edited volume. Without forgetting her faithful writing companion, Charlie.

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1

INTRODUCTION

Valerie Schutte and Estelle Paranque

It is undeniable that some queens have received more attention than others in modern scholarship. From a European perspective, Elizabeth I of England, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Mary, Queen of Scots, Isabella of Castile, Margaret of Anjou, Henrietta Maria of France, and Catherine de Médici have largely dominated queenship studies and the numerous volumes dedicated to assessing the roles of queens during the premodern period.¹ But what is a ‘forgotten queen’ and how is it possible that some queens remain so? A forgotten queen is one whom history, and historians, have glossed over, made little mention of, or dismissed as a ‘non-event’.² But the forgotten queens in this volume were more than wives and mothers: they wielded significant power, developed political networks, influenced kings and princes, and contributed to the cultural development of their period.³ The chapters that follow focus solely on queens dowager and consort; even though for many queens regnant there is still much work to be done, several queens consort and dowager have fared much worse in their historiographical treatment, or lack thereof.

In the last two decades there have been several publications on queenship, from biographies and images of individual queens to several that re-evaluate medieval and early modern queenship as a whole.⁴ Many of these publications have appeared in Palgrave Macmillan’s ‘Queenhip and Power’ series, such as Theresa Earenfight’s *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (2013) and Ilona Bell’s *Elizabeth I: Voice of a Monarch* (2011).⁵ Clarissa Campbell Orr’s *Queenship in Europe* (2004) and *Queenship in Britain* (2002), while exploring regnants, consorts, and widows, does not have the breadth and depth, nor the wide range of subject matter, such as royal involvement in the history of the book, that this current study offers.⁶ Other queenship volumes comprising some overlooked queens include Debra Barrett-Graves’s *The Emblematic Queen: Extra-literary Representation of Early Modern Queenship* (2013), Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki’s *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe* (2009), and Elena Woodacre’s *Queenship in the Mediterranean: Negotiating the*

Role of the Queen in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras (2013). While Woodacre also aimed to shed light on lesser-known female rulers, the case studies in her volume, as its title indicates, concentrate on queens from a specific geographical region – the Mediterranean – and she overlooks important parallels between Northern and Southern queens.⁷ Our collection spans several countries and kingdoms, offering chapters on English, French, Navarrese, Polish, and Austrian queens, while engaging with three main themes: political agency, myth-making, and patronage.

Two of the most recent collections on queenship – *Queenship, Gender, and Reputation in the Medieval and Early Modern West, 1060–1600* and *Queens Consort: Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500–1800* – show that edited collections that offer comparisons of queenship across time and space provide some of the most innovative and fruitful new research into understanding how queens who were not queens regnant held power.⁸ Yet, neither of these collections focuses specifically on unfamiliar queens. Instead, they provide insightful comparisons between well-known and lesser-known female rulers. This volume sheds light on queens who have remained in the shadows of others for too long, which enables readers to draw more relevant parallels. While we are indebted to these works, among many others, the following ten chapters offer a new and/or deeper understanding of the methods of power and patronage that were utilized by women who were not queens in their own right, many of whom have become mythologized into what (mostly male) historians have wanted them to be.

The chapters in this collection cover queenship from 1016 to 1800 and touch on at least nine countries and kingdoms. By offering a broad geographical and chronological sweep, we aim to reveal similarities and differences in how queenship was perceived, acted out, and represented in legal, cultural, and political arenas across time and space, through the lens of queens who left little or no mark in history. Though a majority of the chapters cover the early modern period, the medieval contributions focus on exciting and unfamiliar queens, especially to an English-speaking audience, such as Joanna of Sicily and Matilda of Scotland. The queens of the early modern period who are examined in the other chapters – such as Katherine Howard and Catherine of Braganza – may be somewhat more familiar to readers, yet the approaches taken by each author highlight that these queens have been largely misunderstood or mythologized, owing to the fact that they have been under-represented in scholarship or previously treated as unimportant. By including both medieval and early modern queens, and presenting the queens in chronological order, it becomes apparent that three major themes emerge from these chapters: political agency, myth-making, and patronage. We consciously decided not to group the chapters thematically because these themes cross over so frequently among the chapters.

The three themes uniting the essays in this collection are rather traditional and straightforward methods of looking at queenship. The following essays show that these ideas cannot really be separated when discussing queenship. Moreover, for queens who have typically been footnotes in the historical narrative, it is all the

more important to explore how they, too, contributed as patrons and political actors and have been mythologized, either of their own accord or within contemporary scholarship.

The chapters by Gabrielle Storey (Chapter 4), Lledó Ruiz Domingo (Chapter 5), Eilish Gregory (Chapter 9), and Cinzia Recca (Chapter 11) demonstrate how queens wielded political authority, whether through the traditional role as queen consort or untraditional roles, such as going on crusade. Gabrielle Storey explores the reputations of Berengaria of Navarre and Joanna of Sicily as they were developed and formed in three crusader chronicles. Written with varying goals and from varying perspectives, the chronicles do not represent these two queens in the same ways, and in some cases one of the queens is not mentioned at all. Mostly, the chronicles and their authors highlight only the strength and importance of their marriage alliances. Lledó Ruiz Domingo offers an examination of the political agency and patronage power of Maria of Navarre, a woman who became queen at eight years old and was dead by the time she was eighteen. To establish political agency, Maria had to dress and behave as a queen even before her marriage. She also had an active career patronizing the arts and demonstrating her piety through patronage of various religious books, objects, and even religious houses. Finally, Maria used her status to secure the succession of Aragon for her eldest daughter.

Eilish Gregory's chapter explores Catherine of Braganza's relationships with the Catholics in her household, suggesting that she demonstrated her political agency through her interactions with them and protection of them. Even in tumultuous periods, such as during the Popish Plot, Catherine fought to keep English Catholics in her household and safe from persecution. Cinzia Recca rounds out the chapters on political agency with a re-evaluation of the mostly negative reputation of Queen Maria Carolina, using unpublished sources, such as family correspondence and memoranda. Recca addresses the political agency that Maria Carolina took from her husband, as he was a weak ruler and comfortable to allow her to rule in his stead. Maria Carolina removed over-influential political counsellors, advanced her own family interests, and promoted the growth of the navy. However, her reputation suffered due to her part in the massacre of 1799.

As previously stated, nearly every chapter in this book touches upon political agency, yet for Valerie Schutte (Chapter 6) and Sybil Jack (Chapter 7), their primary focus is patronage, whether through book ownership or cultural transfer. Valerie Schutte offers a case study of the one book that was dedicated to Katherine Howard while she was fifth queen consort to King Henry VIII of England. Richard Jonas's dedication attached to his translation of *The Byrth of Mankynde* not only appealed to Katherine for patronage but offered advice on the most important aspect of the role of queen consort: motherhood. While Katherine Howard, herself, may not be a forgotten queen, it is often overlooked that more took place in her nineteen months of queenship than the sordid affairs that led to her execution. Sybil Jack examines the political agency of Katarina Jagiellonica and Sophie of Mecklenburg-Güstrow, queens in kingdoms where hereditary monarchy did not exist. Katarina, as a foreign queen, had the ability to usher Sweden onto the international scene, while Sophie

was cousin to her monarch husband, the Danish king, so she was popular among local elites. Sophie was crowned to establish her own and her husband's authority and announce Denmark as an important actor within Europe; however, she was never able to achieve political power, despite her patronage activities. Katarina's marriage similarly established Sweden as internationally important, and her patronage of the arts allowed her to increase her standing at court.

Finally, Andrea Nichols (Chapter 2), Lois Huneycutt (Chapter 3), Estelle Paraque (Chapter 8), and Jennifer Germann (Chapter 10) offer fresh analyses on how queens mythologized their own past, have been removed from scholarship because they were considered unnecessary, and have been remembered by others in word and image. Andrea Nichols looks at not one forgotten queen but the thirty-three daughters of King Dioclesian – the eldest of whom, Albine, gave England the name Albion – as well as Gwendolyn, the wife of King Locrine. Nichols examines readers' marginalia in manuscript and printed versions of chronicles that mention these pagan women and their roles in the creation of England. By the seventeenth century, they had all been replaced by just one Protestant mythical figure – Britannia. Lois Huneycutt offers a prosopography of women in the House of Wessex in the century after the Norman Conquest and how they remembered and forgot their ancestry as was convenient, so as to present their own identities in the most favourable way. The descendants of Margaret of Scotland memorialized their Anglo-Saxon past as long as it secured their future. Huneycutt suggests commemoration waxed and waned until pre-conquest rulers became mythological figures rather than revered family members.

Estelle Paraque reconstructs the reputations of Elisabeth of Austria and her daughter Maria-Elisabeth of France and asks why they have escaped modern memory. She concludes that they have been omitted from the historical narrative – especially that as written by two prominent nineteenth-century historians – because they lived peaceful lives free from court politics and drama. Elisabeth's marriage alliance to Charles IX of France was pivotal in allying France to the Holy Roman Empire, yet she often fell under the shadow of Catherine de Médici, for whom she became a political counterpoint. Finally, Jennifer Germann's chapter focuses on one painting of Queen Marie Leszczyńska and how its image was passed down, adopted, and used as a model for other female sitters, ultimately shaping the queen's modern identity. Germann suggests that this image does not have one meaning but many, which changed with each transmediation of the original painting.

Most of the queens covered in this volume will be unfamiliar to most readers, while those that are more familiar are presented in new ways to help dispel the legends and myths that have distorted their modern reputations. For centuries, these women have been forgotten, removed from the historical narrative, replaced by other queens to offer a more Protestant view of the past, and even deliberately misunderstood so as to vilify them for specific political purposes. The chapters are arranged in chronological – rather than thematic – order so the reader may gain an understanding of how these forgotten queens are related by the power, agency, and patronage they displayed, and how they have all endured some degree of mythologization.

Notes

- 1 See Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki (eds), *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009); Debra Barrett-Graves (ed.), *The Emblematic Queen: Extra-literary Representations of Early Modern Queenship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Carolyn Harris, *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Estelle Paranque, Nate Probasco, and Claire Jowitt (eds), *Colonization, Piracy, and Trade in Early Modern Europe: The Roles of Powerful Women and Queens* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Kavita Mudan Finn and Valerie Schutte (eds), *The Palgrave Handbook of Shakespeare's Queens* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); and Anna Riehl Bertolet (ed.), *Queens Matter in Early Modern Studies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).
- 2 David Loades has written of Anne of Cleves that 'as a Queen, Anne had been a non-event ... she was a diplomatic footnote, and is remembered best for her quite spectacular ignorance of matters sexual'; see Loades, *The Tudor Queens of England* (London: Continuum, 2009), 112.
- 3 See: Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford (eds), *Women in Early Modern England, 1500–1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Natalie R. Tomas, *The Medici Women: Gender and Power in Renaissance Florence* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003); Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Rosemary O'Day, *Women's Agency in Early Modern Britain and the American Colonies: Patriarchy, Partnership, and Patronage* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014); Kathleen Wellman, *Queens and Mistresses of Renaissance France* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2013); and Carole Levin, Debra Barret-Graves, and Jo Eldridge Carney (eds), *High and Mighty Queens of Early Modern England: Realities and Representations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
- 4 For a brief history of medieval queenship studies, see Zita Eva Rohr and Lisa Benz, *Queenship, Gender, and Reputation in the Medieval and Early Modern West, 1060–1600* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), xvii–xliv.
- 5 Theresa Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and Ilona Bell, *Elizabeth I: The Voice of a Monarch* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
- 6 Clarissa Campbell Orr, *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) and *Queenship in Britain 1660–1837: Royal Patronage, Court Culture, and Dynastic Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).
- 7 Elena Woodacre (ed.), *Queenship in the Mediterranean: Negotiating the Role of the Queen in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
- 8 Rohr and Benz, *Queenship, Gender, and Reputation in the Medieval and Early Modern West* and Helen Watanabee-O'Kelly and Adam Morton (eds), *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500–1800* (London: Routledge, 2016).

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2

THE POWER OF THE MYTHOLOGICAL PAST

Reader response to Queen Gwendolen and the thirty-three daughters of King Dioclesian in English histories

Andrea Nichols

Thirty-three princesses conspire and murder their husbands. They are banished from their Syrian homeland, sailing aimlessly until arriving on an island they name Albion, after the eldest sister, Albine. They consort with devils and give birth to giants. Their giant offspring are later slain by a new arrival, Brutus of Troy, whose violent conquest enables him to become the first king, found New Troy (later London), and rename the island after himself: Britain. His eldest son Locrine is slain on the battlefield for adultery by his Cornish wife Gwendolyn, who afterwards rules as regent for her son Madan, quietly retiring when he comes of age.¹

While this may sound like a *Game of Thrones* episode, or a TV special listing the bloodiest queens in history, it is actually part of British legend, with Brutus and his descendants first appearing in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*; c. 1136), and Albine and her thirty-two sisters a hundred years later in *Des Grantz Geanz* (*On the Great Giants*; 1250–1333).²

The medieval manuscript transmission and development of these tales is already the focus of much research. Instead, I will examine early modern reader engagement with the Albine sisters and Gwendolyn to illuminate the reasons why these medieval stories continued to be reproduced in a variety of early modern media, illustrating their cultural significance during an era of several European queens regnant. However, their applicability, and thus perpetuation and reader engagement, dimmed in the seventeenth century, as the myths were reformed into a new female figure: Britannia.

Very little of the myths surrounding the founding of Britain are known by modern audiences. Compounding this situation is that much of what has been written since the nineteenth century, or depicted about premodern England in television and film, often focuses on King Arthur, the Vikings, Robin Hood and the Crusades, the Wars of the Roses, and the Tudor era. From pre-Roman Britain,

the female historical figure most widely known today is Boudicca, as evidenced by her position at number 35 in the BBC's '100 Greatest Britons of All Time' poll in 2002.³

While modern culture no longer holds the Albine and Gwendolyn myths in prominence, twelfth- to fourteenth-century Europe focused on developing or codifying origin stories that connected nations back to the peoples of antiquity, and supported the 'peopling of the prehistoric world by giants' from Christian 'theological anthropology'.⁴ As a result, for England, the story developed of Brutus, an exile from Troy and great-grandson of Aeneas, with the thirty-three Syrian princesses added later not only to explain the origin of the giants Brutus killed upon his arrival, but also to account for the ancient Celtic name of the island, Latinized as Albion.⁵

Given the medieval method of manually copying texts, there is a complex record of transmission and variation in stories, as other oral culture and texts influenced different copies.⁶ Some versions were influenced by Greek mythology, in which Hypermnestra, the youngest of fifty daughters, did not murder her husband, as had been ordered by her father, Danaus, grandson of Poseidon and twin brother of Aegyptus. Some versions of the *Brut* chronicle absorbed this story by changing the thirty-three Syrian princesses to fifty Greek ones and having an unnamed youngest daughter betray her sisters' plot and save her husband's life. This later – problematic – addition to the national mythology, along with the multiplicity of versions, enabled criticism and rejection to emerge, as it became increasingly evident that England's chroniclers had not recovered long-forgotten truths about the island's many names but rather invented a memory to fit a current cultural need – a need that eventually faded.

These narrative differences are important to note, given not only medieval histories began to be printed and spread to an even wider audience, but also those readers made choices about which stories to annotate. Authors were also readers, and examined prior materials, making choices on which versions to include and how to interpret their validity. The *Brut* chronicle, a popular medieval vernacular history, contained the Syrian version of the Albine legend. The *Brut* was used by William Caxton for his *Chronicles of England* (1480, 1482), the first printed English history.⁷ John Hardyng's medieval verse chronicle (1457, 1463) contained both the Greek and the Syrian versions of the Albine legend, and was continued to the present day and printed by Richard Grafton in 1543.⁸ This plethora of story variations, though, confused sixteenth-century authors and led to a variety of errors and alterations. For instance, Edmund Spenser and John Milton, among others, cited fifty daughters for the Syrian version of the story, while William Camden and Gyles Godet stated there were only thirty Syrian princesses.⁹ Even with the choices, authors seemed to gravitate more to the older Syrian version of the Albine legend, as it appeared in at least twenty-six books.¹⁰ The Greek version featured in seven works, while both versions appeared in six books.¹¹ For Brutus' descendants, Gwendolyn's regency and her son Madan's thirty-year rule were incorrectly ordered in early sixteenth-century

lists of kings, with Gwendolyn coming eighty years after her son, but Richard Grafton's *Manuell* (1565) corrected this issue.¹²

There were some writers, though, who did not mention the Albine legend, simply acknowledging that the island 'was before called Albion' and preferring to begin with the arrival of Brutus, or use a Renaissance retooling of the medieval origin stories, which transformed Albion into Neptune's giant son.¹³ Citing Caesar, Tacitus, and Gildas as his sources for early Britain, Polydore Vergil summarized Lochrine and Gwendolyn's saga in one sentence, with no mention of the Albine legend.¹⁴ In his opinion, 'What manner of men initially inhabited Britain ... is quite unknown', as 'there is nothing more hidden, nothing more uncertain, nothing more unknown than early deeds of the Britons, in part because their annals, if there were any ... have wholly perished'.¹⁵ While Vergil's attack sparked rebuttals from English authors, his criticism on the transmission of fables did echo in the increasing number of authors dismissing the Albine legend's validity, such as Leland, Speed, Verstegan, Camden, Enderbie, Milton, and Sammes.¹⁶ However, as Phil Robinson-Self argued, restating the Albine legend in order to critique it not only ensured its perpetuation, but undermined all of the myths and national histories that came after it in the historical narrative.¹⁷ This is evident in both Thomas Elyot's and Richard Baker's writings, for, after dismissing Albine, they also dismissed Neptune's giant son Albion as well as Brutus and his descendants into the realm of 'very Fables'.¹⁸

Reading the past

Readers had been engaging with these women since medieval times, as the *Brut* was one of the most popular vernacular histories, with almost two hundred extant manuscript copies, more than either the *Canterbury Tales* or *Piers Plowman*.¹⁹ Tamar Drukker analysed many of the extant *Brut* manuscripts, noting that there was 'a diverse readership' given the quality of decoration, and most were 'heavily annotated by scribes and readers, attesting to their deep interest in the work'.²⁰ More importantly, D. R. Woolf showed that, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, 'readers very clearly used what they read, revised it in various ways, [and] lent their books to others', as I can confirm following my own research into reader usage of hundreds of copies of English histories.²¹

Of the seven books I have found with user marks on the Albine legend or Gwendolyn, only one has reader notes for the Greek version of the Albine legend: Hardyng's 1543 chronicle, where a red pencil mark brackets the first two lines of chapter 2: 'the youngest suster, the mater all discured / To her husbände, and to her father gent'.²² This was when the youngest daughter, like Hypermetra, had heard her sisters' plan to murder their husbands, but instead fled to tell her father and husband. At the end of the chapter, the reader underlines that the island 'was waste' when the forty-nine exiled sisters arrived.²³ As the purpose of the Albine legend was to account for the giants Brutus defeated, this reader was emphasizing that no unaccounted peoples remained. Within the next chapter's

abstract, the user underlined and bracketed ‘that Danays kyng of ye Grekes had .I. doughters and that Egistus his brother kyng of Egypte had as many sonnes that maryed together’.²⁴

Four of the seven books are Caxton’s Syrian version, with several readers marking much of the story, or summarizing the main point of the entire story, as seen in Barbara Philpott’s possibly seventeenth-century marginalia: ‘Albion from albina one of Dioclesians Daughters’.²⁵ In a copy of the *Cronycles of Englonde* (1528), a reader underlined key passages throughout the Albine legend, even when it is repeated in the description of England at the end of the book, but in particular noted ‘33 daughters’ in the margin to highlight the underlined text: ‘.xxxiii. doughters /...y^e eldest was called Albyne’.²⁶ On the following page, the reader continued underlining specific words or phrases, but provided only two additional marks. First, when Albine outlined the plot to kill the sisters’ husbands, she argued that since ‘I am come of a more hyer kynges blode than myn husbonde is’, she would never be obedient, making murder her solution to the impasse between quarrelling spouses.²⁷ At the end of the page, another mark was placed to note that the devil had transformed himself into air, travelled through many countries, and ‘came into y^e londe of Albion / & lay by those women’.²⁸ This engagement with the entire story is similar to a user of the *Chronicles of England* (1515), possibly John Coston from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, who outlined the entire story over two folios by drawing lines down the margin and between the double-columns of text, underlining of much of the story, and providing some marginal comments.²⁹ However, the marginalia in the gutters is no longer readable due to the rebinding that has narrowed the opening from what was available to the original user.

While simply learning that the name Albion came from Albine may have been all one reader wanted, clearly others found the entire story important, as evidenced by their extensive engagement with the narrative. Furthermore, the reader note of the sisters’ sex with the devil highlights how some readers focused on morality and lust. Returning to the *Cronycles of Englonde* (1528), after the devil left, the sisters gave birth to giants, the two most famous being Gogmagog and Langerigan, who are underlined in the narrative, with ‘Gogmagog fol, 11.2’ in the margin.³⁰ A few folios later, Gogmagog has been defeated by Brutus’ friend Corineus, who threw the giant onto a rock, breaking him into pieces known as the Gogmagog Hills near Cambridge, or ‘the saute [seat] of Gogmagog’, which the reader underlined and in the margin noted ‘Fol. 9.2’.³¹ These folio notes, with the ‘2’ indicating the verso side of the page, cross-reference each other, enabling the reader to find the two instances where key information on proper names and geographical features was provided. However, in Hardyng’s *Chronicle* there were also notes on ‘Coryn[eus]’ and ‘gogmagog’ in the margin next to the passage about their fight, illuminating a wider cultural significance and recognition of these figures.³² A cultural interest in the origins of geographical features and names is further confirmed in a copy of Fabyan’s *Chronicle* (1559). The early modern reader noted in marginalia that, among other things, ‘gogmagog ov[er]thrown by Corineus’, and underlined that

Brutus gave Cornwall to Corineus (hence its name), in repayment for his service.³³ In a copy of the *St Albans Chronicle* (1485), a reader has underlined supporting information for the marginal notes throughout the Albine story: 'dame Albinus disdayne of her husband', 'dioclesian chaistiseth his daughters but all in vaine', 'a vilanus murther', 'dioclesian bannisheth his daughters', and 'y^e origenall [origin] of giants gogmagog and laughherigan'.³⁴

One comment, though, does not fit these trends, and illustrates the growing undercurrent of criticism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In Holinshed's *Chronicle* (1577), the narrative states, 'These Ladies thus imbarqued and left to the mercie of the raging seas, at length by hap were brought to the y^e coasts of this yle then called Albio[n], where they took land', but a reader added, 'It is much y^t [that] they shonde be carried such a Compasse through al the midland & west sease & new arrive til they came to Englande'.³⁵ Moreover, a few paragraphs later, Holinshed acknowledged that readers may find this 'incredible', but he would not remove it and instead 'leauie it to the consideration of the reader, to thinke therof as reson shal moue him'.³⁶

Most of Annabel Patterson's reader response examples attack the genre or are examples of law and constitutional politics from Holinshed's pages, whereas I have found only one reader critiquing the text.³⁷ Instead, the examples on the Albine sisters and Gwendolyn illustrate that many read simply to improve their understanding of the past, to learn why those historical events happened, or to find the origins of names and countries. Moreover, continuing to include these stories in print, albeit while simultaneously dismissing them, bolstered memories of the past. In addition, the Albine legend had cultural significance during the sixteenth-century debate about female queens regnant, as the sisters served as evidence that unchecked female sexuality and rule without men had disastrous consequences. Furthermore, as with the Albine sisters' monstrous offspring, Queen Elizabeth I's statement to her first Parliament was 'although I be never so careful of your well-doings, and mind ever so to be, yet may my issue grow out of kind and become, perhaps, ungracious', proven later with her cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, a 'monstrous' Catholic heir, who attempted to kill Elizabeth in order to claim power.³⁸

Queen Gwendolyn's story was annotated in nine books. Most readers focused on underlining or noting in the margin the names of four key players (Locrine, Gwendolyn, Estrilde, and Sabrine), such as a reader of Hardyng's *Chronicle* who wrote, 'Gwendolyne [d]aughter of [C]orineus' and '[S]abren Bast[a]rd [d]aughter of Locryn [&] Estryle'.³⁹ Several noted how long Gwendolyn ruled successfully on her own, perhaps seeking a precedent for the queens regnant of the sixteenth century.⁴⁰ Many of these readers also marked the actions of Brutus, the inheritance of his three sons, the defeat of Humber, and the continued political issues among later descendants. As a result, this situated their notes on Gwendolyn as merely part of a broader effort to understand early Britain.

However, some focused on the causes of war, and its consequences, with Gwendolyn killing Locrine, Estrilde, and Sabrine. For instance, Barbara Philpott

wrote, 'Guentilon slew Lotryn her Husband, and reigned in his stead' and noted why the river was renamed Severn for Sabrine.⁴¹ Similarly, in a copy of Caxton's *Chronicles of England* (1480), the reader underlined Corineus' speech to Lochrine about honouring the oath he made to his father Brutus to wed Corineus' daughter Gwendolyn.⁴² However, at the end of the saga, the reader also underlined that Gwendolyn drowned Estrilde and Sabrine, giving the river its new name – Severn.⁴³ Two other readers were more blunt, with one underlining 'Lotrine forsoke Guendolen that was his wife', and another writing, 'the first civill warre moued by a wooma[n]'.⁴⁴

Historical context: the Elizabethan and Jacobean significance

While noteworthy for different concepts – for the Albine legend, textual criticism and a place as the first founders; for Gwendolyn, the first civil war in England and first successful reign by a woman – they were both frequently annotated by early modern readers, given most of the markings are in mixed or secretary hand. Other medieval queens of England frequently noted by readers – Ælfhryth (the mother of Æthelred the Unready), Emma of Normandy, Holy Roman Empress Matilda, Isabelle of France, Margaret of Anjou, and Elizabeth Woodville – also had reputations as murderers, invaders, and bewitching kings with their beauty, pointing to widespread concern over particular women's impact on England.⁴⁵

There are several reasons why readers focused more frequently on Albine and Gwendolyn. First, there were more queens regnant and powerful queens regents across Europe in the mid- to late sixteenth century.⁴⁶ In particular, for Englishmen, Mary, Queen of Scots embodied the threat of invasion, murder, and destructive female lust, given the murder of her second husband Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley in 1567; her rumoured adulterous affair and resultant pregnancy with her third husband James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell; and the threatening cloud of a Catholic invasion overhanging England while Mary (the Catholic alternative to Protestant Elizabeth) remained under house arrest in England from 1568 until her execution in 1587. This spurred a backlash from many writers, such as John Knox, who attacked female rule as 'a monstre, where there was no head eminent above the rest, ... no lesse monstrous is the bodie of that common welth where a woman beareth empire'.⁴⁷ Such writings highlighted additional elements of monstrosity in the Albine legend.

Beyond histories of England, the Albine women appeared in Elyot's dictionary under 'Britania', and both the Albine legend and Gwendolyn's saga appeared throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in three plays on Lochrine and Elstride, Gogmagog and Corineus in the royal entries into London for Mary I, Elizabeth I, and James I, John Higgin's expansion into early Britain with *Mirror for Magistrates* (1574), Anthony Munday's pageant *The Triumphes of Re-United Britania* (1605), Michael Drayton's *A Chorographical Description ... or, Poly-Olbion* (1622), Ben Jonson's masque *Neptunes triumph for the returne of Albion* (1624), and the first English opera *Albion and Albinus* (1684), by John Dryden and Henry Purcell.⁴⁸

Indeed, many may have first learned about England's past through watching a history play, and a dozen more plays about early Britain were written, performed, and published between 1560–1625.⁴⁹ This cross-genre pollination illustrates both the Albine legend and Gwendolyn's prominent place in English cultural memory, for as Igor Djordjevic noted, if a single moment from history were selected for a standalone project, much less repeatedly for these women, it confirmed that historical episode's importance.⁵⁰ Combined with the political and religious concerns over Elizabeth's continued unmarried state and lack of an heir, in addition to Mary, Queen of Scots' behaviour, contemporary readers and viewers clearly recognized that the shadows of the past overlay current issues.⁵¹

Moreover, as with the Albine legend and Gwendolyn as regent, monstrous offspring and a tale about civil war came to a close only with the return of a male ruler, be it Brutus or Madan.⁵² In the case of Elizabeth and Mary, Queen of Scots, it was the accession of James I in 1603 that many hoped would bring peace and unity to the island, as evidenced in Munday's *The Triumphes of Re-United Britania*, which was performed in 1605 at the inauguration of the new Lord Mayor of London, Sir Leonard Holliday. Munday cast James I as a second Brutus, with the nymph Britannia presiding over the play. She told Brutus:

I that was sometime termed *Albion*,
 After the name of *Neptunes* valiant Sonne:
Albion the Gyant, and so had still held on,
 But that my conquest, first by thee begun,
 Hath in fames Chronicle such honor woon,
 That thy first setting from *Albania*,
 Crowned me thy virgin Queene *Britania*

which 'recalls that other Virgin Queen, Elizabeth I'.⁵³

Conclusion: fading from history

Even though (re)publication of various works continued into the seventeenth century, the historical context changed. While England and Scotland may have joined under a united crown, within a generation the island would be embroiled in civil war (1642–1651), followed by republican government under Oliver Cromwell and his son during the Interregnum (1649–1660), which ended with the restoration of the monarchy under King Charles II. Moreover, there were growing religious tensions, as Puritans, Scottish Presbyterians, Catholic Irish, and Anglicans clashed over politics and faith. In addition, during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, England began global colonization and fostered intellectual, philosophical, and scientific advancement. With this explosive combination of rapid change and tensions, Englishmen turned away from a divisive, violent, and fragmented past as represented in historical works and plays, and instead sought to develop a new mythical figure that better represented a unified island.

As a result, by the eighteenth century, the figure of Britannia had emerged. She fit well into the need for a recognizable national emblem of a unified, Protestant country, worthy to be taken forth and used in the forging of a global empire. Her roots were in personifications of the Church of England, the Anglo-Scottish unification begun under James I, the Protestant Parliamentary reaction to Charles I, and the Protestant salvation found in the Glorious Revolution of 1688.⁵⁴ Moreover, Queen Elizabeth I had laid the foundation during her reign, inspiring prototypes of Britannia through the fusing of the monarch and the land, as seen in her 'Armada Portrait' (1588), 'Ditchley Portrait' (c. 1592), and many sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century frontispieces, such as that of Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, which showed a female figure surrounded by historical invaders of England, including Romans, Anglo-Saxons, and Normans.⁵⁵

Furthermore, there were male monarchs for eighty-five years, and circumstances had changed by the time of Mary II and William III after the Glorious Revolution, so neither Albine and her sisters nor Gwendolyn enjoyed a resurgence. Indeed, harkening back to the Syrian or Greek Albine sisters or Cornish Gwendolyn as foreign invaders would be troubling, rather than unifying, given Mary and William had arrived from the Netherlands. No longer needing the Albine legend and Gwendolyn as sources for historical criticism, as examples of female gynarchy, or as an explanation for the founding of the country, they faded from the national narrative and memory.

Notes

- 1 I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the anonymous reviewer and the excellent editorial work of Valerie Schutte and Estelle Paraque. The chapter has benefited greatly from their feedback and suggestions. All errors are my own. Due to variations in translation from Anglo-Norman French, English, Welsh, and Latin manuscripts, and the lack of standardized orthography in premodern writing, spelling variations abound in premodern texts and modern scholarship. For instance, Hafren, Habren, and Sabrina (later Sabrine) are all names for Locrine's illegitimate daughter in different languages (Welsh, Old Welsh, and Roman, respectively). I use Brutus, Albine, Locrine, Gwendolyn, Madan, Estrildis, and Sabrine in the narrative, and the original spellings of these names in quotes. Phrases such as 'Albine legend' and 'Albine sisters' encompass all thirty-three women.
- 2 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, translated by Aaron Thompson and J. A. Giles, Medieval Latin Series (York: In Parenthesis Publications, 1999), 23–25, www.yorku.ca/inpar/.
- 3 BBC, 'Victory for Churchill as He Wins the Battle of the Britons', 25 November 2002, www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2002/11_november/25_greatbritons_final.shtml. Numbers 11–100 in the list have now disappeared from the BBC website, but they may be found on the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://web.archive.org/web/20021204214727/http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/programmes/greatbritons/list.shtml>.
- 4 James P. Carley and Julia Crick, 'Constructing Albion's Past: An Annotated Edition of *De Origine Gigantum*', in James P. Carley (ed.), *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, Arthurian Studies No. 44 (Rochester: D. S. Brewer, 2001), 349–350; Julia Marvin, 'Albine and Isabelle: Regicidal Queens and the Historical Imagination of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* Chronicles', *Arthurian Literature* 18 (2001), 144; Anke Bernau, 'Beginning with Albina: Remembering the Nation', *Exemplaria* 21:3 (2009), 250–251;

- Ruth Evans, 'The Devil in Disguise: Perverse Female Origins of the Nation', in Elizabeth Herbert McAvoy and Teresa Walters (eds), *Consuming Narratives: Gender and Monstrous Appetite in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002), 185–187.
- 5 Eilert Ekwell, 'Early Names of Britain', *Antiquity* 4 (1930), 149.
- 6 For discussions on the complex manuscript transmission, manuscript stemma, and variations in the Albine legend's content, see: Carley and Crick, 'Constructing Albion's Past'; Marvin, 'Albine and Isabelle'; Evans, 'The Devil in Disguise'; Lisa M. Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters: The Foundation of Albion*, Cambria Studies in Classicism, Orientalism, and Medievalism (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2013); Tamar Drukker, 'Thirty-three Murderous Sisters: A Pre-Trojan Foundation Myth in the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle', *Review of English Studies* n.s. 54:216 (2003); Lauryn S. Mayer, *Worlds Made Flesh: Reading Medieval Manuscript Culture*, Studies in Medieval History and Culture (New York: Routledge, 2013); John Taylor, 'The French Prose *Brut*: Popular History in Fourteenth-century England', in W. M. Ormrod (ed.), *England in the Fourteenth Century Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), 247–254; Diana B. Tyson, 'Des grantz geanz – a New Text Fragment', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 50 (2006): 115–128. Geoffrey of Monmouth's Brutus myth was reproduced in the very popular *Brut* chronicle. For discussions on the medieval *Brut* chronicle's manuscript transmission, see: Lister M. Matheson, *The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle*, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies No. 180 (Tempe: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998), 8–9; Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II: c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 73; Christy Desmet, 'Afterlives of the Prose *Brut* in Early Modern Chronicle and Literature', in William Marx and Raluca Radulescu (eds), *Readers and Writers of the Prose Brut* (Lampeter: Tri-vium Publications, 2006), 227–246.
- 7 William Caxton, *Chronicles of England* (London, 1480), a2r–a2v; William Caxton, *Chronicles of England* (London, 1482), a2r–a2v.
- 8 John Hardyng, *The chronicle of Ihon Hardyng*, continued by Richard Grafton (London, 1543), fols. vi(v)–x, xiv(v)–xix.
- 9 Those mentioning fifty Syrian princesses: Sir Thomas Elyot's *Bibliotheca Eliotae* (London, 1542, 1545, 1548, 1552, 1559); James Harrison's *An exhortation to the Scottes* (London, 1547); Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queen* (London, 1590); Edward Philips's *The New World of English Words* (London, 1658); John Milton's *The History of Britain* (London, 1670, 1706, 1818); and Daniel Langhorne's *An Introduction to the History of England* (London, 1676). Those mentioning thirty Syrian princesses: Gyles Godet's *Genealogie of all the Kynges of England* (London, 1560); and William Camden's *Britain, or a Chorographical Description [Britannia]* (London, 1610, 1637, 1695, 1722).
- 10 Using the older Syrian version of the Albine legend: Caxton's *Chronicles of England* (London, 1480, 1482, 1486; Antwerp, 1493; London, 1497); Schoolmaster of St Albans' *Chronicles of England [St Albans Chronicle]* (St Albans, 1485; London, 1515 (twice), 1520, 1528); Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon* (London, 1480, 1482, 1495, 1498, 1500, 1527); Robert Fabyan's *Chronicle* (London, 1516, 1533, 1542); John Major's *Historia majoris Britannie* (London, 1521); John Rastell's *The Pastime of the People* (London, 1529); Sir Thomas Elyot's *Bibliotheca Eliotae* (London, 1542, 1545, 1548, 1552, 1559); Harrison's *An exhortation to the Scottes* (London, 1547); John Leland's *The laboryouse journey [and] serche of Iohan Leylande*, enlarged by John Bale (London, 1549); Thomas Stapleton's *A Counterblast to M. Hornes* (London, 1567); Spenser's *The Faerie Queen* (London, 1590); John Norden's *Speculum Britanniae* (London, 1593); Thomas Heywood's *Troia Britannica* (London, 1609); John Speed's *The History of Great Britain* (London, 1611, 1614) and *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (London, 1612); Thomas Heywood's *Gynaikeion* (London, 1624, 1640, 1657); Thomas Heywood, *The Generall History of Women* (London, 1657); Richard Verstegan's *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* (London, 1605, 1628, 1634, 1653, 1655, 1673); Camden's *Britain, or a Chorographical Description* (London, 1610, 1637, 1695, 1722); Richard Baker's *Chronicle of the Kings of England*

- (London, 1643, 1653, 1660, 1679); Philips's *The New World of English Words* (London, 1658); Percy Enderbie's *Cambria Triumphans* (London, 1661); Milton's *The History of Britain* (London, 1670, 1706, 1818); Alyett Sammes's *Britannia antiqua illustrate* (London, 1676); Langhorne's *An Introduction to the History of England* (London, 1676); and George Buchanan's *The History of Scotland* (London, 1690).
- 11 Mentioning only the Greek version of the Albine legend: Hector Boece's *History and Chronicles of Scotland* (London, 1540); John Price's *Historiae Brytannicae defensio* (London, 1573); Anthony Munday's *A Brief Chronicle* (1611); Stephen Jerome's *Moses his sight of Canaan* (London, 1614), *Seven helps to Heaven* (London, 1614), and *An Easy and Compendious Introduction* (London, 1655); and R. B.'s *Female Excellency* (London, 1688). Mentioning both the Syrian and Greek versions of the Albine legend: John Hardyng's *Chronicle* (London, 1543); Lloyd Lodowick's *The Pilgrimage of Princes* (London, 1573, 1586, 1607, 1653, 1659); Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London, 1577, 1587); Roland du Jardin's *A Discourse of the Married and Single Life* (London, 1621); William Slatyer's *Palae-Albion: History of Great Britain* (London, 1621, 1622); and Samuel Pegge's *Anonymiana* (London, 1818), 84–85.
 - 12 *A Cronycle of all the Kynges* (London, 1518); *Chronicle of the 7 Ages* (London, 1530, 1532); *A Breviat Cronicle* (London, 1552); Richard Grafton's *Manuell of the Chronicles of Englande* (London, 1565); Slatyer's *Palae-Albion* (London, 1621, 1622); and John Taylor's *The Number and Names of all the Kings of England* (London, 1649). Works with brief mentions of Gwendolyn: Polydore Vergil, *Anglica Historia* (1555), edited by Dana F. Sutton (Philological Museum, University of Birmingham), paragraph 21, www.philological.bham.ac.uk/polverg/1e.html; Robert Crowley, *An epitome of chronicles* (London, 1559), fol. 32v; Thomas Cooper, *Cooper's Chronicle* (London, 1560, 1565), fol. 28v; Richard Grafton, *Abridgement of the Chronicles of England* (London, 1562, 1564), fol. 2r; Godet, *Genealogie of all the Kynges of England* (London, 1560), fol. 4r; John Chetwynd, *Anthologia Historica* (London, 1674), 257–258; James Tyrrell, *The General History of England* (London, 1696), 9–10.
 - 13 John Stow, *Chronicles of England* (London, 1580), 17, 15–16; Crowley, *Epitome of chronicles*, fols. 32r–32v, a pirated edition of Thomas Lanquet's chronicle, which had been posthumously completed by Thomas Cooper; Cooper, *Cooper's Chronicle* (1560, 1565), fol. 28r; Grafton, *A manuell of the Chronicles of Englande* (1565), fol. vi(r); Grafton, *Abridgement* (1562, 1564), fol. 2r; Grafton, *Abridgement* (London, 1572), fol. 1r; John Stow, *Abridgement of English Chronicles* (London, 1566), fol. 8r; John Stow, *Summarie of English Chronicles* (London, 1590), 1–2; John Stow, *Abridgement of English Chronicles*, continued by Edmund Howes (1618), 7–8. The blending of Hebrew scripture with Egyptian and Greek mythology came from the Italian Renaissance fascination with Greece and Egypt. Humanist writers and nascent archaeologists claimed that Osyris Aegyptus came to Italy from Egypt along with his two sons Libyus (Hercules) and Italus (Atlas). See David Mark Whitford, *The Curse of Ham in the Early Modern Era: The Bible and Justifications for Slavery* (New York: Ashgate, 2009), 46–47.
 - 14 Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, paragraphs 18 and 21.
 - 15 Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, paragraphs 18 and 21.
 - 16 F. J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*, Renaissance Society of America Reprint Texts No. 15 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 63–64; Anthony Munday, *The Triumphes of Re-united Britania* (London, 1605), A3r; Speed, *The History of Great Britain*, 158; Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain*, 158; Verstegan, *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence*, 24; Camden, *Britain, or a Chorographical Description* (1637), 24; Enderbie, *Cambria Triumphans*, 5; Milton, *The History of Britain* (1670), 5; Sammes, *Britannia*, 50.
 - 17 Phil Robinson-Self, 'Fifty Sisters Can't All Be Bad: The Early Modern Reception of the Legend of Albina', in Lynne Fallwell and Keira V. Williams (eds), *Gender and the Representation of Evil* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 17–20.
 - 18 Elyot, *Bibliotheca Eliotae*, s.v. 'Britania'; Baker, *Chronicle of the Kings of England* (1643), 1.
 - 19 Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters*, xv; Drukker, 'Thirty-three Murderous Sisters', 449; Matheson, *The Prose Brut*, 8–9.

- 20 Drukker, 'Thirty-three Murderous Sisters', 450.
- 21 D. R. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 6, 44–48. For editions of Caxton's *Chronicle*, see Desmet, 'Afterlives of the Prose Brut', 227.
- 22 Hardyng, *Chronicle*, fol. vi(v), King's College, University of Cambridge, M.36.82. Despite at least five ownership marks being present in the book, none matches the handwriting or red pencil of the marginalia.
- 23 Hardyng, *Chronicle*, fol. vii(r), King's College, University of Cambridge, M.36.82. The reader's underlining is illustrated in the quote.
- 24 Hardyng, *Chronicle*, fol. vii(r), King's College, University of Cambridge, M.36.82. The reader's underlining is illustrated in the quote.
- 25 Caxton, *Chronicles* (1480), fol. 38r, Morgan Library and Museum, PML 20926.1–2. There are several ownership marks in the book, but Barbara's partially scratched-out inscription on the front pastedown matches the handwriting used for these notes. No more information could be found.
- 26 *Cronycles of Englonde* (London, 1528), viii(v), Princeton University, ExKa Americana 1528 Cronycles. The creator of the marks could not be determined, as there are only bookplates for Herschel V. Jones (1861–1928) and Grenville Kane (1854–1943). However, the early modern reader did cite Raphael Holinshed several times in marginalia.
- 27 *Cronycles of Englonde*, ix(r), Princeton University, ExKa Americana 1528 Cronycles. The reader's underlining is illustrated in the quote.
- 28 *Cronycles of Englonde*, ix(r), Princeton University, ExKa Americana 1528 Cronycles. The reader's underlining is illustrated in the quote. The passage does not capitalize 'devil'.
- 29 *Chronicles of England* (London, 1515), fols. 7r–7v, St John's College, University of Oxford HB4/6.d.4.13(2). John Coston's handwriting seems earlier than both the current binding and Nathaniel Crynes, who gave the book to St John's College in 1745.
- 30 *Cronycles of Englonde*, ix(v), Princeton University, ExKa Americana 1528 Cronycles.
- 31 *Cronycles of Englonde*, xi(v), Princeton University, ExKa Americana 1528 Cronycles.
- 32 Hardyng, *Chronicle*, fol. xv(r), King's College, University of Cambridge, M.36.82.
- 33 Fabyan, *Chronicle* (1559), 10, Princeton University, EXOV 1426.336. There are no known provenance or ownership marks, but the handwriting is secretary hand.
- 34 Schoolmaster of St Albans, *Chronicles of England* (St Albans Abbey, Hertfordshire, 1485), bvii(r)–bviii(v), Morgan Library and Museum, PML 718. The only known provenance is William Amhurst Tyssen-Amherst, Baron Amherst (1835–1909). The reader did cite John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* and Polydore Vergil in marginalia.
- 35 Holinshed, *Chronicles* (1577), 8, Columbia University Libraries, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, DA130.H73. There are no known provenance or ownership marks. The handwriting seems a mixed style, with fairly good spelling.
- 36 Holinshed, *Chronicles* (1577), 8; Holinshed, *Chronicles* (1587), 6.
- 37 Annabel Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), x–xv, 264–276.
- 38 'Queen Elizabeth's First Speech before Parliament, February 10, 1559', in Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (eds), *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 57.
- 39 Schoolmaster of St Albans, *Chronicles of England*, bviii(v), Morgan Library and Museum, PML 718; *Cronycles of Englonde* (1528), xii(v), Princeton University, ExKa Americana 1528 Cronycles (also put brackets around 'queen regned xv. Yere'); Hardyng, *Chronicle*, fols. xviii(v)–xix(r), King's College, University of Cambridge, M.36.82; Hardyng, *Chronicle*, fol. xviii(v), Princeton Library, EX 1430.432 (user unknown); Grafton, *Abridgement* (1562), fol. 2r, Bodleian Library, STC 12148, Early English Books Online; John Stow, *Summarie of English Chronicles* (London, 1587), 10, British Library, 808.a.13. The reader of Stow, writing in pencil, was likely Benjamin Washington. He also cited Philippe de Commynes, John Foxe, and Richard Grafton in his marginalia.
- 40 *Cronycles of Englonde* (1528), xii(v), Princeton University, ExKa Americana 1528 Cronycles (put brackets around 'queen regned xv. Yere'); Hardyng, *Chronicle*, fol. xix(r),

- King's College, University of Cambridge, M.36.82 ('regina xv anno' added to printed marginalia 'Guendolena'); Fabyan, *Chronicle* (1559), 12, Princeton University, EXOV 1426.336 ('a woma[n] ruled xv yeres').
- 41 Caxton, *Chronicles* (1480), fol. 42v, Morgan Library and Museum, PML 20926.1–2.
 - 42 Caxton, *Chronicles* (1480), a7r, Morgan Library and Museum, PML 679.1–2.
 - 43 Caxton, *Chronicles* (1480), a7v, Morgan Library and Museum, PML 679.1–2.
 - 44 Schoolmaster of St Albans, *Chronicles of England*, bviii(v), Morgan Library and Museum, PML 718; Fabyan, *Chronicle* (1559), 12, Princeton University, EXOV 1426.336.
 - 45 Katherine Olson, 'Gwendolyn and Estrildis: Invading Queen in British Historiography', *Medieval Feminist Forum* 44:1 (2008), 44. For more on women's depictions in medieval history, see Lister M. Matheson, 'Genealogy and Women in the Prose *Brut*, Especially the Middle English Common Version and Its Continuations', in R. L. Radulescu and E. D. Kennedy (eds), *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Medieval Britain and France*, Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe No. 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 221–258.
 - 46 Sharon L. Jansen, *The Monstrous Regiment of Women: Female Rulers in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 1–3.
 - 47 John Knox, *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* (Geneva, 1558), fol. 27v.
 - 48 For more on *The Lamentable Tragedy of Locrine* (1588–1591; printed 1595, 1664, 1685) and Thomas Lodge's *The tragical complaint of Elstred* (printed 1593), see Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 314–320. Charles Tilney, *Estrild* (c. 1585), noted by Sir George Buc on the title page of a surviving copy of *The lamentable tragedie of Locrine* (1595), *Lost Plays Database*, www.lostplays.org/index.php?title=Estrild. For royal entries into London, see Holinshed, *Chronicles* (1577), 1159, 1174; Holinshed, *Chronicles* (1587), 1120, 1178; Desmet, 'Afterlives of the Prose *Brut*', 242; Emma Major, *Madam Britannia: Women, Church, and Nation, 1712–1812* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 51, 53–55; Harriet Archer, *Unperfect Histories: The Mirror for Magistrates, 1559–1610* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), xi–xii, 39–72; Michael Drayton, *A Chorographical Description ... of this renowned isle of Great Britain, or, Poly-Olbion* (London, 1612, 1622), 11–12, 21, plate 19 for Gogmagog Hills. For further confirmation of the persistence of these legends, see Robinson-Self, 'Fifty Sisters Can't All Be Bad', 16. This evidence overturns Desmet's argument that from 1560 to 1590, the Albina legend faded into oblivion, only to return briefly. See, Desmet, 'Afterlives of the Prose *Brut*', 236.
 - 49 Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England*, 7–8 and chapter 3; Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*, 10, 22, 211–212, 234, 287; Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare*, 314–320.
 - 50 Igor Djordjevic, *Holinshed's Nation: Ideals, Memory, and Practical Policy in the Chronicles* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 43.
 - 51 Djordjevic, *Holinshed's Nation*, 44. For more on popular historical culture manifesting in intertextual conversations across medium and genre, see Kavita Mundan Finn, "'Of Whom Proud Rome Hath Boasted Long': Intertextual Conversations and Popular History", in Kristen Abbott Bennett (ed.), *Conversational Exchanges in Early Modern England (1549–1640)* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 70–100.
 - 52 For more on historical parallels, see Marvin, 'Albine and Isabelle', 163–176; Desmet, 'Afterlives of the Prose *Brut*', 238–246; Olson, 'Gwendolyn and Estrildis', 46; Robinson-Self, 'Fifty Sisters Can't All Be Bad', 16, 23–24.
 - 53 Major, *Madam Britannia*, 5–6, 23–24.
 - 54 Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters*, 137; Major, *Madam Britannia*, 1–7, 14, 23–53; Anthony Adolph, *Brutus of Troy and the Quest for the Ancestry of the British* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Family History, 2015), 115–127.
 - 55 Richard Helgersson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 120, 132.

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3

BECOMING ANGLO-NORMAN

The women of the House of Wessex in the century after the Norman Conquest

Lois Huneycutt

In the modern world, St Margaret, Queen of Scotland (d. 1093), who was born a princess of the Anglo-Saxon royal line, hardly counts as a ‘forgotten queen’. Besides being the subject of numerous academic studies, she lives on in popular memory through sites such as her chapel in Edinburgh Castle and place names such as North and South Queensferry in Lothian, where Margaret established a free ferry service across the Firth of Forth for pilgrims wishing to travel to the shrine of St Andrew.¹ In addition, there are churches and parish schools named after her throughout the English-speaking world, and she is remembered in the names of several societies and organizations intended to preserve ideals associated with the holy queen.² Finally, although the name ‘Margaret’ was rare in the West at the time her parents bestowed it on her, it was used in the Scottish royal family again within about fifty years of her death, and by the mid-thirteenth century vernacular versions of ‘Margaret’ became popular given names for royal and aristocratic daughters, not only in England and Scotland, but in German-speaking areas, Scandinavia, and France. Canonized in the thirteenth century, Margaret the saintly queen has been the subject of myth and an object of veneration for nearly a millennium.³

However, in the century immediately following her death, Anglo-Saxon ancestry was not always something to be celebrated among Margaret’s descendants. A study of Queen Margaret’s female descendants across three generations who both remembered and forgot their ancestor illuminates aspects of the process by which individuals in the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Danish aristocracy of the early eleventh century came to identify as Anglo-Norman in the century following the Norman Conquest. The ways in which Margaret’s female descendants in that period either celebrated or ignored their English ancestry demonstrates the flexible ways in which elite women understood and presented their multiple identities in that crucial period. In the process of remembering and forgetting, Margaret’s daughters and

granddaughters drew upon various and changing ties to different parts of their natal heritage in commissioning literary and artistic works, in their ecclesiastical patronage, and in naming their children.

This study of the manipulation of Margaret's memory also enters into a long-standing discussion on the development of patrilineal families and the privileging of the male line of descent, a much-disputed position articulated most notably by Georges Duby in his study of the French nobility in the central medieval period.⁴ Duby's model has largely been discarded in favour of a model that acknowledges that medieval families were inclusive, generally acknowledging and valuing all family members, and also adopted a variety of strategies when it came to the acquisition, management, and bequeathing of property. Margaret's descendants illustrate the flexibility and variety of what we have come to expect among the medieval nobility, although ultimately their choices did tend to favour publicly 'remembering' the ancestors through whom they claimed their titles and wealth.⁵

The English regime changes of 1066 are among the most well-known events of medieval political history, so nothing other than a brief recap is needed here. In January 1066, King Edward the Confessor, son of King Ælthred II and Emma of Normandy, died at Westminster. By then, descendants of the House of Wessex were thin on the ground, with Edward's approximately fifteen-year-old half-great-nephew Edgar Ætheling the only male heir. Edgar was in no position to challenge the powerful Godwinson clan that had risen to prominence in the early eleventh century, so he fled to Scotland with his mother and two sisters, one of whom was Margaret, who later married King Máel Coluim III (anglicized as Malcolm) of Scotland.⁶ Edward had married Edith, daughter Earl Godwin, and during the last years of his reign had increasingly involved Edith's brother Harold in royal governance. Upon Edward's death, Harold assumed the crown with the assistance of his sister and Archbishop Stigand and the approval of the English *witnagemot* – a prototypical royal council. There were, of course, other claimants, and Harold was forced to defend the throne twice, first against Harald Hardrada of Norway and then, on 14 October 1066, in battle against Duke William of Normandy and his motley crew of Norman, French, Breton, and Flemish followers. William won the day, and thus the kingdom, on the field near Hastings. With the benefit of hindsight, historians know that the Norman Conquest was a permanent turning point in English history, but no one in 1066 could have realized that the Normans were there to stay; and for those who retained any hope of a return of what chroniclers often referred to as England's 'rightful' kingly line, the children of Malcolm and Margaret represented the best hope for a restoration of the old line of kings.⁷

This study, which is grounded in recent research into aristocratic families, the importance of bilateral kin groupings over strictly patrilineal lineages, ethnic identities, and work on gender and memory in the Anglo-Norman world pioneered by scholars such as Charlotte Newman Goldy, Hugh M. Thomas, and Elisabeth van Houts, questions how long the female descendants of Margaret and Malcolm continued to acknowledge and commemorate that lineage either privately or publicly, and for what reasons.⁸ It is well known, for instance, that their daughter

Matilda, who became queen of England upon her marriage to Henry I in 1100, took a great deal of pride in her Anglo-Saxon roots, but how far into the next century did that pride in and memory of Anglo-Saxon origins continue?⁹ Because this study centres on a family of women with identical or similar given names, there is a *dramatis personae* at the end of the chapter to aid in disentangling this tale of many Matildas.

Any serious study of Margaret reveals that she was fully aware of her bloodline and the possibility that one of her children might inherit the throne of England should the Norman Conquest prove to be as temporary as the Danish Conquest that had preceded it. Possibly in order to stake their own claim to the throne, she and Malcolm named the first five of their eight children after distinguished members of the House of Wessex. Edward, Edmund, Æthelred, and Edgar, the names of their first four sons, are the names of the Anglo-Saxon royal inheritance line from Margaret's father back to their ancestor Edgar the Peaceable (d. 975). Their first daughter was named Edith after Edith Godwinsdottir (wife of Edward the Confessor), St Edith of Wilton (daughter of King Edgar), or both. Both Edith, later known by the Germanic Maud or Mahaut, or its French equivalent Mathilde (or Matilda), and her younger sister Mary were sent south for their education, probably because their parents thought they would benefit from mingling with the daughters of the new Anglo-Norman aristocracy whose sons they would eventually marry.

By the time the girls were about six and eight years old, they being educated at the abbey of Romsey, south-west of Winchester, where Margaret and Edgar's sister Christina was abbess. Edith later moved to Wilton Abbey, where previous generations of English aristocratic women, possibly including Margaret herself, had been educated.¹⁰ Both abbeys were as much elite boarding schools as they were places for strict enclosure of professed nuns. At Romsey and Wilton, the princesses would have learned languages, including Latin, received a healthy dose of religious education, and become proficient needlewomen. More importantly for our purposes, they would have been surrounded by physical reminders of former residents of both houses, and would have heard their stories. One such recent resident was Edward the Confessor's queen Edith, who had spent a great deal of time at Wilton and donated funds for expanding the abbey and refurbishing its church.¹¹ The girls would also have celebrated the feast days of Anglo-Saxon saints, many of whom were their ancestors or related to them. Despite the expectations of churchmen such as Archbishop Anselm, many of the girls who were educated at elite Anglo-Saxon abbeys were not necessarily destined for monastic life. Although Edith was briefly veiled at Wilton, presumably to hide her from the gaze of lustful Norman visitors, she never took vows, and both she and her sister Mary eventually married men who fully appreciated the implications of marrying princesses of the House of Wessex.

The most consequential of these marriages was that of Edith in 1100 to the newly crowned Henry I, the fourth son of William the Conqueror. This marriage was controversial among the Normans, and their discomfort with her Anglo-Saxon

identity might have been the reason why Edith abandoned her birth name and adopted the name Matilda in honour of Henry's mother and her godmother and immediate predecessor as queen, Matilda of Flanders. However, while some Normans at court derided the queen's English origins, the marriage was tremendously popular among many of Henry's English subjects, who considered their new queen to be a representative of the rightful line of English kings.¹² The marriage also helped Henry secure his northern border, and generated desperately needed legitimacy for his reign.

Although Henry had seized the throne quickly upon the sudden death of his brother William Rufus, their older brother Robert, duke of Normandy was in the process of returning from the First Crusade with a wealthy, pregnant wife. Robert's claims to the throne were at least as good as Henry's, so the latter's timely marriage to a woman who was descended from the Anglo-Saxon kings of Wessex and could trace her ancestry and legitimacy to Alfred the Great was a shrewd tactic. Moreover, he lost no time in strengthening his position by impregnating his new wife: by 1103, Matilda had given birth to two children.¹³

The birth of Henry and Matilda's son William, in particular, was widely believed to fulfil a deathbed prophecy of Edward the Confessor that was recorded in the *Vita Aedwardi Regis*, a text commissioned by his widow, Edith. According to the *Vita*, Edward experienced a vision in which he saw England about to be delivered to its enemies on account of the sins of its people, and he foretold a period when the land would be riddled with 'devils'. England's ills would be relieved only when

a green tree shall be cut through the middle, and the part cut off, being carried through the space of three acres, shall, without any assistance, become united again to its stem, burst out with flowers, and stretch forth its fruit as before, from the sap again uniting.¹⁴

In 1103, this prophecy was understood to signify the line of English kings, with the three acres being the reigns of Harold Godwinson, William the Conqueror, and William Rufus. The 'reunification' was the marriage of Henry and Matilda, and the 'flowering' the births of their children.

Although both of those children were given Anglo-Norman names, Matilda almost aggressively celebrated her status as a daughter of the House of Wessex. Within the first few years of her reign, she commissioned a biography of her mother, and soon thereafter she requested that the monastic historian William of Malmesbury provide her with a short genealogical account showing her connection to St Aldhelm, Malmesbury's founder, to whom she believed she was related. A few years later, she commissioned William to write a full history of England and its kings. These literary commissions show both a desire to publicize the Anglo-Saxon past and a more private thirst for information that she could pass on to her children and siblings.¹⁵ The *Life of St Margaret*, which Matilda commissioned early in her reign, probably from her mother's former chaplain Turgot, was used in canonization proceedings in the thirteenth century, when Margaret's claims to

sanctity were likely investigated. However, in its earliest incarnation it seems that the *Life* was simply a biographical account of the mother that Matilda had scarcely known, since she had left Scotland for England before she was eight years old and could not have had much further contact with her prior to Margaret's death about five years later.¹⁶ This text, which Matilda also used as a kind of guide to good queenship, detailed Margaret's heritage, focusing on her relationship with Edward the Confessor, her marriage and children, her piety, her advocacy of church reform, and her saintly death. The likely author Turgot, later prior of Durham and bishop of St Andrews, had a direct connection with the community of St Cuthbert in Durham, and in a list of Margaret's donations to various religious communities in England and Scotland, he mentioned many gifts to that community. In fact, Durham was a locus of family piety, and Margaret's Wessex ancestors had venerated the city's saint – Cuthbert – for centuries. Malcolm and Margaret were both devotees of the cult and had entered into a confraternal relationship with the monks of Durham, which their sons and daughters would perpetuate.¹⁷ Malcolm was present when the cornerstone was laid for the rebuilding of the city's cathedral in 1093; Margaret chose her personal confessor from among Durham's clergy; and her sons Edgar, Alexander, and David all continued to patronize the community after their parents' deaths.¹⁸ Matilda continued her family's traditional patronage patterns at Durham, and also founded a house of Augustinian canons at Aldgate in London. This house, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, echoed her mother's foundation at Dunfermline as well as her mother-in-law's dedication of the female monastic community that she had founded in Caen.¹⁹

The *Life of St Margaret* also mentioned many of Margaret's personal possessions, such as a small crucifix and her Gospel book, both of which were probably passed down to her children and would have been further aids to remembering her life and good works. The text itself became the locus of memory and identity for at least two generations. The 'D' version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the writings of well-known twelfth-century chroniclers, such as William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis, John of Worcester, and Ælred of Rievaulx, almost certainly contain passages that are either taken directly from the text or at least betray knowledge of the text.²⁰ A copy was probably included among the books that Henry and Matilda's daughter, also named Matilda, took with her into the Holy Roman Empire when she left in 1110 at the age of eight to prepare for her future role as the wife of Emperor Henry V. Robert of Torigni, a historian whom the empress patronized, had access to a copy of the *Life*, and there was another in the library at the abbey of Bec, where the empress retired before her death. Robert's history includes a statement of his plans (which apparently never came to fruition) to add accounts of the lives of Matilda and the empress to his history of the Norman dukes. Elisabeth van Houts believes these plans were prompted by the empress's desire to further the claims of her children to rule both England and Normandy.²¹

In the years when their children were growing up, the court of King Henry and Queen Matilda was frequented by their nieces, nephews, and other members of the third generation of Anglo-Norman aristocracy. Matilda's younger brother

David was often at court, and it is probable that her sister Mary was too, at least until her marriage to Count Eustace of Boulogne in 1102. Queen Matilda likely had a hand in helping to arrange Mary's marriage, and she certainly orchestrated the marriage of David to Matilda of Huntingdon, by which he became earl of the English county of Huntingdon.²² Henry's nephew Stephen, a younger son of his sister Adela, countess of Blois, was another member of the generation who served as companions of Henry and Matilda's son William.

Matilda and her sister Mary evidently remained close as adults, and when Mary gave birth to her only child, a daughter, she and her husband Eustace named her Matilda in honour of the queen. Since Matilda's daughter and brother possessed or at least had access to copies of the *Life of St Margaret*, it is likely that Matilda gifted her sister and young niece copies of the book, too. When Mary died in 1115 or 1116, Queen Matilda memorialized her with a gift on behalf of her sister's soul to the cathedral chapter at Durham.²³ It is also likely that Mary's daughter Matilda visited the English court on occasion before the elder Matilda's death in 1118, and thus became acquainted with Stephen of Blois, whom she would marry around 1125.

In May of that year Queen Matilda's daughter Matilda (hereafter, 'the Empress') returned to England at her father's request after the death of her husband, Emperor Henry V. Her only legitimate brother, William, had died five years earlier.²⁴ King Henry I had remarried after Queen Matilda's death in 1118, but several years had passed without his second wife Adeliza of Louvain conceiving, so around 1126 he nominated the Empress as heir to England and Normandy. At the Christmas court of 1127, he extracted oaths from those present to support her claim should his second marriage continue to fail to produce an heir. Family members scrambled to take the oath, with King David of Scotland swearing first, followed by Stephen of Blois and Henry's bastard son, Robert of Gloucester.²⁵

Descent from the House of Wessex was not a consideration when Henry chose his daughter as his heir: the succession was patrilineal and the Empress was his only surviving legitimate child. It is impossible to tell how much being a daughter of the House of Wessex and thus a granddaughter of Queen Margaret meant to the English court and public or indeed the Empress herself. During her lifetime, there were widespread rumours that her mother had been a consecrated nun who was illegally removed from the monastery to marry her father against the advice and wishes of St Anselm. These were even raised in papal proceedings designed to negate the Empress's claim to the English throne. Combined with the loss of her brother William and so many other junior members of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy in 1120, they probably served to diminish public interest in, and loyalty to, the House of Wessex.²⁶ Public documents and commemorations of the Empress more often reference her paternal heritage than her connection to the line of King Alfred, but she remained close to her maternal uncle David, who had become king of Scotland in 1124, and supported him when the Durham monks refused to accept his nomination of the royal chancellor, William Cumin, as their abbot in 1141.²⁷ The Empress also included concern for the welfare of the souls of her

parents in most of her donations to religious houses, but none of her three sons (Henry, Geoffrey, and William) was given a name that celebrated or even acknowledged her Wessex heritage and descent from Queen Margaret. She might not have remembered much of her mother, but she had access to texts, including the *Life of St Margaret* and William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum anglorum*, that would have allowed her to learn more of her English heritage, should she have wished to do so.²⁸

There is another reason why descent from the old line of kings was not much of an issue during the civil war between the Empress and King Stephen. Stephen, son of the Conqueror's daughter Adela, was a paternal cousin of the Empress, while his wife Matilda, the daughter of Mary of Boulogne (and granddaughter of Margaret) was a maternal cousin. Thus, when comparing their ancestry to bolster their respective claims to the throne, both Stephen and the Empress could say they were grandchildren of the Conqueror. Stephen himself was not descended from the House of Wessex, but his children were, through his wife, so, like the Empress, they could also claim to be direct descendants of Alfred. Hence, both parties tended to focus on other aspects of their claims – such as designation, prior oaths, and consecration – rather than the strength of their links to the House of Wessex; and, of course, the Empress was 'born to the purple' because she was the daughter and sole heir of the *crowned* King Henry I. The latter had used the fact that he, alone of all of William the Conqueror's sons, had been born after William's coronation as king of England in 1066 to argue for his primacy over his older brothers; now his daughter could similarly adduce porphyrogeniture in her favour.²⁹ Stephen's wife, who became the third Queen Matilda when her husband acceded to the throne in 1135, was also the countess of Boulogne, and her Boulonnais heritage proved to be her most important marker of identity, although she also patronized places associated with her aunt and predecessor, Matilda of Scotland. Her surviving donations and literary patronage indicate that she was much more interested in her paternal heritage than her maternal ancestry. She celebrated this in gifts to churches, especially those that had some connection with the crusading heritage of the counts of Boulogne, such as Templar churches and foundations.³⁰ Her emotional identification with the House of Wessex was more tenuous, especially after 1135, which is understandable given that her husband was at war with her maternal cousin, and her maternal uncle had chosen to support his daughter in that conflict. However, in the first decade of her marriage, before King Henry I died, she and Stephen did commemorate her Wessex ancestors and relatives. For instance, their first daughter was named Mary, after Matilda's mother, and possibly also to signal her devotion to the Virgin Mary. Her two elder sons were named Baldwin and Eustace, reflecting her paternal heritage, but her younger daughter was yet another Matilda, while her youngest son was named William. 'Matilda' was a useful name by which to commemorate her aunt – Henry's wife and Margaret's daughter – as well as Stephen's grandmother, Matilda of Flanders, William the Conqueror's queen, while 'William' honoured the Conqueror himself and highlighted his grandson Stephen's right to hold both Normandy and the English

throne. Studies of naming patterns among aristocratic families reveal that maternal kin are likely to be honoured with a namesake only after paternal kin, so third sons and daughters are much more likely to bear a name from the maternal side than earlier children.³¹ Therefore, Matilda's naming of her first daughter after the child's maternal grandmother may be considered a calculated strategy to foreground her female ancestor. Matilda does not seem to have commemorated her mother Mary with a biographical account, although Elisabeth van Houts has suggested that she commissioned a *Life* of her paternal grandmother, Ide of Boulogne.³²

Of all her Anglo-Saxon relatives, Matilda probably identified most closely with the maternal aunt after whom she was named, rather than her grandmother or any living relations from the maternal side of her natal family. Her father Eustace of Boulogne was often in King Henry I's company from 1102 to 1108, so it seems likely that little Matilda sometimes associated with her aunt Queen Matilda and her young cousins. Especially after Mary of Scotland's death in 1115 or early 1116, it is tempting to think that Matilda of Scotland saw a little of her own history replayed in the life of her namesake niece, who could have been as young as five or as old as thirteen when her mother Mary died. Deprived of the company of her own daughter after she was sent to the continent as a child, the elder Matilda may have formed a bond with her niece that lasted until the former's death in 1118. When Stephen acceded to the throne in 1135, his wife Matilda's deceased aunt was not only a family elder, but also her predecessor as queen of England. As queen, Matilda took control of a number of reginal holdings that had once been in the custody of her aunt; her seal was fashioned after that of her aunt; and she continued to patronize properties associated with her aunt, most notably Holy Trinity, Aldgate, where two of her deceased children were interred. Indeed, both Matilda of Scotland and Matilda of Boulogne appointed their personal confessors from among the canons of Holy Trinity.³³

Matilda's scant public acknowledgement of her Wessex heritage as well as the lack of contemporary discussion about her links to the line of Alfred the Great did not necessarily mean that the ties of kinship were forgotten, even when they were strained by war. The civil war of 1135–1152 was very much a family quarrel. Chroniclers recognized, for instance, the difficult position in which King David of Scotland found himself when he chose to support the claim of his niece, the Empress, over those of his niece, Queen Matilda, and her husband, King Stephen, and emphasized that he had been the first to swear allegiance to the Empress in 1127 and was thus obliged to fulfil that oath.³⁴

Queen Matilda and her elder son Eustace died in 1152 and 1153, respectively, and the civil war came to an end shortly thereafter. The terms of the settlement between King Stephen and the Empress allowed the former to continue to hold the English crown until his death, whereupon it would pass to the Empress's son, Henry. Therefore, the latter (whose father was Geoffrey, count of Anjou) would inherit Anjou, the Empress's Norman possessions, and the kingdom of England. Stephen's only remaining son, William, agreed to pay homage to Henry and renounce his claim to the throne in return for Henry's guarantee of the security of

his lands.³⁵ His daughter Mary (or Marie) had been pledged to the Church as a child, and in 1153 she duly entered the convent her parents had founded for her at Lillechurch.

Linda D. Brown has scrutinized Mary of Boulogne's biography and life choices in a recently published article and her unpublished dissertation. Mary entered religious life at quite a young age, seemingly in accordance with her parents' wishes that she take vows and remain in the cloister. We cannot be certain where she was raised and educated, but Saint-Sulpice-la-Forêt in Brittany, far from the succession conflict in England and Normandy, is a likely contender. However, at some point, probably in the late 1140s, she travelled to England and ultimately entered the convent at Lillechurch. Her mother Queen Matilda was close by, so the two women presumably met frequently. Shortly after Matilda died in 1152, Mary moved to Romsey Abbey to become its abbess. Hence, in addition to hearing stories of her mother's maternal kin from the queen herself, she would have heard tales of her grandmother, Mary, and great-aunt, Matilda, because of their close connections to the abbey. Moreover, she would have interacted with other descendants of the great Anglo-Saxon houses, and would have learned something of the royal history of the abbey in the same way as her ancestors had. But whatever being a descendant of Margaret of Scotland and Alfred the Great might have meant to her privately, there is little hint of any public identification of Mary with her Anglo-Saxon ancestors. During her time in the English convents and shortly thereafter, charters and chronicles refer to her simply as the 'abbess of Romsey', the 'daughter of King Stephen', or both. The House of Wessex had lost its political utility by the mid-twelfth century, so Margaret of Scotland became a 'forgotten queen' of a forgotten dynasty. Even Robert of Torigni, who was well aware of the details of Mary's ancestry, never mentioned her connection to the House of Wessex.³⁶

Yet Mary's story did not end in the abbey. When William, her only remaining sibling, died childless in 1159, she became heiress to the county of Boulogne. Then, the following year, Matthew of Alsace, a younger son of the count of Flanders, caused a scandal by abducting and marrying the abbess. Linda D. Brown suggests that Mary might have cooperated in her own kidnapping to escape her vows, perpetuate the family name, and retain its holdings.³⁷ She and Matthew went on to have two daughters – Ide, named after her saintly great-grandmother, and Matilda, most likely named in honour of Mary's mother, although by then the name had become ubiquitous within the family. While many of the female descendants of Queen Margaret were named Matilda, by 1170, when this particular Matilda was born, the name was most closely associated with three Anglo-Norman queen consorts and a would-be queen regnant, and probably evoked few connotations of Anglo-Saxon heritage among the English public.³⁸

Meanwhile, in Scotland, Margaret's cult had been developing during the reigns of her sons. After a brief interregnum, three of them followed their father on to the Scottish throne, ruling between 1109 and 1153. In that period, the Scots increasingly venerated Margaret as a saint, particularly when David commissioned the

rebuilding of Dunfermline Abbey, a place that Margaret and Malcolm had founded to commemorate the site of their wedding around 1070. David chose to rebuild the abbey in the style of Durham Cathedral and established a family monastery centred on the tomb of his holy mother.³⁹ Later, his son Henry and his wife named their second daughter Margaret, although by then it had become a Scottish royal name rather than a marker of Anglo-Saxon descent.

When the Empress's son Henry assumed the throne of England at the age of twenty-one, he arrived as a Frenchman, having been brought up almost exclusively on the continent. He seems to have had many questions about his English heritage, and his new subjects may have questioned his identification with their kingdom. One of those who emerged to answer those questions was the Cistercian abbot Ælred of Rievaulx. He had grown up in the court of David of Scotland, and he remained firmly attached to the king and, later, to his memory. Ælred gained some first-hand knowledge from David himself, and supplemented this with research into the history of the king's family. His historical writings include a *Life of King David*, a *Life of Edward the Confessor*, and an account of the 1138 'Battle of the Standard', fought between David's Scots and English forces. Ælred also expressed his desire to write a biography of David's sister, Queen Matilda, but declared himself unfit for the job. Between 1152 and 1154, he produced his *Genealogia regum anglorum*, which was dedicated to the future King Henry II. This work draws heavily on the *Life of St Margaret*, with long sections copied verbatim from the earlier text. In order to introduce Henry to his Anglo-Saxon ancestors, he began his account with a dedicatory preface underscoring Henry's roots in the House of Wessex:

You then, good Sir, are the son of the illustrious Empress Matilda. Her mother was the most Christian and excellent queen of the English, Matilda, daughter of the most holy woman Margaret, queen of the Scots, who put sanctity of life before the lustre of her name. Her father was Edward, son of the unconquered Edmund, whose father was Æthelred, whose father was Edgar the Peaceful, whose father was Edmund, whose father was the elder Edward, whose father was the noble Alfred.⁴⁰

Ælred also resurrects the 'Green Tree' prophecy. However, while the 'rejoining' of the stump and the severed trunk still represents the marriage of Matilda of Scotland and Henry I, Ælred equates the 'flowering' with the birth of the Empress and the 'fruit' with King Henry II. He casts Henry, a man descended from illustrious ancestors of many nations, as England's hope for peace and prosperity following the strife of Stephen's reign.⁴¹ As Michael Staunton notes, if Ælred's work 'is not a eulogy of Henry as a member of the lineage of the royal saint [Edward the Confessor] and a kinsman of the link between Anglo-Saxons and Normans, it is hard to imagine what such a eulogy might look like'.⁴² Ælred's writing foreshadowed a new interest in Anglo-Saxon saints and the Anglo-Saxon past that began with the popularization of the cult of Edward the Confessor and resulted in the revival of

Anglo-Saxon names in the English royal family in the thirteenth century. As a sign of the new interest in all things Anglo-Saxon, King Henry III of England and his queen, Eleanor of Provence, christened three of their children Edward, Edmund, and Margaret – names that evoked memories of their long-distant ancestors from the House of Wessex. By then, the trauma of the Conquest and the civil war had passed from living memory. Robert Bartlett sees the martyrdom of Thomas Becket as a new beginning for the flourishing of English hagiography and the development of saints' cults, including that of Edward the Confessor.⁴³ It is also likely that the loss of England's continental possessions after the Battle of Bouvines in 1214 forced Henry III and his successors to cultivate a new appreciation of their insular heritage.

The familial remembering and forgetting of Margaret and the old line of kings reveal a process of changing family identity and loyalty to the House of Wessex in the century after the Norman Conquest. The early excitement the chroniclers expressed about the marriage of Henry I and Matilda within fifty years of the Conquest showed that memories of the recent past were still strong, and that Henry's English subjects, at least, felt that the English throne should be occupied by a descendent of Alfred the Great. Matilda herself displayed great interest in memorializing and recording the Anglo-Saxon past, commissioning both works for wide readership and texts that she presented to family members to boost their sense of self and place. However, commemoration of the old line waxed and waned over the next century, with the enthusiasm of the early reign of Henry I followed by much less public discussion following Queen Matilda's death in 1118, the drowning of her son William two years later, and the civil war, only to resurface with the accession of Henry II, when memories of the pre-Conquest past began to assume mythic qualities. Margaret's daughter Matilda and son David continued to celebrate their mother during their lifetimes, and Matilda tried to ensure that Margaret was not forgotten by making the text of her *Life* available to her extended family. Yet, when the memory of Matilda herself became something of a liability during the civil war, neither her namesake daughter nor her namesake niece chose to 'remember' their grandmother Margaret or their Englishness in public. Indeed, Matilda of Boulogne seemed to have little interest in her maternal familial past, emphasized the paternal lineage that made her the countess of Boulogne, and may not even have identified as 'English' at all, although it is significant that she named her daughters after her mother and her maternal aunt. Maternal kin names tended to be used only for younger children and daughters, not inheriting sons, so Matilda's decision to name her daughters after her maternal relatives rather than someone from her paternal lineage represents a conscious choice to honour those relatives. Both Matilda of Scotland and her daughter gave their children names that highlighted their Norman heritage and so underscored their claims to England, Normandy, and Anjou, although there is plenty of evidence that the former also valued her English heritage. It has largely escaped the historical record if her daughter, the Empress, similarly identified with her English ancestry.

Georges Duby and others have grossly overstated the case for changes in noble family structures in the years following the turn of the first millennium. However, as time went on, family members did seem to ‘forget’ their ancestors, both male and female, when claims to property and positions of power no longer rested on their ability to prove descent from an illustrious ancestor. Pride in heritage and identification with particular ancestors was both a private choice and a tool with useful public implications for the female descendants of Queen Margaret, and in the century after the Norman Conquest the venerated, saintly queen was both remembered and forgotten as circumstances warranted.

Dramatis personae

Adela of Blois (c. 1067–1137): Daughter of William, duke of Normandy and king of England, and his queen, Matilda of Flanders; mother of Stephen of Blois, king of England (r. 1135–1154).

David I of Scotland (d. 1153): Youngest son of Malcolm of Scotland and his queen, Margaret; brother of Edith and Mary of Scotland; king of Scotland (r. 1124–1153); succeeded by his grandson, William the Lion (d. 1214).

Edith of Scotland (c. 1080–1118): Renamed Matilda upon her marriage; elder daughter of King Malcolm of Scotland and his queen, Margaret; queen of Henry I of England; mother of Matilda ‘the Empress’ and William (1103–1120); also known as Queen Matilda II.

Henry I of England (c. 1068–1135): Youngest son of William, duke of Normandy and king of England, and Matilda of Flanders; first marriage to Edith (later Matilda) of Scotland; father of Matilda ‘the Empress’, William, and numerous bastard children; second marriage to Adeliza of Louvain (d. 1151), no issue.

Margaret of Scotland (c. 1045–1093): Descended from Alfred the Great and one of the last representatives of the Anglo-Saxon royal line at the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066; married King Malcolm III of Scotland; mother of eight children, including David, Edith (Matilda), and Mary.

Mary of Boulogne (1136–1182): Daughter of King Stephen I, count of Blois and king of England, and Matilda of Boulogne, countess of Boulogne and queen of England; abbess of Romsey Abbey (1155–1159); became countess of Boulogne upon the death of her brother in 1159; married Matthew of Alsace in 1160; mother of Ide (d. 1216) and Mathilde (d. 1210).

Mary of Scotland (c. 1082–1116): Younger daughter of King Malcolm and Queen Margaret of Scotland; married Eustace III, count of Boulogne (d. 1125); mother of Matilda of Boulogne.

Matilda of Boulogne (c. 1105–1152): Daughter of Eustace of Boulogne and Mary of Scotland; wife of Stephen of Blois, king of England; countess of Boulogne (1125–1152) and queen of England (1135–1152); mother of five children, including Mary of Boulogne; also known as Queen Matilda III.

Matilda of Flanders (c. 1031–1083): Daughter of Count Baldwin of Flanders and Adela of France; married William I, duke of Normandy and king of England;

mother of many children, including Adela of Blois and Henry I, king of England; also known as Queen Matilda I.

Matilda 'the Empress' (1102–1167): Daughter of Henry I, king of England, and Edith of Scotland; first marriage to Emperor Henry V (d. 1125), no issue; second marriage to Geoffrey, count of Anjou (d. 1151), three sons, including Henry II, king of England (r. 1154–1189).

Matilda of Scotland: See Edith of Scotland.

Stephen of Blois (c. 1096–1154): Son of Count Stephen-Henry and Adela of Blois; grandson of William I, duke of Normandy and king of England, and Matilda of Flanders through Adela; married Matilda of Boulogne; father of five children, including Mary of Boulogne.

William I (c. 1028–1087): Duke of Normandy (r. 1035–1087) and king of England (r. 1066–1087); married Matilda of Flanders; father of many children, including Adela, countess of Blois, and Henry I, king of England.

Notes

- 1 Turgot(?), cited in Lois L. Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland: A Study in Medieval Queenship* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2003), 161–178, 173.
- 2 A Google internet search performed on 27 June 2017 revealed parish churches (Presbyterian, Anglican, and Roman Catholic) dedicated to Margaret of Scotland in Scotland, Canada, the United States of America, Australia, and New Zealand. Catherine Keene, *St Margaret, Queen of the Scots: A Life in Perspective* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 134, mentions modern associations, such as the international Queen Margaret of Scotland Girls' Schools Associations, which are dedicated to furthering ideals associated with the royal saint.
- 3 The best discussion of Margaret of Scotland's canonization is in Catherine Keene, *St Margaret, Queen of the Scots*, 119–131. For further information, see Kazmer Nagy, *St Margaret of Scotland and Hungary* (Glasgow: John S. Burns and Sons, 1973); Derek Baker, 'A Nursery of Saints: St Margaret of Scotland Revisited', in Derek Baker (ed.), *Medieval Women*, 119–142 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell for the Ecclesiastical History Society, 1978); and Joanna Huntington, 'St Margaret of Scotland: Conspicuous Consumption, Genealogical Inheritance, and Post-Conquest Authority', *Journal of Scottish History* 33:2 (2013): 149–164.
- 4 See Georges Duby, *Medieval Marriage: Two Models from Twelfth-century France* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1978) and *The Knight, the Lady, and the Priest: The Making of Modern Marriage in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). Duby is most closely associated with the patrilineal model among Anglophones, but his work was heavily influenced by Karl Schmid. See Schmid, 'Zur Problematik von Familie, Sippe, und Geschelecht, Haus und Dynastie beim mittelalterlichen Adel: Vorfragen zum Thema "Adel und Herrschaft im Mittelalter"', *Zeitschrift für des Geschichte des Oberrheins* 105 (1957): 1–62.
- 5 See Amy Livingstone, *Out of Love for My Kin: Aristocratic Family Life in the Lands of the Loire, 1000–1200* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010); Constance Bouchard, *Those of My Blood: Creating Noble Families in Medieval Francia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); and Dominique Barthélemy, 'La mutation féodale a-t-elle eu lieu?', *Annales: Economies, sociétés, civilisations* 47 (1992): 767–777.
- 6 A note about names is in order. The names of the members of Margaret's family are often given in Scots Gaelic or Anglo-Saxon, but I use their modern English equivalents throughout this chapter. Moreover, in this tale of many Matildas, scholars have used

various means to distinguish them from one another. Margaret's daughter was first named Edith, but she is almost exclusively termed Matilda in medieval records, the name she adopted at or before marriage (see Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 26). Modern scholars have sometimes referred to her as Edith–Matilda, and in the context of queenship as Matilda II, since she used that designation in her charters and seals. Her daughter Matilda, married first to Emperor Henry V and later to Geoffrey of Anjou, is often simply called 'the Empress', or sometimes Empress Mau', short for Mahaut, the German form of her name. Stephen's wife and queen is sometimes called Matilda III. I have tried to be clear about which Matilda is under discussion, and have generally used toponyms when necessary to distinguish among them. Some scholars have distinguished between Mary of Scotland and her granddaughter Mary of Boulogne by referring to the latter as 'Marie', but I use Mary consistently.

- 7 The bibliography of the Conquest is immense, but those interested in its effects on elite women should consult Pauline Stafford, 'The Portrayal of Royal Women in England, Mid-tenth to Mid-twelfth Centuries', in John Carmi Parsons (ed.), *Medieval Women*, 143–68 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993); 'Women and the Norman Conquest', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 4 (1994): 221–249; and 'Chronicle D, 1067 and Women: Gendering Conquest in Eleventh-century England', in Simon Keynes and Alfred Smythe (eds), *Anglo-Saxons: Studies Presented to Cyril Ray Hart*, 208–223 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006). See also Eleanor Searle, 'Women and the Legitimation of Succession at the Norman Conquest', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 3 (1980): 159–170; and Hugh M. Thomas, *The English and the Normans: Ethnic Hostility, Assimilation, and Identity, 1066–c. 1220* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), especially 138–161.
- 8 Charlotte Newman, *The Anglo-Norman Nobility in the Reign of Henry I: The Second Generation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988); Thomas, *The English and the Normans*; Elisabeth van Houts, *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe, 900–1200* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 123–142 and *Medieval Memories: Men, Women, and the Past in Medieval Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).
- 9 Catherine Keene has discussed Margaret's sons Edgar and David and their commemoration of their mother as well as the emergence of her cult at Dunfermline, but I am primarily interested in the awareness of bilateral kin and celebration of maternal ancestry and female lineages, so I barely touch upon how or whether Margaret's sons remembered her, and not at all on her reputation in Scotland, even though this is certainly an important part of Scottish history and an interesting topic for family and memory studies. See Keene, *Saint Margaret*, 95–117.
- 10 Keene, *Saint Margaret*, 33–37.
- 11 Frank Barlow, ed., *Vita Ædwardi Regis (The Life of King Edward who Rests at Westminster)* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), 46–48; Stephanie Hollis, 'Wilton as a Centre of Learning', in Stephanie Hollis (ed.), *Writing the Wilton Women: Goscelin's Legend of Edith and Liber Confortatorius*, 307–338 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1994).
- 12 Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 73; Judith Green, *Henry I: King of England and Duke of Normandy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 61.
- 13 Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 26–28, 74; C. Warren Hollister, *Henry I* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 126–130.
- 14 Barlow, *Vita Ædwardi Regis*, 75–76.
- 15 Ewald Könsgen, 'Zwei unbekannte Briefe zu den *Gesta regum anglorum* de Wilhelm von Malmesbury', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 31 (1975): 204–214; Kirsten A. Fenton, *Gender, Nation, and Conquest in the Works of William of Malmesbury* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2008), 22–23; Lois Huneycutt, "'To Proclaim Her Dignity Abroad': The Literary and Artistic Network of Matilda of Scotland, Queen of England 1100–1118", in June Hall McCash (ed.), *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, 155–175 (Athens: University of Georgia Press 1996).
- 16 Keene, *Saint Margaret*, 122–123; Lois Huneycutt, "'The Idea of the Perfect Princess": The Life of St Margaret in the Reign of Matilda II (1100–1118)", *Anglo-Norman Studies* 12 (1991): 81–98.

- 17 David Rollason and Lynda Rollason, eds, *Durham 'Liber vitae': The Complete Edition* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), 1:155–156. See also Valerie Wall, 'Malcolm III and Durham Cathedral', in Margaret Harvey and Michael Prestwich (eds), *Anglo-Norman Durham*, 325–337 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1994); and Archibald A. M. Duncan, 'Yes, the Earliest Scottish Charters', *Scottish Historical Review* 78:1 (1999): 1–35.
- 18 Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 14–15; Keene, *Saint Margaret*, 98–99.
- 19 Laura L. Gathagan, 'Embodying Power: Gender and Authority in the Queenship of Mathilda of Flanders', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, City University of New York, 2003; Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 112; Keene, *Saint Margaret*, 57–58.
- 20 Keene, *Saint Margaret*, 95–96.
- 21 van Houts, *Memory and Gender*, 74–75.
- 22 'Vita et passio Comitum Waldevi', in Francisque Michel (ed.), *Chroniques Anglo-Normandes* (Rouen: Bibliothèque de la Ville, 1836), 2:126–127; Green, *Henry I*, 128–129.
- 23 Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 158–159.
- 24 William and many other members of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy drowned when the *White Ship* sank in the English Channel in November 1120.
- 25 C. Warren Hollister, 'The Anglo-Norman Succession Debate of 1126: Prelude to Stephen's Anarchy', *Journal of Medieval History* 1 (1975): 19–45; David Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen, 1135–54* (Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd, 2000), 24–25; and Marjorie Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda: Queen Consort, Queen Mother, and Lady of the English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 50–53.
- 26 Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 146–147.
- 27 Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda*, 137–139.
- 28 Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda*, 177–194. William of Malmesbury presented the Empress with a copy of the *Gesta regum anglorum*, which was unfinished at the death of her mother in 1118. See Könsgen, 'Zwei unbekannte Briefe'.
- 29 See Hollister, *Henry I*, 105; Green, *Henry I*, 20; and Gilbert Dagron, 'Nés dans la pourpre', *Travaux et mémoires* 12 (1994): 105–142.
- 30 Renée Nip, 'Godelieve of Gistel and Ida of Boulogne', in Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker (ed.), *Sanctity and Motherhood: Essays on Holy Mothers in the Middle Ages*, 191–223 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995); Patricia A. Dark, 'The Career of Matilda of Boulogne as Countess and Queen in England, 1135–52', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 2005 and 'A Woman of Subtlety and a Man's Resolution', in Brenda Bolton and Christine Meek (eds), *Aspects of Power and Authority in the Middle Ages*, 47–64 (Turnhout: Boydell Press, 2008); Heather J. Tanner, 'Queenship: Custom, Office, or Ad hoc? The Case of Queen Matilda III of England (1135–52)', in Bonnie Wheeler and John Carmi Parsons (eds), *Eleanor of Aquitaine: Lord and Lady*, 133–159 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
- 31 Livingstone, *Out of Love for My Kin*, 158–161; Susan M. Johns, *Noblewomen, Aristocracy, and Power in the Twelfth-century Anglo-Norman Realm* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 168–173.
- 32 Van Houts, *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe*, 139–140.
- 33 Huneycutt, *Matilda of Scotland*, 112, Tanner, 'Queenship: Custom, Office, or Ad Hoc?', 144.
- 34 Richard Oram, *David I: The King who Made Scotland* (Chicago, 2004), 209–216; and Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda*, 52.
- 35 Crouch, *Reign of King Stephen*, 270–274.
- 36 Linda D. Brown, '"Elegit domum sibi placabilem": Choice and the Twelfth-century Religious Woman', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Missouri, Kansas City, 2015, 111.
- 37 See Linda D. Brown, '"Inaudito Exemplo": The Abduction of Romsey's Abbess', *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques* 42:1 (2016): 21–34.
- 38 See C. B. Bouchard, 'Patterns of Women's Names in Royal Lineages, Ninth–Eleventh Centuries', *Medieval Prosopography* 9:1 (1988): 1–32 and 'The Migration of Women's Names in the Upper Nobility, Ninth–Eleventh Centuries', *Medieval Prosopography* 9:2 (1988): 1–29.

- 39 Keene, *Saint Margaret*, 97–100.
- 40 Ælred of Rievaulx, ‘The Genealogy of the Kings of the English’, in *Ælred of Rievaulx: The Historical Works* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2005), 72.
- 41 See Marsha L. Dutton, ‘“That Peace Should Guide and Society Unite”: Ælred of Rievaulx’s Political Philosophy’, *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 47 (2012): 279–295.
- 42 Michael Staunton, *The Historians of Angevin England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 32.
- 43 Robert Bartlett, ‘Hagiography of Angevin England’, Peter R. Coss and Simon D. Lloyd (eds), *Thirteenth-century England*, 5:37–52 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995).

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4

BERENGARIA OF NAVARRE AND JOANNA OF SICILY AS CRUSADING QUEENS

Manipulation, reputation, and agency

Gabrielle Storey

Berengaria of Navarre and Joanna of Sicily may be regarded as two forgotten queens; the former of England and the latter of Sicily. Respectively wife and sister of Richard I, they accompanied him on the Third Crusade and were neglected by chroniclers who were primarily focused on recording the actions of militant crusading kings. Although they are often thought to have been passive queens on crusade, this study investigates how their political agency is portrayed in crusader chronicles and why they have been forgotten. Their lives as queens have been pushed to the sidelines due to their alleged lack of interest in politics; however, this chapter demonstrates why they deserve to be fully remembered and should be widely acknowledged for their actions on and beyond crusade, their valuable political alliances, and their reginal roles. This study first provides contextual information on the chroniclers under discussion as this impacted their writings on the two queens. It then explores how the positions of Berengaria and Joanna as brides, hostages, and childless queens were the basis for their depiction in the chronicles.

Women were not encouraged to go on crusade; instead, they were advised to stay at home and remain in the role of pious wife and mother.¹ Yet recent scholarship has uncovered the many roles women could undertake on crusade, including financing the crusade, motivating family and soldiers, and fighting themselves.² Many women of varying status who opted to go on crusade were largely ignored by the chroniclers of this period. Maier has discussed how Christian chroniclers have portrayed the crusades as a predominantly male activity, which undermines the roles noblewomen could take as leaders of their retainers.³ Crusading narratives sought to inspire men to join the crusading movement, and they would present heroic figures with military prowess who were devoted to God.⁴ However, women played a central role in crusading movements, as either pilgrims or retainer leaders, and provided economic resources.⁵ The language chosen to describe

women on crusade reinforces their reputations as role models for other women who participated in crusades.⁶ As noblewomen, Berengaria and Joanna would have been expected to fulfil their principal roles as queens, wives, and mothers, rather than intervening politically or participating in crusades. This is in stark contrast to both Eleanor of Aquitaine and Eleanor of Castile, who received attention from chroniclers, the former for leading the Aquitanian contingent and her alleged adultery with her uncle Raymond of Antioch, both of which were viewed negatively.⁷ The legend of Eleanor of Castile's prevention of an assassination attempt on her husband Edward I was embellished by later writers.⁸ The appearance of both Eleanors in crusading narratives is due to the unusual events in which they participated: leading a battalion of the crusading forces and saving a king from an assassination attempt.

Berengaria, the daughter of Sancho VI of Navarre, was chosen by either Eleanor or Richard himself as the latter's potential bride, despite his prior betrothal to Alice, sister of Philip Augustus.⁹ Berengaria and Richard were married at Limassol on 12 May 1191, after which she joined him on the Third Crusade before returning to Poitou in 1192. Richard continued his military excursions, both in the Holy Land and later in Normandy, and there are minimal references to reunions with Berengaria. After Richard's death in 1199, Berengaria took up residence in Le Mans, where she frequently petitioned both John and Henry III for the return of her dower lands. She lived a quiet life after the restitution of those lands in 1222 and acted as Lady of Le Mans and its surrounding environs until her death in 1230.

Richard's sister Joanna married William II of Sicily on 13 February 1177, but little is recorded of her activities during their marriage.¹⁰ A son named Bohemond may have been produced, although he did not survive infancy.¹¹ Joanna was widowed upon William's death in 1189 and reappears in the chronicles with Richard's arrival in Sicily in September 1190. She accompanied Berengaria from Cyprus to Acre and Jaffa and then back to France in 1192, married Raymond of Toulouse in 1196, and had two children with him before dying in childbirth in 1199.¹²

Berengaria and Joanna deserve to be examined as they both played important roles in the Angevin network of alliances, even though they have been overshadowed by their mutual relative, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Berengaria's reputation as queen has often been undermined by the intervention and intercession of her mother-in-law; however, by examining her presentation in the chronicles and the reasons behind this portrayal, a more accurate understanding of her role as a queen on crusade is revealed. Joanna's appearances in the Angevin chronicles are minimal until 1176, when negotiations for her marriage began.¹³ She reappears when Richard arrives in Sicily, but then disappears again until her death. Eleanor of Aquitaine is a useful counterpoint to Berengaria and Joanna as she featured in crusading narratives as a leader of the Aquitanian troops in the Second Crusade, and her agency was recorded at this point and throughout her reigns as queen of France and England. As such, she is mentioned at various points in this chapter.

Berengaria and Joanna should be remembered not only for their importance in forming political alliances, but also for their agency in turbulent events.

Ambroise, Ibn-al'Athīr, and Richard de Templo

The three chronicles under study have been chosen because they offer differing representations of the two queens under discussion and have received little attention in previous discussions of queens and queenship.¹⁴ There has been much discussion of the authorship of *The crusade of Richard Lion-heart* and *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, and it is highly probable that these two chronicles drew upon the same original work for their information.¹⁵ Although the backgrounds of the three authors differ widely, they were all subject to ecclesiastical influence that directly affected their opinion of women on crusade and contributed to the repression of Berengaria and Joanna in the chronicles.

Ambroise was a poet of Norman origin who lived through the Third Crusade.¹⁶ His Norman cultural background alongside his Christianity heavily influenced his narrative, as may be seen in his description of the Muslim forces and his praise of Richard's crusading activities.¹⁷ His decision to write in Old French verse might be attributable to his unfamiliarity with Latin due to lower-class origins – a non-clerical background that might also explain why his descriptions of the two queens are less critical than those of his contemporaries, although he was still influenced by ecclesiastical views.¹⁸ His verse chronicle stands between the more formulaic Latin chronicles, such as those composed by Roger of Howden and Ralph of Diceto, and the *chansons d'amour* of his contemporaries. As such, his narrative is fantastical at points, keen to inspire chivalry and heroic deeds among readers while on crusade. Ambroise's views regarding the two queens is polite, owing to their noble status, but not overly praiseworthy in comparison to the masculine ideals he was trying to cultivate as part of his crusade narrative. His representation of Berengaria and Joanna may be linked to his perception of how important they were through marital alliances. It may be argued that Ambroise viewed Navarre as far less significant than Sicily, an island that had strong links with the House of Anjou, as he focuses predominantly on the Angevin–Sicilian alliance rather than the Angevin–Navarrese one, as will be discussed later.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Navarre would prove a pivotal ally while Richard was on crusade, even if his marriage to Berengaria did not produce any heirs.

The appearance of Christian queens in the Levant was not unprecedented. Eleanor of Aquitaine received attention from European chroniclers while on the Second Crusade owing to her alleged affair with Saladin (or another Muslim sultan), and the queens of Jerusalem, particularly Melisende and Sibylla, were often discussed in Western and Muslim chronicles alike.²⁰ However, in Ibn-al'Athīr's chronicle, published in 1231, the only reference to either Berengaria or Joanna is the discussion of the latter's proposed engagement to al-'Ādil Abū Bakr ibn Ayyūb (or Saphadin), Saladin's brother.²¹ Ibn-al'Athīr was an Islamic chronicler who was strongly pro-Zankid because of his family's careers in government.²² The Zankids,

or Zengids, were a Muslim dynasty who ruled parts of the Levant between 1127 and 1250, but their rule largely declined with the rise of Saladin. Similar to his European counterparts, Ibn-al'Āthīr was influenced by religious teachings regarding women. The aim of his chronicle was to record the actions of the Muslim caliphs; hence, as with Ambroise and de Templo, there is an almost complete omission of women from his narrative.

Nicholson has argued that Richard de Templo was influenced by classical portrayals of women, which explains his positive depiction of them in his chronicle.²³ Although classical texts are not free from misogynistic elements, they sometimes present more favourable views than medieval writings, which are heavily influenced by Christian teaching.²⁴ However, religion in the medieval period was not entirely oppressive: Marian devotion increased women's opportunities to participate in the Western European Church and its reforms.²⁵ Richard de Templo was a prior of the Augustinian priory of the Holy Trinity in London from 1222 to about 1248, and possibly an ex-Templar who had participated in the Third Crusade.²⁶ Nicholson has argued that his chronicle could have been written to bolster the image of the English monarchy and as such was composed after the Third Crusade, most likely during the minority of Henry III.²⁷ As mentioned above, there is debate over whether Ambroise's or Richard de Templo's text came first, as they both seem to draw extensively upon the same source. Moreover, while they are quite different in form, to some extent they both utilize epic narrative to entertain their readers with the heroic deeds of the crusaders.

The chroniclers' representations of Berengaria and Joanna are indicative of their opinions not only on women's roles in society but also on how the two queens should have behaved to consolidate Richard's position as king and conqueror. Richard's reputation as a heroic leader has largely been shaped by the chronicles of the time, and the representations of Berengaria and Joanna have been linked to his position as king.²⁸ The notion that crusade narratives have been overly critical of women on crusade has been discussed by Hodgson and Riley-Smith, who have highlighted misogynistic, clerical fears of such women's activities.²⁹ Hodgson argues that the sexual status of women was important, while the fact that Berengaria and Joanna were queens, as well as either wife or widow, set them apart from the lower-status women who also accompanied the crusaders.³⁰

The next section presents a comparative analysis of how the chroniclers depicted Berengaria and Joanna as brides, and how this affects our understanding of their agency.

Bride and widow: life-cycle events in medieval chronicles

The marriage of a princess was an integral life-cycle event, and as such it was often recorded in chronicles as it was one of the few occasions deemed worthy of attention. In Ambroise's chronicle, both queens are presented as fulfilling a mainly

ceremonial role as part of their royal position. Berengaria first appears in his verse chronicle shortly before her nuptials to Richard, when Ambroise refers to her arrival in Sicily.³¹ He praises her character, stating that she was a 'fair and worthy damsel' and 'of very gentle womanhood', indicating her nobility and the fact that she was a suitable bride for Richard because she was from a well-respected background.³² Later, Ambroise mentions Berengaria's journeys to Cyprus and Jaffa, accompanied by Joanna, displaying some similarities to chronicle writing as opposed to his more usual poetic verse.³³ He then describes her at the wedding ceremony as a 'virtuous queen with a lovely face'.³⁴ This is significant as a queen was expected to be virtuous and pious in order to support her husband. The fact that Ambroise is complimentary towards Berengaria indicates her value as a political asset to the Angevin empire and conforms to the formula of the *chanson d'amour*, which was highly flattering. However, he does not comment extensively upon Berengaria's looks, which defies expectations of the genre. The lack of detail regarding Berengaria's seminal role in the creation of an Angevin-Navarrese alliance may be explained by the fact that Ambroise's verse chronicle is a crusade narrative, not solely a record of political events. One may assume that his primary aims were to regale his noble audience with Richard's exploits as the saviour of the Holy Land and to encourage his fellow Anglo-Norman noblemen to join the crusade effort. Thus, he had little time for descriptions of the actions and appearance of female noblewomen, even if they held important political positions, which Berengaria certainly did as the wife of one of the most powerful European monarchs. In general, narratives of Berengaria's life are few and far between. More specifically, Ambroise's lack of interest in her may be attributed to her fulfilling her role as queen only ceremonially and then being dispatched to her new homeland while the crusade continued.³⁵

In comparison, Joanna's marriage receives far more attention from Ambroise, and he discusses the loss of her dower, perhaps highlighting its relative importance in comparison to Berengaria's in the web of Angevin matrimonial alliances.³⁶ The chronicler mentions Joanna and William II's marriage ceremony as well as Tancred of Lecce's seizure of her person and her dower upon William's death.³⁷ Similarly, the charter granting Joanna's dower is replicated in Roger of Howden's *Chronica*, whereas Berengaria's is not.³⁸ Ambroise states that Joanna and her dower were eventually recovered from Tancred, but the dower was then given to Richard to help fund the crusade. The chronicler merely applauds the fact that the money was spent 'in God's service', seemingly indifferent to the impact this had on Joanna's financial position.³⁹ It was not unusual to contribute a dowry to crusading funds, but it is not known whether Joanna gifted hers willingly, and she subsequently depended on her natal family for financial support.⁴⁰

Ambroise's description of Joanna is rather perfunctory (he refers to her only as the 'king's sister') and certainly less praiseworthy than his depiction of the 'virtuous' and 'fair' Berengaria, which suggests that he felt the latter and the alliance she helped to create were important at this juncture.⁴¹ However, this is somewhat inconsistent in light of the later attention he lavishes on Joanna's nuptials.

Notwithstanding his praise of Berengaria, his interest in Joanna's marriage and dower seems to indicate the political importance of her marriage to William and the economic value of her dower for the crusade. Bowie concludes that Joanna exercised negligible power over her dowerlands, and the absence of charters in her name suggests that she enjoyed little political agency.⁴²

The dispute over Joanna's dowry and dower provision from her marriage to William II is one of the primary reasons for Richard's intervention in Sicily on his journey to the Holy Land. Despite the status of her dowry, de Templo writes that Richard was concerned for Joanna's wellbeing and ordered Tancred to restore her dowry, along with other treasure owed to her as a dowager queen.⁴³ This account presents Joanna as little more than a pawn, with no agency as a dowager queen seeking to restore her dowry. She merely relied on Richard's intervention to gain financial restitution, in marked contrast to the later actions of her sister-in-law Berengaria, who relentlessly petitioned King John, successive popes, and King Henry III for the restoration of her dowry after the death of her husband.⁴⁴ Ibn-al'Āthīr refers to Joanna's dowry in terms of what she would bring to the marriage to Saphadin, and the dower provision Richard had secured from Tancred.⁴⁵ Bowie presumes that the dowry was entirely in cash, as there is no extant charter listing lands.⁴⁶ However, her dower provision is listed in a charter by William II and there are replicas in several chronicles, including those of Roger of Howden and Gervase of Canterbury.⁴⁷ The charter grants Joanna the county of Mont Sant'Angelo, the cities of Siponto and Vieste, and several major towns, including Lesina, Peschici, and Biccari.⁴⁸ The dower provision was conditional as Joanna was to hold the lands only until an heir was born and able to inherit, which Bowie says was not a feature of other dower stipulations.⁴⁹ The dower provision itself and the fact that it is mentioned in both Muslim and Latin chronicles again highlights Joanna's importance in terms of her status as a potential bride and consort, and the economic and political value of her marital alliance. Political agency takes many forms and it could be argued that although the chronicles do not take into account an official exercise of power over her dowerlands because she held them for her son, and no extant charters suggest otherwise, she may well have acted as an informal adviser to William or exercised power through unofficial channels due to financial restrictions.⁵⁰ The bequests Joanna bestowed upon her deathbed indicate that the Sicilians who served her were closer to her heart than her family and servants from her second marriage.⁵¹

Thus, in his chronicle, Ambroise implies that Joanna held political agency through her ceremonial roles; and when the lack of charters and letters in her name is taken into consideration, the chronicle appears reflective of reality. It is the only chronicle in which this occurs, which is notable and may be due to the fact that events in Sicily formed a significant part of the narrative of Richard's crusade, whereas his marriage to Berengaria was deemed only a minor event in the historical record. Bowie has extensively explored the importance of the marriages of both Berengaria and Joanna in her monograph.⁵² She argues that the references to Joanna in the chronicles demonstrate the importance of an Anglo-Sicilian alliance;

this is significant when analysing why the representation of Joanna has been restricted to a ceremonial role, which gave her limited political presence.⁵³ However, as we shall see below, in other chronicles, and later in her political career, Joanna is shown to have more agency.

De Templo's account of the arrival of Eleanor and Berengaria in Cyprus in 1191 praises the latter as a lady of 'graceful manner and high birth', which explains Richard's desire for her.⁵⁴ It also highlights her significance, as the reference to her high birth shows the value she brought to the Angevins with the Navarrese alliance. This contrasts with Ambroise's account, as he placed higher value on the Angevin-Sicilian alliance, which had a long history.⁵⁵ When discussing the marriage of Berengaria and Richard, de Templo refers to the former as 'very wise and of good character'.⁵⁶ Typically only men were praised for their wisdom, so this unusual compliment demonstrates Berengaria's importance as a queen consort at a time when women were often viewed as emotional and unstable. It is notable that de Templo implies that Richard had desired Berengaria ever since he was Count of Poitou,⁵⁷ although this is a point of contention as there are opposing opinions as to who chose Berengaria as his bride and why. Mitchell suggests she was Eleanor's choice in order to create an Iberian alliance, whereas Turner and Gillingham agree with de Templo and argue that Richard chose Berengaria due to a longstanding affection for her or to secure political gain.⁵⁸ Richard's alliance with Navarre was important enough for him to risk a rupture with Philip Augustus by cancelling his betrothal to Philip's sister Alice.⁵⁹ In the eyes of Henry II and Richard I, both marriages merited discord with one ally to secure a long-term political alliance with another.

Joanna and Saphadin's supposed engagement, which is referenced in Ibn-al'Athīr's chronicle, is surrounded by debate, as the extent to which she was seriously intended as his bride is contested. By September 1191, Richard had achieved victories in Acre and Jaffa as part of the Third Crusade. Asbridge sees the proposal of marriage between Joanna and Saphadin as an attempt to cement these conquests and ensure Richard's safe return to the West, following in the footsteps of Philip Augustus, who had left the Holy Land in July 1191.⁶⁰ The accounts of this engagement provide a glimpse into Joanna's political agency, although the fact that no European chronicler deemed it worthy of mention casts considerable doubt on its authenticity. Bowie cites the chronicler Beha ad-Din, who states that Joanna refused to honour the engagement because of her commitment to her Christian faith.⁶¹ Conversely, Ibn-al'Athīr argues that her refusal was due to English clerics' opposition to the marriage.⁶² Moreover, Richard later made the same claim, perhaps indicating a lack of sincerity on his part with respect to the betrothal.⁶³ Either way, the engagement never came to fruition, and Joanna married Raymond of Toulouse upon her return to the Angevin dominions, which extended the dynasty's web of alliances in Europe. As Amy Kelly notes, Richard's attempts to secure a Muslim alliance through marriage were not yet over, as he then proposed his niece – Eleanor of Brittany – as a bride. However, Saladin's court rejected this advance as it appeared provisional.⁶⁴

Ibn-al'Athīr's account highlights Joanna's importance to the Muslim hierarchy as a potential bride and a valuable economic resource, as well as a possible means to secure peace between themselves and the crusaders. Unusually, he suggests that she had at least some say in her choice of partner, so we may say that she possessed agency.⁶⁵ However, the engagement negotiations were short-lived and the lack of any further reference to Joanna once they were over indicates that her political agency was of little import to Ibn-al'Athīr's history. Nevertheless, the accounts of the agreement demonstrate the strength of Joanna's character in the eyes of the Muslim chroniclers. There is uncertainty over whether it was Joanna herself or the clergy who persuaded Richard accede to their demands, and the seriousness with which he approached the engagement means that we cannot confidently assert that Joanna exercised genuine political agency at this stage. She suffered no adverse consequences from the collapse of negotiations, which suggests that, while Richard wished to marry a female relative to Saphadin, he was not entirely surprised when Joanna refused. Indeed, possibly in expectation of just such an outcome, he already had several alternatives in mind, including his niece Eleanor of Brittany.

Ibn-al'Athīr's representation of Joanna in his chronicle is indicative not only of her status as a political asset but also of her attempts to exercise political agency during the marriage negotiations. He praises her in order to emphasize her merit as a bride, and the potential benefits of an alliance with her family. Meanwhile, the absence of Berengaria from his account perhaps displays a lack of understanding regarding the importance of the Angevin–Navarrese alliance.

This comparison has demonstrated that Berengaria's and Joanna's positions as brides allowed them to exercise agency through their ceremonial roles – a crucial aspect of queenship as it enhanced their legitimacy and authority. However, they were unable to exercise any other form of power, which resulted in a lack of further commentary on their lives.

Hostages, or opportunities to exercise power?

De Templo's chronicle allows the reader to follow the journeys of Joanna and Berengaria around the Mediterranean, and specifically their dealings with Tancred of Lecce and Isaac Komnenos. The fact that de Templo saw fit to document these episodes supports the notion that chroniclers had little interest in queens outside of their participation in life-cycle and highly unusual events.⁶⁶ His account of events in Sicily is rather more nuanced than Ambroise's text as he states that Tancred held Joanna's dowry in 'wardship', rather than explicitly accusing him of stealing her land and taking her hostage.⁶⁷ The language chroniclers use to describe such situations is often tenuous, and de Templo may have had good reason to present a more balanced view than his peers.⁶⁸ For instance, it is possible that he wished to maintain a position of neutrality at a time when England's foreign relations with France were strained due to Louis VIII and Hugh de Lusignan's invasion of Poitou and Gascony.⁶⁹ Or he may not have wished to follow Ambroise's prose to the

letter, with the result that Joanna's predicament became less perilous in his account. Either way, his choice of language is an explicit manipulation of Joanna's representation that depicts her as politically weak and lacking agency, in marked contrast to Ibn-al'Athīr's description of her. The Tancred incident bolstered Richard's image as a benevolent, crusading hero who rescues his sister from an illegitimate and merciless king.

However, de Templo later describes Richard's negotiation of due financial compensation for the outrages committed by the Sicilians, as well as the restitution of Joanna's dower.⁷⁰ Specifically, he states that Tancred would 'give 20,000 ounces of gold' for Joanna's dowry, and another 20,000 if his daughter should marry Arthur of Brittany, Richard's nephew.⁷¹ With the peace treaty signed and financial restitution secured, Joanna was summarily handed over to Richard. This depicts Joanna as little more than chattel, an asset who is passed between Tancred and Richard. There is no mention of her own views on her situation. She does not appear to have appealed to Richard for assistance, and the language de Templo uses to describe her change of status is again indicative of her lack of agency. There is no powerful personality to appease here, in stark contrast to when her mother Eleanor was returned to Louis VII of France after demanding an annulment on crusade.⁷² Joanna has been heavily edited from the historical narrative, so her own opinions on her status as a dowager queen remain unknown. However, it seems unlikely that she petitioned for the return of her dower as she is not referred to by name in any of the records surrounding this.⁷³

De Templo's account of the negotiations between Isaac Komnenos and Joanna and Berengaria provides a snapshot of the two queens' potential agency, because 'in order to hold the emperor off for a while they gave a noncommittal reply' and Isaac refrained from attacking them.⁷⁴ Upon arriving off the coast of Cyprus in April 1191, the queens were wary of disembarking for fear of attack. De Templo writes that Isaac made seductive offers with the intention of persuading them to land and then holding them captive,⁷⁵ but the queens successfully negotiated with him and 'on the basis of [their] promise [to disembark] the emperor held back', which gave Richard's forces sufficient time to land and seize the island.⁷⁶ Roger of Howden offers a rather different perspective on this episode, as he states that the ships accompanying the queens were wrecked, so Joanna and Berengaria were simply forced to remain in the harbour and await Richard's arrival.⁷⁷ By contrast, De Templo describes not only the use of feminine wiles in a time of adversity but also the queens' application of considerable diplomatic skill to avoid a full-blown attack by Isaac, although he reports that they 'wavered' and were 'afraid'.⁷⁸ Hence, the chronicler emphasizes the queens' fearfulness and therefore follows the standard formula of the crusading narrative by placing them in a precarious situation from which they may be rescued by a chivalric hero – Richard.

According to Jostischky, Richard captured Cyprus through simple chance; however, thereafter the island provided a solid foundation for his expeditions, as did securing Sicily as an ally.⁷⁹ Roger of Howden and Richard of Devizes offer contrasting accounts of the events on the island as they relied on different sources

(both oral and written), but de Templo was on crusade with Richard so his chronicle may be considered as an eyewitness account and therefore probably more accurate,⁸⁰ although the influences on his writing and his primary loyalty to Richard should not be forgotten. The latter chronicler clearly indicates that the two queens held a degree of political agency. Diplomatic manoeuvring was an essential part of queenship, and they may have deliberately presented themselves as helpless women who should not be attacked under the rules of chivalry in order to avoid a direct confrontation with Isaac for as long as possible. Nevertheless, their depiction as victims who were ultimately rescued by Richard served to perpetuate and extend the Lionheart legend, which in turn affected our perception of the two women. It is important to remember that Berengaria and Joanna were acting as Richard's agents at this juncture, and to understand that the promotion of Richard's myth may have led chroniclers to disregard the two queens' achievements.

As mentioned, de Templo is more than willing to acknowledge Joanna and Berengaria's agency when threatened with kidnap. His inclusion of this incident supports the theory that queens only ever appear in chronicles in unusual circumstances, but de Templo evidently believed that these two queens were capable of acting in their own interests: even though they were 'burning with gnawing anxiety', they did manage to defend themselves.⁸¹ While Richard is ultimately presented as the rescuing hero, de Templo does not belittle the negotiations the women conducted on their own behalf. In this sense, his account of this incident is far removed from his depiction of Joanna at the time of her capture by Tancred. She exhibits significantly more agency in Cyprus, and the language de Templo uses to describe both Joanna and Berengaria demonstrates their diplomatic and political skill.

Childless queens: the loss of their legacies?

There is no record of either Berengaria or Joanna producing an heir who survived infancy, which may help to explain both queens' disappearance from the historical narrative. The lack of any reference to Berengaria in Ibn-al'Āthīr's text perhaps highlights her unimportance in the eyes of that chronicler because she did not join Richard on crusade for its duration. By contrast, her mother-in-law Eleanor travelled with her husband Louis VII on the Second Crusade and led the Aquitanian contingent. Nevertheless, Eleanor's interactions with the Muslim world were discussed only in French chronicles, as Michael Evans notes.⁸² Berengaria's life, both on crusade and in the Angevin dominions during her marriage to Richard, are difficult to reconstruct fully due to a paucity of surviving records. This is not merely an issue with contemporary chronicles; there are also no surviving letters and charters from her period as queen consort to give an indication of her political agency. It is easy to assume that her dominating mother-in-law took centre stage because Eleanor was nominated regent while Richard was on crusade, and she negotiated his ransom and release after he was captured by Leopold V of Austria

and later ransomed to the Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI on his return journey.⁸³ The two stark issues here – Berengaria's general lack of representation in Angevin chronicles and the fact that she did not enter the Muslim sphere of interest – are probably the main reasons why she did not appear in Ibn-al'Athīr's chronicle. It is not known if Ibn-al'Athīr might have been influenced by Angevin chroniclers' accounts of Berengaria as he does not clearly indicate his sources. Berengaria's lack of heirs would also have impacted upon her status as queen, especially in the face of Eleanor, who had produced several children with Henry II. As such, Berengaria was largely omitted from the chronicles because of her inability to produce heirs.

Although they were childless queens, not all chroniclers chose to exclude Joanna and Berengaria from the narrative. De Templo provides a more succinct description of the two queens' movements after Berengaria's marriage than Ambroise, which fits the conventions of the genre of political histories. He then goes on to describe the perils of their journey, recording their stay at Limassol after Richard's capture of Cyprus, then a period in Acre after it was seized from Muslim forces.⁸⁴ In September 1191 the two queens were asked to join Richard at Joppa, and the following year they returned to Angevin territory.⁸⁵ Frustratingly, though, de Templo does not comment on their activities while Richard was crusading, and there is no suggestion in the chronicles under study that Berengaria attended war councils. It is widely assumed that she and Joanna spent their time pursuing activities expected of women of their status, such as playing instruments, riding and embroidery, although the extent to which they had access to such pursuits during their travels is debatable.⁸⁶ On the surface, the manipulation of Berengaria's and Joanna's images in de Templo's chronicle mirrors that which is found in other chronicles of the time.

There has been much discussion regarding how the relationship between Eleanor and Richard excluded Berengaria, as the latter is viewed as a less imposing figure than her mother-in-law.⁸⁷ This is because there is no reference to Berengaria causing a scandal or commissioning charters and deploying agency in the chronicles. There are several reasons why Berengaria received scant attention from the chroniclers. First, her political agency became apparent only when she assumed the role of queen dowager. Second, she was less inclined to provoke scandal in comparison to her mother-in-law Eleanor and sister-in-law Isabelle of Angoulême. Third, she produced no heirs during her marriage to Richard and so was viewed as historically irrelevant. Finally, if chroniclers were too harsh or too complimentary towards Berengaria, they knew that this would have an impact on perceptions of Richard, because his reputation was closely linked to hers. This concern regarding what could or should be written about the queen contributed to the dearth of record. As dowager queen she exhibited substantial agency as Lady of Le Mans; however, she was often sidelined during her time as Richard's queen in favour of Eleanor, who acted as regent while Richard was on crusade. Perhaps understandably, then, the chroniclers chose to focus on Richard's crusading activities and the political agency of his strong-willed mother. By contrast, as mentioned above,

there is no evidence of Berengaria exercising power during her marriage, probably because there were very few opportunities for her to do so.

Robert of Torigni writes that Joanna gave birth to a son, named Bohemond, in 1181.⁸⁸ However, as no other chronicle mentions this child, it is likely that he died infancy. Bowie argues that the lack of an heir disempowered Joanna as her status as queen was entirely dependent on William.⁸⁹ She also argues that Joanna's childlessness meant that she was unable to exert influence by controlling her offspring – a tactic that other queens of the period, including Eleanor of Aquitaine and Isabella of France, successfully employed.⁹⁰ Thus, neither Berengaria nor Joanna was able to exert full authority as neither could act as intercessor for her children or on her children's behalf, although both demonstrated some power by interceding on behalf of members of the nobility and the clergy.

Notwithstanding de Templo's appraisal of the two queens, both in Cyprus and later, Berengaria and Joanna were largely omitted from the historical narrative because of their inability to produce an heir – a life-cycle event that was one of the primary roles a queen was expected to uphold in the Middle Ages. Moreover, as they had no children to care for, they had limited opportunities to assume the roles of patron and intercessor that queens were expected to undertake.⁹¹ However, childless queens, such as Joanna and Berengaria, could still intercede as a form of official influence, even though, as mentioned previously, their opportunities were restricted.⁹² Therefore, they could be visible in public life but would be obscured in the historical record as they did not fulfil all of the customary aspects of their position.⁹³

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that three important chroniclers largely erased Berengaria and Joanna from their crusading narratives. It is entirely plausible that both queens were politically active during their queenships, but the loss of contemporary records means that we know only of Berengaria's increased agency when she became a dowager queen, perhaps because her mother-in-law Eleanor was no longer such a dominant influence by that time.

The three chronicles provide contrasting insights into the two queens and their omission from the historical record. Although there are similarities between Ambroise's and de Templo's accounts because they consulted the same sources, and although they both follow the form of other crusading narratives, their representations of the two queens are markedly different. While Ambroise praises Berengaria's character and briefly discusses her marriage, he places far more importance on the union of Joanna and William as part of Henry II's marriage strategy, which was linked to earlier Angevin alliances with Sicily. De Templo follows a more formulaic structure and provides an alternative narrative regarding events in Cyprus, which presents the queens as political agents, in contrast to Ambroise's representation of them as mere marital assets. Nevertheless, the chronicles are of little use as sources of information on the agency of queens due to their focus on recording only life-cycle and unusual events.

Ibn-al'Athīr displays very little interest in either Joanna or Berengaria. He omits the latter from his chronicle altogether, but credits the former with a glimmer of political agency because of her refusal to marry Saphadin. However, although Joanna's refusal is contested, it affords a valuable insight into the Muslim perception and representation of an Angevin queen who was so committed to her Christian faith that she disobeyed her brother and king – Richard I. With respect to Joanna's political agency, Bowie has argued that the absence of records makes it difficult to argue for her patronage both within and outside of her dowerlands, because she held them in usufruct for her son.⁹⁴ Thus, Ibn-al'Athīr's insight into her life as dowager queen of Sicily is one of the few examples we have of Joanna displaying agency. As Bowie has noted, she was dependent on her natal family after the proceeds of her dowerlands were handed over to Richard to fund his crusade.⁹⁵

Medieval chroniclers typically reported only major life-cycle or unusual events when discussing queens, as can be seen in the references to the marriages, widowhood, and hostage-taking of Berengaria and Joanna in the three chronicles under discussion here. Hence, these two queens went largely unrecorded – and were subsequently largely forgotten – as they enjoyed little or no political agency and experienced few key life-cycle events (other than marriage) in the period when the chroniclers were writing. The framework of the crusading narrative is also important here, as its focus on masculine, chivalric heroes left little room for discussions of queens. Moreover, both queens remained childless throughout this period and neither was embroiled in any form of scandal, which further explains their absence from the crusading chronicles. However, they deserve to be remembered if only because their marriages cemented powerful political alliances between important dynasties.

Nicholson suggests that women may have been erased from narratives of the Third Crusade to downplay its failure, as they were thought to bring bad luck.⁹⁶ Were Berengaria and Joanna blamed for the crusade's ineffectiveness and therefore omitted when the chronicles came to be written? Certainly, a similar accusation had been levelled at Eleanor of Aquitaine during the Second Crusade.⁹⁷

Considering the evidence from all three chronicles, Joanna is more prominent than Berengaria, which may be attributed to the perceived importance of the Anglo-Sicilian alliance. The significance of the Anglo-Navarrese alliance must not be forgotten, however, as it was crucial to securing Richard's safety while he was on crusade. Analysis of these three chronicles has provided a new perspective on the manipulation of Angevin queens in crusading chronicles as it has shown that Joanna wielded political agency, both on her own and in conjunction with Berengaria. Clearly, then, these two largely forgotten queens ought to be remembered for more than the actions of their male relatives.

Notes

- 1 Natasha Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), 44. For recent discussions of the actions of women on

- crusade, see Hodgson, *Women, Crusading and the Holy Land in Historical Narrative* and Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (eds), *Gendering the Crusades* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001).
- 2 Christoph T. Maier, 'The Roles of Women in the Crusade Movement: A Survey', *Journal of Medieval History*, 30 (2004), 64, 69–70; Keren Caspi-Reisfield, 'Women Warriors during the Crusades, 1095–1254', in Edgington and Lambert (eds), *Gendering the Crusades*, 94–107.
 - 3 Maier, 'The Roles of Women in the Crusade Movement', 69.
 - 4 Natasha Hodgson, 'Nobility, Women and Historical Narratives of the Crusades and Latin East', *Al-Masāq* 17 (2005), 65–67.
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5

POWER, PATRONAGE, AND POLITICS

Maria of Navarre, queen of the Crown of Aragon
(r. 1338–1347)

Lledó Ruiz Domingo

The long reign of King Pedro the Ceremonious (r. 1336–1387) was one of the most decisive in the political evolution of the Crown of Aragon,¹ as it bore witness to the consolidation of an institutional and territorial model that would endure until the late Middle Ages. The policies he implemented over those five decades make his reign one of the most fascinating for historians and medievalists of the Crown of Aragon. However, his first few years on the throne and his consort, Maria of Navarre, have attracted little attention, with the result that she has become one of the forgotten queens of the Crown of Aragon.²

Maria of Navarre was born in 1330 as the second daughter of Felipe of Evreux, count of Evreux, Angoulême, and Longueville, and Juana II, queen regnant of the Kingdom of Navarre and daughter of the king of France. Juana acceded to the throne of Navarre as she was the last descendant of Louis X of France, although her uncle, Felipe of Valois, who had precedence over her, took the throne of France.³ Maria lived at the court of the king of France in Paris, where her parents also resided, until her marriage to Pedro in 1338. Her upbringing and origins would influence many of the events of her brief life.⁴

In many ways, Maria's reign has always been intertwined with her husband's, and scholars have paid insufficient attention to her own role in politics and patronage. Despite her young age when she became queen (she was only eight) and her short life (she died at seventeen), the *infanta* of Navarre deserves to be remembered as a significant figure of the Aragonese realms as she may well have influenced the laws regarding the succession in Aragon and fought for her daughter Constanza's legitimization.

First, this chapter provides some context for the marriage negotiations, revealing that Maria of Navarre was not the first choice for the role of Pedro's wife. It then examines how Maria's appearance and wealth allowed her to develop her royal stature and exercise some political agency both inside and outside the borders of

her realm before moving on to her religiosity and patronage. Finally, the chapter sheds light on Maria's role as a mother. However, in her nine-year reign, she was far more than a wife and mother; she was a political player with strong connections and deserves to be remembered as such.

The marriage negotiations

According to the *siete partidas* (statutory code) of Alfonso VII of Castile, a prospective spouse should possess four important attributes: lineage, beauty, wealth, and good manners.⁵ Accordingly, in 1330, the king and queen of Navarre and the king of Aragon, Alfonso IV, began to negotiate a marriage between their firstborn children, thus planning the union of the heir of Aragon – Pedro – and the heiress of Navarre – Juana – when he was eleven and she was just five.⁶

The monarchs of both kingdoms sought mutual benefits from this union. The king and queen of Navarre wanted to forge an alliance with Aragon to avoid border issues and secure an ally in the event of any issues with another bordering crown, especially that of Castile. On the Aragonese side, at that time the Kingdom of Navarre had no male heir, so the female firstborn was due to inherit the crown. However, the possible unification of the two crowns was not the only reason for the marriage, as Alfonso IV also intended to forge links with France.⁷ The best way to achieve these objectives was to unite the two dynasties through family ties, so in 1332 marriage articles were signed between the young Pedro of Aragon and Juana of Navarre, stating that Juana would become Pedro's wife when she reached the age of twelve. Juana's family would also provide a dowry of 100,000 *sanchetas* pounds,⁸ which was to be paid in two halves: the first half on the wedding day and the second the following year. If the monarchs of Navarre were unable to pay on time, the revenue they received from the town of Tudela would be charged as interest and paid to the king of Aragon. In return, Alfonso IV promised the castles of Borja, Los Fayos, Malón, Sos, Salvatierra, and Campdaliup to the king and queen of Navarre. If Pedro were to die without descendants, the dowry would return to Juana, and if she were to die without heirs, the dowry would return to the king and queen of Navarre. However, if there were descendants, the dowry would be passed down to the children, unless there was a will, in which case all of its terms would be fulfilled.⁹

The proposed union with Juana had still not taken place when Pedro of Aragon became king in 1336, by which time the queen of Navarre had given birth to two sons, so the *Infanta* Juana was no longer heir presumptive to the Navarrese throne. Nevertheless, Pedro was keen to be married, so on 5 October 1336 he appointed Juan García and García Loriç as court procurators with full powers to choose the 'ideal *infanta* both physically and with other qualities to be queen'.¹⁰ A few days later, the procurators informed Pedro that Juana had decided to devote her life to God, so on 17 April 1337 he agreed to marry her younger sister Maria, while Juana entered the Holy Virgin Monastery of Longchamp, in the region of Paris, where she lived out the rest of her days.¹¹

On 22 April 1337, the terms of the marriage between Maria and Pedro were settled. The marriage would take place when the *infanta* was twelve years old, or earlier, if both parties agreed; and the king and queen of Navarre would pay 60,000 *sanchetas* pounds in four instalments, or else the revenue they received from Tudela would be charged as interest (as had been agreed in the earlier marriage contract). Meanwhile, the new queen of Aragon would receive Tarazona, Jaca, and Teruel, along with their villages, as a gift. The succession of the Kingdom of Navarre was also decided. If Queen Regnant Juana and her two young sons were to die, Felipe of Evreux would retain governance until Maria was twenty-one years old, whereupon he would receive 100,000 Aragonese pounds from King Pedro and she would become the new queen regnant of Navarre, with Pedro as her consort. On their deaths, the crown would pass to their oldest male heir.¹²

The marriage was solemnized in 1338 in Alagón, at which point Maria became queen of Aragon at the age of just eight; her husband Pedro was nineteen. The terms of the marriage agreement meant that Maria brought considerable wealth to her new homeland, which enabled her to cultivate her Aragonese consort authority.

Appearance and wealth as part of Maria's political agency

The arrival of the young *infanta* in the Crown of Aragon called for her public and visible transformation from Navarrese and French princess to Aragonese queen. In other words, although marriage and its subsequent consummation would turn Maria of Navarre into King Pedro's consort by right, she also had to exhibit a series of material and symbolic characteristics to distinguish herself, as consort, from lesser members of the nobility and the royal family.¹³ In short, she had to assume the persona of an Aragonese queen.¹⁴

The first of these characteristics related to Maria's appearance. A consort, like the monarch, had to display her superior status in the social elite as well as her financial solvency by means of refined, ostentatious, and expensive attire.¹⁵ Dressing in luxurious and highly valuable objects allowed royals to flaunt their social pre-eminence through meticulous personal adornment.¹⁶ So, to celebrate his new queen, on 11 September 1337, several months before the wedding ceremony, Pedro ordered his silversmith to make Maria a gold crown adorned with precious stones and pearls, as well as a garland or diadem and a lighter crown. He also commissioned six 'wealthy-looking' ruby and diamond rings.¹⁷

Aragonese queens were also expected to support both themselves and their own court. Therefore, a fund was created for Maria that generated sufficient revenue from a variety of sources to enable her to maintain a standard of living that was fit for a queen as well as an appropriately sumptuous household.¹⁸ Her first sources of revenue were the castles and surrounding villages that Pedro gave her as a wedding gift (*arras*). According to Pedro, Tarazona, Jaca, and Teruel and the villages 'accustomed the Queen, like the previous queens of Aragon, to having possessions'.¹⁹ However, he must have decided that they were unlikely to generate sufficient funds, because on 11 September 1338 he promised Maria a further 150,000

Barcelona *sueldos*, with 100,000 coming from the Jewish *aljamas* in Gerona, Lérida, and Valencia, and the remaining 50,000 from the universities and councils of Catalonia.²⁰ The objective, according to Pedro, was 'to maintain the decorum of his household in a way that befits its grandeur' by providing adequate funds for its upkeep.²¹ Unfortunately, at least for the time being, these funds could not come from towns that earlier queens of Aragon had been accustomed to holding, because both Leonor of Castile (the second wife and now widow of Pedro's father Alfonso IV) and Elisenda de Montcada (the widow of Pedro's grandfather Jaime II) were still alive and collecting revenue as queens dowager. However, Pedro promised to grant some of these towns to Maria as soon as one of them died.²²

On 18 February 1339, Pedro was forced to make another donation to Maria because many years earlier Jaime II had serviced a debt by granting a significant proportion of the revenue from the towns she received as wedding gifts to the count of Ribagorza. To resolve this problem, Pedro granted the queen a further 25,000 Barcelona *sueldos* from the 'royal coffers'.²³ He also granted her the toll money from Canfranc and all of the revenue from the market of Biescas.²⁴ These funds would help Maria to cultivate the sort of lifestyle that was expected of an Aragonese queen.

Maria's dowry was another potential source of income. As we have seen, according to the terms of the contract signed by Pedro and the king and queen of Navarre, the dowry was set at 60,000 *sanchetas* pounds, to be paid in four instalments of 15,000 pounds each. The due dates were: Christmas 1338; San Miguel 1339; Christmas 1339; and San Miguel 1340.²⁵ However, by April 1340, no payment had been received. Indeed, it would be 6 May 1340 before the king and queen of Navarre paid just 12,000 *sanchetas* pounds, followed by another instalment of 4,000 pounds in December of that year.²⁶ No further payment was received in 1341, so Pedro and Maria sent court procurators to put pressure on the governor of Navarre²⁷.

In November 1341, in light of the ongoing non-payment of the dowry and according to the terms of the marriage contract, it was decreed that revenue from the Navarrese town of Tudela would be collected as interest by the king of Aragon.²⁸ Further dowry instalments of 2,000 *sanchetas* pounds and 5,000 *sanchetas* pounds were received in May and October 1342, respectively,²⁹ followed by 2,100 *sanchetas* pounds and 5,000 *sanchetas* pounds the following year.³⁰ Hence, by May 1343, Pedro and Maria had received approximately half of the promised dowry. While the queen of Navarre insisted that she wished to settle the outstanding balance as quickly as possible, no further payments were received throughout the rest of the year or in 1344, despite Pedro's many complaints.³¹ The dowry was finally paid in full when Pedro and Maria received 15,000 *sanchetas* pounds and 14,900 *sanchetas* pounds in August and October 1345, respectively.³² Over the previous seven years, Maria had maintained a diplomatic relationship with her parents at the insistence of her husband in order to increase their chances of receiving the money.

Of course, these substantial funds helped Maria to maintain and enhance her household, which was a distinct, separate entity from Pedro's.³³ In fact, the term

'Queen's Household' appears for the first time in Aragonese treasury documents relating to the payment of Maria's officials.³⁴ It comprised about 120 people in 1345 and was structured according to an outline devised by her husband.³⁵ After the forced accession of the Kingdom of Mallorca to the Crown of Aragon, and upon adaptation of the island court's regulations (the so-called *leges palatinae*), known as the *Ordinacions de la Casa i Cort*, Pedro decided to establish a comprehensive, limited structure for the king's and queen's respective households, which would highlight the differences between the two and make the latter a permanent, self-contained entity. The structure of Maria's household, which was similar to her predecessor's and set the template for her successors, was based on table service, the chamber, administration, the chapel, and the queen's scribe.³⁶

Maria was able to project the image of a wealthy and powerful queen of Aragon through her appearance. With jewellery, diamonds, and other precious gems, she and the king enhanced their monarchical authority by displaying their financial superiority. Furthermore, Maria's personal wealth allowed her to control her own household and hence develop some political agency at the Aragonese court. However, if she ever wished to wield genuine political power, she knew that she had to cultivate two further aspects of medieval queenship. She had to enhance her reputation through piety and patronage.

Piety and patronage

Although Maria of Navarre was a very young queen consort when she arrived in Aragon, she had few problems adapting to the demands of her new role, including paying close attention to piety, patronage of the arts, motherhood, and intercession.

Piety was one of the fundamental elements of Maria's role as queen of Aragon.³⁷ Helping the needy, a duty of all good Christians, became an instrument to raise public awareness of her queenship, which was why Bernat Nabinal, Maria's chaplain and almoner, was an important member of her household. Nabinal was in charge of distributing the monthly donations that the queen made to the poor and needy 'for the love of God'.³⁸ There is also evidence of Maria donating sums of money to specific individuals, or even ordering her staff to buy clothing, and particularly shoes, for the needy.³⁹ Similarly, she made donations to religious institutions, especially those of women, such as a gift to the abbess of Eula Monastery in 1345.⁴⁰ Piety helped Marie to construct her image as a true consort, in keeping with the exemplary models that defined the Aragonese queen's identity in society.

Devotion and piety were often intertwined with another element that defined queenly dignity: patronage of the arts. In her short life, Maria became an important patron and sponsor of the arts, commissioning the creation of religious pieces such as missals, chalices, and Bibles. However, there is much debate about her participation in the creation of her own Book of Hours. This was the work of a copyist and three miniaturists – Ferrer Bassa, his son Arnau Bassa, and the Maestro of Baltimore⁴¹ – but no extant documents link Maria to its commission.⁴² The most widely accepted hypothesis is that Pedro commissioned the Book of Hours as a

wedding gift for Maria. This theory is based on a payment he made in 1340 for various books created by Ferrer Bassa and a letter he wrote to Maria in 1342.⁴³ In the letter, Pedro, who was in Barcelona, asked Maria, who was in Valencia, to send to him a Book of Hours painted by Ferrer Bassa that belonged to him.⁴⁴ However, other scholars have pointed out that Ferrer Bassa created many other works, so this was not necessarily a reference to *Maria's* Book of Hours.⁴⁵ Moreover, the king's coat of arms does not appear in the book, which possibly disproves his involvement.⁴⁶ Of course, Maria may have commissioned the book herself, especially as we know that she commissioned and paid for several others, including a Books of Hours dedicated to the Virgin Mary, in 1339.⁴⁷ There is also documentary evidence that she owned various chapel books and commissioned items of religious patronage, including a chalice, although the bill for the latter was not settled until after her death.⁴⁸

Maria's Book of Hours includes at least a dozen depictions of the queen herself. Most of these miniatures are set within capital letters and feature Maria praying, with her coat of arms in the background.⁴⁹ In another, she is depicted praying to St Louis.⁵⁰ However, perhaps the most interesting illustration of all is the miniature on folio 15, in which Maria is kneeling next to the throne of the Virgin Mary with the baby Jesus.⁵¹ Mary is depicted with no crown, as in Byzantine images belonging to the Italian tradition from around 1300, which almost always omitted this symbol of royalty from images of the Virgin.⁵² Young Maria, who was keen to become a mother, is kneeling at the feet of the Virgin – the ideal prototype for both queen and mother – in a clear signal that she wishes to follow Mary's example. Although it is impossible to state categorically who commissioned this piece, it certainly corroborates the queen's role as a patron of the arts.

Exercising political power through motherhood

During her time as queen, Maria would have been most preoccupied by the quest for an heir. Motherhood was socially established as one of the defining elements of the queen consort's role in medieval monarchy.⁵³ Although she was expected to do much more besides, procreation remained a vitally important and fundamental function for every queen for many reasons.⁵⁴ The marriage of two monarchs should be understood as a public union in which individual personality played a secondary role or even became irrelevant given each monarch's expectations of her or his role and the need to guarantee the crown's longevity.⁵⁵

Continuation of the dynastic line through the birth of heirs was an issue that concerned society deeply, because guaranteeing dynastic succession entailed, in most cases, maintaining the peace upon the king's death and the good governance of the *res publica*. Hence, particular attention was paid to everything relating to the birth of heirs and guaranteeing the continuity and integrity of the monarchy. Monarchs simply had to produce children, and specifically boys, in order to prove that God approved of the monarch and his dynasty and guarantee the future of the crown. In addition, the high infant mortality rate had to be taken into

consideration. In the fourteenth century there was a good chance that a single male heir would not survive into adulthood, so no royal couple could afford to relax after producing just one child.⁵⁶

Motherhood was symbolically linked to the Virgin Mary, the Queen of Heaven, so any queen consort who fell pregnant and produced an heir benefited by association and enhanced her status.⁵⁷ According to many scholars, including John Carmi Parsons, motherhood was also closely associated with dispensing advice, being heard, and influencing people: that is, intercession, another of the qualities that defined the ideal institutional figure of the queen consort in society.⁵⁸ Both during and after pregnancy, the queen's prestige would increase and her advice would have greater influence on account of the divine blessing that her conception represented. Likewise, motherhood and the ability to produce male heirs could endow the queen consort with such legitimacy that the king might decide to reward her and publicly honour her with symbolic acts of exaltation, such as a coronation. Only five queens were ever crowned in the Kingdom of Aragon, all of them after they had given their husband a male heir.⁵⁹

Hence, motherhood was inevitably one of the defining aspects of the life and role of Maria of Navarre as queen consort of Pedro the Ceremonious.⁶⁰ However, as we have seen, the new queen of Aragon was only eight years old when she arrived in the kingdom and married Pedro in 1338. The marriage was solemnized in that year, but the couple then had to wait until Maria was twelve before they could try for an heir. They succeeded in the first few months and Maria gave birth to a daughter in 1343, at the age of thirteen. At the time, it was not unusual for royal marriages to take place long before the bride reached puberty. The best-known example in Aragon was the marriage between Alfonso the Magnanimous and Maria of Castile, who married in 1415. The queen did not reach biological maturity until three years later, which caused a major rift between the couple themselves and their families.⁶¹

The birth of Pedro and Maria's first daughter is recorded in the king's chronicle, which states that he travelled from Barcelona to Valencia in 1343, while Maria headed to the monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet for her confinement.⁶² Thereafter, the pregnancy must have taken a bad turn, because Pedro received news that the queen was gravely ill and unlikely to survive. However, after travelling to the monastery to be with his supposedly dying wife, he learned that she had given birth safely and was now in good health. The couple named their daughter Constanza and decided to spend the summer in Poblet to enable the queen to make a full recovery. Then, when autumn came, they headed to Lérida. A few months later, Pedro set off for Valencia while Maria remained a few days longer in Lérida, having learned that she was pregnant again. This second pregnancy gave the monarchs hope that they would produce a male heir, secure the succession, and limit the ever-growing influence of Pedro's brother, the *Infante* Jaime. However, it resulted in another daughter, named Juana, and the same thing happened again with Maria's third pregnancy, when she gave birth to the *Infanta* Maria in 1345.

Motherhood could help a consort to legitimize her position, improve her status, and increase her authority within both the court and the kingdom. However, every consort was under enormous pressure to produce a *male* heir and thereby secure the future of the dynasty, and she was considered a failure if she was unable to do so.⁶³ Maria of Navarre must have suffered all of these pressures and anxieties after giving birth to three daughters, especially in light of Pedro's relationship with his brothers, which had been tense for years. The *Infante* Jaime, the youngest son of King Alfonso IV and Teresa de Entença, was procurator general, a powerful administrative position that was traditionally held by the heir presumptive in Aragon.⁶⁴ In the process of fulfilling his duties, Jaime was able to cultivate relations with the main officers of the royal administration and promote himself as a viable alternative to Pedro. Moreover, his cause was aided by the fact that there was considerable hostility towards Pedro, who had significantly increased the tax burden in many royal cities.⁶⁵

There was also the problem of Pedro's stepbrothers, Fernando and Juan, the sons of Alfonso IV and his second wife, Leonor of Castile. Alfonso had provided both of these *infantes* with enormous patrimonial estates, despite Pedro's very public complaints.⁶⁶ On Alfonso's death in 1336, Leonor and the *infantes* fled to Castile to avoid possible reprisals from Pedro.⁶⁷ For his part, the king was determined to bring the gifted estates back under royal jurisdiction.⁶⁸ Intense negotiations between the various parties concluded in 1339, with the *infantes* deprived of many of the estates they had received from Alfonso. Understandably, this resulted in simmering resentment towards Pedro.⁶⁹

Given all of these family disputes, and especially the *Infante* Jaime's consolidation of power as procurator general, Maria was under intense pressure to produce a son and thereby safeguard Pedro's position against the very real threat of rebellion from his brother and/or stepbrothers. This need was even more pressing due to the king's unpopularity, which was deepening as a result of the fiscal pressure he was exerting on towns under royal jurisdiction in order to finance his military campaigns, such as that in Mallorca.⁷⁰ Maria duly fell pregnant for a fourth time in 1346. Before she could give birth, though, Pedro decided to appoint their firstborn child, Constanza, heiress to the Kingdom of Aragon as long as no legitimate male child was born to the couple in the future. This appointment, which was made on 14 February 1347, marked the first occasion in Aragonese history that a young and healthy king, with an even younger (and evidently fertile) wife, had nominated his daughter as his successor.⁷¹ (Only one other woman had ever been heiress – Petronila (1136–1164), the first queen of the Crown of Aragon, who served simply as a vehicle for securing the succession rather than as queen regnant.) Inevitably, the *Infante* Jaime – who was the first male in the line of succession and therefore, under normal circumstances, heir presumptive – protested strongly and relations between the two brothers deteriorated further.⁷²

However, all of these manoeuvrings seemed immaterial when Maria gave birth to a son in Valencia at the end of March 1347. According to Pedro's chronicle, there was widespread jubilation at court on news of the birth of a male heir and

the celebrations soon spread across the city.⁷³ It was no accident that the new *infante* was born in Valencia: the king had been under extreme pressure from the city's oligarchs to revoke his appointment of Constanza as heiress and reinstate Jaime's claim to the throne. For a few hours, all of those worries could be forgotten, but then, tragically, the *Infante* Pedro passed away, followed shortly thereafter by Queen Maria herself.⁷⁴ As Pedro's chronicle says, jubilation swiftly turned to sadness and mourning at the death of the queen and the heir to the throne.⁷⁵

However, Maria's influence did not end with her death. After all, she was a native of Navarre, where royal women could become heirs to the throne as long as there was no male successor who shared the same kinship with the previous monarch. In other words, in accordance with the *Fueros* – the Navarrese constitution – when there were no male children, a daughter could succeed her father or mother and become queen regnant. Indeed, Maria's mother, Queen Juana of Navarre, had done just that. This Navarrese succession model, which was introduced to Aragon with the arrival of Queen Maria, as well as jurists from Roussillon who arrived at Pedro's court after he had conquered the Kingdom of Mallorca, exerted a powerful influence on the king's decisions on the subject of succession. In a bold move, Pedro dismissed the *Infante* Jaime from the position of procurator general and appointed the *Infanta* Constanza governess general in his stead.⁷⁶ As mentioned above, this was a very important position as it was traditionally held by the heir to the Crown of Aragon. By contrast *lieutenant* general – a role that a number of medievalists have erroneously ascribed to Constanza – was an extraordinary position to which a member of the royal family might be appointed in the absence of the monarch.⁷⁷ The king demanded that all of the Crown of Aragon's governors must swear an oath of allegiance to the new governess general – and heiress to the throne – Constanza on behalf of their respective kingdoms.⁷⁸ Berenguer de Codinach, a former royal scribe in Maria's household and fully trusted by the queen, was involved in these negotiations to legitimize her eldest daughter's position.⁷⁹

However, despite Pedro's best efforts to persuade the kingdoms of Valencia and Aragon to acknowledge Constanza as his legitimate heir, sectors of the nobility, the urban oligarchies, and ordinary citizens all argued that the monarch's request went against the constitution – the *Els Furs* – and launched a revolt, pledging their support to the *Infante* Jaime and the king's stepbrothers, Fernando and Juan.⁸⁰ This conflict, which was known as the War of the Union, continued for just over a year until Pedro emerged victorious over his opponents.⁸¹ Notwithstanding these difficulties after her death, it is important to note that Maria used her motherhood to protect and legitimize Constanza and therefore played an important role in Iberian politics.

Conclusion

In the Middle Ages, whenever a foreign princess married into another monarchy, there would be a ceremony and a formal procedure to mark her transformation from

infanta to monarch's consort. For instance, she would wear a crown, receive income and titles, and oversee a household that was in keeping with her new, exalted status.

Maria of Navarre was a paradigmatic example of this transformation from *infanta* to queen, she wielded significant power at the Aragonese court, and she fulfilled the duties of queen consort with aplomb, despite her tender age. Undoubtedly the most important aspects of her nine-year reign were motherhood and patronage. Although she had four pregnancies, she produced only one male heir, who died almost immediately. Ultimately, the birth of three daughters did not complicate the succession, as the king went on to father a number of sons with later wives. However, it was significant that Pedro tried to legitimize his eldest daughter's claim to the throne by invoking a policy that was very similar to that used in his wife's home kingdom⁸² in a bid to secure the succession for his and Maria's offspring.⁸³

Pedro's three subsequent wives have all been accorded prominent positions in the history of Aragon, in marked contrast to his first, who has been largely neglected. However, in light of the central role Marie played as queen consort in the crucial first few years of her husband's long reign, a reappraisal of her significance is surely long overdue.

Notes

- 1 The Crown of Aragon was a confederation of states that was ruled by king of Aragon from 1162 to 1715. Its origins lay in the marriage of Ramon Berenguer IV, count of Barcelona, and Petronilla, queen of Aragon. In the fifteenth century, the Crown of Aragon comprised the kingdoms of Aragon, Valencia, Mallorca, Naples and its islands, the island kingdom of Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia as well as the principality of Catalonia and the counties of Roussillon and Cerdanya.
- 2 For details of the reign of Pedro IV of Aragon, see: Ernest Belenguer, *Vida i regnat de Pere el Cerimoniós* (Lleida: Pagès, 2015); Rafael Tasis, *Pere el Cerimoniós i els seus fills* (Barcelona: Vicens Vives, 1980); Francisco Gimeno Blay, *Escribir, reinar: la experiencia gráfico-textual de Pedro IV el Ceremonioso (1336–1387)* (Madrid: Abada, 2006); José Angel Sesma Muñoz (ed.), *Cortes del reinado de Pedro IV*, ed. (Zaragoza: Gobierno de Aragón, Departamento de Educación, cultura y Deporte; Ibercaja 2006–2009); Luis Blanco Domingo, *La fiscalidad regia: el Baile General de Aragón durante el reinado de Pedro IV el Ceremonioso (1336–1387)* (Zaragoza: Institución 'Fernando el Católico': Diputación de Zaragoza, 2009); Bibiana Candela Oliver, *Cortes valencianas a finales del reinado de Pedro IV. Actas de 1369, 1371 y 1375* (Alicante: Publicacions Universitat d'Alacant, 2006); Maria del Mar López Veleró, 'La guerra de los dos Pedros: discurso e interpretación en las crónicas de Pere IV el Cerimoniós y Pedro I el Cruel', in José Manuel Lucía Megías (ed.), *Actas del VI congreso Internacional de la Asociación Hispánica de Literatura Medieval* (Alcalá de Henares: Publicaciones Universidad de Alcalá, 1997), 915–924; Pau Cateura Bennàsser, *Política y finanzas del reino de Mallorca bajo Pedro IV de Aragón* (Palma de Mallorca: Institut d'Estudis Baleàrics, 1982); José Camarena Mahiques, *La política peninsular de Pedro el Ceremonioso* (València: Sucesor de Vives Mora, 1973); Alberto Boscolo, *Problemi mediterranei dell'epoca di Pietro il Cerimonioso (1353–1387)* (València: Sucesor de Vives Mora, 1973).
- 3 Fermín Miranda García, 'Juana II (1311–1328/1349) reina titular de Navarra', in Julia Pavón Benito (ed.), *Reinas de Navarra* (Madrid: Sílex, 2014), 591–595.
- 4 For details of other Navarrese queens, see: Elena Woodacre, *The Queens Regnant of Navarre: Succession, Politics and Partnership, 1274–1512* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

- 5 *Las siete partidas del Rey Alfonso el Sabio* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1807), Partida II, Tit. VI, Law I, 41: 'Debe el rey catar que aquella con quien casare haya en si quatro cosas; la primera que venga de buen linage; la segunda que sea fermosa, la tercera que sea bien costumbrada, la quarta que sea rica; ca en quanto ella de mejor linage fuere, tanto será él mas honrado por ende, et los fijos que della hobiere serán más nobles et mas en caro tenudos: otrosi, quanto mas fermosa fuere tanto mas la amará'.
- 6 Pedro IV of Aragon was born in 1319 to Alfonso IV of Aragon and Theresa of Entença. He became king of Aragon at the age of nineteen in 1336, following his father's death. For more information, see: Thomas Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 84–129.
- 7 Salvador Claramunt Rodríguez, 'La política matrimonial de la Casa condal de Barcelona y Aragón desde 1213 hasta Fernando el Católico', *Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia* 23–24 (2002–2003): 214–216.
- 8 For more information on family ties as an instrument of international diplomacy, see: Lledó Ruiz Domingo, 'From Sicily to the Throne: The Hohenstaufen Women and the Differences between Aragonese and Greek Queenship Models', in Elena Woodacre (ed.), *A Companion to Global Queenship*, 245–254 (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2018).
- 9 José Ramón Castro, 'El matrimonio de Pedro IV de Aragón y María de Navarra', *Estudios de la Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón* 3 (1948): 56–60.
- 10 Archivo de la Corona de Aragón (ACA), Real Cancillería (RC), registro (reg.) 1523, fols. 1v–2v.
- 11 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 65r: 'E como por razón que la Infanta dona Joanna queriendo esleyr vida de virginidat a servicio de Dios sea entrada en orden e haya renunciado e feyto disinimiento al dicto senyor don Pedro agora rey de Aragón del tractamiento e obligaciones feytas porel dicto matrimonio'.
- 12 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fols. 6r–7v.
- 13 Ana Echevarría and Nikolas Jaspert, 'Introducción: el ejercicio del poder de las reinas ibérica en la Edad Media', *Anuario de Estudios medievales* 46:1 (2016): 3–33.
- 14 Lledó Ruiz Domingo, "'Del qual tenim loch". Leonor de Sicilia y el origen de la lugartenencia femenina en la Corona de Aragón', *Medievalismo: Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 27 (2017): 303–326.
- 15 Marguerite Keane, *Material Culture and Queenship in 14th-century France: The Testament of Blanche of Navarre (1331–1398)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 12–25.
- 16 Diana Pelaz Flores, 'El tesoro de las reinas consortes castellanas en el siglo XV. Composición, decoración y significado', in Diana Arauz (ed.), *Pasado, presente y porvenir de las humanidades y las artes*, 287–310 (Zacatecas: Gobierno del Estado de Zacatecas, Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas, 2012).
- 17 Próspero Bufarull, *CODOIN* (Barcelona: Academia de Buenas Letras, 1830), 4:243–245: 'Al fiel nuestro Merino de la Seca, argenter de Barcelona ... Primerament una rica corona gentil de riquesas piedras et riquesas perlas en que aya poco oro. Item una corona otra sotil. Item una garlanda. Item seis aniellos ricos dezmarachdes, robizes et diemans'.
- 18 As can be seen in ACA, Real Patrimonio, Maestre Racional, Volúmenes, Serie General, 456.
- 19 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 51v: 'E deven segunt quelas otras reynas de Aragon qui por tiempo fueron han costumpnado haver e tener lo lugares a ellas assignados por cambra e recibir las rendas de aquellos'. See also ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 50r: 'Segunt quelas otras Reynas de Aragon havian costumpnado haver e tener los lugares aellas assignados por cambra'.
- 20 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fols. 68v and 7r.
- 21 Archivo de Navarra, Sección de Comptos, caja 7, número 111: 'Para mantener el decoro de su cambra como corresponde a su alta dignidad'.
- 22 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fols. 84r–v: 'E le prometimos que assignare a vos sobre los legados que agora tiene la Reyna dona Elionor e la Reyna dona Elisenda y es assaber sobre aquellas que primo vagatian por muert delas dictas reynas o de alguna delas dictas'.

- 23 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 88r: 'Ad apus provisionis domus vostre assignamus vobis viginti quinque mille solidos barchinone ... dictos viginti quinque mille solidos supra coffras nostris ducimos assignados'.
- 24 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 147r.
- 25 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 7v–8r: 'E por dot sexanta mil libras de sanchetes o de torneses agora corrientes en el Regno de Navarra o la estimación d'aquellos como agora valen en el dicto Regno e que la meytat dela dita dot se liure et pague luego feyto e solempnizado lo dito matrimonio en fazer dela Egleſia yes aſaber en el dia que se solempnizara al dicto ſenyor rey d'Aragón ho aqui ell querrà e la otra meytat ſel de e pague dentro un anyo ſiguient depues dela ſolempnizació'.
- 26 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 102v–103r.
- 27 Queen Juana and her husband, Felipe of Evreux, ſpent moſt of their time in Paris, ſo ſhe appointed a governor who adminiſtered the Kingdom of Navarre in their abſence.
- 28 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 125v.
- 29 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 130v.
- 30 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 137r.
- 31 Archivo de Navarra, Sección Comptos, caja 9, número 101: 'Eſta es una de las coſas el mundo que eylla querría mas que fueſ acoſplida'.
- 32 ACA, RC, reg. 1523, fol. 187r.
- 33 Lledó Ruiz Domingo, 'Les viles de la Ribera en la cambra de la reina (ſegles XIV i XV)', in Antoni Furió i Diego (ed.), *Vil·les, alqueries i caſes de camp. Poblament diſpers, noves poblacions i urbanitzacions a la Ribera* (in preſſ).
- 34 The designation 'de caſa de la ſenyoſa reyna' does not appear in any documents relating to the reigns of earlier queens of Aragon. See ACA, Real Patrimonio, Maestre Racional, Volúmenes, Serie General, 456 (for Maria) and ACA, Real Patrimonio, Maestre Racional, Volúmenes, Serie General, 455 (for Maria's immediate predecessor, Leonor).
- 35 Details of Maria's household are contained in ACA, Real Patrimonio, Maestre Racional, Volúmenes, Serie General, 456.
- 36 For details of the Aragonese royal household, ſee: Francisco Gimeno, Daniel Gozalbo, and Joſep Trench (eds), *Ordinacions de la caſa i cort de Pere el Cerimoniós* (València: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2009); Jorge Sáiz Serrano, *Caballeros del rey. Nobleza y guerra en el reinado de Alfoño el Magnánimo* (València: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2008); Rita Coſta Gomes, *A corte dos reis de Portugal no final da Idade Média* (Liſboa: Difel, Memória e ſociedade, 1996), 28–31.
- 37 See Theresa Earefight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Joanna Layneſmith, *The Laſt Medieval Queens: English Queenship 1445–1503* (Oxford: Oxford University Preſſ, 2004), 24–25.
- 38 ACA, Real Patrimonio (RP), Maestre Racional (MR), Volúmenes (vol.) Serie General (SG) 456, fol. 27v, 28r, 33v.
- 39 ACA, RP, MR, vol. SG 456, fol. 33r, which deſcribes a gift of 860 *ſueldos* to purchase clothes for thirteen impoverished people.
- 40 ACA, RP, MR, vol. SG 456, fol. 26v.
- 41 Maria's Book of Hours is now in the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice.
- 42 See Roſa Alcoy Pedróſ, 'Los maetroſ del Libro de Horas de la reina María de Navarra: avance ſobre un problema complejo', *Boletín del Muſeo e Instituto Camón Aznar* 36 (1998), 108; Núria Dalmaſes and Antoni Joſep Pitarch, *Història de l'art català: l'art gòtic* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1984), 154–156.
- 43 Joaquín Yarza, 'María de Navarra y la iluſtración del Libro de Horas de la Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana', in *Libro de horas de María de Navarra* (Barcelona: Moleiro, 1996), 129.
- 44 ACA, RC, reg. 1058, fol. 111r: 'Illuſtri Marie, Dei gratie regine Aragonum, conſorti noſtre cariffime. Petruſ, per eandem gratiam rex Aragonum et cetera. Salutem et intime dilectionis affectum. Rogamus voſ quatenus quam citiuſ poteritiſ cum aliqua bona perſona, que primo venerit de Valencia apud Barchinone, mittatiſ nobiſ Oras pulcrioreſ que ſunt in ſcueya depicte, quas depicxit Ferrariuſ Baſſa. Data Barchinone, ſexto kalendaſ madii, anno Domini M CCC XL ſecundo'.

- 45 Francesca Español Bertran, 'Jaume Cascalls revisado: nuevas consideraciones y obras', *Locus Amoenus* 2 (1996): 65–84.
- 46 Alcoy, 'Los maestros del Libro de Horas de la reina', 112.
- 47 ACA, RP, MR, vol. SG 898, fol. 66v: 'A l'honrat Arnau Ballester et cetera. Mana la dita senyora reyna que donets a maestre Domingo d'Aranós, capellà seu, per unes Ores de Senta Maria e de la Passió e altres diverses officis e oretions que li fa fer, ducentos solidos barchinonenses. Escrit en Barcelona, a V dies del mes de juny, anno ut supra'.
- 48 Archivo Provincial de Navarra, Sección Comptos, caja 9, número 111: 'Un officier de cubertes blanques..., un bell Missal ab cubertes de cuyr vermelles, on ha quatre tanca-dors d'argent a senyal de la senyora reyna, ab deu claus d'argent embotits, clavats a les cubertes. Un test d'Evangelis, ab les post cubertes de fulla d'argent daurada ab perles, pedres, voris, e de la una part lo Crucifix e de la altra Sedes Mayestatis ... Un libre de cant Officier ab cubertes de cuyr blanc. Un missal complit ab cuberta de drap o li, e ab tancadors d'argent, ab esmalts en los tencadors, a senyal de França e de Navarra, ab correes de seda vert. Un Breviari de cant e de ligit, en dos volums, a costum de París'. See also ACA, MR, reg. 460, fol. 44v.
- 49 *Book of Hours of the Queen Maria of Navarre*, fols. 20r, 45r, 81r, 98r, 205r, 249r, 254r, 271r, 288r, 342r.
- 50 *Book of Hours of the Queen Maria of Navarre*, fol. 198v.
- 51 *Book of Hours of the Queen Maria of Navarre*, fol. 15v.
- 52 Pere Beseran and Rosa Alcoi, *El romànic i el gòtic desplaçats* (Barcelona: Publicacions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2007), 187–188.
- 53 Carey Fleiner and Elena Woodacre (eds), *Virtuous or Villainess? The Image of the Royal Mother from the Early Medieval to the Early Modern Eras* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2016).
- 54 Dawn Bratsch-Prince, 'A Queen's Task: Violant de Bar and the Experience of Royal Motherhood in Fourteenth-century Aragon', *La corònica* 27:1 (1998): 21–34.
- 55 Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 75–77.
- 56 Valerie Shutte (ed.), *Unexpected Heirs in Early Modern Europe: Potential Kings and Queens* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).
- 57 Elena Woodacre and Carey Fleiner (eds), *Royal Mothers and their Ruling Children: Wielding Political Authority from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
- 58 John Carmi Parson, 'The Pregnant Queen as Counsellor and the Medieval Construction of Motherhood', in John Carmi Parson and Bonnie Wheeler (eds), *Medieval Mothering*, 39–61 (London: Garland Publishing, 1996); Angela Muñoz Fernández, 'Semper pacis amica. Mediación y práctica política (siglos VI–XIV)', *Arenal: Revista de historia de mujeres* 5:2 (1998): 263–376; Dawn Bratsch-Prince, "'Ab les mans junctes e genolls en terra": Intercession and the Notion of Queenship in Late Medieval Catalonia', *Catalan Review* 20 (2006): 211–228; María Jesús Fuente Pérez, 'Tres violantes: las mujeres de una familia en el poder a lo largo del siglo XIII', *Anuario de estudios medievales* 46:1 (2016): 137–165; Lois Lynn Huneycutt, 'Intercession and the High-Medieval Queen: The Esther Topos', in Jennifer Carpenter and Sally-Beth MacLean (eds), *Power of the weak. Studies on medieval women*, 126–146 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990).
- 59 Constanza of Sicily (r. 1276–1285), Leonor of Sicily (r. 1349–1375), Sibila of Fortià (r. 1377–1387), Maria of Luna (r. 1396–1406), and Leonor of Albuquerque (r. 1412–1416). See Nuria Silleras, 'Creada a su imagen y semejanza: la coronación de la Reina de Aragón según las Ordenaciones de Pedro el Ceremonioso', *Lusitania sacra: revista do Centro de Estudos de Historia Ecclesiastica* 31 (2015): 107–128; Jaume Riera Sans, 'La coronació de la Reina Elionor (1352)', *Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia* 26 (2005): 485–492.
- 60 Tasis, *Pere el Cerimoniós i els seus fills*, 62–68.
- 61 Francisca Hernández de León, *Doña Maria de Castilla. Esposa de Alfonso V el Magnánimo* (València, Universitat de València, 1959), 32.
- 62 Ferran Soldevila (ed.), *Pere III el Cerimoniós. Crònica* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1984).

- 63 Nuria Silleras, 'Widowhood and Deception: Ambiguities of Queenship in Late Medieval Crown of Aragon', in Mark Crane, Richard Raiswell, and Margaret Reeves (eds), *Shell Games: Studies in Scams, Frauds and Deceits (1300–1650)*, 185–207 (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2004).
- 64 José Vicente Cabezero, *Poder público y administración territorial en el Reino de Valencia 1239–1348, el oficio de la Procuración* (València: Conselleria de Presidència, 1998), 64–97.
- 65 ACA, Reial Audiència, Processos, Lligall 132–131, fol. 7r: 'Fon dita largament la rahó per què la dita nostra Unió fon feyta, et foren dits et recomptats en presència de tota la dita Cort al dit senyor rey molts e diverses torts, prejudicis e greuges, los quals per ell e per sos officials e Consell eren estats feyts a la ciutat e regne de València, dels quals li'n foren declarats molts, e en special la determinació que ell havia feta de la infanta na Constança, hoc encara de ço que ell havia haüt e treyt de la ciutat e regne de València del temps a ença que ell regna, de la qual cosa tots tots los de la dita Unió de Aragó qui aquí eren se meravellaren fortment'.
- 66 Vicent Baydal, *Els orígens de la revolta de la Unió* (València: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2013), 55.
- 67 Archivo Reino de València, Varia, Llibres, número 583, fol. 25v: 'Los mayores de la corte et del consejo del senyor rey, els quals perseguire et persiguen por odio et malquerencia capital a la dicta senyora reyna et a los dichos senyores sus fillos que son infantes'.
- 68 Queen Leonor received Huesca and Calatayud in the Kingdom of Aragon; Montblanc and Tàrrega in Catalonia; and Morella, Xàtiva, Morvedre, Alzira, and Castellón in the Kingdom of Valencia. The *Infante* Fernando received Tortosa in Catalonia; Albarracín in the Kingdom of Aragon; and Orihuela, Alicante, Elda, Novelda, La Mola, Callosa, Aspe, and Monforte in the Kingdom of Valencia. The *Infante* Juan received Pertusa, Bolea, Biel, and Bebegal in the Kingdom of Aragon; and Castellón de la Plana, Burriana, and Liria in the Kingdom of Valencia. For more details, see: L. Ruiz Domingo 'Castelló no es pot vendre ni alienar', in Ayuntamiento de Castellón (ed.), *Actes de les Jornades de Cultura Castellonense de Cultura* (Castellón: Regidoria de Cultura, 2015), 23.
- 69 Belenguer, *Vida i regnat de Pere el Cerimoniós*, 44.
- 70 Vicent Baydal, *Els orígens de la revolta de la Unió*, 123.
- 71 Mateu Rodrigo Lizondo, *Diplomatari de la Unió al Regne de València (1347–1349)* (València: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2013), 7.
- 72 Ruiz Domingo, "Del qual tenim loch".
- 73 See Anna Cortadellas (ed.), *Pere III el Cerimoniós. Crònica* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1995), 179: 'En aquest endemig, s'edevenc que la reina, nostra muller, parí infant mascle de la qual cosa tota la terra hac gran goig e gran pagament, en tant que, per sobres de goig que havien del novell part, tothom estava esbalaüt e quaix eixit de seny. E encontinent tots los nostres curials e de la reina, dones e donzelles, anaven ballant per tota la ciutat de València: grans dons, grans meravelles se eren en aquest dia'.
- 74 Belenguer, *Vida i regnat de Pere el Cerimoniós*, 56–57.
- 75 See Cortadellas, *Pere III el Cerimoniós*, 179–180: 'Mas Nostre Senyor Déus, volent girar aquest goig en dolor, pre-se lo dit infant a hora del seny del lladre_ lo qual ja haguem fet batejar e hagué nom Pere; de la mort del qual, sens comparació, mutà més lo dol e la ira que n'hagren les nostres gents que no lo goig que d'abans n'havien hagut per lo seu neixement. E per tal com la reina, nostra muller, havia haüt mal part e soferts de grans afanys per lo prenyat, així com a Déus plagué, après de la mort del dit infant cinc dies, la dita nostra myller, així com vera catòlica e amiga de Déu, reté la sua ànima molt devotament a Déu E manpa en son testament que lo seu cos fos sebollit en lo monestir de Pnlet; mas per tal com teníem grans afers entre mans, sebollim-la molt honradament en el monestir de Sant Vicent en la ciutat de València'.
- 76 ACA, RC, Sigilli Secreti, reg. 1126, fol. 164v. During his reign, King Pedro launched a deep transformation of the institutional structure of the Crown of Aragon. As part of this transformation, the title procurator general was changed to governor/governess general. So, during Pedro's reign, both of these terms were used in reference to the same

- position. This change in terminology occurred at the precise moment of Jaime's dismissal and Constanza's appointment, so he was *procurator* general and she was *governess* general, but the role was the same. Thereafter, the holder of the position was known exclusively as governor/governess general – a title that was used in Aragon until the Early Modern period.
- 77 ACA, RC, Sigilli Secreti, reg. 1126, fol. 164v explicitly states that Constanza was appointed to 'the office of governorship', not to a lieutenant generalship. Rodrigo, *Diplomatari de la Unió*, 7–19, is one of the historians who have mistakenly suggested that she occupied the latter role. See Cabezuelo, *Poder público y administración territorial*, 116, and Ruiz Domingo, "Del qual tenim loch" for details of the differences between the two positions.
 - 78 Archivo Municipal de Valencia, MC, A-6, fols. 154r–157r.
 - 79 Berenguer de Codinac was '*escrivà de ració*' of Queen Maria's household; see Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Real Patrimonio, Maestre Racional, Volúmenes, Serie General, 456, fol. 57v. With respect to his role in the negotiations over the *Infanta* Constanza's position, see: Archivo Municipal de Valencia, MC, A-6, fols. 149r–150r; and Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Generalitat de Catalunya, G-231, fol. 3v.
 - 80 Baydal, *Els orígens de la revolta de la Unió*, 171–190.
 - 81 Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Cartas Reales, caja 24, número 3347; Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Cancillería, Processos, llig. 115/3, fols. 14v–15v; Baydal, *Els orígens de la revolta de la Unió*; Agustín Rubio Vela, 'El problema frumentari a València i la crisi de la Unió 1340–1348', in Eva Serra (ed.), *Homenatge al doctor Sebastià Garcia Martínez*, 89–102 (València: Generalitat Valenciana, 1988).
 - 82 Woodacre, *The Queens Regnant of Navarre*.
 - 83 Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Adam Morton (eds), *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics 1550–1750* (London: Routledge, 2017).

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6

BEYOND PATRONAGE

Richard Jonas's *The Byrth of Mankynde* as counsel to Queen Katherine Howard

Valerie Schutte

In season 4, episode 2 of the Showtime series *The Tudors*, Queen Katherine Howard is given a folio-sized book as a New Year's gift.¹ Thomas Culpepper, her lover, presents her with the gift in her personal apartments and explains that the book was written by Richard Jonas. Jonas had arrived in England with Anne of Cleves, but as his book was not printed until after Anne's divorce from Henry, he wanted to dedicate it to her successor as queen. Katherine asks about the book's contents, takes it from Culpepper, and opens it. She reads the title – *The Byrth of Mankynde* – slowly, as if with difficulty. Culpepper explains that it is the first book on midwifery to be written in English. Katherine lays the book on a table and opens it to find text and images of childbirth. Initially she looks shocked at the contents, but then begins to laugh childishly while looking at the woodcuts, which are not scientific but scenes from a birthing chamber. The scene ends with Katherine and Culpepper looking at the book together and fades out to the next scene with the sound of Katherine's laughter.

In 1540, Richard Jonas did in fact dedicate *The Byrth of Mankynde* to Katherine Howard, though there is no proof that she ever saw it or owned a copy.² The book was the only one that was dedicated to Katherine in the brief nineteen months of her marriage to King Henry VIII of England. Primarily, Jonas wrote the dedication to garner favour and patronage. However, this chapter suggests that he also intended to offer Katherine counsel on her most important role as queen – motherhood.

First, this chapter will historicize Katherine's education and relationship to books. Next, it will present a brief discussion of the counsel afforded to all of Henry VIII's consorts in book dedications in order to contextualize Jonas's dedication and the counsel he offered to Katherine. Finally, it will analyse how and why Jonas's text should be viewed not only as a simple gift to obtain patronage but also as a serious attempt to provide useful advice to the young queen.

Katherine Howard is scarcely a 'forgotten queen', although, as one historian has remarked, 'unlike Henry's first two wives, Katherine has not proved to be a popular biographical subject'.³ When studies have considered her, they have almost always focused on her sexuality and relationships with Manox, Dereham, and Culpepper. By concentrating on patronage, this chapter offers a new angle for understanding how people sought Katherine's support, and how they attempted to use that patronage to counsel and boost her into making decisions or supporting their positions.⁴

Katherine Howard's education and background

Not much is known about Katherine Howard; most of her biographical information has been gleaned from the records of her trial.⁵ She was one of ten siblings and probably born before 1525. While her intellectual affinities are still questioned, modern scholarship suggests that she was the victim of sexual predators instead of a girl with loose morals, as traditionally depicted.⁶ As a young girl, Katherine was sent to live in the house of her step-grandmother, the dowager duchess of Norfolk. There, Katherine and other noble ladies slept in a maidens' chamber, acted as waiting women to the duchess, and were provided with clerks, secretaries, and music masters to educate them in preparation to run their own noble households.⁷ Little more is known of Katherine's education other than she was literate.⁸ Only one letter survives in Katherine's hand, written to Thomas Culpepper, and it has poor grammar and spelling, suggesting that she was given only a modest education, befitting her position.⁹

Likewise, there is little information suggesting that Katherine was interested in books. But there are several books that can be connected to her. As a wedding gift Henry gave Katherine five small books enamelled in gold that were most likely girdle books, some of which were encrusted with diamonds, rubies, and pearls.¹⁰ These books were probably recycled gifts of jewellery to Jane Seymour, as one of the books had the initials 'H. I.' enamelled in black on the cover.¹¹ Four other books listed in the Westminster library inventory of 1542 were owned by Katherine Howard and later given to Katherine Parr: two mass books, a New Testament, and a French book of scriptures.¹² These books, based on their subject matter, were not decorative, but meant to be read. Unfortunately, none of these nine books is extant, as Edward VI ordered papal books in the royal library to be destroyed, although the bindings were most likely reused.¹³

According to James Carley, fifteen other books survive that can be linked to Katherine Howard. They were bound in leather by King Henry's binder and have stamped on them the royal arms, a greyhound, and a dragon. Embossed on each cover is 'K. H.' All but one of these books were by church fathers, so they do not reveal anything of Katherine's personal tastes or reading ability. They were probably bought simply in order to fill Henry's many palace libraries.¹⁴ Disappointingly, none of the books associated with Katherine Howard provides concrete information as to her interest in the texts, but perhaps in books as objects and decorations,

and none of Henry's inventories contains a copy of Jonas's book, which would have been an indication that she had read or had an interest in keeping the book.¹⁵ While Katherine is associated with these books, there is not enough extant evidence to prove that any of them were given to her to garner patronage. Likewise, her upbringing in her grandmother's home suggests that Katherine was not a woman whom others would have sought for patronage or better access to the Howard family. The only concrete evidence that Katherine was patronized via books is the one dedication given to her by Jonas; and, as will be shown, he not only sought her patronage but also endeavoured to counsel the queen on how to become a successful wife and mother.

Katherine Howard among the six consorts of Henry VIII

The six wives of Henry VIII received a total of seventeen book dedications on a variety of subjects, such as religion, marriage, education, and proper female behaviour.¹⁶ Not only did the specific subject matter of the books dedicated to each queen attempt to educate or influence the queen on that subject, but the accompanying dedications offered advice and counsel specifically devised for the queen to whom it was addressed. Generally, the dedications attempted to counsel the queens in virtue and good living, and in the case of Henry's wives after Catherine of Aragon, also in religion.

Catherine of Aragon received eight book dedications, the most of any of Henry's wives, as their marriage lasted longer than his other five marriages combined. Yet, none of the dedications offered counsel to Catherine beyond advising her that she should guide her daughter, Mary, in education and virtue, as she was a perfect example.¹⁷ Catherine had personal relationships with many of the men who wrote dedications to her and often had a hand in the creation of the books. The men who dedicated books to Catherine almost always relied on her patronage and support for both their careers and their well-being. While they did not offer her counsel in their dedications – most likely so as not to offend her and lose her support – they did offer counsel in the subject matter of the books themselves. Indeed, the dedicators wrote that she did not need any counsel because she was already a model of virtue, spousal support, and queenship. For example, Catherine commissioned Erasmus to write a book on matrimony, and when he finally did so, he wrote in his dedication that she did not need his advice as she already had an exemplary marriage.¹⁸ Ironically, this book was dedicated to Catherine at the precise moment when her marriage to Henry began to dissolve.

As for Katherine Howard and Henry's other four wives, they received a total of nine book dedications, most of which offered specific counsel to each wife. Many of these dedications accompanied books that promoted evangelical theology, whereas the dedications to Catherine of Aragon accompanied books that expounded orthodox, Catholic theology. Anne Boleyn received four dedications, two of which seemed to assume that she had intercessory power over Henry VIII. In them Anne was specifically counselled to pass a message of reform on to Henry:

specifically reform of religion and the poor laws. In 1535, William Marshall dedicated to Anne his translation of *The forme and maner of subvention or helping for pore people, deuysed and practysed in the city of Hyppres in Flanders*, a treatise outlining a poor relief plan.¹⁹ Anne may have followed Marshall's advice and passed on the plan, as poor laws were reformed just a year later.²⁰ In 1536, Anne received the dedication of Tristram Revel's translation of Frances Lambert's *The summe of christianitie gathered out almoste of al placis of scripture*, and there is evidence that she owned a copy herself.²¹ Yet Revel's text, which called for removal of the Roman Church and the 'papal antichrist' from England, proved to be too evangelical for the time, and Anne refused to sponsor the book.²² Hence, Revel's counsel to the queen seems to have failed.

Jane Seymour was not offered counsel or sought for patronage in any dedications, as she was mentioned by name – along with Henry – only in the dedication of an English-language Bible.²³ Anne Boleyn's name had appeared in the first edition, and Jane's replaced it in the second; no wife was mentioned in later editions. This dedication was primarily directed towards Henry and mentioned Anne and Jane only because it followed the traditional format of books dedicated to married kings. There are no other extant printed books or manuscripts with dedications to Jane, most likely due to her brief reign as queen. Likewise, James Carley has noted that Jane's 'literary remains are minimal', with only two other books associated with her.²⁴ As there is no information about Jane's early life and education, it is possible that she received so few books and dedications because she was not sufficiently well educated to read them; or perhaps by the time of her reign Henry was simply more interested in fertility and motherhood than books and humanism.

Anne of Cleves, like Anne Boleyn, was counselled to pass on books and knowledge that were presented to her. Yet, rather than conveying that information to Henry, she was counselled to support the books that were dedicated to her so that members of her family and household – and ultimately the general public – may read them.²⁵ Like books dedicated to Lady Margaret Beaufort, Henry VIII's grandmother, dedicators assumed that connection to a royal patron would give their books increased authority and credibility, resulting in greater sales.²⁶ In Thomas Becon's *The Pomaunder of Prayer*, Becon instructs Anne to pray daily, and counsels that she should encourage her family to do so too, so that she may develop a strong relationship with God.²⁷ Conveniently, Becon suggests his book of prayers may be a good starting point for Anne's own prayers. In *Defence of Good Women*, Thomas Elyot encourages Anne to pass on his text so that others may read about women's virtues, as the queen herself already lives a virtuous life.²⁸ However, modern scholars often interpret *Defence* as a veiled critique of Henry VIII's decision to set aside Catherine of Aragon so that he could marry Anne Boleyn.²⁹

Katherine Parr received two printed book dedications, both of which accompanied books on evangelical theology that were printed after the death of Henry VIII. Anthony Cope's *A godly meditation vpon. xx. select and chosen Psalmes of the prophet Dauid as wel necessary to al them that are desirous to haue ye darke wordes of the*

prophet declared and made playn: as also fruitfull to suche as delyte in the contemplatio[n] of the spiritual meanyng of them is a collection of evangelical prayers, printed in 1547.³⁰ The following year, Nicholas Udall compiled *The first tome or volume of the paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the newe testament*, which he partially translated, with the rest translated by others, including Princess Mary Tudor.³¹ Udall wrote several dedications to Katherine Parr, each appearing before a different Gospel, as Katherine was the organizer of the project. Udall did not perceive Katherine as a great influence over her stepdaughter Mary, who translated most of the Gospel of St John, but the dedication may be understood as counsel to Henry's widow to make greater attempts to guide Mary away from Catholicism.³²

All six of King Henry VIII's wives were counselled in the traditional queenly duties of serving as an example of virtue and good living for all women, offering patronage, and endorsing books and knowledge to be passed on to either Henry himself or their households. Only a few of the queens were perceived to have the capability to perform other functions, such as Catherine of Aragon serving as an instructor for her daughter in both formal and informal education, and Katherine Parr transcribing and promoting vernacular evangelical theology. Dedicators used their dedications as acceptable opportunities to offer both outright and veiled counsel to Henry's wives disguised as praise.³³ Katherine Howard, however, was given specific counsel to fulfil her principal duty as queen – giving birth to an heir – lest she risk the fates of Henry's earlier wives.

Patronage as a means to counsel

Richard Jonas's *The Byrth of Mankynde* has frequently been acknowledged as the most important book on midwifery produced in early modern England.³⁴ It was also the first book in English on midwifery. One scholar has suggested that there was a plethora of vernacular medical textbooks in the 1530s and 1540s because of Thomas Cromwell's influence over the vernacular Great Bible; with the acceptance of vernacular Scripture came a similar acceptance that knowledge should be accessible to everyone in their own language, not simply passed down by authorities.³⁵ *The Byrth of Mankynde* was one such example of a book providing medical information to a wide readership.

According to David Cressy, men almost never witnessed childbirth; yet, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, several books were compiled and written by men on ways to improve the management of the process. These childbirth manuals frequently plagiarized one another and remained grounded in ancient and medieval science. They were also frequently construed as semi-pornographic, as they gave extensive details about methods of conception and female anatomy. Before the manuals existed midwives generally learned through experience, and it was not until later in the seventeenth century that doctors began to undercut the knowledge of experienced midwives.³⁶ Jane Sharp was the first woman to publish a book on midwifery, in 1671, more than 130 years after Jonas offered counsel to Katherine Howard on childbirth.³⁷

The Byrth of Mankynde was printed in several editions between 1540 and 1654. It was a translation of the Latin *De Partu Hominis* by Christian Egenolff. In turn, the latter was a translation of a German book written in 1513 by Eucharius Rösslin (a German physician) – *Der Swangern Frauen und habammen Rosegarten*, commonly known as *The Rose Garden*.³⁸ *Rosegarten* was dedicated to Katherine, archduchess of Saxony, showing a pattern of dedicating texts to royal women who may have been in need of childbirth advice.³⁹ Rösslin's book was based largely on the antique theories of scientists such as Galen, whom he frequently cited.⁴⁰ Jonas deleted many of these citations, indicating that he intended to inform both midwives and general readers who did not care about scientific theory.⁴¹

Jonas's *The Byrth of Mankind* includes an admonition to the general reader as well as a dedication to Katherine Howard, and it is divided into three books: the first two are parallels of the Latin edition, while the third is an addition by Jonas on methods of conception. The inclusion of the latter indicates that Jonas hoped that *Byrth* would enable all readers to expand their own gynaecological knowledge and therefore become less reliant on physicians. Rösslin often stated that his ideas should be implemented strictly under a doctor's supervision, whereas Jonas suggested that the reader should consult a physician only if one was available.⁴²

All of the editions after Jonas's original 1540 translation were compiled by Thomas Raynalde rather than Jonas himself; the first of these appeared in 1545. Raynalde (not to be confused with Thomas Raynald, the printer of the first three editions of *Byrth*) was a physician who took it upon himself to correct many of the medical errors in Jonas's translation.⁴³ In 1560, the rights to the text passed to Richard Jugge, the queen's printer, though many of his editions are undated.⁴⁴ *Byrth* was so popular that it remained the most important book on midwifery in England until at least 1676.⁴⁵ Raynalde made several further changes to Jonas's version, besides correcting the textual errors. For instance, he omitted Jonas's admonition to the reader and his dedication to Katherine Howard, and he added a new Book One, which consisted of anatomical descriptions and drawings by Andreas Vesalius. (These are the images that the fictional Katherine Howard finds so hilarious in *The Tudors*.) All of the versions after Jonas's original edition, beginning with the 1545 edition, therefore comprised four books pertaining to pregnancy, childbirth techniques, care of infants, and sterility. No editions addressed the actual ritual of childbirth because men did not participate in that part of pregnancy.⁴⁶

Little is known of Richard Jonas himself, and three possibly identities have been suggested by modern scholars. Janel Mueller states, 'all that is known of Jonas is that he died in prison in Mary's reign (1557)', but she offers no citation.⁴⁷ J. W. Ballantyne suggests that Anne of Cleves had family ties with Lutheran princes in Germany, and it is possible that Jonas was a relation of Justus Jonas of Wittenberg, a disciple of Luther, and thus came to England in the train of Anne.⁴⁸ Elaine Hobby, the modern editor of Jonas's text, has argued that the author was probably Richard Jones, the 'high master of St Paul's school in London from 1532 to 1549, having been a teacher there from 1522'.⁴⁹ The school established a relationship

with the court as early as the 1520s, and in 1533 some of the students recited poetry near the cathedral during Anne Boleyn's coronation procession into London. Seven years later, as St Paul's was an important centre of the book trade, Jones certainly would have been easy to approach to commission a translation. He died on 5 October 1549, after receiving several warnings that he needed to improve his administration of the school.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, it is impossible to confirm or disprove any of these possible identities, so I simply treat Jonas as the translator of Egenolff's text and assume that he had the same motivation for translating and dedicating a book to royalty as so many other men: to offer advice and receive patronage.

As only Jonas's first edition has the dedication to Katherine Howard, that is the only version of the text discussed here. Jonas's frontispiece provides the title of the book, a direct translation of *De Partu Hominis*, as well as a brief description of the contents. Just after the title page, Jonas's text begins with a single page – 'An admonicion to the reader' – which notes that Jonas is 'offerynge and dedicatyng it vnto our moste gracyous and vertuous Quene Kateryn onely'.⁵¹ Jonas addresses a general readership in this admonition and insists that any men who use the book should do so with good intentions and not lewdly, such as to talk rudely of female anatomy, or they will have to answer to God. He wants men as well as women to read the text and learn about childbirth so that they may show women compassion in their labours. He utilizes the admonition to ask his readers to show sympathy and pity for women who have painful labours in the course of the birth of mankind. Perhaps insensitively, he also refers to his translation of the text as 'labor and paynes'.

A six-page dedication to Queen Katherine Howard follows the admonition. It begins, as was traditional for many book dedications, 'Unto the most gracious and in all goodnesse most excellent vertuous Lady Quene Katheryne'.⁵² Jonas then goes on to note that many treatises have been translated into English recently for 'the greate utilite and profet of all people', including Scripture, which in the vernacular has given much comfort and consolation.⁵³ This particular book is so profitable, especially to women, that it has already been translated into French and Dutch and printed in great quantities. Jonas suggests that, as the text has proved so useful to women in other countries, his translation should now provide beneficial knowledge to English women. Although not much is known about Jonas, here he provides a clue that he was an evangelical, as he was clearly in favour of vernacular translations of the Bible. For Jonas, it was important to be able to read good books in the vernacular because this increased understanding and accessibility. This lends credence to the identification of Jonas as an Englishman. He seems too eager, in his repetition of the need for texts in vernacular English, to have been a native speaker of another language. Moreover, English was not commonly taught outside of England, and it should be remembered that Jonas translated the Latin edition, not the German original, both of which suggest that he was an educated Englishman. Of course, it is possible that his text was originally meant for Anne of Cleves, but was ultimately dedicated to Katherine Howard instead because of her predecessor's

short tenure as queen.⁵⁴ Jonas may simply not have finished the translation before Anne's divorce. Prior to that point, she, too, might have found herself in need of pregnancy and labour advice.

After justifying his choice of text and its translation into English, Jonas moves on to address Queen Katherine directly. He 'moste humbly desyryng fyrst your graces hyghnes and then consequentye all noble ladyes and gentylwomen with other honeste matrones to accepte my paynes and good wyll employd in the same',⁵⁵ then advises Katherine to perform two of her most important duties as queen – provide patronage and act as a good example for the ladies of the court, and thereby the whole commonweal. Katherine had a responsibility to pass on good and useful literature to the women of her household, who would in turn give it to others, leading to widespread appreciation of his translation. Jonas also implies that an endorsement from the queen (even if she never read the text) would help with the sales and distribution of his book.⁵⁶ This shows that Katherine, like all queen consorts, was expected to be a conduit of counsel – both a receiver of advice and a communicator of that advice to others. Jonas continues by writing that he does not doubt Katherine's goodness, which encouraged him to revise and set forth the text again. This suggests that he first gave Katherine a presentation manuscript version of the text and with her blessing meant to revise it prior to sending it to the printer; presentation manuscripts were commonly given to patrons before the text was printed. Unfortunately, there is no extant manuscript version of the text, so it is impossible to verify that one was given to Katherine. If there was no presentation manuscript, Jonas might simply have been anticipating that his translation would do as well in England as many of the previous translations had done in other European nations.

As for Jonas's counsel to Katherine, one sentence in particular is clearly not meant to flatter her, but rather instruct her as to how and why she should use his text. Jonas writes:

for consyderynge the manyfolde, daylye, and imminente daungeorus and perrelles the which all maner of women of what estate or degre so euer they be in theyr labor do sustayne and abyde: many tymes with parell of thery lyfe, of the whiche there be to many examples nedelesse here to be rehersed.⁵⁷

This is the crux of Jonas's dedication. First, it reminds Katherine that motherhood is her most important duty as queen. The only way that she could secure Henry's love and affection, and probably a coronation, was to become a mother to a healthy son. Unlike Henry's first four wives, Katherine must have male children and survive her labours. Catherine of Aragon gave birth to only one child who made it to adulthood, and she was a daughter; she had several miscarriages and a son who lived for only a few weeks. Anne Boleyn similarly gave birth to only one surviving daughter; her other pregnancy resulted in a miscarriage. Jane Seymour died twelve days after giving birth to Prince Edward, and Anne of Cleves allegedly never had a physical relationship with Henry and certainly bore him no children. The fates of

these women were intimately linked to their inability either to produce a male heir or to survive the process of doing so. Jonas suggests that his book will help Katherine succeed where her predecessors had failed.

Second, Jonas states the well-known fact that pregnancy is dangerous, irrespective of the status of the woman concerned. In June 1518, just four months after the birth of Mary, Henry VIII wrote to Cardinal Wolsey that he believed Catherine of Aragon was pregnant again and he was reluctant for her to travel because of the risk to both his wife and the unborn child.⁵⁸ Katherine Howard was expected to become pregnant at least once, if not several times. Her labour would not be any easier just because she was queen of England, and her child was not sure to survive. Katherine was young and needed to be educated about the dangers of pregnancy, because they were unavoidable. If she were to acquire this education through Jonas's translation, then she could become a good queen where the others had failed. By reading his text and asking other noblewomen to read it (especially those who would help her in the birthing chamber), she would be better equipped to complete her duty with less risk to her life.

Third, Jonas acknowledges that pregnancy may result in the death of the mother, child, or both, and writes that there is no need to provide specific examples, as every reader will know of someone who suffered loss during childbirth. This is a clear reference to Jane Seymour, Henry VIII's third wife and mother to Prince Edward, who died shortly after his birth. Jonas was wise not to mention Jane directly as she was still held in high regard at court because she was the mother of the prince; naming her would merely have served as a reminder of her ultimate failure in childbirth and certainly would have earned the wrath of the king. Recovery after childbirth was just as precarious as the labour itself. Various physicians reported to Thomas Cromwell that Jane made a good recovery initially, but then fell ill a few days later.⁵⁹ Her example would probably have been uppermost in Katherine's mind, and Katherine would have been well aware that it was difficult to survive childbirth and she might be replaced if she proved unable to produce children.

Later in the dedication, Jonas writes:

for this cause and for the honor of almyghty God, and for the moste bounde seruyce, the which I owe vnto your grace, most gracyous and uertuous Quene, I have iudged my labor and paynes in this behalfe ryght well bestowed, requyrynge all other women of what estate so euer they be, whiche shall by readynge of the same fynde lyght and comforte to yelde and render thanks vnto your moste gracyous hyghnes.⁶⁰

Jonas, in a common literary topos in book dedications, attempted to flatter Katherine by claiming that his loyalty was bound to her and that he found her to be an inspiration for his text. But he knew that his text and dedication also made a statement about the king and his new queen, in that Katherine was under a great deal of pressure to deliver a healthy baby boy and Henry had almost as

much pressure on himself to sire one. This situation made Jonas's addition about methods of conception especially appropriate and meaningful. Importantly, though, he also counselled Katherine about her second most important duty as queen – to serve as an example to all women in England. Not only must she give birth to an heir; she must also lead a virtuous life that her subjects will be inspired to emulate. Moreover, in the age of humanism at Henry's court, Katherine was expected to pass knowledge on to her household, and by extension all women. Even if she did not do so directly, her name would act as an endorsement for readership.

Yet, Katherine Howard is not the only woman to whom Jonas offers counsel. His advice to her is implicit and not commanding, though the meaning is unmistakable. However, when he addresses midwives, whom he also expects to read his text, his writing adopts a very different tone:

for as touchynge mydwifes, as there be many of them ryght expert, diligent, wyse, circumspecte, and tender aboute suche busynesse; so be there agayne manye more full vndyscreate, vnreasonable, chorleshe, and farre to seke in suche thynges, the whiche sholde chiefflye helpe and socoure the good women in theyr most paynefull labor and thronges. Throughe whose rudenesse and rasshenesse onely, I doubte not, but that a greate number are caste awaye and destroyed.⁶¹

Therefore, while he saw his text as an aid to any woman who read it by increasing her knowledge and offering her solutions to labour difficulties, he also sought to educate bad midwives and make them more helpful during childbirth. Midwives had great responsibility, but when they were ignorant and the birth was complex, mother and child often perished. While this accusation probably had a basis in fact, his tirade against midwives is clearly an attempt to apply learned – and masculine – medicine to the art of midwifery, which was controlled by largely uneducated female practitioners.⁶² He does acknowledge that some good midwives' knowledge probably exceeds the contents of the book, but hopes that he might at least clarify some details they already know. This sentence also counsels Katherine Howard to find good and trustworthy midwives to help with her delivery, with the implication being that her royal predecessors had failed to do so and had suffered difficult labours and stillborn children as a result.

Jonas's dedication to Katherine ends, typically, with a prayer for the queen to be preserved by and prosper under God, and the hope that she will be 'the contynuall comforte and consolacion of our moste redoubted and withoute comparyson moste excellent Christen prynce', and offer joy and gladness to his subjects.⁶³ This is another example of the writer's counsel. Jonas implies that Katherine will be a 'comforte and consolacion' for Henry VIII only if she consults the book, finds a good midwife, gives birth to a healthy son, and lives through the experience to have more children. The phrase 'comforte and consolacion' is an interesting choice of words, given Henry's previous marriages. Each of those marriages ended poorly,

with Henry losing a partner whom he had expected to provide him with children and goodly female companionship. By instructing Katherine to give Henry comfort and consolation, Jonas suggests that she should not be like Anne Boleyn or Catherine of Aragon, both of whom challenged Henry, nor Jane Seymour, whose death left Henry sad and alone, nor Anne of Cleves, who did not appeal to the king's tastes. The implication is that all four of Henry's previous marriages failed as a result of his brides' shortcomings. Of course, in the event, Katherine Howard turned out to be neither comforting nor consoling for very long.

Jonas's expected patronage of his text should not be ignored. Indeed, this was possibly his main reason for dedicating it to Katherine Howard. He would have been well aware that the dedication might enable him to profit from Katherine, and possibly even Henry, if his text went on to aid the queen in childbirth.⁶⁴ The dedication is not dated, so there is no way of knowing when Jonas gave Katherine the text. The book itself is dated 1540, as imprinted on the colophon. Books, both with and without dedications, were common New Year's gifts, but as Katherine and Henry were married on 28 July 1540, the *Byrth* could not have been given as part of the New Year's tradition of 1540.⁶⁵ Rather, Jonas probably presented it to Katherine as a wedding gift. If so, this lends credence to the theory that Jonas was Richard Jones, the St Paul's schoolmaster, as he might have given Katherine the book in the hope of reprising the role he had performed at the coronation ceremony of her cousin, Anne Boleyn, seven years earlier. On the other hand, if he delivered it later, during Katherine's first six months as queen, perhaps Jonas was motivated simply by the belief that his translation would sell more copies and go through more editions if he could secure the queen's favour. Either way, a dedication to Katherine Howard was likely to generate more patronage, endorsements, and readers. Sadly, though, Jonas chose one of Henry's wives who gave the least patronage.⁶⁶

Conclusion

Richard Jonas's *The Byrth of Mankynde* is an example of a printed text that sought the patronage of a queen, yet at the same time it offered counsel to Katherine and other potential readers. His admonishes those readers – and specifically his male readers – to be sensitive to women who endure labour and not to use his text lewdly. He encourages them to learn about childbirth in their own language, as all vernacular texts should be embraced as a means to increase scientific knowledge. He also counsels midwives who are already experienced in the art of childbirth but might learn some of the scientific reasoning behind their practice and therefore improve their competence. Finally, and crucially, he counsels Queen Katherine Howard directly by offering advice on how to conceive and why she should choose experienced women to help during her labour. Finally, and most importantly, he reminds her that the only way for her to become a successful queen is to give birth to several healthy children, unlike Henry's previous wives. Beyond appealing for patronage, Jonas both offers advice and reminds Katherine that it is

her duty as queen to convey such advice and knowledge to others. Unfortunately for Jonas, there is no evidence that she ever did.

To return to *The Tudors* TV series, in season 4, episode 3, Katherine Howard barges into a Privy Council meeting to inform King Henry VIII that she is pregnant. Of course, he is overjoyed at the news.⁶⁷ Over the course of the episode, he visits Anne of Cleves and has sex with her, while Katherine begins an affair with Thomas Culpepper. When Katherine and Culpepper first have sex, she asks him to be careful not to impregnate her and Culpepper agrees, implying that Katherine had knowledge of birth control. Katherine later admits to Henry that she was mistaken about her pregnancy, which strains their relationship. Near the end of the episode, Henry summons Prince Edward, they exchange a few words, and Henry cries for his son. This is juxtaposed with the following scene, in which Katherine lies face down on her bed, leafing through Jonas's book. Clearly, it is a reminder of her youth, immaturity, and failure to conceive an heir. As Katherine turns the pages, the viewer sees an anatomical image of a womb and foetus. Katherine's ladies are visible in an anteroom, and one of them announces that the king has come to see her. Katherine jumps up and Henry tells her matter-of-factly that they will be leaving on progress in two days' time and Lady Mary will be joining them. Katherine asks why Mary must come, as the two ladies do not have a good relationship. Henry angrily responds that Mary is much loved in the North and Katherine must do as she is told. As the king leaves, Katherine runs after him and apologizes for not being pregnant, but assures him that she will be soon. Henry makes no response and strides away. A distraught Katherine returns to her bed and resumes reading Jonas's text. Clearly the book had the desired effect on the fictional Katherine.

Notes

- 1 Michael Hirst (writer), Dearbhla Walsh (director), 'Sister', in *The Tudors*, CBC/Showtime, 18 April 2010. A similar introductory paragraph appears in Valerie Schutte, 'Dedication Is What You Need', *History Today* 68:2 (2018): 14–16.
- 2 Eucharius Rösslin, *The Byrth of Mankynde, newly translated out of Laten into Englysshe*, translated by Richard Jonas (London: Thomas Raynald, 1540). STC 21153.
- 3 Retha Warnicke, *Wicked Women of Tudor England: Queens, Aristocrats, Commoners* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 46.
- 4 Margaret Aston, *The King's Bedpost: Reformation and Iconography in a Tudor Group Portrait* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 215.
- 5 Two recent biographies are: Lacey Baldwin Smith, *Catherine Howard* (Stroud: Amberley, 2010); and David Loades, *Catherine Howard: The Adulterous Wife of Henry VIII* (Stroud: Amberley, 2012).
- 6 Smith (*Catherine Howard*, 10) notes Katherine's 'light-hearted idiocy', while Loades (*Catherine Howard*, 108–109) argues that she was childish and lacking in 'intellectual and moral resources'. Warnicke (*Wicked Women of Tudor England*, 76) analyses Katherine from a gendered perspective and suggests that the older men at court took sexual advantage of her.
- 7 David Starkey, *Six Wives: The Queens of Henry VIII* (New York: Perennial, 2004), 646. Joanne Denny suggests that Katherine would have received sexual education while in the care of the dowager duchess, as she would have seen other girls engaging in

- intercourse in the maidens' chamber; see Denny, *Katherine Howard: A Tudor Conspiracy* (London: Portrait, 2005), 89.
- 8 Smith, *Katherine Howard*, 46.
 - 9 J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. H. Brodie (eds), *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1862–1932), vol. 16, entry 1134.
 - 10 British Library, MS Stowe 559, fols. 55–68.
 - 11 See James Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives* (London: The British Library, 2004), 134 for a fuller description of these five books.
 - 12 James Carley, *The Libraries of King Henry VIII* (London: The British Library, 2000), 31.
 - 13 Carley, *Books*, 135.
 - 14 Carley, *Books*, 135–137.
 - 15 Carley, *Books*, 108. See Carley, *Libraries*, for a full list of Henry's book inventories and the location of any extant volumes.
 - 16 Valerie Schutte, *Mary I and the Art of Book Dedications: Royal Women, Power, and Persuasion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 18–32.
 - 17 Valerie Schutte, 'Under the Influence: The Impact of Queenly Book Dedication on Princess Mary', in Sarah Duncan and Valerie Schutte (eds), *The Birth of a Queen: Essays on the Quincentenary of Mary I*, 31–47 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
 - 18 Erasmus, *Institution of Christian Marriage*, translated by Michael Heath, in Josh O'Malley and Louis Perraud (eds), *Collected Works of Erasmus: Spirituality and Pastoralia*, 203–438 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Valerie Schutte, "'To the Illustrious Queen": Katherine of Aragon and Tudor Book Dedications', in Julie Chappell and Kaley Kramer (eds), *Women during the English Reformations: Renegotiating Gender and Religious Identity*, 15–28 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
 - 19 William Marshall, *The forme and maner of subue[n]tion or helping for pore people deuysed and practysed i[n] the cytie of Hypres in Flaunders, whiche forme is auctorised by the Emperour, [and] approued by the facultie of diuinitie in Paris* (London: Thomas Godfray, 1535). STC 26119.
 - 20 E. W. Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn: 'The Most Happy'* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 284.
 - 21 Franz Lambert, *The summe of christianitie gatheryd out almoste of al placis of scripture, by that noble and famouse clerke Francis Lambert of Auynyon. And translatyd, and put in to prynte in Englyshe, by Tristram Reuel* (London: Robert Redman, 1536). STC 15179.
 - 22 Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 409; Maria Dowling, 'Anne Boleyn as Patron', in David Starkey (ed.), *Henry VIII: A European Court in England* (London: Collins and Brown Limited, 1991), 111; *Letters and Papers*, vol. 10, entry 371.
 - 23 Bible, translated by Miles Coverdale (Cologne: E. Cervicornus and J. Soter, 1535), ii.r. STC 2063.
 - 24 Carley, *Books*, 108.
 - 25 Valerie Schutte, 'Anne of Cleves in Book and Manuscript', *Journal of the Early Book Society* (forthcoming).
 - 26 Schutte, *Mary I*, 7–18.
 - 27 Thomas Becon, *The Pomaundur of Prayer* (London: John Day, 1561), A.iir. STC 1746.
 - 28 Sir Thomas Elyot, *Defence of Good Women* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1540). STC 7657.5.
 - 29 Greg Walker, *Writing under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 125, 135; Foster Watson (ed.), *Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912), 211–212; Constance Jordan, 'Feminism and the Humanists: The Case for Sir Thomas Elyot's *Defense of Good Women*', in Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy Vickers (eds), *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, 242–258 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).
 - 30 Anthony Cope, *A godly meditation vpon. xx. select and chosen Psalmes of the prophet David as wel necessary to al them that are desirous to haue ye darke wordes of the prophet declared and made*

- playn: as also fruitfull to suche as delyte in the contemplatio[n] of the spiritual meanyng of them (London: For John Daye, 1547). STC 5717.
- 31 Erasmus, *The first tome or volume of the paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the neue testament* (London: Edward Whitechurch, 1548). STC 2854.
 - 32 Susan James, *Catherine Parr: Henry VIII's Last Love* (Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2009), 112; see also Schutte, 'Under the Influence'.
 - 33 Alexandra Walsham, "'A Very Deborah?'" The Myth of Elizabeth I as a Providential Monarch', in Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (eds), *The Myth of Elizabeth* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 147.
 - 34 Elaine Hobby (ed.), *The Birth of Mankind: Otherwise Named, The Woman's Book* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), xvi, xviii.
 - 35 Janel M. Mueller, *The Native Tongue and the Word: Developments in English Prose Style, 1380–1580* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 282–283.
 - 36 David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 35–39.
 - 37 See Jennifer Wynne Hellwarth, *The Reproductive Unconscious in Medieval and Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 2002) for a feminist interpretation of Jonas's text.
 - 38 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xvi.
 - 39 Sir D'arcy Power, 'The Birth of Mankind or the Woman's Book: A Bibliographical Study', *The Library* 8:1 (1927), 2–3. Katherine's first marriage to Archduke Sigismund was childless and her second resulted in only one short-lived daughter.
 - 40 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xvii.
 - 41 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xxxi.
 - 42 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xvii, xxxi.
 - 43 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xxxvi.
 - 44 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xxxviii.
 - 45 Hellwarth (*Reproductive*, 18) suggests thirteen editions between 1540 and 1676; Hobby (*Birth*) suggests an unknown number of editions until 1654; Power ('The Birth of Mankind or the Woman's Book') suggests twelve editions up to that year.
 - 46 Hellwarth, *Reproductive*, 18–19.
 - 47 Mueller, *The Native Tongue*, 283.
 - 48 J. W. Ballantyne, 'The "Byrth of Mankynde": Its Author, Editions and Contents', *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the British Empire* 10 (1906), 304.
 - 49 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xxxiii.
 - 50 Hobby (ed.), *Birth*, xxxiv–xxxv.
 - 51 Jonas, *Byrth*, fol. A.B.i.v.
 - 52 Jonas, *Byrth*, fol. A.B.ii.r.
 - 53 Jonas, *Byrth*, fol. A.B.ii.r.
 - 54 Ballantyne, "'Byrth'", 304.
 - 55 Jonas, *Byrth*, fol. A.B.iii.r.
 - 56 A. S. G. Edwards and Carol M. Meale, 'The Marketing of Printed Books in Late Medieval England', *The Library* 6 (1993), 115.
 - 57 Jonas, *Byrth*, A.B.iii.r–v.
 - 58 British Library, Cotton MS Vespasian F iii, fol. 73, reprinted in Susan Doran (ed.), *Henry VIII: Man and Monarch* (London: The British Library, 2009), 111.
 - 59 British Library, Cotton MS Nero C x, fol. 3, reprinted in Doran (ed.), *Henry VIII*, 190.
 - 60 Jonas, *Byrth*, A.B.iii.v–iv.r.
 - 61 Jonas, *Byrth*, A.B.iii.v.
 - 62 Hellwarth, *Reproductive*, 16.
 - 63 Jonas, *Byrth*, A.B.iv.v.
 - 64 Loades, *Catherine Howard*, 103.
 - 65 Felicity Heal has recently explained gift-giving in early modern England. See her chapter 'The Politics of Gift-exchange under the Tudors' in *The Power of Gifts: Gift-exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 87–120.
 - 66 Warnicke, *Wicked Women*, 65; Loades, *Catherine Howard*, 112.

- 67 Michael Hirst (writer), Ciaran Donnelly (director), 'Natural Ally', in *The Tudors*, CBC/Showtime, 2 May 2010.

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KATARINA JAGIELLONICA AND SOPHIE OF MECKLENBURG-GÜSTROW

Power, piety, and patronage¹

Sybil Jack

Katarina Jagiellonica (1526–1583) and Sophie of Mecklenburg-Güstrow (1557–1631) became queens consort of Sweden and Denmark, respectively, at approximately the same time, when the Danish–Swedish Seven Years War of 1563–70 was coming to an end.² They were very different people and married into dynasties that were moving in rather different directions following the break-up in 1523 of the Union of Kalmar, under which the two states had shared a ruler. Nevertheless, the kingdoms' cultures remained similar, as did their expectations of society.

Katarina, the youngest of Bona Sforza's daughters, was born into the Polish Jagiellon dynasty on 1 November 1526. Her paternal family was the most distinguished dynasty in Northern Europe at the time, and her mother, who had introduced the Renaissance to Poland, raised her children to maintain its ideals.³ She was also formidable and well able to intervene in political matters.⁴ However, Katarina remained unmarried until relatively late in life, and when she did finally marry it was not to the king of Sweden but to his younger half-brother, Johan. Moreover, she was imprisoned with her husband for several years, until a revolt allowed him to accede to the throne in 1569.

Sophie, born on 4 September 1557, more than a generation later than Katarina, had a very different life after marrying King Frederick II of Denmark in 1572. Her husband had picked her out after spotting her in the train of his proposed bride, Margarethe, the twenty-eight-year-old daughter of Philip I of Pomerania. Like Katarina, Sophie was a member of an old and distinguished family; but unlike Katarina, she was closely connected to the kingdom of which she became queen consort because her mother, Princess Elizabeth of Denmark, was King Christian III's half-sister, so Sophie was Frederick's cousin. Their marriage met political needs. Her father, Elizabeth's second husband, was Duke Ulrich III of Mecklenburg-Güstrow, and Denmark needed to establish links with neighbouring German Protestant rulers from whose families most Danish queens came. As Sophie spent

the first dozen years of her marriage bearing eight children, it was some time before she was able to exercise the power that went with her position; indeed, she would achieve her greatest agency only when she became queen dowager. This brought her into conflict with the managing elite, who eventually prevented her from becoming regent of Denmark, but she had been broadly accepted earlier in her reign.⁵

Monarchy in the Scandinavian kingdoms

Both women would have been aware of the possibilities and limitations of the particular kingdom they entered. Both were of higher status than many of their predecessors and contemporaries who had been queens consort hereditary, some of whom had been members of powerful local elites, rather than the daughters of foreign princes with limited international influence. The impact of this had been to limit the queen consort's power in international affairs. Queens from the local nobility did not possess the blood of royal ancestors, were not bred for rule, and had fewer sources of external leverage. Conversely, their backgrounds meant they had considerable influence in domestic affairs, especially when they enjoyed the support of a significant body of kin who were also effectively rulers of particular areas.⁶

Hence, previous queens of Denmark and Sweden were not entirely powerless. Indeed, Katarina and Sophie would have been well aware of a number who had managed to dominate. In 1384, for instance, Jadwiga was crowned 'king' of the state of Poland–Lithuania. Similarly, Margaret, daughter of Valdemar III of Denmark, amassed considerable authority to ensure the succession of her son Olav; and when he died in 1388 she received the titles of 'sovereign lady, master, and guardian' in Denmark and 'mighty lady and master' in Norway. Thereafter, the Swedish nobles recognized her as their 'sovereign lady and rightful master' and she was crowned as their monarch.⁷

It is unlikely that either Katarina or Sophie expected to reach a similar level of authority. Moreover, they would have been conscious of the need to safeguard their respective husbands' positions, because, although hereditary succession was reasonably firmly established in most of Europe by the sixteenth century, in Scandinavia the succession of the male heir who was closest to the throne was not yet secure.⁸ Denmark was still theoretically an elective monarchy, and those who acceded to the throne were often not the next in hereditary line. Indeed, in the early sixteenth century, most of the country's monarchs had come to the throne by ousting their predecessor.⁹ Similarly, it has been said that in medieval Sweden only one king was neither deposed nor enthroned as a pretender.¹⁰ Denmark's Oxe, Trolle, and Brahe families – whose members routinely sat on the *riksrag* – were quite prepared to intrigue for a change of monarch, and maintained a tight hold on the kingdom's finances. Meanwhile, the middle and lower classes were politically insignificant; indeed, it was technically impossible for a Brahe to 'marry' a member of the lower classes.¹¹ The system was the same in Sweden.

In these parts of Northern Europe, the monarchs were seen more as executive officers than sacred rulers, while the elite believed they had a specific duty to the kingdom and a legal right to resist, when necessary. The court was still the centre of the bureaucracy, with a cameral system that was very similar to those elsewhere in Europe, but the elite families had a traditional right to form the greater part of that court. Frequent local rebellions placed further limitations on the monarch's authority in both countries. The election of a king in Scandinavia was not a mere formality but usually involved long negotiations among the country's elite, who had to consent to the choice and then record it in a charter, so his queen's rights could vary. Nevertheless, ordinary women had significant rights of inheritance that could not be overturned in both countries; and when they looked to the monarchy for justice, the queen served as their model. Queens had a seal and could be legally independent; they had their own treasurer and kept their own accounts; and they had control over the revenue from their estates. Hence, if they were financially shrewd, they could play significant roles in the governance of kingdoms that still had only limited bureaucracies.¹²

The potential role of a queen in Scandinavia

In the sixteenth century, the Scandinavian monarchies embarked on a strategy to emulate the politics of the southern and western parts of the continent, where the divine right of kings and the idea of absolutism were already widely accepted and where the court was already 'a symbolic image of the state recognized and approved by everyone'.¹³ The queens had key symbolic roles to play in these attempts to change the constitutional structure and increase the monarchies' power and authority and transform the local elites into loyal servants of the state.

Two of the queens' chief responsibilities were to link their husbands to other states in Europe and to foster the development of international culture within their respective kingdoms. Therefore, Katarina – as an outsider from a distinguished dynasty – had more potential authority than Sophie, but she was not popular with the local Swedish elite, who preferred to look to the queen dowager, Catherine Stenbock, Gustav Vasa's third wife, who had strong links to the kingdom's most powerful families.¹⁴ Sophie, whose mother had been a Danish princess herself, had no such problems.

The authoritarian view of a woman's role

Katarina and Sophie may have been cognizant of several models of female authority, but contemporary enthusiasm for women's political activity was limited and religious theology was becoming increasingly critical of women engaging in political activity. Marcin Kromer, the prince bishop of Warmia, Katarina's advisor, and one of the two major chroniclers of Poland in the sixteenth century, criticized several earlier princesses and queens in his *Kronika Polska*: 'What could be more unnatural than a woman who, instead of delivering and raising children, supporting

the evangelisation work of the Church and exercising *ascesis*, prefers to rule the country?'¹⁵ While Sophie might not have found this too surprising and Katarina listened respectfully to Kromer, the Swedish queen probably felt that she had a wider role. After all, her principal model was her mother, Bona Sforza, who had achieved considerable power and influence. This was in part because she had arrived in Poland to marry Sigismund I with a sizeable fortune and a large entourage who settled in Cracow and helped to create one of the most intellectual and artistic courts in Europe. Katarina must have observed her mother's skilful management of her estates and her creation of a faction that favoured the shift towards autocratic monarchy and eventually opposed the Habsburgs.¹⁶

The circumstances of the marriages

The events leading up to the marriages of Katarina and Sophie could not have been more different. Sophie was Frederick's choice, but she also enjoyed the goodwill and support of the Danish council, which had considerable power over the kingdom's royal family. Indeed, it was pressure from the council that led Frederick to choose a bride as they were anxious for him to produce an heir. His grandfather and father had both acceded to the throne when they were not the immediate heir, and the council had demanded a marriage in a bid to guarantee continuation of the line at a time of political difficulty. Sophie's mother, brought up in the Danish court in a period of unremitting civil war, had visited Denmark frequently since her marriage and had remained on good terms with the queen dowager, Dorothea, who had been ensconced at Haderslev, so Sophie must have found her adopted country familiar. Furthermore, there would be no religious conflict as she practised the dominant Lutheran Protestantism of the region.¹⁷ She would also have observed her mother playing an active role in religious and practical matters at court, so she had her own model of queenship, albeit a more modest one than Katarina's. The council deemed Sophie acceptable as a bride because they knew she would strengthen Frederick's ties to the north German nobility and draw him closer to the Protestant political networks in the Holy Roman Empire, which had strong links to the Netherlands and France. In addition, her youth (at fourteen, she was only just of marriageable age) promised heirs.

Katarina did not step so easily into marriage, and her union was initially less prestigious. Although she and her sisters could expect to secure distinguished partners because of their foreign affairs potential, and although they eventually formed a group who communicated with one another both formally and informally across national boundaries, all of their marriages were much delayed. Only Isabella found a husband before their father's death, when she married John Zapolya – chosen as monarch of Hungary in preference to Archduke Ferdinand of Austria – in 1539. Thereafter, religious and political difficulties were complicating factors. Poland–Lithuania was resolutely Catholic, so forging marital links with the Protestant Scandinavian countries and many of the northern German

states proved problematic. Moreover, after 1548, Bona and her son Sigismund were at odds over his policies and marriages, so she and her unmarried daughters moved to Ujazdów Castle in Mazovia on the outskirts of Warsaw. Mother and son then found it impossible to reach agreement on suitable husbands for his sisters. Sigismund was focused on his struggle with Russia, and only likely to favour a match that would advance his position there. Although there was apparently plenty of interest in the princesses, they all remained unmarried until Bona came close to giving up and returning to Italy. Finally, in 1556, Sophia, the second youngest, married the sixty-seven-year-old Henry of Brunswick-Woffenbüttel, but that still left Anna and Katarina with no immediate prospects of marriage.

Few princesses can have faced so likely a disaster as Katarina did when her brother Sigismund arranged her marriage to Gustav Vasa's second son, Johan, in September 1562. Although it had been suggested that she might marry either Gustav's eldest son Eric or Johan back in 1555, nothing had come of those negotiations. Eric became king of Sweden when Gustav died in 1561 and he was now in conflict with Johan, the ruler of Finland. The *rigsdag* of Arboga, to which Johan had subscribed, required the royal brothers to secure the king's assent to any political treaty, but this was anathema to Johan, whose ambitions in Livonia were in direct opposition to Eric's plans for Sweden and his relations with Russia.¹⁸ The relative positions of Gustav's sons had yet to be tested, despite the estates' acceptance of the principle of hereditary succession in 1544. Sigismund seems to have been keen to secure support for his resistance to Russia, which ran counter to Eric's strategy, so Johan's acceptance of the marriage proposal added fuel to the resentment between the two brothers. Moreover, Eric was committed to Lutheranism, so he found it impossible to countenance his brother marrying a Catholic princess. Hence, the marriage took place without his approval. This made it legally questionable, to such an extent that twenty years later the Vatican felt the need to confirm it.

The financial terms of the marriage were seemingly unfavourable to Katarina. Furthermore, Sigismund never even paid the dowry he had promised. When he died and she became joint heir to his moveable property, she was dependent on her sister for any funds that became available. In one of the two wills that were attributed to Katarina's mother Bona, she left her moveable property to her daughters, but the legal conflict over these documents continued to rumble on long after her death. Although Katarina and her husband made multiple attempts – via the pope and through various other means – to secure her inheritance, they failed repeatedly. The main beneficiary of this protracted dispute was Philip II, who dominated southern Italy at the time. Meanwhile, it seems likely that Sigismund was primarily interested in marrying his sister to Johan to confirm their common opposition to Russia in the Livonian War. In any event, after the contract was sealed in late September 1562, the couple were rapidly married in a Catholic ceremony, accompanied by a flamboyant pageant, in the lower castle of Vilnius, Lithuania, on 5 October.¹⁹

Sophie and the Danish court: influence and symbolism

The year 1572 was a critical one for Frederick II of Denmark as he had just lost a major war and needed to re-establish his authority both domestically and internationally. His marriage to Sophie was a part of this. To prove his financial stability, he minted magnificent dalers to pay off his German mercenaries as well as some special gold sets that he gave to Sophie.²⁰ The wedding and her immediate coronation fulfilled Western expectations about the symbolic function of a queen. They married on 20 July 1572 in Copenhagen Castle and she was crowned the following day, having arrived in a silver carriage drawn by eight horses with Peder Oxe, the principal minister, carrying her crown before her, which highlighted the monarch's status above the politician and her direct link to God. Frederick had already pledged to govern justly, preserve the kingdom's religion, support its schools, and help the poor, and Sophie was expected to do the same.²¹

The banquets, tourney, masquerades, and other festivities that followed confirmed Denmark's position as an important state in Europe.²² Although she may have read the Danish court poet Erasmus Laetus's account of her predecessor as queen of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, Margarethe, Sophie apparently did not aim to achieve so much power.²³ She did not arrive with a large entourage, but she did follow tradition and establish the 'queen's side' of the court with her own servants and staff, headed by a number of Danish noblewomen, including Inger Oxe, Tycho Brahe's foster-mother, and his mother Beate Bille, who was Sophie's mistress of the wardrobe.

From the start, she exercised some influence around the court and a degree of patronage. For instance, she advised Antonius van Opbergen from Malines in Flanders, who supervised the transformation of Kronborg, where after 1574 a two-storey building was erected specifically for the queen. This eventually boasted a passage to the chapel and a picture gallery called the Queen's Gallery. Sophie also had control over her own space in the other palaces and castles she and Frederick remodelled, much as queens oversaw their quarters in France and Spain. Indeed, she even had her own palace at Nykjobing, which Philip Brandin started to rebuild in a more contemporary style in 1587; and as queen dowager she maintained a separate set of apartments at Frederiksborg that included a large room known as the Angels' Hall on account of its decorations.

As Frederick's mother Dorothea had died in 1571, Sophie was immediately plunged into a central role at court, where patronage was important.²⁴ She performed the necessary functions of a queen during ceremonial events and entertainments despite her frequent pregnancies, which themselves served to promote the idea of royalty as they gave rise to further festivities, poems, and pageantry. Although the births were not accompanied by the elaborate symbolism of the French and Spanish rituals that greeted the arrival of a royal heir, they were publicly celebrated. After her first daughter, Elizabeth, was born at Koldinghus Castle, where Frederick was holding court, on 25 August 1573, the christening and Sophie's churching were held on 25 October in front of a large gathering of the

Danish elite and numerous ambassadors.²⁵ Anne of Denmark was born in Skanderborg Castle on 12 December 1574, whereupon Frederick reputedly chastised Sophie for producing another daughter. However, on 12 April 1577 she finally gave birth to a son, Christian, at Fredericksborg, where she was under the care of Inger Oxe and three midwives. His baptism was delayed until 2 June so that it could be another occasion of state and social symbolic rejoicing. Erasmus Laetus wrote a lengthy Latin account of the festivities (which included several school dramas) in which he also reflected on the responsibilities of the monarchy, including the queen.²⁶ Three years later, Christian was confirmed as heir to the throne in another grand ceremony.²⁷

Sophie learned that the Danish court was already committed to advancing and patronizing science, especially Paracelsianism.²⁸ The principal physician at court, Petrus Severinus, oversaw iatrochemistry at the royal castle of Rosenborg, where cosmetics and drugs were manufactured.²⁹ Frederick was also interested in astronomy and went to great lengths to keep Tycho Brahe in Denmark.³⁰ Meanwhile, Sophie evidently developed an interest in astrology, chemistry, and arcane apparatus, visiting Hven in June 1586 and later.³¹ And arts were not neglected: she was involved in the production of some fine love poetry and a number of well-regarded plays, including Hieronymus Justesen Ranch's *Karrig Nodding*. Operas, ballets, and other performances were also staged during her reign.³² These activities, for which Sophie was a patron, had a political aspect.³³ She and her husband also patronized historians, especially Arild Huitfeldt and Anders Sorensen Vedel, the celebrated court preacher, who translated the important *Saxo Grammaticus*. Sophie encouraged the latter to collect Danish ballads, and in other ways mirrored Katarina in her concern for intellectual and investigative research. Moreover, she enjoyed more financial support than her Swedish counterpart, as the Danish government profited from the Sound Tolls to become one of the wealthiest states in Europe.

Sophie was not, however, deeply involved in Denmark's international affairs. She was merely an observer in Frederick's lifetime, although her background suited the king's commitment to the idea of an international Protestant union and his opposition to Poland. He was anxious to dominate all of the seas surrounding Scandinavia, and especially the Baltic, now that the Hanseatic League had effectively collapsed and the Dutch and Spanish were contesting with each other in the English Channel. This led to occasional strife with Sophie's father, but she was never directly involved in the clashes.³⁴ For most of her marriage, she was not politically active, although she wrote formal letters to be enclosed with Frederick's and remained close to her family. She was much distressed at her mother's death in 1586.³⁵

Katarina in Sweden: problems and priorities

Katarina would have known that her marriage was likely to bring political and other problems – soaring ambition and intrigue were common elements in most

Swedish royal marriages, and hers was a highly political union – but they did not emerge for several months. The later story of how the newly-weds suffered many setbacks on their return to Finland – reputedly written by her adviser, Marcin Kromer, to promote a Swedish–Polish attack on Russia – is unreliable, especially as Kromer did not witness most of the events first hand.³⁶ The suggestion that they arrived with almost no goods or support and had to walk until Katarina was recognized by local nobles is particularly unsustainable. In actuality, she and Johan reached Turku in December 1562 with a sizeable entourage of 59 people and a wealth of personal possessions: garments, rugs, linens, jewellery, and so on.³⁷ However, they had barely settled into their new home before Eric besieged the castle with a large army. Johan capitulated on 12 August 1563. Then, if Kromer is to be believed, it was suggested to Katarina that Johan's *lèse majesté* had dissolved the marriage, but she rejected the notion, affirming the indissolubility of the bond with the traditional Latin words '*Nemo nisi mors*', which became her signature theme, as recorded in the chapel where she is buried. Thwarted, Eric imprisoned the couple in Gripsholm Castle until the brothers were temporarily reconciled in October 1567. Later accounts suggest that Eric considered trading Katarina to Tsar Ivan IV, who was claiming that Sweden was a vassal of Russia, but she was saved by the elite's opposition to the deal and her pregnancy with her second daughter, Anna.³⁸ During her imprisonment, she had already given birth to two children: Isabella, who lived only a year or two, and Sigismund. Her incarceration was not as strict as Johan's, and she was evidently able to maintain contact with her sister Anna as well as some members of the Swedish elite who were opposed to Eric, such as Pontus de la Gardie. However, while de la Gardie seemingly hoped to use Katarina as a conduit to persuade Johan to lead the rebellion, there is no evidence that she was particularly active in the events of 1568 that led to Eric's downfall and Johan's accession to the Swedish throne.

After Eric's fall and negotiations with the nobles, in January 1569 Katarina and Johan were crowned in a modest ceremony at Uppsala after they had agreed to additional clauses in the charter regarding declarations of war and the rights of the nobility.³⁹ Thereafter, however, they became symbols for the authority of monarchs in all of the key areas of Sweden.

Katarina's upbringing must be taken into consideration in any discussion of her role as queen consort. She was a resolute adult who refused to be manipulated by the men around her, but it is necessary to examine how her early life shaped the character and interests that she displayed throughout her reign. She spent most of her childhood with her mother at Wawel Castle, where she and her sisters received a thorough education, learning Latin as well as Italian, Polish, and German. During that time she would have met many prominent literary and scientific figures, as the court sponsored poets such as Johannes Dantiscus and historians such as Jost Ludwig Decius, employed distinguished artists, and organized concerts of the most fashionable music. Indeed, the Polish–Lithuanian court of the mid-sixteenth century rivalled those of France and Spain in terms of ostentation.⁴⁰ At the same time, Katarina gained an understanding of court factions and watched her mother's

innovations in agrarian reform and management of the kingdom in her father's declining years. Through this, she developed a great love of plants and a keen interest in agriculture.⁴¹ She intended to make the Swedish court as impressive as her mother's had been. First, she and Johan remodelled strongholds like Borgholm as Renaissance palaces in the Italian style. The Italian–German builders the Pahre brothers were invited to design and construct the new structure, with instructions to retain its defensive capabilities.

Eric's court had reflected his cultured tastes and European interests. It was especially noted for its music, and Katarina was keen to maintain this.⁴² She tried to introduce ceremonies that were common practice in other European courts, with their material magnificence, their musicians, and their artists, and she enjoyed Johan's full support in this endeavour. While always maintaining a deep commitment to their religious faith, they promoted astrology and other sciences,⁴³ bought a great deal of art, and encouraged local artists.⁴⁴ In addition to the Pahre brothers, they commissioned a number of other architects, mainly from Italy, to revamp Swedish buildings in the Renaissance style and attempted to fill them with their increasingly magnificent art collection.⁴⁵ Katarina's interest in Renaissance ideas and science may have led to a general improvement in education and knowledge throughout the kingdom, but this was overshadowed by Sweden's constant involvement in war and the inevitable problems of governing a religiously divided country.

The king's court was peripatetic, although Katarina did not always travel with it, probably because she was beset by a number of health problems.⁴⁶ For instance, she contracted gout as early as 1572. Although some of those who had accompanied her from Poland were still by her side at that time, her control of her court was undermined by female members of the Swedish elite, especially Karin Gyllenstierna, her senior lady in waiting, who was almost certainly not Katarina's choice as she had been Johan's mistress and was mother to several of his illegitimate children. Ture Bielke, described as master of her court, was one of the key figures in the royal government and a relative of Johan's second wife, Gunilla Bielke.⁴⁷ The correspondence of Katarina's favourite dwarf, Dorothea Ostrelska, with Anna and Sophie provides a fascinating insight into what was a modest court by Western European standards.⁴⁸

Katarina fulfilled her expected role as an adviser of restraint and a conduit for mercy. For instance, according to Swedish tradition, when Johan contemplated torturing Eric to discover the whereabouts of some buried treasure, it was her protests that stayed his hand. However, her strong links to Poland and other European kingdoms with which she communicated in formal Latin were more significant, as they made her a valuable asset in Sweden's foreign policy. Sweden and Russia went to war again in 1571, and Poland played a critical role in the conflict. Katarina's regular communication with her sister Anna became even more important when the latter became queen of Poland in 1576. Her husband, Stephen Bathory, was willing to join forces with Sweden and they defeated Russia at Wenden in 1578. However, Anna suffered a loss of influence in the aftermath

because Johan was unsatisfied with the peace treaty that Poland subsequently signed with Russia.

Religion and patronage

Katarina and Sophie both contributed to their husbands' attempts to exercise religious control over their respective countries. For instance, they both participated in the use of broadsheets to enforce religious authority.⁴⁹ However, in other ways, their roles were very different. Sophie, like Frederick, was a moderate Lutheran, but she made few contributions to his management of the Danish Church, which he hoped to turn into a leader of the true evangelical faith in Europe, nor with his suppression of the country's many other religious groups, although she did assist him in his campaign to improve the education of the clergy.⁵⁰ The couple were markedly anti-Catholic and supported the theories of Niels Hemmingsen, but they were more concerned with promoting religious stability and conformity in Denmark than debating the finer points of theology.⁵¹

Katarina played a much more active role in her husband's religious policies, particularly his attempt to restore Sweden to the Catholic fold, which was a key component of Johan's foreign policy. She was widely perceived as deeply religious, with a strong commitment to turning Sweden back to Catholicism. Indeed, this goal was often presented as her sole preoccupation, although in reality she had many other interests, as we have seen. Her religious views largely corresponded with her husband's. He attempted to move the Swedish Church in a more Catholic direction, but was reluctant to return any land to the Church or diminish his own authority. Meanwhile, Katarina used her powers of patronage to appoint Catholics to various key religious positions. Her authority over her entourage was critical here, as it enabled her to appoint Catholic missionaries as her personal chaplains.

However, in religious matters, Katarina's patronage was always secondary to Johan's. He was a remarkably learned monarch, had a keen interest in philosophy and theology, and had even read the Church Fathers, so he had full appreciation of the different sides' arguments. Indeed, while his personal preference was for Catholicism, his relationship with the papacy was rarely smooth. For instance, he asked the pope for special dispensation to remain a Protestant until he was better established, but this request was denied.⁵² In 1577, the pope sent Antonio Possevino to Sweden, and the envoy allegedly converted Johan the following year. However, Johan supposedly asked for another dispensation to keep his conversion secret for ten years; again the pope refused.

Katarina's position was far less ambiguous, although she was willing to compromise with the Lutherans in order to ease Catholicism's return to Sweden. For instance, she took communion under both creeds, which horrified her sister Anna and led to a scolding from Cardinal Hosius, with whom Katarina was in regular contact from at least 1572. In other letters, he offered lengthy advice on how she should persuade Johan to convert and displayed a conservative attitude towards the

role of women that today seems highly patronizing.⁵³ In 1574, Katarina wrote to the pope to ask for the return of the Brigittine Hospice in Rome. This appeal was successful, but some of her other interventions were less productive.⁵⁴ The problem was that her attempts to further the cause of Catholicism in Sweden became entangled with her attempts to obtain her Sforza inheritance, which was held by Philip II of Spain.⁵⁵ The latter had no hesitation in utilizing this to promote Spanish interests in Sweden in the 1570s.⁵⁶ Similarly, the pope and the Jesuits hoped that the withheld dowry might be used as leverage to force Katarina and Johan to press ahead with the restoration of Catholicism. Ultimately, the lawsuit relating to the inheritance dragged on until after her death, and Johan never received the dowry of 10,000 dalers that Katarina's brother had promised him.

Throughout all of this intrigue, Katarina's chaplains – including the Jesuit father Stanislas Warszewicki – acted as hidden persuaders. However, they seemingly never appreciated that her influence over Johan was limited, regardless of the couple's similar aims. In 1574, Laurentius Nicolai Norvegus – another Jesuit whose undeclared role was to persuade Johan to make a public conversion in return for his wife's inheritance – arrived in Sweden to serve as a chaplain to Katarina, but instead Johan appointed him rector of the new school of theologians.⁵⁷ A few years later, the pope's envoy, Possevino, insisted that Norvegus must reveal his true identity, which proved to be a serious error of judgement. While Sweden's Catholics were delighted by the news, the Lutherans were furious, stormed the school buildings, and set them on fire. The king jailed the perpetrators, but then retreated into a position of neutrality. Later, his new liturgy resulted in a series of dissensions and dismissals at the college, and in 1583 it became Lutheran, rather than Catholic.⁵⁸

The Catholics described Katarina's deathbed as 'exemplary', although other reports suggested that her anxiety may have caused her daughter to turn away from Catholicism. Her funeral was delayed until 16 February 1584, when she was buried in a magnificent tomb in Uppsala Cathedral. Royalty's unique, direct link to God was emphasized during the ceremony.⁵⁹

The queens and their families

Katarina and Sophie were typical queens in their commitment to finding suitable positions and marriage partners for their children. Indeed, Katarina's main objective may have been to provide for her children. With one eye on the throne of Poland, she insisted that both of her surviving children were raised as Catholics. Indeed, in 1576, she sent Sigismund to Cardinal Hosius's Jesuits in Braunsburg, possibly with the intention of persuading her sister Anna that he merited consideration as a future monarch of Poland. The tactic may well have worked as he was elected king after the death of Anna's husband, Stephen Bathory, in 1586.

Sophie's most significant role around the time of Frederick's death was match-maker for her children. Although they had all spent some years at Sophie's mother's court, rather than her own, she remained acutely concerned about their

welfare. Between 1588 and 1590, she was deeply involved in the negotiations that led to the weddings of Princess Elizabeth to Duke Heinrich Julius of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel and Princess Anna to James VI of Scotland, whom she had favoured despite Frederick's objections.⁶⁰ She oversaw the levying of 150,000 rigsdalers for the two weddings and other expenses, and spent 50,000 on jewellery. In 1596, she arranged the marriage of her daughter Augusta to John Adolph of Holstein-Gottorp, which improved Denmark's links to the north German Lutheran kingdoms. Finally, in 1602, she negotiated the marriage of Hedwig to the elector of Saxony. She was also instrumental in obtaining suitable brides for her younger sons.

Becoming a queen dowager

Sophie was distraught when Frederick died on 4 April 1588, but she organized his grand funeral in Roskilde, then lobbied to become regent for her son Christian IV. This was standard practice in the rest of Europe when the heir to the throne was a minor, but in Denmark the council had the final say, and its members decided to appoint four guardians instead: Niel Kaas, Peter Munk, Christoffer Walckendorg, and Jorgen Rosenkrantz. In response, Sophie set about securing the resources she would need to remain an influential figure within Denmark. She was entitled to *Livgeding* ('support for life') as well as the castles that comprised her 'morning gift', and there was also talk of a contract with Frederick on the basis of which she claimed all of her late husband's liquid assets. In the end, she managed to extract a lump sum 30,000 rigsdalers, plus an annual income of 8,000 rigsdalers from the Sound Tolls. Her 'pension' came from the crown estates of Lolland (Denmark's fourth-largest island and a significant player in Baltic trade) and Falster (a neighbouring island on which the castle of Nykøbing was situated), which she administered in person, as previous queens had done.⁶¹ The council attempted to keep her out of the country, but she maintained a separate set of apartments at Kronborg.

Moreover, the council struggled to diminish her influence. A succession dispute in the duchies of Schleswig, which was a Danish fiefdom, and Holstein, which paid allegiance to the Empire, resulted in Sophie becoming regent of Schleswig-Holstein on behalf of younger son, a role she continued to play until 1594.⁶² Similarly, while her relations with her independently minded elder son Christian were often distant, she exerted considerable influence over her daughters even after their marriages. For instance, in 1595, Anne obeyed her instruction to reconcile with the earl of Mar.⁶³

During her long dowagership, Sophie mainly devoted herself to managing her estates, where she was effectively an independent ruler. She protected the residents of her dowerlands and engaged in trade and money-lending from which she garnered considerable profits.⁶⁴ Indeed, her business ventures were so successful that Christian petitioned her for a loan and she duly helped to fund his military campaign against Sweden in 1611 and his entry into the Thirty Years War in 1615. She also advanced loans to one of her grandsons, Frederick Ulrich,

and several German Protestant princes. Meanwhile, she continued to study chemistry and astronomy throughout her life, and supervised the renovation of Nykøbing Slot Palace.

Sophie outlived her two elder daughters and finally died at the age of seventy-four on 14 October 1631, by which time when she was said to be the richest woman in Northern Europe. She remained active and influential right to the very end, even to the point of engaging in financial dealings with the leader of the Catholic forces in the Thirty Years War – Count Tilly – in the final year of her life.⁶⁵ She was buried in state with her husband in an impressive baroque tomb in the chapel of the Magi, Roskilde Cathedral.⁶⁶

Conclusion

Katarina and Sophie both balanced their formal role with a degree of independent power. They fulfilled the public requirements of a crowned consort and gave due consideration to the sacred aspects of the role by appearing in processions, receiving distinguished visitors, entertaining important guests, accepting the petitions of ordinary people, providing a model of social propriety and family harmony, and embodying contemporary notions of good womanhood and good queenship. Tapestries, paintings, sculptures, and classical references were all used to highlight their majesty among their largely illiterate subjects. This meant they were key players in the invention of the concepts of ‘Sweden’ or ‘Denmark’ by helping to give meaning to the topographical identities of those two countries. Meanwhile, they also found the time to pursue their own interests and used their connections and wealth to advance a number of cherished causes.

Notes

- 1 I am most grateful to Susanna Niiranen for permitting me to see the manuscript ‘Remembering a Past Princess: Catherine Jagiellon and Construction of National Narratives in Sweden and Finland’ prior to publication. I have greatly benefited from reading it. I also wish to extend belated thanks to Charlotte Lindberg Clausen (now Charlotte Warakaulle) for the help she provided twenty years ago when I was working in the archives in Copenhagen.
- 2 E. I. Kouri and Jens E. Olesen (eds), *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*, Volume 2: 1520–1870 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
- 3 Anne Markham Schulz, *Giammaria Mosca Called Padovano: A Renaissance Sculptor in Italy and Poland* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 172.
- 4 S. C. Rowell, ‘The Lithuanian–Prussian Forest Frontier c. 1422–1600’, in Daniel Power and Naomi Standen (eds), *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700–1700* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 189, 196, 200.
- 5 The standard details of her life are Svend Cedergreen Bech (ed.), *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1984).
- 6 Johan’s second wife fits this category.
- 7 Most of the biographical details of people mentioned in this chapter are taken from *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon* (SBL), which forms part of the Swedish National Archives. So far, this comprises thirty-three volumes (a total of approximately 25,000 pages) that contain more than 9,000 family and individual entries, making SBL one of the largest

- resources in the Nordic region. Birgitta Lager Kromnow biography of Katarina is in volume 20.
- 8 For detailed discussions of the political changes in sixteenth-century Sweden and Denmark, see Byron J. Nordstrom, *Scandinavia since 1500* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), part 1; and Kouri and Olesen, *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia: 1520–1870*, chapters 4 and 5, on which the next few paragraphs draw heavily.
 - 9 See Nordstrom, *Scandinavia*, 24ff.
 - 10 Mia Korpiola, *Between Betrothal and Bedding: Marriage Formation in Sweden 1200–1600* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 13.
 - 11 Victor E. Thoren, *The Lord of Uraniborg: A Biography of Tycho Brahe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
 - 12 See Karin Tegenborg-Falkdalen's important work on the position of women: *Kungen är en kvinna: retorik och praktik kring kvinnliga monarker under tidigmodern tid* (Umeå: Institutionen för historiska studier, 2003).
 - 13 H. G. Koenigsberger, 'Dominium regale or dominium politicum et regale: monarchies and ... theorique', and Antoni Maczak, 'Le rôle politique de la noblesse autour de la Baltique', in Andre Stegmann (ed.), *Pouvoirs et institutions en Europe au XVI^e siècle*, 173–186 and 220–229 (Paris: Bibliothèque d'Histoire de la Philosophie, 1987).
 - 14 Karin Tegenborg-Falkdalen, *Vasadrottningen: en biografi över Katarina Stenbock 1535–1621* (Lund: Historica Media, 2015) is interesting but offers few insights on the relationship between the two women.
 - 15 Quotation from Anna Mikolajewska, 'About restless females', in *Passage to Knowledge: Museum of King Jan III Palace at Wilanow*, available at: www.wilanow-palac.art.pl/about_restless_females_german_wives_of_the_piasts_in_marcin_kromer_s_kronika_polska.html, accessed 20 February 2018.
 - 16 Daniel Stone, *The Polish–Lithuanian State, 1386–1795* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), 39–41.
 - 17 A great deal of the information about the queen and her family is taken from *Bibliotheca Danica Systematisk Fortegneise over den Danske Litteratur fra 1482 til 1830*, five volumes (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde Og Bagger, 1961–1963). Here at 3:57–68. Details of the charters are taken from the relevant years of *Kancellieffs Brevboger*.
 - 18 In one version of the story Katarina was sent to Stockholm as a bride for the crown prince, but that seems improbable as there was no crown prince at the time! See Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, Volume 1: *The Origins to 1795* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 117.
 - 19 In 2013 an international conference – European Unions and Historical–Cultural Ties – was organized to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the wedding of Johan and Katarina. It attracted delegates from Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden, but the proceedings have not yet appeared in print. There was music from the sixteenth-century Polish court and the proceedings stressed the significance of the marriage for the later governance of Lithuania and Poland, which would not have been evident at the time.
 - 20 Kirsten Bendixen, *Denmark's Money* (Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark, 1967), 72.
 - 21 The contemporary festival book has not survived, but there were others. See Erich Hoffmann, 'Coronation and Coronation Ordines in Medieval Scandinavia', in János M. Bak (ed.), *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (California: California University Press, 1990), 125, 131–136, 137ff; for comparisons, see Marie-Claude Canova-Green, Jean Andrews, and Marie-France Wagner (eds), *Writing Royal Entries in Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).
 - 22 There is a full description of the coronation and wedding in C. F. Bricka (ed.), *Kong Frederik den Andens Ungdomskjærlighed. Et historisk forsøg* (Copenhagen: Bogtrykkeri, 1873), 173–175; see also Victor E. Thoren, *The Lord of Uraniborg: A Biography of Tycho Brahe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 54.
 - 23 Lisa Hopkins, *Women who Would be Kings: Female Rulers of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Vision Press, 1991), 20–23.

- 24 There are some financial accounts for court expenses in the Danish Rigsarkivet.
- 25 *Kancellieffs Brevboger*, 325–329.
- 26 Karen Skovgaard-Petersen and Peter Zeeberg (eds), *Erasmus Laetus' skrift on Christian IV's fødsel og døb (1577)* (Copenhagen: Reitzel, 1992).
- 27 Thoren, *The Lord of Uraniborg*, 119; for a more thorough account, see Jole Shackelford, *A Philosophical Path for Paracelsian Medicine: The Ideas, Intellectual Context, and Influence of Petrus Severinus (1540/2–1602)* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2004).
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- 32 Mara R. Wade, 'Drama in Denmark and Norway', 'Opera in Denmark and Norway', 'Ballet in Denmark and Norway', and 'Fireworks and Entries in Denmark and Norway', in Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Pierre Béhar (eds), *Spectaculum Europæum: Theatre and Spectacle in Europe 1580–1750, Histoire du Spectacle en Europe 1580–1750*, 289–297, 465–470, 571–575, and 743–749 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999).
- 33 Mara R. Wade, 'Politics and Performance: Saxon–Danish Court Festivals 1548–1709', in Marie-Claude Canova-Green (ed.), *Musical Entertainments and the Politics of Performance*, 41–57 (London: Goldsmith's College, University of London, 2000).
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- 35 Danish National Archives, Copenhagen: Rigsarkivet Kongehusets Registrering Seddelreg 1; Indhold Korrespondance med dronning Sophie Dansk Kvindebiographisk Leksikon.
- 36 The title of this work, published in 1570, is: *Historyja prawdziwa o przygodzie żałosnej księżniczki finlandzkiego Jana i królowny polskiej Katarzyny*.
- 37 Almut Bues, 'Art Collections as Dynastic Tools: The Jagiellonian Princesses Katarzyna Queen of Sweden and Zofia Duchess of Braunschweig-Wolfenbuttel', in Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Adam Morton (eds), *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500–1800*, 15–36 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017).
- 38 This story is repeated in various modern accounts of her life, notably Roland H. Bainton's *Women of the Reformation: From Spain to Scandinavia* (Augsburg: Fortress Press, 1977), 183–201. Bainton engages in a detailed discussion of the struggle between Eric and Johan without apparently realizing that both of their mothers were long dead and the queen in question was Catherine Stenbock. Susanna Niiranen gives a clear account of the contemporary sources.
- 39 For coronations in Scandinavia, see Hoffmann, 'Coronation and Coronation Ordines', 125–144.
- 40 Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book: Function and Form', in J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Margaret Shewring (eds), *Europa Triumphant: Festivals and Festival Books of the Renaissance and Baroque* (London: Ashgate, 2004), 1:3–17; Mara R. Wade, 'Festivals in Scandinavia', in Mulryne et al. (eds), *Europa Triumphant*, 2:237–341; Karin Friedrich and Almut Bues, 'Festivals in Poland–Lithuania from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century', in Mulryne et al. (eds), *Europa Triumphant*, 2:373–464.
- 41 Bues, 'Art Collections'.
- 42 John Bergsagel, 'Music at the Danish and Swedish Courts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia 1520–1870*, 2:609–618 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Erik Kjellberg (ed.), *The Dissemination*

- of *Music in Seventeenth-century Europe: Celebrating the Duben Collection* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006), 18.
- 43 M. Kjellgren, *Taming the Prophets: Astrology, Orthodoxy and the Word of God in Early Modern Sweden* (Lihmahn: Sekel Bokförlag, 2011), 60.
 - 44 For details, see August Hahr, *Studier i Johan III's renässans* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1907–1910), book 3, and *Queen Katarina Jagellonica and the Vasa Renaissance: Studies in Vasatime Art and Swedish–Polish–Italian Relationships* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1940).
 - 45 Bues, 'Art Collections', 15–36.
 - 46 Fabian Persson, 'The Kingdom of Sweden: The Court of the Vasas and Palatines', in John Adamson (ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500–1750* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), 276–278.
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 - 48 For details, see Fabian Persson, 'Living in the House of Power: Women at the Early Modern Swedish Court', in Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (eds), *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-waiting across Early Modern Europe*, 343–363 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).
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 - 50 Lockhart, *Frederik II and the Protestant Cause*, 58, 69–70, 75. For the wider problems of divided Protestantism, see Robert Kolb (ed.), *Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550–1675* (Leiden: Koninklijke, 2008).
 - 51 Rasmus H. C. Dreyer, 'The Changing Face of Lutheranism in Post-Reformation Denmark', in Ole Grell and Andrew Cunningham (eds), *Medicine, Natural Philosophy and Religion in Post-Reformation Scandinavia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 46–48; Mark A. Granquist, Mary Jane Haemig, Robert Kolb, Mark C. Mattes, and Jonathan Strom (eds), *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2017); Louise N. Kallestrup, *Agents of Witchcraft in Early Modern Italy and Denmark* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
 - 52 Oskar Bernhard Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia, until the Establishment of the S. Congregatio de Propaganda Fide in 1622*, Volume 1: 1539–1583 (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1963), 51.
 - 53 Published in Hosius, *Opera Omnia* (1584), 2:336; see also Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia*, 90.
 - 54 Vatican Archives reprinted in Henry Biaudet, *Documents concernant les relations entre le saint-Siege et la Sued Durant la seconde moitié du XVI siecle II Epoque des relations officielles* (Geneva, 1912); see also Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation*, 88–95, 97, 103, 279–280.
 - 55 Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation*, 64, 112, 168, 250–251, 255–257, 380.
 - 56 Some idea of what was happening from the Spanish viewpoint may be obtained from James M. Boyden, *The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gómez de Silva, Philip II, and the Court of Spain* (California: California University Press, 1995), 102–104.
 - 57 Raissa Maria Toivo, *Faith and Magic in Early Finland* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 64.
 - 58 Kjellgren, *Taming the Prophets*, 52–55, 71.
 - 59 Joseph M Gonzales, 'Fashioning Death: Clothing, Memory and Identity in 16th Century Swedish Funerary Practice', in Sarah Tarlow (ed.), *The Archaeology of Death in Post-medieval Europe* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2015), 113–114.
 - 60 Lockhart, *Frederick II and the Protestant Cause*, 306–311.
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 - 62 Paul Douglas Lockhart, *Denmark, 1513–1660: The Rise and Decline of a Renaissance Monarchy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 42.

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8

ELISABETH OF AUSTRIA AND MARIE-ELISABETH OF FRANCE

Represented and remembered

Estelle Paranke

This chapter sheds light on the reputations of Elisabeth of Austria (1554–1592) and her only daughter, Marie-Elisabeth of France (1572–1578). Scarcely remembered, apart from in the works of two nineteenth-century historians and one twentieth-century scholar, they are all too often overshadowed by the fame of other contemporary European princesses, such as Marguerite de Valois and Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots. Furthermore, Marie-Elisabeth is rarely mentioned in accounts of the history of the French royal family, and her affiliation to Charles IX of France is often ignored or barely noted. While most of the scholarship regarding Elisabeth is in German or French, Joseph Patrouch has produced a study in English in which he examines the queen's education and relations with her family in Austria.¹ Marie Héyret pays close attention to the convent Elisabeth created when she returned to Austria in 1574, but does not engage with the queen dowager's reputation.² This chapter explores the myth-making behind the reputations of these two neglected princesses.

For too long they have been largely forgotten by scholars and the public. As Simone Bertièrè harshly points out, without Brantôme's *Vie des dames illustres françaises et étrangères* and François Clouet's portrait of the queen, 'Elisabeth of Austria will only be a name' in the long list of queens of France.³ Yet, perhaps ironically, her marriage to Charles IX was a pivotal alliance between two of Europe's great royal houses in the sixteenth century. Elisabeth embodied the hope that a strong alliance between France and the Holy Roman Empire could be forged and maintained, to the benefit of both. Ambassadors and special envoys, such as Albert de Gondi (1522–1602) and Scipion de Fiesque (1528–1598), were sent to the Austrian court to conclude negotiations to that end.⁴

Elisabeth and her daughter lived a peaceful life away from court and political drama, which may well explain history's lack of interest in them. There is no shortage of primary sources, such as marriage negotiations and contracts, pamphlets,

and chronicles, relating to their lives. Two nineteenth-century historians even showed some interest in them. Yet, this was not enough to draw significant attention to them. The sources used in this chapter allow us to grasp how the princesses' reputations were constructed. Besides, these sources need to be discussed. In this chapter, Brantôme's well-known work needs to be treated with caution as a primary source, as it relies on other writings. However, it is important to note that his text does offer valuable insights when looking at the queen's representation during her own lifetime.⁵ It also remains a contemporary source with anecdotes and in many ways can be seen as a starting point when analysing Elisabeth of Austria and her daughter's myth-making.

In order to comprehend that process of myth-making, this chapter relies on nineteenth-century and twentieth-century sources. In his account of their lives, Clary Darlem, a nineteenth-century historian who based his research on Austrian and German sources, depicts two pious and virtuous princesses.⁶ While his work represents a valuable source in terms of myth-making, it is important to note that it did not divulge the whole truth, as he remains vague when discussing his foreign sources. Jules Du Bern de Boislandry also showed an interest in the two women and contributed to their afterlife representations. A magistrate as well as an author, he had a strong interest in French history, and particularly French queens and princesses.⁷ In all, drawing upon sources including sixteenth-century chronicles, pamphlets, poems, letters, as well as historical accounts written since the nineteenth century and contemporary works, this chapter examines and scrutinizes the tragic lives and reputations of these all but forgotten princesses, and investigates the reasons for the consistent lack of attention that has been paid to them.

Elisabeth: the perfect match

Marriage negotiations between the Valois and Habsburg houses began as early as 1563, followed by intensive discussions from October 1567 to November 1569. Catherine de Médici wanted Charles to marry the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II's eldest daughter, Anna of Austria. However, Philip II of Spain championed his son Don Carlos with respect to the same princess, complicating the situation. In 1565, Catherine wrote to her ambassador at the Spanish court that she accepted an alliance 'with the second daughter',⁸ but the specifics of the negotiations have yet to be determined. As previously mentioned, Albert de Gondi and Scipion de Fiesque were sent to the Austrian court and then reported back to Catherine. De Gondi had been trusted by the French royal family since Henri II's accession to the throne in 1547. He was appointed gentleman of the chamber and master of the wardrobe to Henri's second son, Charles, and continued to occupy these positions when the latter became Charles IX in 1560 and during the reign of his successor, Henri III.⁹ De Fiesque, who was Italian in origin, was highly trusted by Catherine. He was made a knight of the Order of the King, counsellor of state, and Catherine's knight of honour.¹⁰ Hence, it is not surprising that Catherine commissioned him to undertake this mission, as he had been a loyal servant for

many years. Most of his letters were coded – a telling sign of the delicate nature of the enterprise with which he had been entrusted.¹¹ He also sent reports and letters to Charles. In one, dated December 1567 and directly addressed to the French king, de Fiesque assured Charles of ‘the good will of the emperor towards me’.¹² In 1569, Elisabeth of Valois, queen of Spain, died, creating another shift in the marriage negotiations. Philip II was now interested in marrying Anna himself, and a marriage between Charles and Maximilian’s second daughter was imminent.¹³ Strengthening the alliance with the Habsburgs remained a priority and the negotiations were ultimately successful: Charles and Elisabeth of Austria would marry.

The union was well received and pamphlets praised the bride.¹⁴ Despite her foreign origins and lack of proficiency in the French language, she was considered a perfect match for the French king.¹⁵ Clary Darlem reconstructed Elisabeth’s arrival in France. He reported, without citing any sources, that while Elisabeth embraced her new homeland and wanted to address the French people in their language, she recognized that it would be better to do so in Spanish and have her speech translated by her lady-in-waiting, Madame d’Aremberg.¹⁶ Darlem even claimed that ‘Elisabeth’s melodious voice, the charm of this language from the south which had been familiar to her since her childhood, the attractiveness and power of her gaze, the majesty of her person, everything combined to ensure total victory over everyone’s hearts.’¹⁷ Hence, Darlem helped to shape the myth that the Austrian archduchess received a warm welcome in her new homeland.

The wedding and the couple’s entry into Paris were reported throughout the realm. One account related how Elisabeth’s beautiful dress, ‘covered with golden fleurs-de-lis, and several diamonds and gems, pearls and other exquisite things’, revealed her grandeur and her elevated status as an archduchess.¹⁸ Another asserted that her dress was embroidered with ‘golden fleurs-de-lis, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds’ and was of such ‘excellent richness and value that [its] price is inestimable’.¹⁹ Such accounts stress that the young archduchess was a perfect match for Charles, and for France.

Elisabeth’s affiliation to Austria was also emphasized. A pamphlet written by Pierre de la Roche Saintongeois described how ‘the wealthy France now wants to join the noble blood of Austria’.²⁰ This highlights that the marriage’s significance and its role in connecting the two houses made their way into the public consciousness. Charles ‘renewed and reconfirmed the alliance that it [France] had with this old house of Austria [by marrying] Elisabeth, daughter of Maximilian, Emperor of the Romans, one of the wisest and most virtuous princesses in the world’.²¹

The first pageant to celebrate the royal couple’s entry invoked the image of Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and strategic warfare, and the sponsor of arts, trade, and strategy. Direct comparisons were drawn between Elisabeth and the goddess. Thus, it was written that, in the pageant, Minerva was represented by ‘our Queen Elisabeth who like any celestial and divine creature has been put on earth by the singular favour of God to be the spouse of a king of France and to bring happiness, peace, and prosperity to the French’.²² The allegory is strong and Elisabeth is once again portrayed as a perfect match for France: she embodied hope

for a peaceful and prosperous future in a country that had been ravaged by violent religious civil wars for over a decade. This depiction of a virtuous, pious, and peaceful queen helped the French monarchy to bring stability to the realm. Elisabeth became the symbol of wisdom, and 'the very happy and virtuous Minerva Elisabeth Queen of France'.²³ This association with the goddess also glorified her Austrian origins by depicting Maximilian II as Minerva's father, Jupiter, to illuminate the grandeur of the Habsburgs. She was accepted as queen of France, with nobles and members of the French aristocracy rushing to welcome her.²⁴

In the nineteenth century, Jules Du Bern de Boislandry described Elisabeth as 'daughter of the Emperor Maximilian II and of Maria of Austria, and granddaughter, on her mother's side, of Charles V'.²⁵ Even centuries after her death, her affiliation to the great Charles V, who dominated Europe during the first half of the sixteenth century, affirmed the significance of the alliance for France. Elisabeth was not only pious and virtuous but also the descendant of a respectable and notable royal European family. Interestingly, commentators never highlighted her devout Catholicism; instead, they opted for a more classical representation. In addition to her heritage and virtue, they praised her physical attributes. Darlem wrote that she was 'charming' and 'gracious'.²⁶ Indeed, he argued that her beauty was 'outstanding'.²⁷ Typically, he does not provide any sources for this appraisal, but it seems likely that he had read Brantôme's text, in which Elisabeth is described as 'a very beautiful princess, with the complexion of her face as beautiful and delicate as the other women of her court'.²⁸ Her beauty, chastity, wisdom, and grace were all praised in pamphlets throughout the realm, but above all she represented hope for peace in France. However, these fine qualities seemed to stand in stark contrast to the less appealing characteristics of her mother-in-law, Catherine de Médici, undermining the latter's reputation.

Praise for the two princesses at the evil French court

Brantôme wrote that Elisabeth was 'one of the best, gentlest, wisest, and most virtuous queens that have reigned since the reign of all kings and queens that have ever reigned'.²⁹ He also insisted that she was 'very devout, but not at all a bigot, showing her devotion by external and apparent acts that were not too much, nor too extreme'.³⁰ For Darlem, Elisabeth made an 'ephemeral and hazy' appearance in French history that contrasted with 'the perverted court' of Catherine de Médici.³¹ As Du Bern de Boislandry similarly related, the virtuous Elisabeth 'came to live in the soiled palace of Catherine de Médici and Charles IX'.³² He explained that, as Elisabeth was 'raised by virtuous parents', she 'must have found herself isolated in the middle of a corrupt court, where infamous plots were orchestrated'.³³ This new queen represented everything that the French court was not: virtuous, benevolent, pious, and pure. In many respects, especially in the nineteenth century, all of this praise for the Austrian princess served to reinforce Catherine's reputation as an evil queen who was personally responsible for many of France's woes.

The St Bartholomew's Day Massacre of August 1572 is often viewed as the darkest hour of early modern France. The slaughter of thousands of Huguenots in Paris, and then thousands more in Rouen and other parts of France, undermined Charles IX's and Catherine's reputations both inside and outside the kingdom. Meanwhile, Elisabeth's image remained untarnished. Brantôme related that 'she knew nothing, nor even had she seen it coming, went to bed as usual, and woke up in the morning and was told of what had happened', whereupon her first reaction was to ask if her husband knew about the massacre. Charles's councillors told her that he had ordered it, and she screamed, 'My God, I beg you and require of you that you forgive him.'³⁴ The notion that she was too good for Charles persisted for centuries. Du Bern de Boislandry explained that the king 'appreciated in his wife all the merits he did not possess himself' and concealed his plans for the massacre from her. He claimed that Elisabeth fell to 'her knees, bursting into tears, and implored divine mercy to forgive the murderer whom she loved'.³⁵

In striking contrast to this representation of the benevolent Elisabeth, Charles was seen as perfidious and cruel for ordering the massacre of thousands of innocent people. Brantôme related that she 'was most fair and most worthy for him'.³⁶ Du Bern de Boislandry reinforced this idea and explained that 'she offered mildness in the face of Charles IX's outbursts, who admitted that he did not deserve the hand of so virtuous a woman'.³⁷ Nevertheless, there was no doubt that Elisabeth was in love with Charles. Moreover, Brantôme suggested that 'she honoured him enormously'.³⁸ In these respects, Elisabeth's fine qualities were constantly praised and remembered: 'as much for the grandeur of the house from which she came as for the merits of her virtues, such as her charming, chaste, holy manners, she has been well received, loved, and honoured in this realm, [and] the good King loved her as his cherished and loyal spouse'.³⁹ She was invariably presented as a fine example of chastity and fidelity. Hence, Darlem claimed that she was surprised to learn that the former queen consort Mary Tudor contemplated marrying someone else after the death of her first husband, Louis XII of France. The historian depicted a queen who did not understand that a royal widow could consider another marriage and for whom 'fidelity of heart' meant everything.⁴⁰ In many ways, Elisabeth was represented as a dedicated wife whose virtues and qualities outshone those of both Catherine and Charles.

Various accounts of Elisabeth's life and reign also focused on her lack of interest in politics, once again casting her as the polar opposite of her mother-in-law, whose thirst for power and talent for political games were discussed at length. Du Bern de Boislandry assumed that Elisabeth 'was not involved in any political affairs; she groaned in secret for all the woes that afflicted the realm, [which was] under the government of a prince whom she endeavoured to please'.⁴¹ On the other hand, Darlem claimed that she was a trusted ear and confidante for anyone in trouble, and illustrated this by recounting an incident involving Brantôme, notwithstanding the fact that the author himself failed to mention the episode in any of his own writings. In Darlem's tale, Brantôme escorts a mysterious foreign lady named Mademoiselle de Raré – 'whom the queen of Scotland trusts fully' – to

Elisabeth's chamber. The lady then delivers a private letter that asks Elisabeth to have 'compassion and profound pity' for Mary Stuart. Seemingly, Mary hoped that Elisabeth might persuade Charles and Catherine to come to her aid and rescue her from imprisonment in England. However, Darlem maintained that 'the selfish policies of Catherine de Médici made her [Catherine] indifferent regarding Mary Stuart's fate'.⁴² Given the complexity of foreign politics in this period, this claim is evidently contestable. While Elisabeth may well have acted as a mediator between her husband and Mary Stuart, Darlem's account suggests that the young queen felt powerless to intervene, despite weeping over the letter.⁴³ Once again, then, her purity and kindness are contrasted with the darkness of sixteenth-century French politics, but she is also depicted as a somewhat impotent queen.

Nevertheless, Du Bern de Boislandry insisted that 'she ruled her house with order that she would have liked to see applied to the state'. Furthermore, he revealed that Elisabeth was far from uninterested in contemporary events, and that she 'wrote memoirs about the history of her time as well as composing religious poetry'.⁴⁴ Bassompierre (1547–1596) deplored that her writings were lost,⁴⁵ while Bertièrre described two of her works: 'one on piety, *On the Word of God*, the other on history, *On the significant events that happened in France*, during her lifetime. She sent both of them to her sister-in-law Marguerite. Both works have disappeared without trace.'⁴⁶ Although we have no further details about the contents of these books, the mere fact Elisabeth was able to produce them proves that she was more than just a pretty face or a pious queen tasked with the responsibility of ensuring the royal legacy. According to Bertièrre, she was highly educated and wished to use her writings to promote peace and piety in a court that lacked morality.⁴⁷

For over a year, Elisabeth strove to produce an heir. Charles IX had a mistress, Marie Touchet, but he did not completely neglect his marital duties, and in 1572 Elisabeth became pregnant.⁴⁸ The young queen welcomed the news with joy and relief, and gave birth to Marie-Elisabeth, also known as Marie-Isabeau or Isabelle, on 27 October 1572. After the strain that the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre had placed on diplomatic relations, this event played a crucial role in maintaining the French alliance with England as the royal couple begged Elizabeth I to become the infant's godmother. She accepted and gave her name to the little princess.⁴⁹ It is not known whether Elisabeth's happiness was tempered by the fact that Marie Touchet gave birth to a son just three months later.⁵⁰

Marie-Elisabeth was praised for being 'a true miracle of nature in spirit, and in grandeur, and in bravery'. Although she lived for only six years, Brantôme claimed that 'she said incredible things'.⁵¹ Such depictions of the princess reveal the astonishing admiration she enjoyed in her brief life. She seemed to make a deep impression on everyone who met her. Brantôme recalled that she was well aware of her status and high rank, and was fond of 'saying that she was from the two greatest houses of Christianity'.⁵² Indeed, her marvellous heritage was praised in her funeral oration, with the author reminding everyone that she was the descendant 'of around 62 kings of France, from Pharamond to her father the king, Charles IX. From her mother's side, she was the descendant of around nine

Emperors.' Moreover, she was the daughter 'of a very Christian and magnanimous father & of a very Christian and virtuous princess'.⁵³ Clearly, then, Marie-Elisabeth was no ordinary princess, and the mere fact that she was the progeny of such great European monarchs might have led many to believe that she herself was destined for greatness. Had she lived longer, she may well have been courted by all of Europe's royal houses.

Interestingly, her funeral oration was not dedicated to Marie-Elisabeth's uncle, Henri III of France, nor to Catherine de Médici, but to her aunt, Marguerite de Valois, queen of Navarre. This was unsurprising as Marguerite had always been close to her sister-in-law and there is little doubt that she was very fond of her niece, too.⁵⁴ Marie-Elisabeth's 'graces and virtues which God had given to her' were widely acknowledged and admired.⁵⁵ Her young age was emphasized to denounce the unfairness of her early death, and her 'soul' was described as 'beautiful and fair'.⁵⁶ For comfort, the oration also invoked the words of Plutarch to his friend Apollonius: 'better to die young, virtuous ... than old and vicious'.⁵⁷ Once again, Marie-Elisabeth's virtue and purity were highlighted; and once again, the malevolent characteristics that were routinely attributed to her grandmother, Catherine, were thrown into stark relief.

Elisabeth and her daughter seem to have been admired primarily for their morals and innocence. In many respects, these qualities contrasted with the dubious morals of the French court, described by nineteenth-century historians as 'perfidious'. However, while this representation undoubtedly casts the queen and the princess in a positive light, it also suggests that they failed to have much of an impact on their contemporaries or indeed France's collective memory, and that they were rather detached from the major historical events that unfolded around them. Furthermore, it is important to note that they have been largely ignored since the nineteenth century, with modern scholars, aside from the few who have been previously mentioned, barely giving them a second thought.

The widow and the orphan: forgotten but loved?

The most two life-altering moments of Elisabeth's life were, first, when Charles IX died and, second, when she had to return to her home country, leaving her only child behind in France. At Charles IX's death in 1574, Elisabeth was told to remain composed and dignified in her grief, and Brantôme related that she was successful in this regard: she did not scream or try to pull out her hair; rather, she quietly cried 'beautiful and precious' tears.⁵⁸ An account of her departure similarly emphasized Elisabeth's grace: 'in all continence, piety and great modesty, in all the actions of her life, she has never used strange manoeuvres, nor fake wigs and masks, nor muffler, showing herself as an example for other ladies'.⁵⁹ In times of grief, Elisabeth was portrayed as a solemn woman. Darlem went further in constructing the myth of a devoted wife and widow. He insisted that she was 'devastated' after Charles IX's death, having remained at his bedside throughout his illness: 'in her

modest silence, with tender and respectful looks, people said that she bore in her heart all the love she had for him'.⁶⁰

Royal widows were expected to remain in utter darkness in their apartments for forty days. During that time, little Marie-Elisabeth was sent to the castle of Amboise, far from her mother. According to Darlem, Catherine made this decision, and even the guileless Elisabeth realized the hatred that her mother-in-law felt towards her. While Elisabeth 'was free to leave the realm', Marie-Elisabeth belonged to France and 'had to stay'.⁶¹ Darlem wrote that Catherine visited the little princess and asked why she was so sad 'with a fake and banal smile'. Marie-Elisabeth replied that she wanted to 'kiss her mother', to which her grandmother, 'with a hypocritical voice', responded, 'Am I not your mother as well, Isabelle? Come close to me, my child.'⁶² As usual, Darlem did not cite his source, but he clearly intended to fashion the myths of Catherine and her granddaughter as an evil queen and a fair and innocent princess. Indeed, he depicts Catherine as a monster whose heart was devoid of all sympathy and goodness. Yet, in reality, she always exhibited great interest in her grandchildren, and there is little or no evidence that she ever treated them badly.⁶³ A few months after Marie-Elisabeth's death, Henri III and Catherine sent a special envoy, Seigneur de Montmorin, to the imperial court. Montmorin insisted that the royal family had been deeply affected by the little princess's death and that 'the queen [Catherine] was as much saddened by the death of the said lady and bears the same regret as if it were her own daughter'.⁶⁴ Of course, it is impossible to determine whether this message was sincere. However, modern historians have attempted to present a more well-rounded and balanced picture of the queen mother than their nineteenth-century predecessors.⁶⁵

Brantôme suggested that Henri III neglected his niece during her illness. Then, when he finally decided to pay her a visit, Marie-Elisabeth shunned him, declaring: 'Since I fell ill, he has not come to see me once; me, his niece, the daughter of his older brother, who does not dishonour him'. Brantôme concluded that, despite her young age, Marie-Elisabeth was well aware of her rank and status.⁶⁶ Although she suffered the royal family's indifference, she was highly regarded by 'her disconsolate nation', which prayed 'for Marie Isabeau to enjoy some better moments'.⁶⁷

This notion that the French people were saddened by the fates of Elisabeth and Marie-Elisabeth was implied in a pamphlet announcing the former's departure for Austria. Its author claimed that people pitied her and 'cried and bitterly moaned', and that 'her piety was an example for them to go to God on all occasions, and her kindness to cherish others'.⁶⁸ Elisabeth was remembered as a chaste and pious queen who created the monastery of St Claire in her natal country and was 'until her death a model of all virtues'.⁶⁹ Du Bern de Boislandry even claimed that she never abandoned her widow's weeds, which demonstrated her devotion to late husband.⁷⁰ She died at the age of thirty-eight in her own monastery.

The widow and dowager queen Elisabeth and her child, the orphaned princess Marie-Elisabeth, both suffered unusual fates given their high rank and royal status. Neglected and often forgotten by their contemporaries, they led short, modest lives. Having advanced from archduchess to queen consort of France, Elisabeth

ended her life as a pious nun who refused to remarry and instead devoted her life to God.⁷¹ Yet, while their names remain largely unknown, the people of sixteenth-century France seemed to feel great love and sympathy for them.⁷²

Conclusion

Is it difficult to comprehend how history can forget, or at least barely remember, a beautiful, virtuous, and benevolent archduchess and queen consort, especially as neither her own contemporaries nor later scholars had a bad word to say about her character or reign. Even more surprisingly, her daughter Marie-Elisabeth, the offspring of two great European royal houses, has been hardly mentioned at all. Brantôme and her funeral oration focused on the little princess's sweetness and courage, whereas her affiliation to Charles seemed of little consequence.

This chapter has revealed that the queen and her daughter were revered and loved by their contemporaries, while nineteenth-century historians endeavoured to represent them as almost perfect models of royalty. Yet, they scarcely appear in novels, popular culture, or later history books. Perhaps the depictions were so flawless that other writers found Elisabeth and Marie-Elisabeth rather boring and therefore not worthy of their consideration. After all, their lives were not dramatic; they did not wield political power; they were not executed by their own kinswomen; and they did not pursue extra-marital affairs. Marie-Elisabeth was simply the only daughter of a king who failed to bring peace to France, while Elisabeth remained in the shadows of her powerful mother-in-law and ended her life in a monastery.

In various sources, Elisabeth is portrayed as the perfect bride. For Bertière, 'she joined the cohort of history's unparalleled queens whose goodness, sweetness, and discretion shaped all their merits'. Furthermore, she 'shaped the image of the ideal queen that the collective unconsciousness never stopped imagining: a queen who would never get involved in politics'.⁷³

History has often displayed a schizophrenic attitude towards queenship. On the one hand, women who remain silent and modest are praised but then forgotten and ignored. On the other, women who wield significant political power are endless sources of fascination but usually portrayed as evil and manipulative. One might, then, wonder whether such a rigid dichotomy may be transcended. The aim of this chapter was to discover the reasons for the lack of interest in Elisabeth and Marie-Elisabeth. It should now be apparent that their lives were neither dramatic nor scandalous, so they were never likely to feature prominently in popular culture. Yet, if nothing else, I feel that their modesty and kindness merit closer attention. Hopefully, this chapter will serve as a stepping-stone for further studies of queens who are too often neglected primarily because of their lack of interest in politics.

Notes

- 1 Joseph F. Patrouch, *Queen's Apprentice: Archduchess Elizabeth, Empress Maria, the Habsburgs, and the Holy Roman Empire, 1554–1569* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010). Also see:

- Roman D'Amat, 'Elisabeth d'Autriche', *Dictionnaire de biographie française* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1965), 12:1203; Joseph Mathes, *Tugendsterne Deutschlands* (Vienna: Missiondruckerei Steyl, 1902), 131–132.
- 2 Marie Héyret, 'Elisabeth, Königin von Frankreich, die Stifterin des Königs Klosters in Wien', *Katholische Warte* 4 (1888): 373–384.
- 3 Simone Bertière, *Les reines de France au temps des Valois*, Volume 2: *Les années sanglantes* (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1994), 211.
- 4 In his letters, Count Scipion de Fiesque explained the significance of such an alliance between the Holy Roman Empire and France. See: MS Fr 15919, Lettres du comte Scipion de Fiesque, envoyé vers l'Empereur, pour le mariage de Sa Majesté avec Élisabeth d'Autriche, fille dudict Empereur, au Roy à la Reine-mère (October 1567–November 1569).
- 5 For a more detailed discussion of Brantôme's works, see: Tracy Adams, 'Gender, Reputation, and Female Rule in the World of Brantôme', in Zita Eva Rohr and Lisa Benz (eds), *Queenship, Gender, and Reputation in the Medieval and Early Modern West, 1060–1600* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 29–32.
- 6 Clary Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche, reine de France* (Paris: Chez A. Franck, Libraire-Editeur, 1847), 1:iii.
- 7 Léon Galidert (ed.), *Revue britannique, ou choix d'articles traduits des meilleurs écrits périodiques de la Grande-Bretagne* (Paris: Librairie Rue Neuve-Saint-Augustin, 1838), 14:xxxix.
- 8 Catherine de Médici to Monsieur de Fourquevaux, 30 December 1565, in Ct Hector de la Ferrière, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, Volume 2: 1563–1566 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1885), 337: 'avecques la seconde fille'.
- 9 See Joanna Milstein, *The Gondi: Family Strategy and Survival in Early Modern France* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014).
- 10 M. de la Chenaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la noblesse, contenant les généalogies, l'histoire & la chronologie des familles nobles de France* (Paris, 1773), 6:393.
- 11 MS Fr 15919.
- 12 MS Fr 15919, Scipion de Fiesque to Charles IX of France, 29 December 1567, fol. 26: 'la bonne volonté que l'Empereur a envers moy'.
- 13 MS Fr 15919, Scipion de Fiesque to Charles IX of France, 10 September 1569, fol. 147.
- 14 François Rose Parisien, *Epithalame sur le mariage du roi & de tres-haulte & tres-illustre princesse Elisabet d'Autriche* (Paris, 1570).
- 15 Simone Bertière insists that Elisabeth knew only German and Spanish and that no one cared to teach her French; see Bertière, *Les reines de France*, 213.
- 16 Given the origins of the Habsburg family, royal members spoke both German and Spanish fluently.
- 17 Clary Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche, reine de France* (Paris: Chez A. Franck, Libraire-Editeur, 1847), 2:11: 'La voix mélodieuse d'Elisabeth, le charme de cette langue du midi qui lui était familière depuis l'enfance, l'attirait et la puissance de son regard, la majesté de sa personne, tout enfin se réunissait pour lui assurer une entière victoire sur tous les cœurs'.
- 18 *Le mariage du roy de France avec la royne Elisabeth d'Autriche, fille de l'Empereur Maximilian* (Lyon, 1570), 11: 'toute couverte de fleurs de lys d'or en broderie & plusieurs diamans & pierreries, perles & autres choses exquise'.
- 19 *Bref et sommaire recueil de ce qui a esté fait & de l'ordre tenue à la ioyeuse & triumpante entrée de tres puissant, tres magnanime & tres chrestien Prince Charles IX, de ce nom roy de France, en sa bonne ville & cite de Paris, capitale de son royaume, le mardy sixiesme iour de mars avec le couronnement de tres haute, tres illustre & tres excellente Princesse Madame Elisabet d'Autriche son espouse, le dimanche vingtinquiesme* (Paris, 1571), 118: 'fleurs de liz d'or traictz & son surcot garny & enrichy de gros diamans, rubiz & esmeraudes, le tout de telle excellente richesse & valeur que le pris en est inestimable'.
- 20 Pierre de la Roche Sainctongeois, *Congratulation sur le mariage du roy et de tres haultes & tres illustre Princesse Elisabet d'Autriche* (Paris, 1570), 22: 'la France riche veut maintenant se joindre au sang noble de l'Autriche'.

- 21 *Bref et sommaire recueil*, 15: 'renouvelé & reconfirmé l'alliance qu'il avoit avec ceste ancienne maison d'Autriche, & espousé Elisabet fille de Maximilian Empereur des Romains, l'une des plus sages & vertueuses princesses du monde'.
- 22 *Bref et sommaire recueil*, 179: 'nostre Royne Elisabeth laquelle comme toute celeste & divine a esté par la singulière faveur de Dieu mise en terre pour 180 estre espouse d'un roy de France & causer le bonheur, paix, & prospérité des François'.
- 23 *Bref et sommaire recueil*, 181: 'tres-heureuse & vertueuse Minerve Elisabet Royne de France'.
- 24 MS Fr 15597, fols. 177–178, includes a list of the people who attended the ceremony.
- 25 Jules Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines et régentes de France et des favorites des rois Childeric I à Henry III* (Paris, 1837), 345: 'fille de l'empereur Maximilien II et de Marie d'Autriche, et petite-fille, par sa mère, de Charles Quint'.
- 26 Clary Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche, reine de France* (Paris: Chez A. Franck, Libraire-Editeur, 1847), 1:6, 7: 'la jeune et charmante achiduchesse Elisabeth', 'gracieuse archiduchesse Elisabeth'.
- 27 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:53, 'La beauté remarquable d'Elisabeth d'Autriche'.
- 28 Pierre de Bourdeille, Abbé de Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres françoises et étrangères* (Paris, 1868), 370: 'Elle estoit une très-belle princesse, ayant le teint de son visage aussy beau et delicat que dame de sa cour'.
- 29 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 369–370: 'avoir esté une des meilleures, des plus douces, des plus sages et des plus vertueuses reynes qui regna depuis le regne de tous les roys et reynes qui aient jamais regné'.
- 30 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 370: 'Elle estoit très-devote et nullement bigotte, ne monstrant ses devotions par actes exterieurs et apparens par trop, ny trop extremes'.
- 31 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:iii: 'apparition éphémère et vaporeuse'.
- 32 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 345: 'La vertu vint habiter le palais souillé de Catherine de Médicis et de Charles IX'.
- 33 Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 347: 'Elevée par des parens vertueux, ayant reçu d'eux des principes sévères, Elisabeth devait se trouver isolée au milieu d'une cour corrompue, où se tramaient tant d'infâmes complots'.
- 34 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 374: 'Mon Dieu! Je te supplie et requires de luy vouloir pardonner'.
- 35 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 347: 'Charles, qui, de son côté, honorait en son épouse tous les mérite qu'il n'avait pas ... Elisabeth se jeta à genoux en fondant en larmes, et en implorant la miséricorde divine pour le meurtrier qu'elle aimait.'
- 36 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 373: 'Elle estoit fort propre et fort digne pour luy'.
- 37 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 348: 'Elle opposait la douceur aux emportemens de Charles IX, qui avouait n'avoir pas mérité la main d'une femme si vertueuse'.
- 38 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 373: 'elle l'aimoit et honoroit extresmement'.
- 39 *Le partement de France de tres-illustre et tresvertueuse Princesse Elisabet d'Autriche, fille de l'Empereur Maximilian a present regnant, veuve du feu roy de France Charles Ix de ce nom, avec les regrets de la France, pour le partement de la ladite Princesse* (Lyon, 1575), Lb 314382, 4: 'tant pour la grandeur de sa maison dont elle est issue, que pour les mérites de ses vertus, c'est à savoir, débonnaire, chasteté, sainteté de moeurs, as esté for bien venue, aimée, et honorée en ce Royaume, le bon Roy l'aima comme sa chère & loyalle espouse'.
- 40 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:110: 'la fidélité du coeur'.
- 41 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 347: 'Cette reine ne prit aucune part aux affaires politiques; elle gémissait en secret des malheurs du royaume, sous le gouvernement d'un prince auquel elle s'efforçait de plaire'.
- 42 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:126: 'la politique égoïste de Catherine de Médicis rendait indifférent à la destinée de sa belle-sœur'.
- 43 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:129–132.
- 44 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 348: 'elle dirigeait sa maison avec l'ordre qu'elle eût voulu voir régner dans l'état; elle passait ses loisirs à rédiger des mémoires sur l'histoire de son époque et à composer des poésies religieuses'.

- 45 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 348: 'Bassompierre dit que ses ouvrages étaient fort curieux; on doit regretter qu'ils aient été supprimés'.
- 46 Bertièrre, *Les reines de France*, 225: 'l'un de piété, Sur la parole de Dieu, l'autre d'histoire, Sur les événements considérables qui arrivèrent en France de son temps. Elle les aurait envoyés à sa belle-sœur Marguerite. Tous deux ont disparu sans laisser de traces'.
- 47 Bertièrre, *Les reines de France*, 225. Una McIlvenna has refuted this idea in her recent book, *Scandal and Reputation at the Court of Catherine de Medici* (London: Routledge, 2016).
- 48 On the rivalry between Elisabeth and Marie Touchet, see Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:178.
- 49 Marie-Elisabeth had two godmothers, her maternal grandmother Maria of Austria and Elizabeth I of England – hence her name. On the letters exchanged regarding Elizabeth I as godmother, see Estelle Paranke, *Elizabeth through Valois Eyes: Power, Representation, and Diplomacy in the Reign of the Queen, 1558–1588*, chapter 4, which discusses the impact of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre on Anglo-French relations (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).
- 50 Jacqueline Vons and Pauline Saint-Martin, 'Vie et mort de Marie-Elisabeth de France (1572–1578), fille de Charles IX et Elisabeth d'Autriche' (2010), available at: <http://cour-de-france.fr/article744.html>, accessed 2 June 2017.
- 51 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 309: 'laquelle on peut dire avoir esté un vray miracle de nature en esprit et en grandeur de courage, au bas age qu'elle a vescu, n'ayant pas huit ans lorsqu'elle mourut, elle disoit et racontoit des choses incroyables'.
- 52 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 309: 'Ceste petite princesse sçavoit bien dire qu'elle estoit des deux plus grandes maisons de la chrestienté, du costé de France et du costé d'Autriche'.
- 53 *Oraison funèbre de treshaute et vertueuse princesse Marie Isabeau de France, fille de trehaut et treschrestien Roy Charles IX, amateur de toute vertu, & protecteur de la foy. Prononcée en l'Eglise Nostre-dame en Paris le 11 d'avril mil cinq cens septante huit* (Lyon, 1578), 23: 'elle est extraite d'environ 62 Roys de France, à compter depuis Pharamond iusques au Roy Charles son père. Et du costé de sa mere, elle est issue d'environ neuf Empereurs'.
- 54 Nancy Goldstone, *The Rival Queens: Catherine de' Medici, Her Daughter Marguerite de Valois and the Betrayal that Ignited a Kingdom* (Croydon: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2016), 371.
- 55 *Oraison funèbre de treshaute et vertueuse princesse Marie Isabeau de France*, 5.
- 56 *Oraison funèbre de treshaute et vertueuse princesse Marie Isabeau de France*, 25: 'l'ame belle & clere'.
- 57 *Oraison funèbre de treshaute et vertueuse princesse Marie Isabeau de France*, 27: 'vaut mieux mourir ieune vertueux, & net des taches, que nostre ame contracte avec ce corps mortel, que aagé & vicieux'.
- 58 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 371–372: 'Ainsy prioit nostre reyne pour l'ame du roy son mary, qu'elle regretta extremement, en faisant ses plaintes et regrets, non comme une dame désespérée et forcenée, faisant ses hauts cris, se deshirant la face, s'arrachant les cheveux, ny contrefaisant la femme qu'on loue pour pleurer, mais se plaignant doucement, jettant ses belles et precieuses larmes si tendrement'.
- 59 *Le partement de France de tres-illustre et tresvertueuse Princesse Elisabet d'Autriche*, 5: 'Elle s'est contenue en France en toute continence, pieté & grande modestie, en toutes les actions de la vie & deportements: elle n'a usé d'attiffetz estranges, ny de perruques fausses, & masques, nouveaux cachenez, soy monstrant exemplaire aux autres Dames'.
- 60 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:264–266: 'A son silence modeste, à ses regards tendres et respectueux, on eut dit qu'elle le couvroit en son cœur de l'amour qu'elle lui portoit'.
- 61 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:268–270, 'Il était d'usage à la cour de France que les veuves royales restassent quarante jours renfermées dans leur appartement, tendu de noir, et rendu inaccessible aux rayons du jour. Elisabeth, affaissée dans sa douleur, se soumit sans murmurer à la nécessité de se séparer de sa fille; nécessité que commandait, disait-on, cette lugubre reclusion de deuil. Dès le premier jour de la mort de Charles IX, la régente avait ordonné que madame Isabelle de France fut transportée au château d'Amboise pour y être élevée ... Enfin, Catherine déclara que la reine douairière était libre de quitter le royaume; mais que Madame Isabelle, fille de France, devait y rester'.

- 62 Darlem, *Elisabeth d'Autriche*, 2:278, 'Et moi, ne suis-je pas ta mère aussi, Isabelle? reprit la reine d'une voix hypocrite. Viens près de moi mon enfant'.
- 63 See Susan Broomhall, 'Ordering Distant Affections: Fostering Love and Loyalty in the Correspondence of Catherine de Medici to the Spanish Court, 1568–72', in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder*, 67–88 (Ashford: Ashgate, 2015).
- 64 Mémoire et instruction de ce que le Seigneur de Montmorin, premier escuyer de la royne, aura a faire allant de la part du roy et de la royne sa mère trouver l'empereur, l'impératrix sa mère et la royne Elisabeth, Douarière de France, pour se condouloir avec eulx, de la part de leurs majestez, sur le trepas de feue Madame Marie-Elisabeth de France, leur petite-fille et niepce, 1 June 1578, in M. Le Comte Baguenault de Puchesse, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, Volume 6: 1578–1579 (Paris, 1897), 386: 'de la part de la Roynie qui a receu aultant d'ennuy de la mort de la feue madicte dame et en porte pareil regret que si c'estoit sa propre fille'.
- 65 See Fanny Cosandey, 'Puissance maternelle et pouvoir politique: la régence des reines meres', *Clio: Histoires, femmes et société* 21 (2005): 69–90; Fanny Cosandey, *La reine de France: symbole et pouvoir, XVe et XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000); on Catherine's use of emotions and her strong bond with her daughters, see Susan Broomhall, "'My Daughter, My Dear": The Correspondence of Catherine de Medici and Elisabeth de Valois', *Women's History Review* 24:4 (2015): 548–569.
- 66 Brantôme, *Vie des dames illustres*, 310, 'depuis que je suis malade, il ne m'a pas veue une fois, non pas seulement envoyé visiter, moy qui suis sa niepce, et fille de son aîné, et qui ne luy fais point de deshonneur'.
- 67 *Oraison funèbre de treshaute et vertueuse princesse Marie Isabeau de France*, 32: 'que Marie Isabeau / Obtienne quelque temps plus beau / Sur sa nation, désolée'.
- 68 *Le partement de France de tres-illustre et tresvertueuse Princesse Elisabet d'Autriche*, 7–10: 'le peuple pleura et gemit amerement ... sa pieté nous est pour exemplaire a recourir vers Dieu en tout affaire et sa douceur, a cherir a chacun'.
- 69 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 349: 'elle offrit jusqu'à sa mort un modèle de toutes les vertus'.
- 70 Du Bern de Boislandry, *Histoire des reines*, 350.
- 71 Philip II of Spain asked for her hand in 1580, following the death of her older sister Anna of Austria, who had been queen of Spain since 1570.
- 72 Bertière, *Les reines de France*, 226.
- 73 Bertière, *Les reines de France*, 226, 'Elle rejoignit dans l'histoire la cohorte des reines incomparables dont la bonté, la douceur, l'effacement font tout le mérite ... à modeler l'image idéale de la reine, telle que l'inconscient collectif n'a cessé de la rêver: une reine qui surtout ne se mêle pas de politique'.

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9

CATHERINE OF BRAGANZA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HER CATHOLIC HOUSEHOLD

Eilish Gregory

Queen Catherine of Braganza is generally forgotten in the history books of early modern British history. Usually consigned to fleeting references among contemporaries and historians, she has faded into the background due to her 'failure' as a queen consort to provide a legitimate heir for King Charles II. No modern biography has been written to place more attention on Catherine and assess her role as queen consort in Restoration England, yet it was noted by a contemporary that 'in the end she was pretty successful' as queen.¹ Lillias Campbell Davidson's biography of Catherine of Braganza, written in 1908, remains the principal English text on the life and history of Catherine. This text charts the reception she faced from the public as a childless foreign Catholic queen, as well as her return to Portugal in the last years of her life in dignity as a widowed queen.² Other biographies, written by Janet MacKay, Hebe Elzna, and Manuel Andrade e Sousa, have characterized Catherine as an isolated figure who was often shunned by the court, an adoring wife despite her husband's infidelities, a pious woman who was a devout Roman Catholic, and a queen who was proud of her Portuguese lineage.³

This chapter focuses on Catherine's relationship with her English Catholic household throughout her time as queen consort, from 1662 until Charles II's death in February 1685. Few manuscripts survive that were written by Catherine herself, but looking at her household provides us with a window into Catherine's political agency through the protection she offered to her Catholic servants and supporters at the height of anti-Catholic tension between 1673 and 1681. One of Catherine's ladies-of-the-bedchamber, Barbara Howard, the countess of Suffolk, recorded the movements of the queen and her household from 1663 until the countess's death in 1681 by documenting the disbursements of money from Catherine's Privy Purse to the servants of those she visited and to people from whom she received gifts. The Privy Purse accounts provide a wealth of information that reveal the extent of Catherine's agency and patronage throughout the

1660s and 1670s. The countess of Suffolk documented whom Catherine visited on a regular basis, and these records provide an insight into the queen's behaviour towards those who were her favourites. The accounts also reveal who sent her gifts in an attempt to gain patronage, and also which servants acted as agents by carrying out a number of duties on her behalf. At the Restoration, English Catholics were barred from public office due to their refusal to swear the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy. Nevertheless, they gained prestigious roles in the queen's household throughout the Restoration because Catherine was permitted to practise her faith in accordance with the terms of her marriage treaty, which gave English Catholics opportunities to thrive culturally and politically.

These under-exploited accounts are key to exposing the short-term and long-term agency of the queen as they show which Catholic figures were favoured by Catherine, which English Catholic servants continued in her service even at times of political and religious tension, and, most importantly, whom she trusted within her household to carry out duties on her behalf. Catherine's disinterest in creating political factions is perhaps in part responsible for the neglect she has suffered in modern historiography. Unlike other Stuart queens, such as Henrietta Maria, who was involved in many political factions at her husband King Charles I's court in the 1630s, Catherine seems to have been keen to stay out of the political machinations of the court.⁴ In the last twenty years, studies have endeavoured to bring her to the forefront of early modern historiography by focusing on her political power, religious piety, and cultural patronage of Italian art and music within the Stuart court, which helped to fashion her public reputation as a devout Catholic queen who wanted to avoid political scandal.⁵ Recently, Adam Morton has argued that because politicians attempted to use queen consorts as political 'catalysts', Catherine became the focus of conspiracy in the Popish Plot of 1678 due to the actions of Titus Oates and William Bedloe.⁶ By assessing her relationship with her English Catholic household, this study reveals how her household evolved during her tenure as queen consort, especially after the 1673 Test Act placed restrictions on who could serve her. It will examine how she dealt with Parliament's attempts to undermine her authority to choose members of her household. And, crucially, it will demonstrate that after the loss of almost all of her Portuguese servants Catherine gradually formed a close relationship with her English household, and heavily relied on its members to exercise her political patronage.

A foreign queen

When Catherine of Braganza arrived in England in May 1662 to marry Charles II, she was greeted by her brother-in-law James, duke of York, at Portsmouth. Catherine was surrounded by her large entourage of Portuguese servants and priests, as well as a few English servants who had gone ahead to Portugal to prepare for her arrival in England. Catherine could barely speak English and she was dependent on her Portuguese servants, who were also her religious kin, her natural allies, and her family.⁷ Shortly after her arrival, Charles presented Catherine with a

list of people and suggested she should appoint to her household by 'pricking' the names of those whom she wished to be in her English 'family'. At the top of the list was Barbara Palmer, Lady Castlemaine, Charles's mistress. According to Samuel Pepys, Catherine angered her new husband when she erased Castlemaine's name from the list.⁸ The situation quickly worsened when Catherine publicly showed her disdain towards Castlemaine at court in July; during their first meeting, Catherine suffered a severe nosebleed and a fainting fit, and Charles humiliated his wife by accusing her of deliberately making a scene.⁹

Catherine was not only forced to submit to her husband's will by accepting her chief rival into her household; Charles also quickly went about dismantling her powerful, and protective, entourage. In August, he sent all but one of Catherine's Portuguese servants back to their home country, with only Mary Drago de Portugal, the countess of Penalva, allowed to remain on account of her age. The expulsions left Catherine isolated, without allies or friends in a foreign country.¹⁰ Charles's decision to expel the servants was indisputably motivated by the fact that they had encouraged Catherine to resist the appointment of Castlemaine to her household, as they viewed this as an insult to her status as a Portuguese princess.¹¹ Catherine was left with a household of English servants and, crucially, Castlemaine was one of them, as she became one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting.¹² Charles had complete control over who served the queen in her household, and notwithstanding her initial anger at the appointment of Castlemaine, Catherine appeared to accept the rest of her new servants with little fuss, undoubtedly because she did not wish to enrage the king again.¹³ She was now isolated and surrounded by foreign ladies – Protestants as well as Catholics – for whom she felt no affection or attachment.

Initially, in the early years of her queenship, Catherine received few visits to her court. Indeed, her own household preferred to attend to Castlemaine, as she had the power to elevate or ruin courtiers; many of Catherine's servants would therefore remain behind to flatter Castlemaine after their mistress had retired to her apartments.¹⁴ Following the Catholic dowager queen Henrietta Maria's return to England in the summer of 1662, she invited Catherine to be by her side at formal gatherings, including one at Somerset House in September of that year. Such events were hosted by the dowager queen, not by Catherine, although the latter did start to establish her own social circle in Whitehall. Initially, these were solemn affairs that few people attended.¹⁵ In February 1663, Pepys remarked that Henrietta Maria's court was 'now the greatest of all', while Catherine had little to no company in hers, which the diarist admitted he was sorry to see.¹⁶ Her predicament was not helped by her failure to conceive a child in the early months of her marriage, which hindered her power and influence at court. However, a severe illness throughout October 1663 saw Charles return to Catherine's side, and he was reported to have been genuinely upset when it seemed she was about to die, although she began to recover the following month.¹⁷

In the mid-1660s, Catherine's situation started to improve as she grew more familiar with the English language and English customs, which allowed her to

become a more relaxed figure.¹⁸ After Henrietta Maria returned permanently to France in 1665, shortly after the outbreak of the Great Plague, Catherine's court became a popular venue where courtiers, visitors, and the royal family could meet.¹⁹ Her confidence grew and was able to allow English Catholicism to thrive within her household, a trend that would continue throughout her queenship. The queen's royal household gave Catholics opportunities to hold positions of influence that were otherwise denied to them because of their religion. Among her English Catholic attendants were members of the Scrope, Throckmorton, and Roper families, all of whom gained important roles, such as ladies-of-the-bedchamber, through Catherine's patronage.²⁰ Moreover, Philip Howard was appointed the queen's high almoner in January 1666, a high-ranking post for a member of one of England's most prominent Catholic families.²¹

Catherine's court also became a social hub for courtiers from both royal households. While she had little political influence, politicians and influential courtiers still made their way to her bedchamber as this was where courtiers of both sexes could socialize and play cards with the queen. Crucially, it was also where the king would often be found when he was not with one of his paramours.²² Her bedchamber and court were public spaces with English servants, whereas her chapel was private and served by Portuguese attendants, but it was also a place where English Catholics could worship.²³ In some respects, Catherine's household reflected the king's. Anna Keay has shown that the queen engaged with the ceremonial aspects of court alongside Charles, such as receiving diplomats, dining in public, and participating in processions, although, as a Catholic, she was unable to participate in ceremonies that involved religious worship in accordance with the Church of England. Her 'evening assemblies' were initially similar to Henrietta Maria's in that they were held in the presence chamber when she was in Whitehall. However, within a few years, Catherine moved these sessions to the withdrawing room, which made the meetings more intimate.²⁴

Catherine became more sociable as she adapted to English customs and her mastery of the language improved, and the elites who sought influence at court increasingly coveted her patronage. Her Privy Purse accounts reveal which members of the elite Catherine regularly visited during her queenship, whom she rarely saw, and which Catholic servants she used as her intermediaries. For instance, the disbursements of servants who were paid or tipped on the queen's behalf show that Catherine regularly visited Elisabeth Bennet, Lady Arlington, whose husband Henry Bennet was the senior secretary of state and head of a court faction that rivalled one headed by George Villiers, duke of Buckingham.²⁵ Lord Arlington was suspected of holding Catholic sympathies, and as Pepys noted in his diary in February 1663: 'all the Court is almost changed to the worse since his coming in, they being afear'd of him'.²⁶ A few months later, the diarist recorded that when George Digby, earl of Bristol, attempted to impeach Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, in the House of Lords for high treason, Bristol declared that the Protestant secretary Sir Edward Nicholas had been sidelined in favour of the 'papist, Sir H. Bennet', which Pepys observed was rather strange given that Bristol himself was a

Catholic.²⁷ Clarendon and Gilbert Burnet also commented on Lord Arlington's manoeuvres within the Catholic faction at court, which they believed helped his rise to power.²⁸ Between May 1668 and August 1672, Catherine visited Lady Arlington fifteen times, and she occasionally received gifts from the Arlington household, including food and an unspecified bird; the lady's footmen and chairmen also transported the queen around London and Somerset House. Mary Villiers, duchess of Buckingham, on the other hand, received only four visits between July 1670 and August 1674, although in September 1669 her servants waited on the queen when she decided to travel to Lady Arlington's house. Catherine also visited Bristol eight times between July 1670 and July 1674.²⁹ This shows that the queen was starting to build a patronage network that publicly displayed her preference for some courtiers over others.

In October 1669, a month after Henrietta Maria's death in France, Catherine took possession of Somerset House. Under the terms of her marriage settlement, she was not allowed to keep two establishments, so she closed her chapel at St James's Palace despite having built a new friary there, and moved herself and her household to Somerset House.³⁰ The building was closely associated with Catholicism. During the 1620s and 1630s, when it was occupied by the young queen Henrietta Maria, it had hosted Catholic dignitaries, and allowed a consortium of Catholic religious orders, such as the Capuchins, to carry out their religious functions, perform Masses, and administer the sacraments.³¹ Henrietta Maria renovated the house and resumed her residence there in 1662 as queen dowager, prior to her return to France in 1665, so it became a centre of cultural and political English Catholic activity. For instance, it housed a printing press on which a network of priests and laymen printed pamphlets that advocated religious toleration, as promised by Charles when he was restored as king.³² Pepys attended Mass there out of curiosity, and he heard Catherine's Catholic musicians play in the chapel in the late 1660s, noting a substantial improvement since he had last attended a concert there.³³

Some of Catherine's Catholic servants had previously served under Henrietta Maria, including the Benedictine monk Serenus Cressy and Sir Kenelm Digby, a member of the controversial Catholic minority faction the Blackloists, who had been on good terms with Oliver Cromwell during the 1650s.³⁴ Digby served Catherine as chancellor while Sir John Arundell became master of game. Her most prominent Catholic ladies included Frances Stewart, the duchess of Richmond, Anne Boteler, the countess of Newport, and Lady Castlemaine (by now the duchess of Cleveland), who had converted,³⁵ supposedly to 'please' the king. Despite the legislative sanctions against those who practised Catholicism, the faith was 'fashionable' within the royal court, which allowed adherents to gain access to new networks of influence. However, Cleveland's conversion had no impact on Catherine's Catholic power base. The former lost her influence over Charles after she publicly ridiculed the queen, not realizing that Charles was eavesdropping, which sparked her gradual fall from grace.³⁶ Cleveland later attempted to curry favour with Catherine by sending her gifts of cream and cheese on four occasions

in July and August 1670, but the queen visited her rival only once, on 12 July that year, which demonstrated that Cleveland was no longer Charles's favourite, and that Catherine's power was increasing.³⁷

It was around this time that Catherine became privy to Charles's private affairs concerning religion. In May 1670, she was one of a handful of people who knew that Charles had signed a secret clause in the Treaty of Dover between England and France, in which he promised King Louis XIV that he would convert to Catholicism in return for a cash payment. Louis would also provide troops to help counteract any disorder and revolt that the conversion might precipitate.³⁸ Although Charles did not go through with the conversion in 1670, only four other people in England knew about the treaty: Thomas Clifford, Lord Arlington, Henry Arundell, Lord Arundell of Wardour, and Catherine's Irish secretary Sir Richard Bellings.³⁹ This involvement represented a shift in the way Catherine's English Catholic household participated in delicate political and religious matters. Additionally this epitomized the forbearance the queen displayed in the face of anti-Catholic sentiment and legislation over the following decade. In these new circumstances, she was able to offer protection to her household at a time of political turmoil.

Anti-Catholic sentiment in English culture and politics

Throughout her tenure as queen, Catherine's religion and connections became increasingly problematic. From the mid-1660s onwards, there was growing anti-Catholic feeling towards the open practice of Catholicism within the royal households, and especially Catherine's. Rumours were widespread. In January 1665, John Hoyle of Keighley in Yorkshire alleged that a certain Anthony Garforth had told him that the king had declared himself a Roman Catholic and attended Mass with the queen.⁴⁰ Around the same time, the priest Thomas Weedon reported to Thomas Russell, 'London ringeth again with the fame, sanctity and miracles ... of an Irish priest now resident in London by the Queen's authority'. He claimed that the priest could heal the sick, cure the lame, and restore sight to the blind, noting that 'Protestants and other sectaries are amazed, though not convinced, by evident testimonies, not of words but of deeds'.⁴¹

Such fears were exacerbated after the Great Fire of London in September 1666. The fire was blamed on Catholic plotters, and Robert Hubert, a French Catholic, was hanged for his part in the alleged conspiracy.⁴² The Privy Council received reports from around the country that Catholics were arming themselves and preparing to rise up and overthrow Protestantism. A cache of some three hundred weapons was supposedly discovered when the house of John Digby – son of Catherine's recently deceased servant Sir Kenelm Digby – was searched.⁴³ In response to these rumours, Charles removed Catholic guards who refused to swear the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy from his household, although he ensured that they received compensation.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Parliament attempted to counteract the alleged spread of English Catholicism by targeting Catherine's household.

In September 1667, the Privy Council requested the lord keeper and the secretaries of state to prepare an order to suppress 'the assembling of Roman Catholiques' at Somerset House, St James's Palace, and the residences of Catholic ambassadors.⁴⁵

Charles was increasingly at odds with Parliament in the early 1670s, which had an effect on Catholics throughout the country and particularly within Catherine's household. In 1672, Charles issued his second Declaration of Indulgence, which permitted Catholics to practise their religion in private and allowed Protestant dissenters to worship in public. It was intended to be 'Indulgent to truly Tender Consciences',⁴⁶ but it failed, and in response Parliament tabled a bill that would suppress popery and limit Catholics' access to the upper echelons of society. Charles prorogued Parliament until the new year, but also ordered the lord chamberlain and the lord steward to remove any known or suspected Catholic courtiers from his presence in a bid to stem the tide anti-Catholic sentiment.⁴⁷ In March 1673, he consented to Parliament passing the Test Act, which enforced the penal laws and barred Catholics from sitting in the House of Lords unless they swore the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and took communion in accordance with the Church of England. This not only removed a number of high-profile peers, including Lord Thomas Clifford, but led to increased suspicion that Charles's legitimate heir, his brother James, had converted to Catholicism, as the bill exempted him any obligation to swear the oaths.⁴⁸

The Test Act affected not only those in public office but the royal households. Parliament turned its attention to removing English Catholics from Catherine's household by demanding that all royal servants must also swear the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, denounce the pope and transubstantiation, promise to preserve Protestantism, and pledge allegiance to the king. This was an obvious assault on Catherine's power base and her position as queen consort. Thereafter, Parliament continued with its drive to suppress recusancy in the royal courts by proposing further bills to limit Catholics' ability to hold positions of power within the queen's household. In February 1674, both Houses of Parliament resolved that Catherine could have Catholic servants in her household only if they were Portuguese, as agreed in the terms of her marriage treaty. They also stipulated that her English Catholic servants should be removed from their posts, and that all remaining English royal servants must swear oaths of loyalty by 4 May.⁴⁹ Furthermore, in May of the following year, in a move that was clearly directed at James's Catholic wife, Mary of Modena, Parliament attempted to prevent Catholic servants from serving future queen consorts.⁵⁰ This was the beginning of Parliament's attacks on Catherine's household and their efforts to dictate who could serve queens in the future, which in turn precipitated counter-attacks from the queen to protect her servants.

Catherine's household and the threat of recusancy

Queen Catherine's relationship with her English Catholic servants changed significantly during the 1670s in response to the growing anti-Catholic rhetoric

within Parliament and among the general public. Yet, despite the reinforcement of the recusancy laws and the restrictions that were placed on Catherine's household, she continued to shelter her English Catholic servants from prosecution for religious nonconformity. Senior members of her staff were granted apartments within Somerset House itself, while Somerset Yard accommodated her junior officers, including surgeons.⁵¹ This was not to say, however, that Catherine gave preferential treatment to her English Catholic attendants. Indeed, her English staff were paid considerably less than her Portuguese ladies. For instance, the countess of Suffolk received an annual salary of £300, her secretary and master of bequests, Sir Richard Bellings, had to make do with £100 plus an allowance for stationery, and her maids of honour received only £10 each.⁵² In comparison, the countess of Penalva's pension was £960, although she was granted this as a personal friend because she did not hold an official salaried position in the queen's household. Moreover, Catherine altered the status of some of her household servants during this period, replacing her ladies-of-the-bedchamber in the early 1670s and increasing her number of dressers from eight in 1671 to fifteen by 1684. Her priests were also paid high salaries: Philip Howard, the high almoner, received £1,000; Father Christopher del Rosario £300; and the additional almoners £250 apiece.⁵³ Nevertheless, despite Catherine's intimate relationships with her Portuguese servants and her moves to lower the ranks of some of her English Catholic ladies, gentlemen, and servants, there is no evidence that she cared any less for her English 'family'. The Privy Purse accounts reveal that she paid £21 13s. 4d. in April 1674 for the christening of Lady Anne Knowles's child, while the following February she paid £21 15s. for the christening of Christopher Roper, Lord Teynham's son.⁵⁴

Additionally, Catherine's English Catholic servants acted as her agents, from paying workmen for carrying out building work at Somerset House to organizing her trips to Audley End, Somerset House, and elsewhere. The Privy Purse accounts show that chief among her staff in the 1670s were the Ropers, Sir Richard Bellings, his wife Lady Frances, and her father Sir John Arundell of Lanherne. These servants exercised considerable power on Catherine's behalf and acted as her gatekeepers. For instance, in March 1676, 'Mr Roper' (presumably Francis Roper, who held the post of surveyor of the robes) received a payment and used his influence to grant access to a 'woman that longed to kiss the Queen's hand'.⁵⁵ Similarly, Sir John Arundell paid the maids of honour's wages as well as the rent for Mrs Anne Roper's lodgings in September 1678, while Bellings received two payments for warrants, in June 1677 and November 1678.⁵⁶ Catherine clearly trusted these English Catholic servants with important tasks, and promoted several to roles that would normally be out of their reach on account of their religion. Moreover, she undoubtedly grew close to some of them and was willing to protect them from religious persecution, especially when she viewed it as an affront to her status as queen. She persisted with her political activity during the 1670s by paying regular visits to Lady Arlington and Lady Northumberland, whose gardener was tipped no fewer than twenty-three times between June 1675 and September 1678. In

contrast, she seems to have visited Louise de Keroualle, the duchess of Portsmouth, the king's new principal mistress and a French Catholic, only once, on 2 September 1678. Nevertheless, the duchess's servants delivered gifts, including orange flowers, on two occasions, presumably in the hope of gaining the queen's favour.⁵⁷

In July 1674, the Privy Council ordered that all servants in the inferior offices of the queen's household should be convicted as popish recusants and 'deprived of their service and attendance' upon her.⁵⁸ This was a flagrant affront to Catherine's position as queen consort, but a few months later the king granted several members of her household – including her linen draper Frances Curson, cabinetmaker Gerard Johnson, and financial agent Daniel Archer – *nolle prosequis*. In other words, Charles displayed a willingness to accommodate at least some of Catherine's servants by sparing them from prosecution for their recusancy.⁵⁹ However, in April 1675, Parliament responded by introducing measures that stopped the attorney general from granting further *nolle prosequis*.⁶⁰

Nevertheless, Catherine continued to aid the advancement of English Catholics to positions of power. For example, in November 1674, her solicitor general, Sir James Butler of Lincoln's Inn, joined the King's Council, which suggests that the queen was able to exert considerable influence over Charles.⁶¹ Despite her Catholicism and lack of children, both of which hindered her influence within the court, Catherine was able to assert her authority and political agency as queen consort through her promotion of Catholics, notwithstanding several politicians' attempts to subvert her ability to control appointments to her household. Catherine's reception of people within her circle was discussed in this period. For instance, at Christmas 1676, Lady Grace Chaworth remarked in a letter to her brother John Manners, Lord Roos, that the queen received Anne Talbot, Lady Shrewsbury, at 'the King's absolute command' as he wanted to appease Shrewsbury's son and father, who had repeatedly requested the audience. It was apparently not a convivial meeting, however, as Chaworth added that Shrewsbury received a warmer welcome from 'the Duchess' (presumably of either York or Portsmouth).⁶² Catherine's frostiness was indubitably personal, as Shrewsbury had been the mistress of the duke of Buckingham, and for years the latter had been calling for Charles to divorce his consort so that he could marry a Protestant and produce a legitimate heir. In 1668 he had even suggested that Catherine should be kidnapped and transported to a plantation in America to make it appear as if she had deserted the king. Charles heard of the plan and was so outraged that Buckingham fell out of favour for a time.⁶³

Catherine ensured that she outwardly obeyed the wishes of Parliament concerning her servants, but then frequently circumvented the orders so that her Catholic staff were protected from prosecution. On 4 August 1676, the French secretary to the queen's Lord Chamberlain, Anthony de Mareville, was arrested and placed in Gatehouse Prison after it was alleged that he had plotted to print an English version of the Mass book.⁶⁴ Yet, days later, after a search of Somerset House for copies of popish and unlicensed books, de Mareville was released, having 'with all humble submission acknowledged his error' in his attempts to print the

Mass book. He also provided a £500 bond of surety to attend the king in council whenever summoned.⁶⁵ Furthermore, that October, the Privy Council were informed that 'bold and open repair' had been made by members of the public to the queen's chapel in Somerset House and at ambassadors' houses to hear Mass, and that Irish, English, and Scottish priests had performed the rite in these places, contrary to the laws of the kingdom. The king and the Privy Council forbade members of the public from entering Somerset House, the ambassadors' houses, or the chapels, but declared that the queen's domestic servants could attend Somerset House's chapel, as they were exempted from the ban.⁶⁶ Catherine attempted to prevent further meddling in her household affairs when Charles asked her to remove the loyal Protestant servant Ralph Montagu from her service in July 1678. Sir Robert Southwell claimed that Catherine replied that Montagu had not caused her any offence, so it would be hard for her to punish him, but she reluctantly agreed that 'if he were criminal to His Majesty he had full power to do what he thought fit'. The presumption was that Montagu then lost his position.⁶⁷

The following month, the Popish Plot transformed Catherine's Catholic household. In August 1678, the libeller Titus Oates informed the king that there was a Catholic plot to assassinate him so his brother James could accede to the throne and slaughter 100,000 London Protestants if they 'had Courage enough'; the following month, he repeated the accusation in front of a magistrate.⁶⁸ The alleged plot generated national hysteria when the body of the magistrate, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, was found in a ditch on Primrose Hill a few weeks later. He had been strangled and run through with his own sword. A forensic examination of the body and the ditch confirmed that he had died elsewhere.⁶⁹ Although both the coroner and the jury initially suspected that Godfrey might have committed suicide, as there were claims that he had expressed suicidal thoughts and seemed melancholic in the weeks leading up to his death, witness testimonies caused the jury to return a verdict of murder.⁷⁰ Oates's original testimony of a Catholic plot prompted arrests. Under torture, Miles Prance, formerly one of Catherine's silversmiths, alleged that Godfrey had been kidnapped by Jesuits, taken to Somerset House, and murdered before Prance himself and others moved the body to Primrose Hill a few days later.⁷¹

Seven years later, after the accession of James II, Oates was found guilty of perjury, imprisoned, pilloried, and publicly whipped at Aldgate, Newgate, and Tyburn, but in 1678 his claims had a devastating impact on England's political and religious establishment.⁷² In part, this was due to the fact that Oates and his fellow libeller William Bedloe accused the queen herself of complicity in the plot to kill her husband. On 13 November 1678, after Bedloe had claimed (and Prance had corroborated) that Godfrey's murder took place at Somerset House, Charles questioned Oates in private about the queen's connections to the Jesuits. A few days later, in another private audience with the king, Oates reported two pieces of evidence that he had supposedly acquired in July. First, he insisted that he had seen a letter written by Catherine's surgeon Sir George Wakeman to the Jesuit Richard Thimbleby in which Wakeman confirmed that the queen would assist in the

scheme to poison Charles. Then he claimed that he had overheard a woman during a visit to Somerset House, presumably the queen, saying 'that she would not take these affronts any longer that had been done unto her, but would revenge the violation of her bed'.⁷³

On 4 November 1678, Parliament ordered the queen's Lord Chamberlain, Thomas Butler, Lord Ossory, to compile a list of her 'papist' servants. A similar list was ordered for the household of Mary of Modena, the duchess of York.⁷⁴ William Stanhope and Charles Rogers completed the queen's list the following month.⁷⁵ They noted that several prominent ladies were Catholic, including Frances, Lady Bellings, Catherine's maids of honour Frances Sheldon, Joan Widdrington, Anne Roper, Mary Crane, and Lady Mary Tuke. A number of the ladies also had their own Catholic servants.⁷⁶ However, Stanhope assured Ossory that a search of Somerset House, the stables, and the coach house had revealed that only seven male and nine female resident staff were Catholic, as most of Catherine's servants had already left.⁷⁷

Although politicians were sceptical that the queen was personally involved in the Popish Plot, Oates's and Bedloe's accusations shone an unwelcome spotlight on Catherine's Catholic household. In early November 1678, Sir Robert Southwell remarked to the duke of Ormond that the queen's friends were 'affrighted' by the situation and concerned that she might become embroiled in 'any extremity' that resulted from the scandal.⁷⁸ Catherine herself was reportedly hysterical when some of her servants, in particular Wakeman, were accused of complicity in the plot, weeping before Charles and begging him to protect her staff. Once again, this demonstrated the deep affection she felt for her English 'family'.⁷⁹

On 14 November 1678, Charles attempted to relieve the pressure on Catherine by acceding to the House of Commons' request that the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy must be sworn by all servants in the royal households, aside from Catherine's Portuguese staff. However, he suggested that Catherine's menial servants should also be exempted from the oaths because there were so many of them. Moreover, he pointed out that the recent House of Lords bill on banishing papists from court had not included menial servants.⁸⁰ In the Commons debate, Joseph Williamson argued that the subject of Catholic servants in Catherine's household should be dropped because 'the King's nature is so good, that you may imagine it will go near with him to deny this House any thing, and to put this hardship on the Queen'. Secretary Henry Coventry added that two-thirds of the queen's servants were now Protestant and she had already endured countless expulsions from her household. He asked his fellow politicians: 'Let every man lay upon his heart; could he bear this in his own Family?'⁸¹ Nevertheless, the next day, the House of Commons informed the king that they had rejected his request. The argument was that making all royal servants take the oaths would quieten the minds of his loyal Protestant subjects and dispel concerns within the kingdom that the laws and statutes against recusancy were not being enforced. It was already 'too great [a] Countenance to the dangerous Factions, who are already come to that Height' as a consequence of the political crisis.⁸²

Hence, from November 1678, most of Catherine's English Catholic servants started to leave her household. After much debate within both Houses of Parliament, it was finally agreed that she would be allowed to retain no more than nine female Catholic servants.⁸³ However, the situation deteriorated on 28 November when Titus Oates publicly accused the queen of conspiring to kill the king when he was questioned by the House of Commons. It was suggested in the Commons that the queen should be expelled from Somerset House, and all other Catholics ejected from court, in order to protect the king. Moreover, Sir John Trevor called for a vote on removing the queen, 'her family', and all known and suspected papists from Whitehall.⁸⁴ This triggered an exodus of Catherine's Catholic servants, who fled abroad. For instance, on 29 November, her master of horse, Sir John Arundell, and her secretary, Sir Richard Bellings, were granted passes to leave the country with three servants each and swiftly departed. Her surgeon David Power, along with numerous pages, grooms, dressers, equerries, and under-servants, soon followed.⁸⁵

The Popish Plot created countless difficulties for Catherine and her Catholic household because of the public accusations that they plotted to kill the king, promote popery, and suppress Protestantism. However, those who cared for Catherine remained convinced that she was innocent of Oates's claims. In early December 1678, the duke of Ormond urged Lord Ossory to show his diligent attendance to the queen, and instructed him not to let fear or compliance induce him to abandon his conviction that she was innocent. In another letter, Ormond wrote that he was persuaded of Catherine's 'virtue, honour, and innocence' and requested constant updates on her condition.⁸⁶ A few months later, suspicions started to grow about the veracity of Oates's and Bedloe's testimonies. In July 1679, a jury acquitted Sir George Wakeman of plotting to kill the king; Richard Jones, first earl of Ranelagh, informed Viscount Conway that the queen was delighted by the verdict.⁸⁷ Catherine's authority as queen consort had been badly shaken by Oates and Bedloe, but she did not let their accusations affect her patronage or her power. She continued to pay social visits to Lady Arlington and Lady Northumberland, and she still received gifts from those seeking her patronage, such as Lady Bristol and Lady Clarendon, in 1679.⁸⁸

The crisis came to an abrupt end in 1681 when Charles used his royal prerogative to dissolve the Oxford Parliament after the politicians had attempted to force him to remove his brother from the line of succession and replace him with James's Protestant daughter Mary, the princess of Orange.⁸⁹ The final years of his reign were more authoritarian and Anglican in nature, in order to preserve his authority and prestige.⁹⁰ The early 1680s also witnessed changes to Catherine's patronage as queen. In February 1682, Frances Stewart, the dowager duchess of Richmond and Lennox, was granted a *nolle prosequi* following an appearance the previous December at the Old Bailey on a charge of recusancy.⁹¹ Councillors confirmed that Catherine's nominated female Catholic servants were exempt from the act concerning 'our Dearest Consort the Queen' and her household, as long as they did not number more than nine. The duchess, who served as Catherine's

lady-of-the-bedchamber-in-ordinary, was one of the nine. Therefore, she should not only 'have and enjoy the benefit of the said Proviso', but was henceforth exempted from any suits concerning recusancy as long as she continued in the service and attendance of the queen.⁹² This was a clear sign that Catherine's Catholic servants would not be punished for their religious beliefs, and that she still had the power and authority to protect them from prosecution.

The intimate relationships that Catherine forged with some of her servants proved well able to survive these political crises. In 1679, while in exile in France, Sir John Arundell received word that the queen was in good humour, which the author hoped would ease the 'greate Mallencholly' that was having a detrimental impact on his health.⁹³ Similarly, Sir John's daughter Ann remarked in a letter to her father in December 1680 that the queen 'was much concerned' because she had been forced to dismiss an unnamed gentleman with 'great regret'.⁹⁴ The servant was undoubtedly a Catholic, and had to be removed in accordance with the strict limitations that Parliament had imposed on Catherine's household, yet this report indicates that the queen was very fond of her English, as well as her Portuguese, staff.

Many English Catholics residing in London continued to attend the ambassadorial chapels in this period, to such an extent that some of them overflowed with people during Mass. Indeed, two to three hundred worshippers regularly attended the queen's chapel even in 1680, when anti-Catholic sentiment was at its height. Although the Privy Council attempted to fine and even imprison English Catholics who attended these services, in the event few people were prosecuted for fear of reprisals against England's embassies abroad.⁹⁵

Catholicism remained a highly controversial and contentious topic in the early 1680s, yet, by the time of Charles's death in 1685, Catherine's English Catholic household was secure. In part, this was due to the king's determination to protect his wife's household from outside interference, in addition to the queen's own close relationships with her English servants.

Conclusion

Catherine of Braganza's twenty-three years as England's queen consort provided an avenue for English Catholics to participate in high society. Her household was a hub where Catholicism could thrive, and served as a base for Charles II to conduct his own affairs among his own courtiers.⁹⁶ Her Privy Purse accounts show the various Catholic networks that Catherine cultivated and the people who were her favourites, providing an insight into the personal workings of her queenship. Even during times of heightened anti-Catholicism in the 1670s, Catherine's behaviour as a devout Catholic queen encouraged those who wished to practise their religion. While she abided by Parliament's restrictions on her Catholic household and affairs at Somerset House, she resisted all challenges to her authority as queen consort and continued to exercise political agency and patronage throughout the 1670s.

After her Portuguese servants were expelled following her arrival in England, Catherine gradually warmed to her English Catholic servants. In the 1670s, her success in protecting these servants from prosecution for recusancy, political scandal, and the Popish Plot shows that she enjoyed a degree of political power. Although she paid her Portuguese servants higher salaries, she was clearly upset when English Catholic servants were forced to leave her household, and she remained close to those who remained faithful to her. In 1692, when Catherine returned to Portugal to live out the rest of her days, she left England with great honour and dignity. Moreover, she was accompanied by a number of Catholic servants, including Sir Richard Bellings, who remained a loyal attendant until her death in 1705.⁹⁷

Catherine of Braganza may have been a forgotten queen across the centuries, but her personal endurance, political agency, and constancy to her servants merit appreciation and further study.

Notes

- 1 Anthony Hamilton, *Memoirs of the Court of Grammont*, translated by Horace Walpole (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1911), 124.
- 2 Lillias Campbell Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança: Infanta of Portugal and Queen-Consort of England* (London: John Murray, 1908).
- 3 Janet MacKay, *Catherine of Braganza* (London: John Long Ltd, 1937); Hebe Elzna, *Catherine of Braganza: Charles II's Queen* (London: Robert Hale Ltd, 1967); Manuel Andrade e Sousa, *Catherine of Braganza: Princess of Portugal, Wife to Charles II* (Lisbon: Inapa, 1994).
- 4 See, for example, Caroline Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983); and Michael C. Questier (ed.), *Newsletters from the Caroline Court, 1631–1638: Catholicism and the Politics of the Personal Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- 5 Edward Corp, 'Catherine of Braganza and Cultural Politics', in Clarissa Campbell Orr (ed.), *Queenship in Britain, 1660–1837: Royal Patronage, Court, Culture, and Dynastic Politics*, 53–73 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); Lorraine Madway, 'Rites of Deliverance and Disenchantment: The Marriage Celebrations for Charles II and Catherine of Braganza, 1661–62', *Seventeenth Century Journal* 27:1 (2012): 79–103; Peter Leech, 'English Catholic Musicians in the Chapel Royal of Catherine of Braganza', *Catholic Ancestor* 8:5 (2000): 189–192; David Johnson, 'The Life and Times of Catherine of Braganza', *British Historical Society of Portugal Annual Report* 40 (2013): 15–34; Anna-Marie Linnell, 'Greeting the Stuart Queens Consort: Cultural Exchange and the Nuptial Texts for Henrietta Maria of France and Catherine of Braganza, Queens of Britain', in Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Adam Morton (eds), *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500–1800*, 153–171 (London: Routledge, 2017).
- 6 Adam Morton, 'Sanctity and Suspicion: Catholicism, Conspiracy and the Representation of Henrietta Maria of France and Catherine of Braganza, Queens of Britain', in Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Adam Morton (eds), *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500–1800*, 172–201 (London: Routledge, 2017), at 184–185.
- 7 John Miller, *Charles II* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991), 97–98.
- 8 Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys: A New and Complete Transcription*, edited by Robert Latham and William Matthews (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd, 1970–1983), 3:147; Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança*, 120–121.
- 9 Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança*, 125–126.

- 10 Ronald Hutton, *Charles the Second: King of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 187–188; Elsna, *Catherine of Braganza*, 32–33.
- 11 Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança*, 124.
- 12 Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança*, 164; Corp, ‘Catherine’, 57.
- 13 Miller, *Charles II*, 97–98.
- 14 Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança*, 152–153.
- 15 Anna Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch: Charles II and the Ceremonies of Power* (London: Continuum, 2008), 126.
- 16 Pepys, *Diary*, 4:48–49.
- 17 Pepys, *Diary*, 4:337–358.
- 18 Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch*, 126.
- 19 Ibid., ; MacKay, *Catherine of Braganza*, 150–151.
- 20 Gabriel Glickman, *The English Catholic Community 1688–1745: Politics, Culture and Ideology* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009), 31.
- 21 *Historical Manuscripts Commission, Calendar of the Stuart Papers Belonging to His Majesty the King Preserved at Windsor Castle* (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1902–1933), 4:2.
- 22 Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch*, 122–136.
- 23 Corp, ‘Catherine’, 59.
- 24 Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch*, 125–127.
- 25 Ronald Hutton, ‘The Making of the Secret Treaty of Dover, 1668–70’, *Historical Journal* 29:2 (1986): 297–318, at 305–306.
- 26 Pepys, *Diary*, 4:48.
- 27 Pepys, *Diary*, 4:222–224.
- 28 Helen Jacobsen, ‘Luxury Consumption, Cultural Politics, and the Career of the Earl of Arlington, 1660–1685’, *Historical Journal* 52:2 (2009): 295–317, at 296.
- 29 Lincolnshire Record Office (hereafter LRC), 1–WORSLEY/7.
- 30 Simon Thurley, *Somerset House: The Palace of England’s Queens 1551–1692* (London: London Topographical Society, 2009), 70.
- 31 Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*, 41, 56–57, 142.
- 32 Gabriel Glickman, *The English Catholic Community*, 31, and ‘Christian Reunion, the Anglo-French Alliance and the English Catholic Imagination, 1660–72’, *English Historical Review* 128:531 (2013): 263–291, at 268.
- 33 Corp, ‘Catherine’, 59–60.
- 34 The Blackloists were a controversial literary, scientific, political, and philosophical association because they sought to exploit opportunities that republican rule offered for religious groups to obtain liberty of conscience. Led by Thomas White, other members included Sir Kenelm Digby, John Austin, John Sergeant, and Henry Holden. In the 1650s, the Blackloists offered to swear conditional allegiance to parliamentary rule in exchange for permission to practise their faith in peace, which caused them to be known as the ‘Papists of the New Model’. For more details, see Stefania Tutino, ‘The Catholic Church and the English Civil War: The Case of Thomas White’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 58:2 (2007): 232–255, at 233, 236–238; Stefania Tutino, *Thomas White and the Blackloists: Between Politics and Theology during the English Civil War* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); R. T. Petersson, *Sir Kenelm Digby, the Ornament of England, 1603–1665* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956); Dorothea Krook, *John Sergeant and His Circle: A Study of Three Seventeenth-century English Aristotelians* (Leiden: Brill, 1993); Simon Johnson, ‘“Papists of the New Model”: The English Mission and the Shadow of Blacklow’, in Nadine Lewycky and Adam Morton (eds), *Getting Along? Religious Identities and Confessional Relations in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of Professor W. J. Sheils*, 213–236 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), at 220; and Jeffrey R. Collins, ‘Thomas Hobbes and the Blackloist Conspiracy of 1649’, *Historical Journal* 45:2 (2002): 305–331.
- 35 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Clarendon MS 78, fols. 250–252: ‘An Establishment of Ordinary Wages, Fees, allowances and pensions [sic] dayly allowed by Us unto Our officers and Servants of Our Chamber and others of Our Household and Stables and to the officers and servants of Our Revenue’.

- 36 MacKay, *Catherine of Braganza*, 154–155.
- 37 LRO, 1-WORSLEY/7.
- 38 Hutton, 'The Making of the Secret Treaty of Dover', 301, and *Charles the Second, King of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 306; John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 113–114.
- 39 John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: 'This Masquerading Age'* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2000), 11–12; John Miller, 'The Potential for "Absolutism" in Later Stuart England', *History* 69 (1984): 187–207, at 202; Glickman, 'Christian Reunion', 263–264, 286.
- 40 J. Raine (ed.), *Depositions from the Castle of York: Relating to Offences Committed in the Northern Counties in the Seventeenth Century* (Durham, 1861), 126.
- 41 Thomas Weedon to Thomas Russell, 1663–1667, in Aileen M. Hodgson and Michael Hodgett (eds), *Little Malvern Letters*, Volume 1: 1482–1737 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 195.
- 42 John Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (London: Heinemann, 1972), 10–12; Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 79.
- 43 The National Archives (hereafter TNA), SP 29/177/67.
- 44 TNA, SP 29/223/27; SP 29/270//22. See also John Miller, 'Catholic Officers in the Later Stuart Army', *English Historical Review* 88 (1973): 35–53.
- 45 TNA, PC 2/59, 6:286v.
- 46 Charles II, King of England, *His Majesties Declaration to All His Loving Subjects, March 15th 1671/2* (London, 1672), 4–8.
- 47 Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch*, 165.
- 48 Kenyon, *The Popish Plot*, 18.
- 49 TNA, SP 29/306/229; SP 29/360/295; *Journal of the House of Lords* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1767–1830; hereafter *Lj*), 12:632–636; *Journal of the House of Commons* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1802; hereafter *Cj*), 9:306–309.
- 50 TNA, SP 29/370/139, 173.
- 51 Thurley, *Somerset House*, 71.
- 52 Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança*, 309–313.
- 53 Corp, 'Catherine', 57–58.
- 54 LRC, 1-WORSLEY/7.
- 55 LRO, 1-WORSLEY/8; Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança*, 309–310.
- 56 LRO, 1-WORSLEY/8.
- 57 LRO, 1-WORSLEY/8.
- 58 TNA, PC 2/64, 11:253.
- 59 TNA, PC 2/64, 11:298, 312, 419; Miller, *Popery and Politics in England 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 25, fn. 83.
- 60 *Cj*, 9:320.
- 61 TNA, SP 44/36/296.
- 62 *Historical Manuscripts Commission, the Manuscripts of His Grace, the Duke of Rutland, K. G. Preserved at Belvoir Castle* (London: Her/His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1888–1905), 2:33–34.
- 63 MacKay, *Catherine of Braganza*, 168, 172.
- 64 TNA, SP 29/384/147; TNA, PC 2/65, 12:333.
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- 69 Kenyon, *The Popish Plot*, 77–78.
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- 74 *LJ*, 13:338.
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- 77 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 118, fol. 171.
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- 80 *CJ*, 9:539–540.
- 81 Anchitell Grey, *Debates of the House of Commons, from the Year 1667 to the Year 1694* (London: T. Becket and P. A. De Hond, 1769), 6:192–209.
- 82 *CJ*, 9:539–40.
- 83 *LJ*, 13:384–5; *CJ*, 9:547–548.
- 84 Grey, *Debates*, 6:285–304.
- 85 TNA, SP 44/51/96; Kenyon, *The Popish Plot*, 105. Sir John Arundell had been Catherine's master of horse since July 1678.
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- 92 *Ibid.*
- 93 The letter was signed 'M. F.' but the author's identity is not known. See Cornwall Record Office (hereafter CRO), AR 25/92/6.
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10

QUEENLY AFTERIMAGES

The visual and historical legacy of Marie Leszczinska

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Myth and myth-making have figured prominently in historical and visual representations of the French monarchy. The portrayal of and rituals around Louis XIV at Versailles and their dissemination via texts, medals, and engravings generated the image of a heroic and god-like king. Peter Burke has described this as myth, which can be understood as ‘a particular story’ that mediates between ‘a heritage of images and specific individuals and events’.² While the Sun King’s reputation was burnished by a team of artists and decorators under the guidance of Charles Le Brun, more notorious myths are associated with France’s later queen, Marie Antoinette, who has been accused of everything from adultery and incest to conspiracy and crimes against the nation. Marie Leszczinska, queen consort to Louis XV and the longest-reigning queen of France, was only rarely figured as a god(dess) and never as a dangerous figure, *à la* Marie Antoinette; she may be the quintessential forgotten queen. However, her portraits did play a role in the construction of royal myths along the lines that Burke describes.

The myth of Marie Leszczinska might better be described as an anti-myth: she has never been regarded as heroic or exceptional. The ‘particular story’ that tends to be repeated about Marie Leszczinska is that she was basically good, but dull and ineffectual. As described by the royal minister turned memoirist René-Louis de Voyer de Paulmy, the marquis d’Argenson, she offered ‘fecundity, piety, sweetness, humaneness, and an overwhelming incapacity for affairs’, a sentiment that has found its way into modern scholarship.³ In describing the portrait of the queen by Jean-Marc Nattier (Figure 10.1), Xavier Salmon has claimed that the artist responded to the queen’s wish ‘to be a woman like any other’.⁴ Jennifer Milam follows this view by stating that the portrait shows Marie Leszczinska as ‘an unassuming private woman with her Bible’.⁵ Rather than endorsing or contesting this view, in this chapter I would like to trace how later adaptations of the queen’s portrait produced the image of Marie Leszczinska as the homely and good but



FIGURE 10.1 Jean-Marc Nattier, *Portrait of Marie Leszczyńska* (1748), oil on canvas; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles.
Photo: Christophe Fouin © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

largely irrelevant queen consort to Louis XV. In particular, this anti-myth, as I have called it, may be traced through the reception, reproduction, and adaptation of Nattier's 1748 portrait of the queen.

This somewhat unpromising context for the study of Marie Leszczinska's visual and historical legacy offers an opportunity to consider how images impact the formulation of historical memory and, in this case, how queens are remembered or forgotten.⁶ Myth, particularly when crafted with the support of images, has the capacity to displace memory and history. The ways that Nattier's portrait was adapted by other artists and in other formats offers an opportunity to consider how the myth about Marie Leszczinska was shaped by this reception. The painting was transformed by these engagements: it began as an instance of self-fashioning, then was used by the monarchy to promote an image of a harmonious royal family before being transformed into a celebratory image that enshrined particular qualities ascribed to the queen by her admirers, and, finally, was utilized by other women as a starting point to craft their own public images, with varying degrees of success.

The original painting did not shape the queen's legacy alone. Its reproduction and consumption in various mediums and formats were essential to this process. Crucial to the proliferation of the portrait and its meanings were the miniatures and copies that began to appear soon after the painting was finished and especially after the appearance of the engraved version in 1755. This was a process of transmediation which conveyed the formal character of the portrait but also changed it, allowing it to become open to various interpretations. As Benjamin Schmidt explains, 'transmediation implies the movement of forms of representation from medium to medium ... it also implies, on a more analytic level, the transformation that invariably takes place by dint of these movements themselves and the media traversed'.⁷ This chapter asks what kinds of knowledge about Marie Leszczinska were generated and what transformations of that knowledge occurred as her representation moved across media and through time. These sorts of transformations do not destroy or preclude these other meanings.⁸ Rather, transformation is a generative act, one that produces new meanings while also having an impact on the way the original image is understood. In addressing these issues, I argue that gender and genre play significant roles in this process.

Key to this story is the consolidation of memory around a single image which was transformed via its reproduction in various mediums, formats, and scales. The meanings of Marie Leszczinska's portrait shifted with these changes as well as with changes in ideas about gender, monarchy or the state, and religion. It is impossible to identify a simple, singular meaning of the image; rather, the various adaptations of the portrait expand rather than limit meaning as the image was replicated in novel contexts and formats. Despite this, there are broadly recognizable themes that resonate with Marie Leszczinska's portrait, including piety, family (encompassing dynasty and maternity), maturity, and self-fashioning. These are not mutually exclusive, but they may be identified distinctly in certain images. Indeed, what this suggests is that individuals saw the significance of the portrait through a personal lens and sought to harness the most germane meanings for themselves.

Marie Leszczinska as queen of France

Marie Leszczinska remains little known, though certain facts are regularly rehearsed when she is invoked.⁹ She was an unlikely queen, rising from obscurity to the throne of the most powerful monarchy in Europe. She was born in Wrocław in 1703; her father, Stanislas Leszczinski, was the deposed king of Poland. The French regent, Philippe d'Orléans, granted her family asylum in 1719. Six years later, her surprise marriage to Louis XV made her the queen, a position she held until her death in 1768. Between 1727 and 1738, the queen gave birth to ten children, weathered multiple mistresses, and consistently advocated for a conservative Catholic perspective at court and across France during a time of religious turmoil. The marquis d'Argenson dismissed her as irrelevant, and historians have largely followed his lead. However, Marie Leszczinska was, in fact, embraced by her subjects and even revered by some throughout her forty-three-year reign, after her death, and into the nineteenth century. Her memory was filtered through France's continually changing political circumstances. A key factor in the way she was remembered was her portrait by Jean-Marc Nattier, adapted in a wide variety of media and formats.

While Nattier's image may be the best known, Marie Leszczinska's long tenure as queen generated a considerable body of images during her lifetime as well as afterimages following her death. For instance, painters including Jean-Baptiste Vanloo, Carle Vanloo, and Maurice-Quentin de La Tour and the sculptors Guillaume Coustou and Augustin Pajou crafted many portraits. Between 1744 and 1748, three new portraits of the queen were produced in quick succession and all three were shown in the annual Salon exhibitions in Paris, where thousands of her subjects would have seen them. This made her one of the most visible members of the royal family, along with the king and her son, the dauphin, before 1750. Most of the portraits of the queen tend to be feminized versions of kingly portraits, typically in the mould of Hyacinthe Rigaud's iconic portrait of Louis XIV, painted in 1701. Carle Vanloo's 1747 portrait of the queen at Versailles, shown in the Salon exhibition of that year, is a good example of this type combined with a new emphasis in queenly representation that foregrounded her status as consort to the king, rather than a royal and majestic figure in her own right. The portrait by Nattier offers a dramatic contrast to this type of formal portraiture, which makes it even more remarkable. And it was the final new image of the queen, even though she lived for another twenty years. The painting circulated widely during Marie Leszczinska's lifetime and after her death. It was reproduced in multiple media that were regularly requested, copied, and shared. Indeed, by not continually engaging her self-image, Marie Leszczinska may have ceded the ground in developing her legacy, thus allowing a broader array of meanings to flourish.

Marie Leszczinska commissioned Nattier at a moment of considerable factional conflict within the court. One major point of contention was the rise of the new royal mistress, Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson, Madame de Pompadour.¹⁰ Court politics became quite heated as Pompadour used her influence to place her confidants

and family members into significant positions and other officials were dismissed, likely due to her influence.¹¹ One figure, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, *comte de Maurepas*, secretary for the navy from 1723, aligned himself with the queen's party, known as the *parti dévot*.¹² He was dismissed by the king when he was implicated in the dissemination (and possible authorship) of the *Poissonades*, pamphlets that attacked Pompadour. One unattributed example was a crude pun that played on the mistress's name (Poisson):

If the court is degraded
Why is one surprised?
Is it not from the market
That fish comes?¹³

Similar verses circulated within and beyond the court and aimed to shame the king into dismissing Pompadour, according to d'Argenson.¹⁴ But the attacks failed, and she remained the king's companion until her death in 1764.

In addition to the factional disputes, the queen and Pompadour had some interpersonal conflicts, but the latter remained deferential to the former, and their relationship was not overtly rancorous. Yet, the queen objected to Pompadour's presence within the royal household and her more liberal politics. The queen's portrait may have been an attempt to assert her status to the French public in light of Pompadour's rise to power. The specifics of the commission have not survived, though it is generally accepted that the queen ordered the painting herself.¹⁵ Marie-Catherine Tocqué, Nattier's daughter, described the production of the portrait in her father's biography, writing that the queen sat for the artist (an unusual event in itself)¹⁶ and suggested that he could not have dressed her in such an informal gown 'but for having received the express order ... to paint her in her *habit de ville*'.¹⁷ In other words, the portrait was a collaborative attempt to produce a remarkable new vision of queenship that would be seen by a much wider range of audiences beyond the court.

In the painting, the queen is shown seated, close to the picture plane, and absorbed in thought. Her open book is spread before her, although her eyes are unfocused as she concentrates on an internal vision. The curtain draped over the back of her chair is a traditional cloth of honour, indicating the queen's rank, but also intensifying the sense of physical closeness. The queen has a contemplative air, with her attention drawn inward and her pose relaxed and unselfconscious. Dressed in a fur-trimmed, red velvet *habit de ville*, she looks over her right shoulder, with her left hand tucked into the pages of the book. The text on the painted page is illegible, though the letters 'LE' and a chapter number ('IX') suggest that this is a Gospel book.¹⁸ Later versions (in paint and on paper) render the header more legible (see below).

Louis XV seems to have preferred Carle Vanloo's 1747 portrait of the queen, which featured a heroic bust of the king: he hung it in his apartments, held a reception for its debut, and gave the artist a bonus of 2,000 livres.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Nattier's portrait came to be seen as the defining image of the queen, and it was

subsequently reproduced by the royal copyists in multiple forms. These copies were made in a variety of scales, formats, and media, which offered new ways to read the imagery. Women within and outside the court, and from different parts of Europe, adapted the portrait for themselves.²⁰ While some scholars have suggested that the original image reveals Marie Leszczinska's desire to renounce her regal status and pursue a simpler lifestyle, the ways in which other women engaged with it indicate that modesty was only one of many readings. Moreover, the range of interpretations grew as adaptations started to appear in different media. Engravings and miniatures shrank and often cropped the image, bringing the queen closer to the viewer, enhancing the intimacy, and undermining the social distance engendered by her high rank and indicated by the throne and drapery in the original portrait.

While Nattier's portrait seems to suggest the queen's modesty, due to her choice of informal (but still rich) dress, the abundant layers she wears, and the Bible, she intended this picture to be seen. She immediately commissioned two autograph copies and permitted Nattier to display the painting in the Salon of 1748.²¹ Elsewhere, I have described the significance of the portrait in terms of the context of court conflict and the meanings that Marie Leszczinska herself might have hoped to convey.²² In short, I have argued that, rather than an expression of modesty, the portrait was explicitly constructed to produce the *appearance* of modesty in a public context and in contrast to Pompadour, who seemed decidedly immodest as a woman who exceeded her place in terms of her gender and social rank.

For Nattier, Marie Leszczinska's portrait was an unlikely high point in his career. As an artist, he had made his name painting elite women, including the royal mistresses. For instance, he represented Madame de Châteauroux, Pompadour's predecessor, as Aurora. As a noblewoman, Châteauroux regarded herself as higher born than the queen, which became a point of conflict between them. Her death in 1744 opened the way for Pompadour, whom Nattier portrayed as the goddess Diana. Such portraits elevated his sitters by portraying them in the guise of allegorical figures or goddesses from classical mythology, suggesting their sophistication and knowledge, but they were often presented in revealing attire.²³ For Nattier, the queen was his highest-ranking subject to date.

In contrast to the royal mistresses, Marie Leszczinska did not wish to see herself rendered as a goddess; nor did she want Nattier to paint a new state portrait. Rather, this portrait rejects the recent official formulations of her identity, specifically those that had portrayed her as the king's wife. The portraits by Carle Vanloo (1747) and Maurice-Quentin de La Tour (1746 and 1748) presented the queen as the feminine and submissive adjunct to her husband, an image that seems to have been strategically generated in response to the scandal surrounding Louis's liaison with Pompadour. They actively produced a visibly gendered difference that was central to the construction of Louis XV's masculine royal authority. This image of the queen as loyal wife and first subject gained currency with the crown precisely at the moment when criticism relating to the king's liaison was taking new and virulent forms in the *Poissonades*, which were emerging from the court and

circulating throughout Paris. Nattier's portrait countered this representation by fashioning a self-image that offered a subtextual critique of both the king's infidelity and his lack of religious engagement.

One eighteenth-century version of the queen's portrait, produced before 1760 and attributed to a *copyiste du roi* (Figure 10.2), demonstrates the phenomenon of transformation, in this instance by augmenting Marie Leszczinska's remoteness, rather than heightening the intimacy of the image. The queen is seated and shown full length, with a looming column base supporting a billowing curtain. Her status is amplified by the inclusion of a crown and ermine robes, just beyond her elbow. The scale of the painting is amplified, too: Nattier's original version is approximately 67 inches high (172 × 137.5 cm), whereas the copy is 108 inches (275 × 195 cm). While this seems to have been an unsuccessful picture – there is only one version of it in the collection at Versailles – it points to the way adaptation increases the array of possible meanings and interpretations of the image. We no longer see a good but humble queen; rather, this is a majestic monarch in a palatial setting. In addition to scale and medium, gender and genre contributed to the shaping of the queen's historical legacy.

History, genre, and gender

Portraiture is a genre that is intimately bound up with ideas about history and memory. In *The Art of Painting*, the art theorist Roger de Piles addresses the relationship between painting and history, as well as that between gender and genre.²⁴ He begins his discussion of the origin of painting with the story of the Corinthian maid who is credited with the first portrait by tracing a silhouette on a wall. This is a story of memory; in tracing and then sculpting her beloved's profile, she could record his image before he departed for war. The portrait preserved the soldier's image both for the maid personally and for posterity. Further into his discussion, de Piles contrasts history – which is concerned with chronology and where 'truth is of the essence' – with painting, which is largely preoccupied with 'effect' based on 'the imitation of nature'.²⁵ Painters might increase the value of their work and the pleasure taken in it if they attempt to ascertain the historical correctness of their representation, but, as he says, 'When I would learn history, I would not go to a painter for it; he is an historian merely by accident.'²⁶ However, even if the history shown by the painter is ultimately inaccurate, 'we shall still have the pleasure of viewing a kind of creation that will both divert and move us'.²⁷

Marie Leszczinska's portrait by Nattier and its later uses generate particular forms of historical memory and do so through the lenses of genre and gender, as becomes clear when de Piles turns his attention specifically to portraiture and takes a slightly different tack regarding the relationship between painting and history. According to him, portraits encode the image of significant men for history, so artists should not scrupulously record every defect, although they should avoid flattery:



FIGURE 10.2 Anonymous, *Marie Leszczyńska, reine de France* (1748–1760), oil on canvas; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles.

Photo: Gérard Blot © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

For heroes, and men of rank, or those who are distinguished by their dignity, virtues, or great qualities, we cannot be too exact in the imitation of their visage, whether the parts are beautiful or not ... [T]hese sorts of portraits are authentic signs consecrated to posterity; in which case, everything in a picture is precious that is faithful.²⁸

By contrast, de Piles insists that there is no need to make women's portraits as exacting or truthful, not least because the sitters themselves do not want them to be. He notes that a woman's portrait must offer 'a noble simplicity, and ... modest playfulness; for modesty must be the character of women'.²⁹ Indeed, he asserts that it is advisable to wait to paint them on a 'good day'.³⁰ Men's portraits are meant to confirm their valour for posterity. Women's portraits do not appear to have this function and therefore have different requirements: they should commemorate femininity, expressed as noble simplicity and modesty. While de Piles and later critics attributed a variety of problems to women's vanity,³¹ the underlying concern may have been with the way gender intersected with the construction of historical memory.

Royal women, in particular, presented a challenge to these formulations. Like kings and princes, they lived their lives in public and had to craft images of themselves that both upheld their rank and met gendered social expectations. For queens and other female members of royal families, those expectations were also centred on their identity as women. This was a key tension by the middle of the eighteenth century: which aspect of their identities had precedence? As a queen, Marie Leszczinska's images needed to confirm her royal status and femininity while also suggesting her ability to inspire respect and virtue, in addition to other values.³² These formulations, which de Piles had articulated several decades earlier, were repeated throughout the eighteenth century by later theorists and critics responding to the portraits displayed in the Salons, including those of the queen. Yet, portraits of the queen also needed to reference her rank and, especially, her husband. Nattier's painting resisted these references and served as a significant example of self-fashioning by presenting Marie Leszczinska as an intelligent, sensitive, pious, and regal woman, though not solely – or even primarily – the wife of the king. While not presented in heroic terms, she did not wish to be seen as a 'merely' ordinary woman. Instead, this portrait revises ideas about noble femininity by conforming to gendered ideals of modesty (as articulated by de Piles) but simultaneously allowing the queen to present herself in the public arena. Very quickly, Nattier's painting was adapted and integrated into a wide variety of artworks, moving between media and formats, transforming the meaning, and even, at times, casting the queen within the role that I believe she resisted.

Thinking small

Not long after its public debut, Nattier's portrait of Marie Leszczinska was transformed into miniature paintings, some of which were incorporated into snuffboxes that were used as diplomatic gifts or to reinforce relationships between the royal family and courtiers.³³ There are several known miniatures after Nattier's portrait in public collections.³⁴ One example, which decorates a double snuffbox made by Jean Ducrollay (Figure 10.3), demonstrates how format, size, and setting all contribute to altering perceptions of the image.³⁵ In short, as Michael Yonan has noted, medium matters. He contrasts portrait medals with painted miniatures, both



FIGURE 10.3 Jean Ducrollay, double snuffbox with a portrait of Marie Leszczynska (1749–1750), gold, enamel, vellum, gouache, glass; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Photo: Creative Commons Zero (CC0) license. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/206421>

of which were used as diplomatic gifts: unlike the medal, ‘the hand-painted miniature emphasizes physiognomy and likeness and symbolizes the closeness of the recipient and the monarch’.³⁶ The intimacy that is encoded in Nattier’s original painting is intensified by the miniature format. While miniatures vary in size from a

few inches to almost a foot, they are invariably much smaller objects than life-size oil paintings on canvas, which invites the owners to examine them closely. As Michael Hall notes, 'the act of giving such a small and intimate item ... bound the donor and the recipient in a close and personal relationship'.³⁷ In part, this was due to the size: these objects were scaled to fit within the palm of a hand and were often carried in pockets or worn on the person. In addition, though, when the miniature adorned a snuffbox, the contents were physically inhaled and shared with others.³⁸ Such proximity to both eye and body generated a distinctly intimate relationship.

The Ducrollay snuffbox may feature one of the earliest translations of Marie Leszczinska's portrait from full-scale oil painting into a miniature. The maker was a renowned goldsmith who also produced boxes for the king and Pompadour.³⁹ The marks on this particular example indicate a date of production between 1744 and 1756, a span of years that is contemporaneous with its twelve portraits of the royal family.⁴⁰ The king and queen are depicted inside the double box, on the upper and lower inner lids, respectively. Their children are rendered on the exterior, along with one son-in-law, one daughter-in-law, and grandchildren.

The portrait of Marie Leszczinska is closely based on Nattier's painting, but the format is a horizontally oriented rectangle rather than the original vertical composition. In changing the painting in this way, the setting is largely eliminated, and the spectator is drawn even closer to the queen herself. The artist has cropped her at the waist, cutting off her right hand, but we still see her face with a gentle smile, the broach pinned to her shoulder, and her left hand, stroking the pages of a book. Any possibility of identifying the text has been lost, though one might conjecture that if the recipient were a member of the court, they would have seen or at least known of the original portrait and so would imagine it as a Gospel book. A significant element of this format is that the box itself – specifically its size and function – generates greater closeness that speaks directly to Nattier's painting.

The other notable element is that the queen's portrait is juxtaposed with images of her family, including the king. In Nattier's painting, her role as queen and queen consort is distinctly underplayed. She is presented as a reflective, spiritual or intellectual, and regal woman. On the snuffbox, though, her portrait is accompanied by those of her children and her spouse, firmly placing the queen within a familial context. In this sense, the box represents the royal family *as* a family, not unlike British engravings during the Hanoverian period that recontextualized images of the three queens with portraits of royal children and spouses. The portraits of Caroline of Ansbach, Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz 'were continually and increasingly embedded in narratives of royal bodily reproduction'.⁴¹ These engravings sent a message about the fecundity and stability of the Hanoverian line. Essentially, the double snuffbox articulates a similar message about the Bourbon dynasty by crafting an extended family tree. Moreover, the box may well have been presented as a diplomatic gift; if so, it may contain further subtle messages relating to royal marriages and alliances, perhaps connected to ongoing marriage negotiations.

The miniaturization of Nattier's portrait alters the viewer's relationship with the queen by enhancing the intimacy between the two. Moreover, the image is given new meaning because it is combined with other family portraits, so the queen is now celebrated as *materfamilias*, an idea that her successors embraced.

Moving pictures

While Nattier's image circulated in replica and miniature forms, presented as official gifts by the French crown, it was some time before the artist was paid for his work. Moreover, as was common, he received no royalties from copyists for their use of his image. As we know, he painted the original portrait in 1748, prior to the Salon in August, but he also produced two copies around the same time, which were delivered to Marie Leszczinska's ally the comte de Maurepas and Joseph Pâris-Duverney.⁴² However, it was four years before Nattier received any payment for these three oil paintings, and even then he had to settle for a reduced fee. This may have prompted his decision to work with Jacques-Nicolas Tardieu on an engraved version of the image in 1755 (Figure 10.4). Tardieu was an Academician who was renowned for his high-quality reproductive prints after portraits. In March 1755, the *Mercure de France* announced, 'M. Nattier, Painter to the King, and Professor in his Academy, has just given the public a print which he has had engraved after the portrait of the Queen, which appeared at the Salon du Louvre in 1748.'⁴³ The report names M. Tardieu, a '*Graveur du Roi*', as the printmaker and notes that he is known for 'the resemblance and delicacy of his burin'.⁴⁴ The print was dedicated to the queen and sold in Paris and Rome. The same year, Nattier presented two copies to the Royal Academy. Whatever his intentions may have been, this gesture certainly extended his association with the royal family and may have been designed to restore or maintain his prominence even as critical voices were rising against him.⁴⁵

Nattier had previous experience of translating paintings into prints. At the start of his career, he was commissioned to prepare drawings after Peter-Paul Rubens's Marie des Médicis series for engravings. For the Marie Leszczinska engraving, he may have produced a drawing of his original portrait or supervised its production by someone else in his workshop. As a reproductive print, Tardieu's engraving remains very close to the original, but it is not an exact copy. The changes it makes point to new meanings that allude to its purpose as a print presented to the queen. As was discussed earlier, in the painting, the text on the book is mostly illegible, with only two letters 'LE' and the chapter and page numbers visible. By contrast, the text is clear in the print version. It incorporates the phrase '*Cette Reine adorée*', which appears between her arm and the header ('CHAP. IX 233'). The portrait is transformed from an image that was *commissioned* by a queen into one that *celebrates* a queen, and specifically an adored queen. Nattier and Tardieu's intention may have been simply to flatter Marie Leszczinska, but in the process they transformed her image and encoded the idea that she was well loved.



FIGURE 10.4 Jacques-Nicolas Tardieu, after Jean-Marc Nattier, *Marie Leszcinska, reine de France* (1755), engraving; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles.
© RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

More importantly, the production of the print increased the dissemination of the queen's image as it entered the world of prints and books. For example, it was adapted for the 1768 edition of Charles-Jean-François Hénault's *Abrégé de l'histoire de France*, which he dedicated to the queen.⁴⁶ Hénault's book is a chronology of French history, ending with the reign of Louis XIV. In the frontispiece, the

queen's image is reversed and cropped into an oval framed with roses. The engraving, by Charles Étienne Gaucher, and the dedication may be interpreted as a celebration of the queen at the end of her life by one of her close confidants. Thereafter, the oval cropping of the image would become a popular format. With her head turned to the right and the removal of the book and setting, this version eliminates any possibility of reading the portrait as either spiritual or intellectual. Similarly, she is not placed in a familial setting, in contrast to the image on the Ducrollay snuffbox. Rather, she is set in a historical context, via the subject matter of the book itself. However Hénault does capture the gendered dimension in his dedication by celebrating the queen's modesty and the virtue that garners 'the admiration and love of her subjects'.⁴⁷ Indeed, her modesty is such that 'the more she wants to hide, the more she reveals herself'.⁴⁸ Here, the author highlights the quality that de Piles insisted all portraits of women should foreground.

Slightly later, in 1771–1773, Pierre-François Cozette produced a similarly oval-framed Gobelins tapestry that was paired with an image of the king in armour, along with portraits of the dauphin and dauphine.⁴⁹ This tapestry portrait and its pairing recall the Ducrollay snuffbox and blur the marital, the familial, and the dynastic. A gendered dynamic is evident, too: the king's boldness and the queen's modesty offer the viewer a complementary pairing, a theme that Carle Vanloo and Maurice-Quentin de La Tour had explored in their earlier paintings.

Tardieu's print after Nattier's painting spurred a variety of adaptations as individuals both within and outside the French royal court began to modify Marie Leszczinska's portrait for their own purposes.

Looking at women looking at Marie Leszczinska

Portraits of other royal women adapted from Nattier's portrait of the French queen transformed its meanings by generating new ones. These images make reference to the original painting by imitating the queen's pose, dress, or both in order to link the new sitter to the queen herself. However, it is notable that different sitters identified different elements of the queen's portrait to address their particular situations.

The dauphine, Marie-Josèphe de Saxe, and the royal daughters, known collectively as 'the Mesdames', were among the first to generate what I term 'after-images' – portraits that referenced Nattier's painting. While this may seem an obvious development due to their close relationships to the original subject, it is notable that production of these adaptations began only after the engraved version started to circulate in 1755. One might speculate that while the queen's family enjoyed privileged access to Nattier's oil painting from 1748, the portrait gained broader recognition – and therefore utility for the later sitters – only after the print was widely available.

All of these afterimages share the original portrait's concern with self-fashioning for public consumption. In particular, most of the women who imitated Nattier's painting sought to address elements of their lives that often related to their public

roles and were not necessarily perceived as feminine. Indeed, one might read these engagements with the image as offering creative ways to negotiate or reject normative – and at times negative – conceptions of femininity. Aside from self-fashioning, two main themes that emerged through engagement with the queen's portrait were family and maturity. While the ways in which different individuals engaged with these themes were quite personalized and changed over time, they constituted two key means through which Marie Leszczinska's pictorial performance was understood and interpreted by later sitters, including Marie Antoinette and the Empress Eugénie.

The concept of family underwent a significant transformation over the course of the eighteenth century as an ideal of companionate marriage supplanted the earlier focus on lineage and dynasty. In the process, compatibility, domestic harmony, and even love became the preferred rationales for marriage.⁵⁰ Of course, royal and other elite marriages continued to be organized in terms of the best political and/or financial match well beyond mid-century, but even within the elite attitudes towards marriage started to shift towards the ideal of families united by affection. It is perhaps more accurate to say that both perspectives – the pragmatic and the romantic – were present in the latter half of the century. A mix of these attitudes is certainly evident in the portraits that the royal women who followed Marie Leszczinska commissioned in that period. Despite Marie Leszczinska's attempt to distance herself from the roles of wife and mother in Nattier's portrait, later generations used the painting as a basis on which to *celebrate* their motherhood as an affective and dynastic role. This interpretation of Marie Leszczinska's portrait is not generated by the painting itself; rather, significantly, it is engendered by the picture's use as a miniature and its imitation and adaptation by other royal women.

Maurice-Quentin de La Tour's pastel portrait of Marie-Josèphe de Saxe was begun after 1756 but never finished (Figure 10.5).⁵¹ This picture combines the format of a 'state portrait and an intimate scene'.⁵² It overtly celebrates lineage and dynasty across the generations but also provides a glimpse into the home and family life of the sitters. The dauphine holds the hand of one relative, while other family members are represented in artworks: her husband's portrait hangs on the wall; a bust of Louis XV dominates the left side of the canvas; and the subjects' hands frame a black-and-white engraving of Marie Leszczinska. While the engraving likely references one made by Gilles Edme Petit after La Tour's 1748 portrait of the queen (which was displayed in the Salon exhibition of that year, along with Nattier's), the dauphine's attire directly references Nattier's painting.⁵³ Marie-Josèphe wears a red gown trimmed with black or dark brown fur. While this is a formal court dress, it is strongly reminiscent of the queen's sartorial statement. Unlike Marie Leszczinska's portrait, however, the dauphine's presents an image that overtly links queenship and maternity. As Amanda Strasik has argued, 'the point here is that, because of Marie-Josèphe's role as mother, the boy in the portrait will inherit the throne, and his featured presence communicates his dynastic significance'.⁵⁴ At the same time, the dauphine appears to embrace the Rousseauian concept of maternal devotion to her other children, who are depicted



FIGURE 10.5 Maurice-Quentin de La Tour, *Portrait of Marie-Josèphe de Saxe and Her Son* (1761), pastel on paper; Musée Antoine-Lécuyer, Saint-Quentin.
Photo: Mathieu Rabeau © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

outside the salon. Interestingly, the portrait balances the patriarchal line of royal power with the centrality – or, indeed, necessity – of the royal mother. While Marie Leszczinska was not the dauphine's mother, she was the royal matriarch and therefore both her placement in this image and the dauphine's embodiment of the queen's sensibility suggests a matriline that conformed to developing ideals of noble femininity mediated through Marie Leszczinska's defining self-image. Significantly, noble femininity is defined by family in the portrait.

Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun incorporated similar themes in her controversial 1787 portrait of Marie Antoinette and her children.⁵⁵ This portrait has been interpreted as an effort by the queen – who was embattled almost from the moment of her arrival in France – to present an image of regal yet deferential queenship *and* the ideal of devoted motherhood. She is depicted as at once majestic and maternal, a combination that numerous critics found difficult to reconcile. As Strasik notes, Marie Antoinette, following her predecessors, 'dons the iconic fur-trimmed red gown to suggest a visual fellowship between royal women as they confronted gender constraints within French absolutism as patrons of and subjects in art'.⁵⁶ It is important to note that Marie Antoinette's claim is rather different from Marie Leszczinska's, but it engages with the meanings generated by the original portrait's transmediation in the Ducrollay snuffbox and the unfinished depiction of the dauphine and her son. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, the Empress Eugénie embraced this approach in the portrait of herself and her son, Louis Napoléon, painted by Franz Xavier Winterhalter in 1857.⁵⁷ While Eugénie might not have realized the connection with Marie Leszczinska, her choice of an 'iconic fur-trimmed red gown' was governed by the practice of royal women who had referenced the queen's 1748 portrait over the previous century.⁵⁸

A rather different interpretation is suggested by Madame Adélaïde's engagement with her mother's portrait, which was undoubtedly linked to her position as an unmarried female member of the royal family. From the 1750s to the 1780s, she commissioned a number of portraits that adapted Nattier's original, which she clearly viewed as a touchstone. The first of these, painted by Nattier himself in 1759, references the 1748 painting via both the artist and Adélaïde's fur-trimmed dress, though the gown is blue rather than red.⁵⁹ Adélaïde's interpretation of the original work contrasts strongly with those of Marie-Josèphe and Marie Antoinette. The image of the queen's daughter displays an overt connection to her mother, with whom she shared a close bond as well as an affinity for conservative Catholic and royal values. They also held similar positions on court politics. After the queen's death, Adélaïde was her mother's heir and oversaw the completion of the convent Marie Leszczinska had begun.

As she grew older, the 1748 portrait became an increasingly appropriate model for Adélaïde – who was the highest-ranking female member of the royal family, after Marie Antoinette – particularly since it does not allude to motherhood in any way; rather, it presents the queen as a mature and serious woman.⁶⁰ Memorializing her mother in this way affirmed Adélaïde's royal identity and publicly proclaimed

her status as a Bourbon matriarch.⁶¹ While the 1759 painting highlighted a daughter's filial devotion through a less direct formal association, the parallels between Nattier's 1748 work and Johann-Ernst Heinsius's 1785 portrait, painted when Adélaïde was fifty-four years old, are much more striking (Figure 10.6). Heinsius is a somewhat mysterious artist who has been described as a copyist and a painter to the Mesdames.⁶² His portrait of Adélaïde clearly references Nattier's



FIGURE 10.6 Johann-Ernst Heinsius, *Portrait of Madame Adélaïde* (1785), oil on canvas; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles.

painting of her mother, and it seems almost unnecessary to point out the differences between the two works, but it is revealing to consider what has been included and what has been altered. Heinsius retains the palette, format, and setting of the original, while Adélaïde wears the *habit du cour*, like the dauphine and Marie Antoinette, in the now-familiar rich red with brown fur trim. Her white lace *engageantes* and the lace mantle and wrap recall those of her mother. Here, she signifies her own modesty but also clearly presents herself at court. There is also a shift in tone: whereas Marie Leszczinska's portrait is intimate and reflective, drawing the viewer into the picture, Adélaïde's keeps the spectator at a distance. Notably, the latter has no book, and there are no other religious references. Instead, she looks off to the left and gestures with her left hand while her right wields a folded fan in a manner that is reminiscent of her father's pose in his state portrait by Louis-Michel Van Loo, exhibited at the Salon of 1761.⁶³ Indeed, the fan takes the place of King Louis's sceptre, as Adélaïde was a member of the distaff side of the family. The fan, then, allows her to present herself in an appropriately feminine fashion while also proclaiming her authority. In this sense, Adélaïde could claim a position of leadership while mitigating that claim under the guise of noble femininity channelled via her mother's image.

After Marie Leszczinska's death, Adélaïde and her sisters became key cultivators of their mother's memory. For instance, in 1786, they commissioned the Abbé Proyart to write her biography. This text presented an image of Marie Leszczinska as pious, devoted to her family and husband (though willing and able to challenge the king), and loved by her subjects.⁶⁴ As such, it had a major impact on the late queen's legacy. Published in 1794, though begun when criticism of Marie Antoinette was at its height, it may be seen as another arena in the battle for dominance in the royal court. It was reprinted numerous times during the nineteenth century, often in abridged editions that were intended to teach the girls of France the value of comportment and devotion.

While Marie Antoinette never managed to improve her image, the Mesdames burnished their mother's as an exemplary queen who contrasted with her successor in many ways. Yet, both sides drew on Marie Leszczinska's portrait, reading a familial connection either into it or out of it, whether intimate, maternal, or dynastic, along with other aspects that suited each woman's particular situation. While Marie Leszczinska used her portrait to distance herself from her roles as wife and mother, those who adapted it invariably privileged familial readings.

Conclusion

Nattier's 1748 *Portrait of Marie Leszczinska* was a touchstone for women in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While different women engaged with it in multiple ways, it generally encoded positive and notably feminine values that were associated with the queen. Perhaps most interesting in light of the question of historical memory and its construction is that these distinct interpretations – maturity, maternity, family, and self-fashioning – impact the way Marie Leszczinska's portrait has been understood. This is a key source of the anti-myth of Marie

Leszczinska, the 'particular story' of a singularly unregal queen who is frequently cast as an 'ordinary woman'.⁶⁵

Returning to Nattier's portrait, the painting has often been read through the lens of its adaptations, rather than by placing it within its historical context. The changes wrought on Marie Leszczinska's image perhaps ironically limited the scope for understanding the queen's initial gesture and shaping the historiography about her life and role at court. The afterimages indicate both the power of a single image and its limitations.

Notes

- 1 I wish to thank Christina Lindeman, Heidi Strobel, Pearl Ponce, the editors, and the reader for their invaluable comments.
- 2 Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 6.
- 3 René-Louis de Voyer de Paulmy, marquis d'Argenson, *Journal et mémoires du Marquis d'Argenson, publiée pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits autographes de la bibliothèque du Louvre pour la Société de l'histoire de France* (Paris: J. Renouard, 1859), 168: 'fécondité, piété, douceur, humanité, et surtout grande incapacité aux affaires'. D'Argenson was the French minister of foreign affairs until 1747. After his dismissal, he turned to writing his memoirs, which include useful, though not necessarily disinterested, descriptions of the court.
- 4 Xavier Salmon, *Jean-Marc Nattier, 1685–1766* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1999), 197: 'En peignant ce portrait ... Nattier répondait à un vœu, celui d'une reine de France, qui ... aspirait à être une femme comme les autres'.
- 5 Jennifer Milam, 'Matronage and the Direction of Sisterhood: Portraits of Madame Adélaïde', in Melissa Hyde and Jennifer Milam (eds), *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-century Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 120.
- 6 For a useful discussion of memory from a philosophical perspective, see Anne Whitehead, *Memory* (London: Routledge, 2009).
- 7 Benjamin Schmidt, 'Knowledge Products and their Transmediations', in Susanne Friedrich, Arndt Brendecke, and Stefan Ehrenpreis (eds), *Transformations of Knowledge in Dutch Expansion* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 122. Schmidt's use of this concept is addressed at cross-cultural knowledge generation and consumption in the early modern period, whereas my interest is cross-temporal.
- 8 Mary Sheriff addresses this characteristic of transformation between media in 'Seeing Metamorphosis in Sculpture and the Decorative Arts', in Martina Droth (ed.), *Taking Shape: Finding Sculpture in the Decorative Arts* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2009), 158–164.
- 9 Much of the material in this section is drawn from Jennifer Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczinska (1703–1768): Representing Queenship in Eighteenth-century France* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015). See also John Rogister, 'Queen Marie Leszczinska and Faction at the French Court, 1725–1768', in Clarissa Campbell Orr (ed.), *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort*, 186–219 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Jacques Levron, *Madame Louis XV: l'épouse du Bien-Aimé* (Paris: Librairie académique Perrin, 1987).
- 10 The bibliography on Pompadour is enormous. Important art historical sources include: Elisa Goodman, *The Portraits of Madame de Pompadour: Celebrating the Femme Savante* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Xavier Salmon, *Madame de Pompadour et les arts* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2002); Melissa Hyde, 'The "Makeup" of the Marquise: Boucher's Portrait of Pompadour at Her Toilette', *Art Bulletin* September (2000): 454–475, and her more recent volume, *Making up the Rococo: François Boucher and His Critics* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2006).

- 11 For discussions of the criticism of Pompadour, see: Thomas Kaiser, 'Madame de Pompadour and the Theaters of Power', *French Historical Studies* 19:4 (1996): 1025–1044; and Lisa Jane Graham, *If the King Only Knew: Seditious Speech in the Reign of Louis XV* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000), especially 123–124.
- 12 André Picciola, *Le comte de Maurepas: Versailles et l'Europe à la fin de l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Perrin, 1999).
- 13 Kaiser, 'Madame de Pompadour', 1030.
- 14 Kaiser, 'Madame de Pompadour', 1027.
- 15 Salmon, *Jean-Marc Nattier*, 197.
- 16 Royal portraits typically utilized sketches or previous portraits, as Carle Van Loo did when creating the queen's 1747 portrait. See Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczinska*, 182.
- 17 Marie-Catherine Tocqué, 'Abrégé de la vie de M. Nattier, peintre et professeur de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture par sa fille, Mlle Nattier l'aînée, épouse de M. Tocqué', in L. Dussieux, E. Soulié, Ph. de Chennevières, Paul Mantz, and A. de Montaiglon (eds), *Mémoires inédits sur la vie et les ouvrages des membres de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture publiés d'après les manuscrits conservés à l'École impériale des Beaux-Arts* (Paris: J.B. Dumoulin, 1854), 2:358.
- 18 '233' likely indicates the page number.
- 19 Fernand Engerand, *Inventaire des tableaux commandés et achetés par la direction des bâtiments du roi (1701–1792)* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1901), 479: '2,000 livres par gratification en considération des frais de voyage qu'ils a faits, peines et soins qu'il s'est donné pour l'exécution d'un tableau ... qu'il fait par les ordres du Roy en la présente année'; MS AN O1 1921A1, 'Etat des ouvrages de peinture et sculpture qui ont été distribués aux artistes ci après, tant sous la direction de Monsieur le Duc d'Antin, celle de Monsieur Orry que celle de Monsieur Le Normant de Tournehem': 'A lui, le portrait de la Reine en grand d'après M. De la Tour. Ce tableau est fini. Il n'a rien au dessus. On pourrois en faire le Reception. Faire le Reception. | Reglé à ... 4000 ll. | Il a touché en Nov. 1747 le parfait payement du Portrait de la Reine ... 4000 ll. En Nov 1747, une gratification pour le portrait de la Reine de ... 2000 ll. / 6000 ll. | Parfait payement 6000 ll'.
- 20 Examples of portraits that reference Nattier's painting, in terms of dress, pose, or both, include: Franz George Herrmann's *Portrait of Maria Barbara Herrmann* (1766; Musée d'Ulm); Allan Ramsay's *Portrait of Elizabeth Montagu* (1762; private collection); and various portraits of Françoise de Graffigny. For the latter, see Colin Harrison, 'Les portraits de Mme de Graffigny: Françoise de Graffigny, femme de lettres: ecriture et reception', *SVEC* 12 (2004): 195–208. Notably, the non-French examples post-date the engraved version of the queen's portrait.
- 21 MS AN O1 1934A; Engerand, *Inventaire des tableaux commandés et achetés*, 336.
- 22 Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczinska*, 155–197.
- 23 Kathleen Nicholson, 'The Ideology of Feminine "Virtue": The Vestal Virgin in French Eighteenth-century Allegorical Portraiture', in Joanna Woodall (ed.), *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, 52–72 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).
- 24 Roger de Piles, *The art of painting, with the lives and characters of above 300 of the most eminent painters: containing a complete treatise of painting, designing, and the use of prints. with reflexions on the works of the most celebrated masters, and of the several schools of Europe, as well ancient as modern. Being the most perfect work of the kind extant* (London, 1744), 19. The next three citations are to this edition. Originally published in French as *L'abrégé de la vie des peintres, avec des reflexions sur leurs ouvrages, et un traité du peintre parfait, de la connoissance des desseins, & de l'utilité des estampes* (1699).
- 25 De Piles, *The art of painting*, 20.
- 26 De Piles, *The art of painting*, 20.
- 27 De Piles, *The art of painting*, 20.
- 28 Roger de Piles, *Cours de peinture par principes avec un balance de peintres* (Paris, 1708), 212, 215: 'pour les héros, & pour ceux qui tiennent quelque rang dans le monde, ou qui se sont distinguer par leurs dignités, par leurs vertus, ou par leurs grandes qualités, on ne sauroit apporter trop d'exactitude dans l'imitation de leur visage, soit que les parties s'y

- recountent belles, ou bien qu'elles y soient défectueuses; car ces sortes de portraits sont des marques authentiques qui doivent être consacrées à la postérité, & dans cette vue tout est précieux dans les portraits, si tout est fidele'.
- 29 De Piles, *Cours de peinture*, 217: 'en général il faut qu'elle soit d'une simplicité noble, & d'un enjouement modeste: car modestie doit être le caractere des femmes'.
 - 30 De Piles, *Cours de peinture*, 217: 'mais aux portraits de femmes, il faut encore de l'agrément'.
 - 31 By mid-century, women's perceived vanity was seen in their desire for portraits and was blamed for the overproduction of such portraits, the collapse of history painting, and the general decline in morals. See especially Etienne La Font de Saint-Yenne's essay, *Réflexions sur l'état de la peinture en France* (La Haye: Chez Jean Neaulme, 1747).
 - 32 Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczynska*, 145.
 - 33 Pompadour commissioned Jean Charlier to produce a box with a set of forty-nine miniature portraits of the royal family after a bust of Louis XV by Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne and paintings of the rest of the family by Nattier. Xavier Salmon, *Madame de Pompadour et les arts* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2002), 174, suggests that this must have been given as a gift since it did not appear in her inventory after her death.
 - 34 See, for example, miniatures held in the collection of the National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen (KMS 7457), the Wallace Collection, London, UK (M119), and the Tansey Miniatures Foundation (No. 11023) at the Bomann Museum in Celle, Germany.
 - 35 See www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/206421, accessed 29 June 2017.
 - 36 Michael Yonan, 'Portable Dynasties: Imperial Gift-giving at the Court of Vienna in the Eighteenth Century', *Court Society* 14:2 (2009): 177–188, especially 183.
 - 37 Michael Hall, 'Hand Made and Hand Held: Snuff Boxes in the Huntington Collection', in Shelley M. Bennett and Carolyn Sargenston (eds), *French Art of the Eighteenth Century at the Huntington*, 393–403 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), especially 403.
 - 38 Hall, 'Hand Made and Hand Held', 403.
 - 39 See Vincent Bastien, 'Les Ducrollay de prestigieux orfèvres parisiens au XVIIIe siècle', *L'Estampille: L'Objet d'art* 415 (2006): 60–69, at 65, where Bastien states that Ducrollay was named 'orfèvre-joaillier du roy' in 1760 and 1763, and points out that slightly earlier boxes are also stamped with this title.
 - 40 The box features several stamps by Ducrollay as well as Paris charge marks, a Paris discharge mark, and a Paris warden's mark, which date the box itself between 1744 and 1756. This is not a *tabatière à cage* (cagework box), which allowed the owner to change the décor with relative ease. In *The Wrightsman Collection: Gold Boxes* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1977), n.p., Clare Le Corbeiller states that it may have been 'studded with oval pieces of agate or other hardstone' before being decorated with the royal portraits. If this is true, it is unclear when the decoration changed. Ducrollay did produce other boxes with portraits: see Charles Truman, 'From the Boîte à Portrait to the Tabatière: The Production of Gold Boxes in Paris', in Tessa Murdoch and Heike Zech (eds), *Going for Gold: Craftsmanship and Collecting of Gold Boxes* (Brighton, Chicago, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2014), 24–25. It is possible that if the decoration was changed, it was done by a subsequent owner. Files at the Metropolitan Museum of Art indicate that it was owned by an 'unidentified member of the Hapsburg family' and then possibly by the duc de Mouchy until it was sold in 1936/7. There are also letters indicating that the duc de Mouchy worked with someone in the Habsburg family to sell it in the early twentieth century. It is not known when it may have come into the possession of the Habsburgs. Gaston Bensimon sold the box to the Sassoon family in 1936/7. According to a letter written by Bensimon and dated 25 March 1957, 'The duke was an intermediary rather than the owner and acted on behalf of a member of the Hapsburg family, whose actual identity was not disclosed to me.' It was later purchased by the Wrightsmans, who gifted it to the museum in 1976. (see www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/206421, accessed 29 June 2017).
 - 41 A. Cassandra Albinson and Mark Hallett, 'Cornucopia: Royal Female Portraiture and the Imperatives of Reproduction', in Joanna Marschner, David Bindman, and Lisa L. Ford (eds), *Enlightened Princesses: Caroline, Augusta, Charlotte, and the Shaping of the*

- Modern World*, 75–107 (New Haven, CT: Yale Center for British Art University Press, 2017), at 80.
- 42 The choice of these two individuals is quite interesting. The comte de Maurepas supported the queen against Madame de Pompadour until his fall in 1749. Pâris-Duverney supported Marie Leszczinska's selection and was her secrétaire des commandements de la reine until 1726, when he crossed the prime minister Cardinal de Fleury and was exiled from court. His brother, Pâris-Montmartel, was a Pompadour supporter and even rumoured to be her father. See Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczinska*, 164–168.
 - 43 *Mercure de France* March (1755): 'M. Nattier, Peintre du Roi, & Professeur en son Académie, vient de donner au public l'estampe qu'il a fait graver d'après le portrait de la Reine, qui a paru au salon du Louvre en 1748', available at <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k9604501n/f140.image>, accessed 25 June 2018.
 - 44 *Mercure de France* March (1755): 'la ressemblance et la délicatesse du burin'.
 - 45 Nattier experienced professional difficulties in the 1750s when his critical and financial fortunes started to wane. See Pierre de Nolhac, *J.-M. Nattier, peintre de la cour de Louis XV* (Paris, 1905), 104ff; and Hannah Williams, *Académie Royale: A History in Portraits* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015).
 - 46 Hénault's book was a chronological account of the people and events of French history. The full title is *Nouvel abrégé chronologique de l'histoire de France, contenant les événements de notre histoire depuis Clovis jusqu'à la mort de Louis XIV, les guerres, les batailles, les sièges, &c.* and there were numerous editions in the eighteenth century, and several updated editions in the nineteenth. Gaucher's engraving, as Nolhac (*J.-M. Nattier*, 146) notes, incorrectly claims that the original was 'Peint par Nattier en 1755'.
 - 47 Hénault makes this claim in his dedication to the queen in the 1768 edition of *Nouvel abrégé chronologique*, n.p.: 'l'admiration & l'amour de ses sujets'.
 - 48 Hénault, *Nouvel abrégé chronologique*: 'plus elle veut se cacher, plus elle se découvre'.
 - 49 Pascal-François Bertrand, 'Le portrait tissé en buste: un genre de tableau', in P. Bordes and P.-F. Bertrand (eds), *Portrait and Tapestry / Portrait et Tapisserie*, 109–117 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), at 110–111.
 - 50 As Simon Schama and Erica Naginski have both recounted, these shifts impacted ideas about royal families and their representation in the eighteenth century. In 'The Domestication of Majesty', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17:1 (1986): 155–183, at 183 and 179, Schama argues that royal family portraiture developed as a result of the need for monarchies to 'be seen ... [as] the family of families, at once dynastic and domestic, remote and accessible, magical and mundane' and suggests that 'it is the mothers who personify the unities of family' in the work of Zoffany, Vigée-Lebrun, and David. In light of this, it is notable that Nattier's portrait of Marie Leszczinska does not seek to engage with this development. Erika Naginski has more precisely located the articulation of 'domestic royalty' in monuments dedicated to the dauphin after his death, which portray the late prince and his wife as devout and devoted to each other. See Erika Naginski, *Sculpture and Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 114–160.
 - 51 The portrait was likely left unfinished due to the death of Marie-Josèphe's son. See Amanda Strasik, 'Portraying the Royal Self: Maurice-Quentin de La Tour's 1761 Portrait of Marie-Josèphe of Saxony and Her Son', *Women in French Studies* 25 (2017), 108.
 - 52 Laurent Hugues, 'La famille royale et ses portraitistes sous Louis XV et Louis XVI', in Xavier Salmon (ed.), *De soie et de poudre: portraits de cour dans l'Europe des lumières*, 135–172 (Versailles: Actes Sud, 2004).
 - 53 See, for example, www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=1382852001&objectId=3512255&partId=1, accessed 25 June 2018. The Bibliothèque nationale de France owns a very similar print of the dauphin that is framed in an oval with a socle inscribed with his name and coat of arms. This engraving is based on the later surviving portrait of the dauphin and is signed and dated 1747. De La Tour's 1746 version rendered him in armour. Marie Leszczinska's pastel portrait was finished in 1748; the British Museum version of the engraving is dated between 1748 and 1760 (the date of Petit's death).

- 54 Strasik, 'Portraying the Royal Self', 113.
- 55 See Joseph Baillio, *Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, 1755–1842* (Fort Worth, TX: Kimbell Art Museum, 1982), 78–81; Mary Sheriff, 'The Cradle is Empty: Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, Marie-Antoinette, and the Problem of Intention', in Jennifer Milam and Melissa Hyde (eds), *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-century Europe*, 164–187 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).
- 56 Strasik, 'Portraying the Royal Self', 116.
- 57 In *Empress Eugénie and the Arts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 98–101, Alison McQueen notes this portrait's connection to Marie Antoinette's 1787 portrait, though not to Nattier's portrait of Marie Leszczyńska.
- 58 Miniatures of Nattier's portrait continued to be produced for the restoration kings in the nineteenth century. See Anne Lajoix, *Marie-Victoire Jaquotot, 1772–1855: peintre sur porcelain* (Paris: Librairie le trait d'union and Société de l'histoire de l'art français, 2006). Lajoix discusses a large box with many miniatures of French historical and royal figures, including one of Marie Leszczyńska.
- 59 Milam, 'Matronage and the Direction of Sisterhood', 125–127.
- 60 In 'Growing Old in Public', in Jennifer Milam (ed.), *Making Ideas Visible in the Eighteenth Century: Essays in Art History from the XVth David Nichol Smith Seminar* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, forthcoming), Jessica Fripp argues that women engaged with 'aging as a cultural construction of respectability demonstrated through age-appropriate dress, rather than a biological process marked by physical changes'. She notes that the 'performance of old age through dress represented a renunciation of sex appeal, seduction, and fertility that were key aspects of Geoffrin's and Marie Leszczyńska's public image, commented upon during their lifetime, and which served to set them apart from other women'.
- 61 Milam, 'Matronage and the Direction of Sisterhood', 127. The title 'Madame' also signified her status as the highest-ranking woman at court, after the queen. Her 1787 portrait by Labille-Guiard similarly picks up on this thread and includes the late queen's portrait; and, while Adélaïde's dress is different in style, it is notably red. See also Melissa Hyde, 'Under the Sign of Minerva: Adélaïde Labille-Guiard's *Portrait of Madame Adélaïde*', in Hyde and Milam (eds), *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity*, 139–163.
- 62 Charles Oulmont, *J.-E. Heinsius* (Paris, 1913), 15. Little is known about Heinsius: Oulmont's French text is the only biography. He was court painter in Weimar before moving to France.
- 63 The original painting is lost, but a 1763 copy by Jean-Martial Frédou (MV 3753) is in the collection at Versailles (<http://collections.chateauversailles.fr/#01596615-316d-4fb1-a392-57b720ca824f>, accessed 25 June 2018). See Christina Lindeman's analysis of fans and gender in 'Gendered Souvenirs: Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein and Jacob Philipp Hackert's Grand Tourist *Vedute* Fans', in Heidi Strobel and Jennifer Germann (eds), *Materializing Gender in Eighteenth-century Europe*, 51–66 (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2015).
- 64 Proyart had earlier published biographies of the dauphin (1782) and Stanislas Leszczyński, the queen's father (1784). He may have begun work on Marie Leszczyńska's biography around the same time. The outbreak of the revolution seems to have interrupted his work, so the book was first published in Brussels in 1794. Some editions included an engraving after Nattier's portrait of the queen. There are at least twenty-seven copies in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, with the latest bearing a publication date of 1864.
- 65 Recently, a copy of Nattier's portrait was included in the background during an episode of *The Crown* ('Marionettes'; season 2, episode 5), which first aired on 8 December 2017. In this episode Queen Elizabeth II is criticized for being out of touch with her subjects, dull, and even 'priggish and tweedy', as one pictured headline reveals. Interestingly, this approximates the anti-myth of Marie Leszczyńska.

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11

THE EAGLE EYE OF THE HABSBURG FAMILY ON THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES

Lights and shadows of Queen Maria Carolina at court

Cinzia Recca

There are conflicting opinions about Maria Carolina's private and public actions based on personal beliefs, preconceptions, and subjective judgements that have prevented the development of a holistic overview of this much maligned queen of Naples. This chapter presents the first results of detailed analysis of several unpublished sources relating to the Habsburg family and specifically Maria Carolina herself. The goal is to demonstrate that Neapolitan politics of the 1780s was strongly influenced by the Habsburg family's advice, which was contained in two important memoranda and the rich correspondence between Maria Carolina and her brothers, Emperor Joseph II and the grand duke of Tuscany Peter Leopold.

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, the behaviour of some European monarchies underwent a singular process of change, with several queens exercising power that was rarely institutionalized and gaining unprecedented influence over the politics of their respective kingdoms. Sovereigns such as Elizabeth Farnese of Spain, Catherine of Russia, Carolina Matilda of Denmark, and the three daughters of Maria Theresa – who sat on the thrones of Paris, Naples, and Parma – were at the forefront of this development. Without doubt, Maria Carolina of Naples has been the most neglected of these powerful queens.

Modern scholars have not been well disposed towards Maria Carolina as a woman, a mother, or a monarch. Indeed, some have compared her vicissitudes to those of her sister, Marie Antoinette.¹ Moreover, while many intellectuals and scholars of her period were fascinated by the queen's life, few modern historians have given any her space in their works. As a result, Maria Carolina has become little more than a ghost who is recalled in the public imagination only as one of the root causes of the political turbulence that culminated in the revolution of 1799.² Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, she suffered waves of criticism emanating from the revolutionary, nationalistic, and 'anti-feminist' historiographical traditions that found its way into biographies of the queen.³

In consequence, Maria Carolina now has a poor reputation, but it is the intention of this chapter to show that she was a politically effective queen, contrary to the reports of her detractors and subsequent biographers.⁴

The generally negative attitude towards Maria Carolina of Naples has encouraged attempts to reshape her image through analysis of unpublished sources, including her personal diary and family correspondence.⁵ She has been overlooked and traduced for many years, yet she played a crucial role by inaugurating a new way of governing based on a personal and individualistic conception of power. An ambitious queen, she took over from her rude, uneducated husband, King Ferdinand IV, reformed her country, and forged an alliance with Great Britain to avoid the fate of her sister, Marie Antoinette. However, she fell victim to her own emotions and took misguided advice from those she trusted, which meant her reign ultimately ended in failure.⁶

Although there have been some attempts to re-evaluate Maria Carolina over the last ten years, few have credited her with any political skill or power. This chapter aims to shed light on the key role that the Habsburg family played in Maria Carolina's rise to power through analysis of several unpublished sources, such as a memorandum from Empress Maria Theresa to Maria Carolina, another written by Austrian ambassador Prince Kaunitz, and family correspondence.

Learning the Austrian art of ruling

On 15 October 1767, after the sudden death of Maria Josepha, who had been promised in marriage to the young king of Naples and Sicily, Ferdinand IV of Bourbon, Maria Carolina's future was suddenly and dramatically altered when she was designated to take the place of her elder sister. Although just fifteen at the time, she was soon taught the art of ruling and was treated with all the deference due to a crowned head.⁷

Initially, Maria Carolina's education was entrusted to Countess Walburgis von Lerchenfeld, who had been her personal governess since August 1767. Empress Maria Theresa was a devoted mother who oversaw all her children's education, issuing instructions to governors and governesses concerning the princesses' lessons and even their diets. She also wrote short letters of encouragement, reproach, and advice directly to the children.⁸ These tended to focus on morals and religion. One of the main recommendations that she addressed to all her children was that they should always be guided by God's will. Any future rulers, be they emperors, kings, or queens, were urged to bear this in mind and continually strive for the happiness and well-being of their subjects. The clear implication was that this duty must always come before their own personal happiness.⁹

The specific instructions to the future queen of Naples are titled *Informations secretes de l'imperatrice Marie Therese pour Mme l'archiduchesse Caroline a l'occasion de son mariage avec Ferdinand roi de Naples*.¹⁰ They focus primarily on the submission of women, while any suggestions relating to the affairs of state are rather vague. The maternal advice also highlights the positive aspects of Maria Carolina herself, such

as her inherited instinct for knowledge and interest in politics, which Maria Theresa predicted would ensure her daughter's future success as queen.¹¹ No negative aspects of Maria Carolina's character, such as her rebellious streak and disobedience, are mentioned, presumably because Maria Theresa feared they might harm her married life.

Maria Theresa's advice about a wife's conjugal duties and the position of women in marriage are interesting. She wrote: 'the behavioural model of a queen is associated with several levels that are inseparable and linked together, such as, for example, a wife's attitude towards her husband and how she must communicate with him'. Clearly, Maria Theresa felt her daughter should obey her new husband, and she encouraged her to demonstrate her 'respect, sweetness, humility and submission' at all times: 'You know that women are submissive to their husbands, their will and even their whims ... Therefore, women cannot be happy if they do not earn through sweetness the trust and esteem of their husbands.'¹² This piece of advice probably stems from concern over her daughter's young age and the fact that she would soon be entering an alien environment. The empress felt that Maria Carolina could overcome these obstacles only by displaying submissiveness: 'No one will reproach you when you are in the wrong ... so there is no other way but to keep quiet and listen politely to become a good sovereign.' Later, the advice becomes more explicit: 'we must never forget that, as women, we must never fail in the presence of our husbands ... [W]omen are always wrong, whoever is the husband ... You must show respect, complacency, and submission concerning any order from your husband.'¹³ Maria Carolina must intervene in the affairs of state only if she is sure her intervention will be appreciated and, crucially, only if her husband permits her to do so, and she must never affect an air of superiority over him. Rather, she must always endeavour to retain his trust.

In relation to possible future alliances, the empress reminds her daughter that she is about to marry a Bourbon, a family that is closely linked to and allied with the French. So the best option is neutrality.¹⁴

Another piece of advice concerns Maria Carolina's future correspondence with Vienna. Maria Theresa suggests that her daughter should not write too much because her letters may be intercepted. She should also appoint a trusted courier from Florence and follow official court etiquette: that is, the letters have to be written in French.¹⁵ Moreover, the letters themselves must follow established rules of etiquette. They should be written in French and addressed and delivered first to the emperor, then to the empress, and finally to Grand Duke Peter Leopold or his wife. The empress also urges Maria Carolina to trust the wisdom of her brother Peter Leopold and his wife Maria Luisa of Spain, who will tell her how to behave in the presence of a Catholic king.

Maria Carolina received further advice before her departure for Naples in the form of a memorandum from Prince Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz-Rietberg.¹⁶ This document outlines the current economic and political situation in the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily and offers a set of political guidelines relating to affairs of state.¹⁷ Hence, it is reasonable to assume that Kaunitz was the first person to recognize

Maria Carolina's natural and dynamic predisposition towards politics. He was amazed by her interest in political subjects, noting that she not only listened attentively but also gave careful consideration to problems before formulating pertinent questions.¹⁸

First, Kaunitz reiterates a number of the points that Maria Carolina's mother addressed in her memorandum: that is, the new queen must earn the trust of her husband and the respect of her father-in-law; and she must also secure the affection and happiness of her subjects by displaying mercy, generosity towards the meritorious, and charity towards the poor.¹⁹ This advice evidently had a significant impact on Maria Carolina because she later insisted that the plight of the poor was an issue that was always very dear to her.²⁰ In both memoranda, the word 'love' is used frequently in relation to the people, the unhappy, and the kingdom, and priority is given first to the people and then to the others. Kaunitz also emphasizes the importance of religion for the well-being of any state and points out that all monarchs are ordained by God and therefore share a heavy responsibility. For guidance in these matters, he encourages Maria Carolina to read Abbot Jacques Joseph Duguet's text *Institution d'un prince*.²¹

Subsequently, the memorandum is characterized by Kaunitz's advice on administrative, domestic, and foreign policy issues. He suggests that in-depth knowledge of the population and keeping abreast of the administration of the kingdom will be key to success. Without this basic knowledge, rulers can neither protect the former nor improve the latter. Kaunitz argues that a large population is fundamental to preserving and increasing the power and security of any state: a larger population means greater global security, which in turn means the state is less likely to suffer attack.²² Therefore, he suggests that a monarch must understand the history, strategic position, size, and other natural features of both kingdoms (Naples and Sicily), because so much depends on the quality and character of the population, the local government, and everything that happens in the provinces.²³

Whenever Kaunitz addresses potentially intimidating political issues, he is careful to offer words of comfort and encouragement to Maria Carolina. For instance, he tells her not to feel anxious about her new role, but rather to take inspiration from her future mother-in-law. Queen Maria Amalia participated in the Council of State and many important policy discussions, kept herself well informed about all of the affairs of state, and demonstrated an unquenchable desire to learn.²⁴

In addition to tackling questions relating to the duties and rights of a sovereign, Kaunitz offers plenty of advice on the economic management of the state. For him, it is extremely important to understand what makes a kingdom flourish. He cites England as an example to follow, as it has abandoned old customs and prejudices, increased its shipping, and perfected its agriculture, all of which has enabled it to surpass states such as Poland, Denmark, and some African countries.²⁵ He advises Maria Carolina to adopt similar strategies to improve the already fertile territory of Sicily, but again insists that her subjects will have a key role to play: the rural population must be encouraged to make both agriculture and industry more profitable.

Kaunitz also provides Maria Carolina with valuable information on the empire and its foreign policy. For instance, he mentions the treaty and alliance with France that was designed to counter the Prussian threat,²⁶ and explains that both parties now enjoy increased security as a result of the agreement.²⁷ Later, he again alludes to the close alliance with the French, their cooperation, and their true friendship before outlining the political background that led to the marriage unions between the Bourbons and the Habsburgs – links that were initiated to preclude hegemonic and territorial imbalance in Europe.²⁸ In this context, Kaunitz explains the political changes in the Spanish court since the last war,²⁹ as well as the reasons why the Habsburgs signed both the ‘Family Pact’ and the Triple Alliance. In addition, he stresses the importance of maintaining cordial relations with Spain.³⁰ Kaunitz then compares this with the political system in the Kingdom of Naples, which led to mistrust and jealousy towards the imperial crown and controversy over the right of succession.

Kaunitz’s lengthy memorandum on economic policy, domestic politics, and foreign policy concludes by reminding Maria Carolina to try to avoid any involvement in war, because armed conflict invariably results in disastrous losses that would surely benefit the Sardinian crown. Therefore, she must do all in her power to maintain the friendship with the Bourbon house.³¹

These two pivotal documents – the memoranda of her mother and Prince Kaunitz – gave Maria Carolina the advice she needed to assume the role of queen of Naples. Nevertheless, the week before the royal wedding, she wept incessantly over her impending separation from her family.³² She seemed to regard her departure for the Kingdom of Naples with a sort of horror, probably exacerbated by shock over the death of her sister Maria Josepha. Perhaps she viewed the alliance as a poison chalice, and expressed her reluctance to leave to the empress and Kaunitz. However, the fascinating descriptions of the splendour of the Neapolitan court must have prevailed over Maria Carolina’s sadness and worries, because she left Austria on schedule to begin her new life as the wife of Ferdinand IV of Naples.

Maria Carolina’s entry into Naples: from consort to queen regnant

Queen Maria Carolina arrived in Naples on 12 May 1768, having already married King Ferdinand by proxy in Vienna.³³ Their marriage was one of convenience, but it proved to be a long-lasting union.³⁴

During her first few years as queen, Maria Carolina followed her mother’s advice and remained largely aloof from Neapolitan politics. Instead, she tried to secure her husband’s trust and respect by supporting him in his dull yet extravagant pursuits. In addition to giving birth to two princesses, she simply attended debates and advanced the occasional opinion or suggestion that the king usually adopted.

Ferdinand, whom his subjects nicknamed the ‘*lazzarone*’ king, is mainly remembered for his lack of interest in or competence for government, an opinion that is confirmed in Emperor Joseph’s report of his nine-day visit to the Neapolitan

court in March 1769.³⁵ In this account, which was written for his mother, Joseph praises the conduct of his sister, the queen, who was apparently establishing her influence and maintaining her self-respect under the most trying circumstances. By contrast, Joseph perceives little education and no appetite for learning in Ferdinand. The emperor highlights the king's personal indifference towards literature and his disapproval of those who do read, and bemoans the fact that his host was only interested in riding, hunting, and playing games with his attendants.³⁶

Ferdinand had become king of Naples while still a child, after his father Charles of Bourbon had moved to Madrid to occupy the throne of Spain. In 1759, before his departure for Spain, Charles had established a Council of Regency led by his faithful minister Bernardo Tanucci, who was tasked with overseeing the affairs of the kingdom.³⁷ So Charles continued to 'reign' in Naples through his proxy, Tanucci.³⁸ Ferdinand turned sixteen on 12 January 1767 and the Council of Regency became the Council of State, but in practice nothing changed because Ferdinand continued to delegate all responsibility to Tanucci.³⁹ Therefore, the mechanisms were in place for two young monarchs – Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina – to rule, but the king had no interest in governing. As soon as the young queen arrived in Naples, she sensed Tanucci's enmity. They both understood that whichever one of them managed to exert the most influence over the king would become the effective ruler of Naples, and the queen was determined that it should be her. A crucial clause in the marriage contract helped her to achieve this aim, because it stipulated that Maria Carolina must be granted a seat in the Council of State after giving birth to her first male heir. This clause implicitly sanctioned the resumption of Austrian influence in Naples.⁴⁰

So, at the end of the eighteenth century, King Ferdinand was widely viewed as an ill-educated, inept, and apathetic monarch. However, he received considerable moral support from his wife, which gave him an unanticipated opportunity to escape from the usual burdens and responsibilities of kingship. As a result, Maria Carolina soon exerted almost total control over her weak husband and gained significant influence in the politics of the kingdom. She justified her actions in the following terms:

As God has decided for him I can dedicate myself to my home ... but his distracting life makes it impossible for him to rule ... He has not been educated in this and never will be. So, rather than see him killed by his ministers or by a bad person, or misled by his confessor, I am forced to act so that he has trust and confidence in me.⁴¹

Therefore, Maria Carolina's thirst for power and ambition drove her to seize the reins of power in a domestic coup that she firmly believed was in the best interests of her new kingdom. Of course, she was motivated by a desire to set Naples on a pro-Austrian political course, but she also hoped to build a stable and flourishing kingdom for the benefit of her many children. As for her style of government, the young queen was determined to follow the examples of her mother, Empress

Maria Theresa, and brother, Grand Duke Peter Leopold. They both believed that the ideal relationship between a ruler and his or her people should reflect the relationship between parents and children: characterized by affection, care, and absolute authority on the part of the parent/ruler, and love, reverence, implicit obedience, and unquestioning submission from the child/subject. Maria Carolina was ready to put the precious advice she had received from her mother and Prince Kaunitz into practice, but first she needed to persuade her husband to dismiss Tanucci, whom she considered too much of an intrusive presence. In this task she was aided by the fact that a strong opposition group had developed in response to the minister's policies and his cultivation of ever closer ties between Naples and Madrid during his period in office.⁴²

The early 1780s witnessed a major reorganization of government in Naples and exponential growth in the political authority of Maria Carolina. A number of her policies may be linked directly to the advice she received from Kaunitz in his memorandum, and he certainly seems to have set the template for her management of state affairs. For instance, the Kingdom of Naples started to focus on asserting its national independence and attempted to extricate itself from oppressive foreign economic influence. Maria Carolina championed both of these policies while portraying herself as a passionate Neapolitan patriot, notwithstanding her Austrian background. In order to implement them, she established close relationships with a number of favourites, both public and private, who were offered protection and the promise of rapid progress to significant positions at court in return for their loyalty and support.⁴³ There were some highly talented economists and philosophers in this group, including Domenico Grimaldi, Gaetano Filangieri, Giuseppe Palmieri, Domenico di Gennaro, and Duca di Cantalupo.

Maria Carolina also relied on the advice of her two brothers, Emperor Joseph II and especially Grand Duke Peter Leopold, throughout her reign.⁴⁴ They both provided unflinching support for their sister in all of her government affairs, especially in the 1780s, although Peter Leopold played a much more active role than Joseph,⁴⁵ probably because of the geographical distance that separated the latter from his sister. Indeed, in Joseph's first few letters to Maria Carolina after she became queen, he urges her to ask Peter Leopold for anything she needs, while also advising her to remain strong and prudent, and never to give her letters to strangers.⁴⁶ Like Kaunitz before him, Joseph clearly had complete faith in his sister and believed she was up to the task that he and Maria Theresa had entrusted to her. However, he did issue occasional rebukes and a few very strict warnings.

Several other letters reveal the deep affection that Maria Carolina felt for Peter Leopold: he was her closest confidant and an ideal example to follow, so she felt she could ask him for advice on any topic. She also took every opportunity to share her daily life at court with him. It was Peter Leopold who suggested that Maria Carolina should adopt a series of strategies to improve and modernize the kingdom. In return, she asked for his help in reorganizing the navy. The queen's ultimate aim was to turn Naples into a base that would aid the Habsburgs' plans to achieve dominance in the Mediterranean, which would demand good mercantile

and military fleets. However, there was a distinct shortage of naval expertise in Naples at the time, so in 1778 Maria Carolina asked Peter Leopold if she might borrow one of his most gifted naval officers, John Acton:⁴⁷

Our situation needs a good navy since we are surrounded by the sea, close to the pirates, and for our business and not to be insulted [a navy] is necessary for us ... [W]e lack an honest man, as you know, who is capable of [understanding] details, incapable of stealing, and knows how to command ... My dear husband would like to give the secretaryship of the navy to Acton, or commandant of the sea might be a more useful position at first, as that would enable him to formulate plans to build and sustain our navy ... For an honest man this could take a few years and if you would be good enough to lend Acton he would become secretary of the navy ... We have no one in our state.⁴⁸

Peter Leopold acceded to his sister's request and gave Acton permission to relocate to Naples.⁴⁹ The officer, a member of a noble Anglo-Irish family who had served in the French navy prior to joining the Tuscan fleet, accepted the offer and made the journey south. As early as the spring of 1780, with his measures to modernize and strengthen the Neapolitan fleet already having an impact, he was promoted to secretary of war – the government minister with responsibility for all of the kingdom's armed forces. Within a few years, he had also masterminded the building of new shipyards and the establishment of schools for officers. These initiatives facilitated the expansion of Naples's international trade and helped the kingdom to profit from the steady growth of commercial exchanges with France and England, which had always been intermittent in the past. This era also witnessed the first attempts to establish diplomatic relations with Russia, and Acton made progress towards setting up bases in the Mediterranean. In addition, he started to restructure the Neapolitan army in 1786.

Meanwhile, the powerful reformist movements in Naples and Sicily started to exert their influence on the administration of both kingdoms.⁵⁰ The astute and increasingly indispensable Acton played a leading role in the government restructuring that ensued. At the same time, however, this was when the image of a sly, libertine queen started to emerge. King Charles had long believed that Maria Carolina was manipulating Ferdinand IV and orchestrating Naples's shift away from Spain and towards his European rivals. And in 1784 and 1785, the Neapolitan court's pro-Spanish faction attempted to damage Maria Carolina's reputation by repeatedly hinting at intimate relations with the ministers who implemented government policy – especially Acton, whom the faction had never accepted.⁵¹

Understandably, given the seriousness of the accusations against her, this was the main topic of several letters that Maria Carolina exchanged with Peter Leopold in those years. In addition, the letters contain sensitive political information, reports on the conduct of ambassadors and courtiers, and several requests for help. Peter

Leopold was always willing to offer solace and advice to his sister, but he was also prepared to issue a reproach, if necessary:

You report to me the pains you have and the sorrows that come to you from Spain, which I realize are unpleasant[.] I am close to you, but nevertheless let me tell you, you have attracted them to yourself by acting precipitously ... and as a result of this you indicate to me an extract from the letter sent by the King of Spain to your husband, and since he names your parents in it, you take it as a cue to tell me that the Emperor, my wife and I have written to the Court of Spain to cause you harassment, recriminations and trouble, and you want us to reproach you for your wrongs ... On this occasion allow me, given my attachment to you, to warn you that your vivacity and impulsiveness often lead you to be misled by first impressions and to take a somewhat aggressive position towards me[.] I do not care, but very often towards others this behaviour could have consequences that might cause you trouble.⁵²

As Maria Carolina pressed ahead with the government reforms and thereby strengthened Acton's position, the Spanish ambassador informed King Charles that there was considerable opposition to both her policies and the behaviour of the court. Meanwhile, the Spanish faction continued to plot against both the minister and the queen,⁵³ especially after Acton was assigned the role of liberating the Neapolitan court from Spanish influence. Indeed, Ferdinand entrusted many other tasks and duties to Acton's department too, and thereby reduced the authority and influence of the ministers who remained loyal to his father.⁵⁴

Emperor Joseph and Grand Duke Peter Leopold played pivotal roles in unmasking the plotters against the queen, as the following letter reveals:

You have in Naples a number of adventurers and bad subjects from every nation who conspire, harass, spy and write things that are unheard anywhere else in the world, and especially in Spain and France, as you will have learned from the Gazette of the Netherlands[.] I know for sure that Madame de Herreria, the wife of the Minister of Spain, has talked about this and she writes about it in a very bad way.⁵⁵

It now seems clear that the allegations against Acton and the queen were fabricated by the pro-Spanish faction within Naples,⁵⁶ but they provoked panic among the various embassies at the time and the Spanish crown contemplated some extreme responses, such as insisting on Ferdinand's repudiation of Maria Carolina or the removal of both king and queen. However, the first of these suggestions was unenforceable because Ferdinand was not only deeply in love with his wife but more than happy to let her govern in his stead. Meanwhile, the second was impractical because there was no alternative legitimate candidate for the throne.

Nevertheless, Maria Carolina still asked for her brothers' support to save not only her reputation and position but Acton's, too. As ever, they leapt to her

defence and issued public denials of the slanders and rumours that were circulating around Europe. Ultimately, it was this intervention that enabled Maria Carolina to emerge victorious from the power struggle within the Neapolitan court.

Conclusion

The houses of Bourbon and Habsburg-Lorraine both had designs on the Kingdom of Naples, but it was the latter, in the person of Maria Carolina, that exerted the most influence on the kingdom in the late eighteenth century. Her own letters as well as memoranda that were addressed to her before her marriage shed new light on what motivated her to initiate a reform process in the early 1780s. Moreover, she and her husband continued to receive valuable support and advice from her brothers, Joseph and Peter Leopold. Their profound interest in the Neapolitan court and the queen herself manifested their determination to keep the kingdom within the Habsburg sphere of influence and not let it fall back into the hands of the Bourbons.

To conclude, the Kingdom of Naples in the second half of the eighteenth century was administered by a queen who was determined to fulfil her political role. We know this because Maria Carolina revealed some of her deepest beliefs and emotions in her letters. She felt it was important to write not only because the process helped her to remember, but also because she wanted to record her thoughts for posterity.

The sources analysed here have shown that Maria Carolina was not only interested in politics and affairs of state from an early age but, like her mother, had an innate talent for ruling. Her education played a crucial role in preparing her for queenship, while the constant stream of advice from her mother and brothers encouraged her to assert and maintain her independence from the Spanish court.

Unfortunately, her impetuous personality gradually prevailed over these positive traits and contributed to shaping her reputation as a bad queen. This reputation was then cemented by the revolutions that her many years of almost absolute rule precipitated. Nevertheless, she was undoubtedly an influential protagonist among the splendours and miseries of the eighteenth century in the Kingdom of Naples.

Notes

- 1 Cinzia Recca, 'Maria Carolina and Marie Antoinette: Sisters and Queens in the Mirror of Jacobin Public Opinion', *Royal Studies Journal* 1 (2014): 17–36.
- 2 After the French Revolution, there was a clear fracture between the throne and the most intellectually and politically advanced classes, whom the sovereign and her court viewed as drivers of the revolution. On the Neapolitan revolutionary events during 1799, see, among others: Michelle Vovelle and John A. Davis, *Naples and Napoleon: Southern Italy and the European Revolution, 1780–1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Anna Maria Rao, 'The Neapolitan Revolution of 1799: Popular Societies in the Neapolitan Republic of 1799', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 4 (1999): 358–369.
- 3 This queen has been celebrated, flattered, and worshipped by many, but cruelly slandered by others. Among numerous biographies, the following are particularly important:

- Alexander Freiherr von Helfert, *Königin Karolina von Neapel und Sizilien im Kampfe gegen die französische Weltherrschaft 1790–1814* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1878) and Maria Karolina von Österreich: *Königin von Neapel und Sizilien* (Wien: G. P. Faesy, 1884); André Bonnefons, *Une ennemie de la Révolution et de Napoléon. Marie Caroline reine des Deux-Siciles (1768–1814)* (Paris: Perrin, 1905); Mary Charlotte Bearne, *A Sister of Marie Antoinette: The Life-story of Maria Carolina, Queen of Naples* (London: T. Fisher and Unwin, 1907); Amalia Bordiga Amadei, *Maria Carolina d'Austria e il regno delle Due Sicilie* (Napoli: Cooperativa Editrice Libraia, 1920); Egon Caesar Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter: Ein Lebensbild der Königin Marie Karoline von Neapel* (München: Bruckmann, 1950).
- 4 On the construction of Maria Carolina's bad reputation, see Cinzia Recca, *The Diary of Maria Carolina of Naples: New Evidence of Queenship at Court* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 97–109.
 - 5 See Friederike Hausmann, *Maria Carolina Königin von Neapel. Eine Biographie* (München: C. H. Beck, 2014); Cinzia Recca, *Sentimenti e politica. Il diario inedito della regina Maria Carolina di Napoli 1781–1785* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2014) and *The Diary of Maria Carolina of Naples*; Giulio Sodano and Giulio Brevetti, *Io la regina. Maria Carolina d'Asburgo-Lorena tra politica, fede, arte e cultura* (Palermo: Quaderni di Mediterranea, 2016); Melanie Traversier, *Le journal d'une reine. Marie Caroline de Naples dans l'Italie des lumières* (Paris: Champ Vallon, 2017).
 - 6 Mirella Maffrici, 'All'ombra della corte. Donne e potere nella Napoli borbonica (1734–1860)', in Adriana Valerio (ed.), *All'ombra della corte. Donne e potere nella Napoli borbonica (1734–1860)* (Napoli: Fridericiana Editrice universitaria, 2010), 69.
 - 7 Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter*, 18–22.
 - 8 Empress Maria Theresa to Maria Carolina, Schonbrunn, 9 August 1767, quoted in Arsenio Frugoni, *Consigli matrimoniali alle figlie sovrane, di Maria Teresa d'Austria* (Firenze: Passigli Editori, 2000), 60.
 - 9 Voltaire stressed the importance of good governance and contented subjects in his *L'Encyclopédie*, and such values were widely adopted in the courts of Enlightenment Europe. See Antonio Trampus, *Il diritto alla felicità: storia di un'idea* (Roma and Bari: Laterza, 2014); Vincenzo Ferrone, *Storia dei diritti dell'uomo* (Roma and Bari: Laterza, 2015); Will Durant and Ariel Durant, *The Age of Voltaire: The Story of Civilization*, Volume 9 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011).
 - 10 Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter*, 32 quotes some of this memorandum. I consulted the complete version that Frugoni translated into Italian, edited, and published in *Consigli matrimoniali*, 37–78.
 - 11 Frugoni, *Consigli matrimoniali*, 54.
 - 12 Frugoni, *Consigli matrimoniali*, 70–71.
 - 13 Frugoni, *Consigli matrimoniali*, 57, 60, 69.
 - 14 Frugoni, *Consigli matrimoniali*, 64.
 - 15 Frugoni, *Consigli matrimoniali*, 68.
 - 16 Kaunitz's memorandum is dated 17 March 1768, comprises twenty-six pages, and is written in German. See Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Obersthofmeisteramt, *Ältere Zeremonialakten*, Karton 80, 4, *Memoire des Hof- und Staatskanzler Kaunitz für die Erzherzogin Maria Karoline betreffend das politische System des Erzhauses (anlässlich ihrer Vermählung mit Ferdinand IV, König beider Sizilien)*, 17 March 1768, fols. 1r–25v.
 - 17 Kaunitz (1711–1794) personified Enlightened absolutism and was ambassador in Paris from 1750 to 1753. From 1753, he was the principal Austrian negotiator at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, then state chancellor and foreign minister of the Habsburg monarchy.
 - 18 Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter*, 39.
 - 19 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 3.
 - 20 On the queen's charity and generosity, see Carmine Lancellotti, *Elogio di Maria Carolina, arciduchessa d'Austria, regina delle Due Sicilie* (Napoli: Tipografia Flautina, 1829), 11–15.
 - 21 Jacques Joseph Duguet, *Institution d'un prince, ou traité des qualitez, des vertus et des devoirs d'un souverain, soit par rapport au gouvernement temporel de ses états, ou comme chef d'une société*

- chrétienne, qui est nécessairement liée avec la religion* (Londres: Jean Nourse, 1711); Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 17.
- 22 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 7.
 - 23 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fols. 4v–5r.
 - 24 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 5r.
 - 25 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 9.
 - 26 Here, Prince Kaunitz mentions the Seven Years War (1756–1763), in which Austria battled against Frederick II of Prussia for control of Silesia. In connection with this war, see the recent studies by Franz A. J. Szabo, *The Seven Years War in Europe: 1756–1763* (London: Routledge, 2013); Matt Schuman and Karl W. Schweizer, *The Seven Year War: A Transatlantic History* (London: Routledge, 2012).
 - 27 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 23.
 - 28 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 24.
 - 29 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fols. 25–41.
 - 30 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fols. 41–44.
 - 31 Memorandum of Prince Kaunitz, fol. 63.
 - 32 On the distress suffered by Maria Carolina prior to her departure from Vienna, see Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter*, 38–40; Charles Antoine Hennequin, comte de Villermont, *Marie Thérèse. 1717–1780* (Paris: Desclée de Brower, 1895), 2:68.
 - 33 The marriage was celebrated on 7 April 1768 in Vienna at the church of the Augustinian in the presence of Maria Carolina, with her brother Peter Leopold taking the place of King Ferdinand. See Michelangelo Schipa, *Nel regno di Ferdinando IV* (Firenze: Vallecchi, 1938), 35–76.
 - 34 The marriage formed part of the political strategies of the Habsburg and Bourbon dynasties, each of which hoped to use it to serve their own interests. King Charles III of Spain aimed to consolidate the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily after driving the Austrians out of the former and founding an autonomous territory in 1734. Meanwhile, Maria Theresa hoped to strengthen her family's presence in Italy following her son Peter Leopold's accession to the grand duchy of Tuscany. These marital plans were associated with the so-called '*renversement des alliances*', which was a consequence of the War of the Austrian Succession. Regarding the two sides' mutual interest in the union, Maria Theresa wrote a letter to Ferdinand IV in which she expressed her strong desire for the marriage. See Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Hausarchiv (HA), Ministerium des k. k. Hauses, Vermählungen, Karton 14, 1, Lettera di Maria Theresa to Ferdinand IV, 8 Decembre 1768, fols. 12r–12v. On the '*renversement des alliances*' and the Kingdom of Naples, see Roberto Tufano, 'Le renversement des alliances europees e l'espulsione di Bernardo Tanucci dal governo delle Sicilie', *Frontiera d'Europa* 2 (2003): 87–178 and *La Francia e le Sicilie. Stato e disgregazione sociale nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia da Luigi XIV alla rivoluzione* (Napoli: Arte tipografica, 2009).
 - 35 This document is written in French and dated 21 April 1769. See Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Familien-Archiv, Hofreisen, 1, fasz. 2. Harold Acton, *I Borboni di Napoli (1734–1825)* (Milano: Martello Editore, 1961), 150–166, includes an extensive extract from the report.
 - 36 Ferdinand's daily routine is recorded in his personal diary, published by Umberto Caldora, *Diario di Ferdinando IV di Borbone* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1965).
 - 37 King Charles III of Spain ruled the Kingdom of Naples during his regency period, 1734–1759. On his kingship in Naples, see: Michelangelo Schipa, *Il regno di Napoli al tempo di Carlo di Borbone* (Roma: Dante Alighieri, 1923); Raffaele Ajello, 'La vita politica napoletana sotto Carlo di Borbone. "La fondazione ed il tempo eroico" della dinastia', in Luigi La Bruna (ed.), *Storia di Napoli* (Napoli: ESI, 1972), 7:461–717, and 'Carlo di Borbone', in Alberto M. Ghisalberti (ed.), *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Roma: Istituto Enciclopedico italiano, 1977), 20:961–984; Mirella Mafrić, *Il Re delle speranze: Carlo di Borbone da Madrid a Napoli* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1998); Giuseppe Caridi, *Essere re e non essere re. Carlo di Borbone a Napoli e le attese deluse (1734–1738)* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubettino, 2006); Giuseppe Galasso, 'Il regno di Napoli. Il

- Mezzogiorno Borbonico e Napoleonico', in Giuseppe Galasso (ed.) *Storia d'Italia*, 3–258 (Torino: Utet, 2007).
- 38 Raffaele Ajello, 'I filosofi e la regina. Il governo delle Due Sicilie da Tanucci a Caracciolo (1776–1886)', *Rivista Storica italiana* 103:3 (1991): 398–425.
 - 39 Ever since Charles of Bourbon's arrival in the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, Tanucci had initiated a number of reforms to improve the state's political-administrative apparatus. On his period in office, see: Enrica Viviani della Robbia, *Bernardo Tanucci ed il suo più importante carteggio* (Firenze: Bibliografia, 1942); Raffaele Ajello and Mario D'Addio, 'Bernardo Tanucci, statista, letterato, giurista', paper presented at the Conference of the Bicentenary 1783–1983, Napoli, 1988; Tufano, *La Francia e le Sicilie*.
 - 40 On the marriage negotiations, see Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter*, 37, 108–109.
 - 41 Maria Carolina to Grand Duke Leopold, 30 November 1779, quoted in Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter*, 112.
 - 42 The queen felt that Tanucci was responsible for generating discontent among the nobles due to his reforms and his abolition of Naples's freemasonry lodges. (Unlike her husband, Maria Carolina was openly sympathetic towards the movement.) For further details, see Anna Maria Rao, 'La massoneria nel regno di Napoli', in *Storia d'Italia*, Volume 21: *La massoneria*, 515–542 (Torino: Einaudi, 2006).
 - 43 Giuseppe Astuto, 'Dalle riforme alle rivoluzioni. Maria Carolina d'Asburgo: una regina austriaca', in Salvatore Aleo and Giuseppe Barone (eds), *Regno di Napoli e di Sicilia, in Quaderni del dipartimento di studi politici*, 27–51 (Milano: Giuffrè, 2007), at 33.
 - 44 Peter Leopold and Joseph also frequently mentioned the Kingdom of Naples and Maria Carolina when they exchanged letters between themselves. See Alfred Ritter von Arneth, *Joseph II und Leopold von Toscana, von 1781 bis 1790* (Wien: Braumüller, 1872).
 - 45 The correspondence between Maria Carolina and Peter Leopold reveals that he offered her advice on numerous public and private matters, ranging from how to alleviate her subjects' unhappiness and famine, to smallpox inoculations, to how to restrain her own impulsiveness. Peter Leopold also paid occasional visits to his sister and sent trusted envoys to monitor the Neapolitan situation. See Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Sammelbände des Hausarchivs, K. 10.
 - 46 Corti, *Ich, eine Maria Theresias Tochter*, 47.
 - 47 Acton, *I Borboni di Napoli (1734–1825)*, 199.
 - 48 Maria Carolina to Grand Duke Peter Leopold, Caserta, 28 April 1778, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Sammelbände des Hausarchivs, Karton 10, fols. 5r–6v: 'Notre situation porte la necessite d'un bonne marine etant entouré de mere pour voisins les pirates et pour notre Commerce et pour etre point insulté la marine nous est necessaire ... mais l'homme honete et de savoir nous manqué celui qui est capable de details incapable de voler et sut diriger cette oeuvre ... mon chere mary pensoit donner la Secretairie de la Marine a Acton ou la Comandament sur Mere a la premiere il nous pouvoit etre utile pouvant mettre les plans faire construire et soutenir notre marine ... en home honete cela pouvoit meme etre l'affaire de quelques années que vous euyez la bonté de nous le preter il seroit Secretaire de Marine ... Nous n'avons personne dans notre etats'. In this extract and those that follow I have translated the text largely verbatim to highlight Maria Carolina's rather simplistic and not always correct French.
 - 49 Recca, *The Diary of Maria Carolina*, 63–79.
 - 50 The Supreme Council of Finance, which was created in 1782, engaged with some of the best reformist minds in Naples, including Domenico Grimaldi, Gaetano Filangieri, and Giuseppe Palmieri. See Galasso, 'Il regno di Napoli', 527–531; Astuto, 'Dalle riforme alle rivoluzioni', 27–51.
 - 51 This is issue is highlighted in the testimonies of diplomats and travellers. See Mirella Mafri, 'Un'austriaca alla corte napoletana', in Mirella Mafri (ed.), *All'Ombra della Corte. Donne e potere nella Napoli borbonica (1734–1860)*, 51–82 (Napoli: Fridericiana, 2010), at 57–58.
 - 52 Grand Duke Peter Leopold to Maria Carolina, Caserta, 21 August 1784, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Sammelbände des Hausarchivs, Karton 10, fols. 123r–124v: 'Vous

me marquer les peines que vous avez, et les chagrins qui vous viennent de Espagne, je très bien comme ils sont desagreables, j'y prends toute la part, et vous en plains bien, quoique permettez mois que je vous le dire, vous vous l'êtes atterées un peu an partie par la precipitation avec laquelle vous en avez agi dans l'affaire ... et a la fuite de cela vous me marquez un extrait de lettre du Roi d'Espagne à votre Mari, et parce que il nomme vos parents, vous partez de la pour me dire qu'est ce mois, ma femme, et l'Empereur qui ont écrit en Espagne pour vous y faire des tracasseries, des recriminations et du desagrement, et vous voulez que nous reprochions vos torts ... Dans cette occasion permettez a mon attachement de vous avertir, que votre vivacité, et promptitude vous engages souvent à juger sur des soupçons dans un premier moment, et à prendre des partis un peu violents vis à vis de mois, cela ne fait rien, mais fort souvent vis à vis d'autres, cela pourroit avoir des fuites qui pourroient vous causer de desagrement'.

53 Ajello, 'I filosofi e la regina', 398–425.

54 Giuseppe Galasso, *Storia del regno di Napoli* (Torino: Edizioni Utet, 2009), 4:546.

55 Grand Duke Peter Leopold to Maria Carolina, 26 September 1784, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Sammelbände des Hausarchivs, Karton 10, fol. 127v: 'Outre cela vous avez a Naples une quantité d'aventuriers et mauvais sujets de toutes les nations, qui intriguent, tripotent, espionnent, et ecrivent par tout de choses de l'autre monde et surtout en Espagne, et en France comme vous l'aurez sû par le Gazette de Hollande, je sai pour sûr que Mad.me de Herreria femme du minister de Espagne tient de propos et ecrit très peu convenablement'.

56 The queen's journals and letters allude to the controversies and intrigues that threatened Naples at the time. For further details of the machinations of the pro-Spanish faction, see Ajello, 'I filosofi e la regina', 657–738. There are also several references to the plots in the queen's diary: see Recca, *The Diary of Maria Carolina*, 79–90.

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