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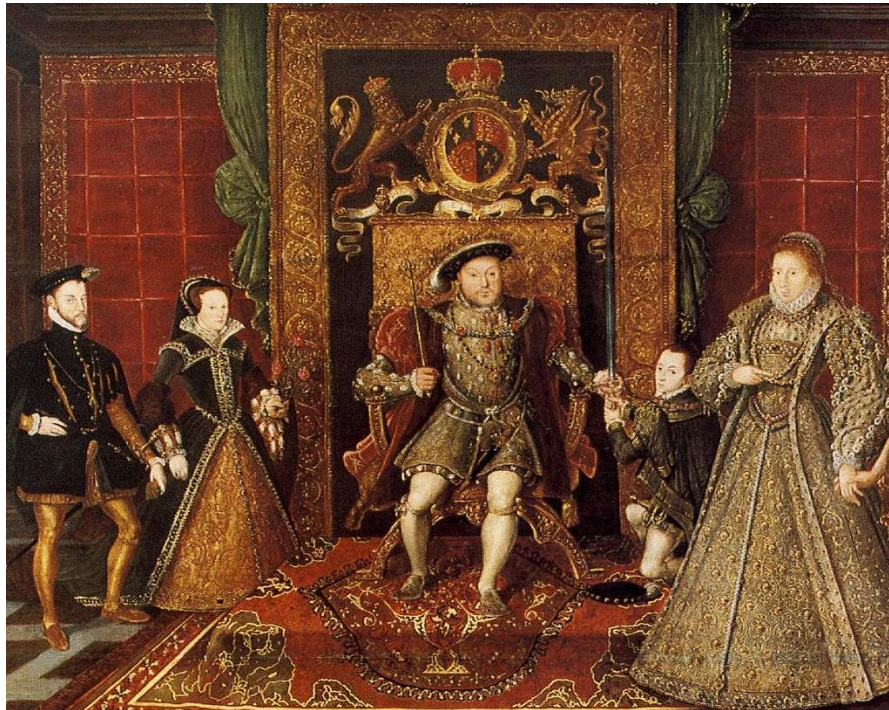
MORE THAN A CROWN: ROYALTY IN HISTORY



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MORE THAN A CROWN: ROYALTY IN HISTORY



Letter from the Editor

2022 marks Queen Elizabeth II's 70th anniversary of her Coronation with celebrations of her Platinum Jubilee happening across the nation. For the final issue of History Student Times, the theme is royal history. This year is particularly special for the British monarchy as Queen Elizabeth becomes the only British Monarch to celebrate 70 years on the throne and the 2nd longest reigning monarch of all time, just recently surpassing Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) of Thailand.

However, though some of this issue does focus upon British monarchy, this issue also highlights other global monarchies and their rulers. It is important to stress that not all of royal history should be 'celebrated,' especially the atrocities caused by the hand of those in power. Aside from the complex history, I hope that this issue brings to light some new perspectives of Global Royalty.

Henna Ravjibhai

NOTE: Some of the articles cover some potentially upsetting or triggering events. I have done my best to flag these with content warnings (CW) 3

THE TUMULTUOUS LIFE OF THE FIRST QUEEN REGNANT

Chloe Haney

CW: Mental illness

Mary Tudor was the first queen regnant of England (excluding the disputed reigns of Empress Matilda and Lady Jane Grey). Despite this, she is better remembered today as 'Bloody Mary', for sentencing some 280 Protestants to burn at the stake throughout her reign. Although this was a harsh series of executions, brutal punishment was the norm for Tudor heretics. Mary's life and memory deserve more contextualization than we give it.

As a child, Mary's life was turned upside down by the divorce of her parents. When her father, Henry VIII, converted to Protestantism to annul his marriage to her mother, Catherine of Aragon, she was deemed illegitimate and stripped of her titles. At just 17 years old, her household was dissolved, and she was made to move into her newborn half-sister Elizabeth's household. Alongside this, she was not permitted to see her mother from 1531, and Catherine died before Mary could visit her again. Unsurprisingly, Mary adamantly refused to accept Anne Boleyn as Queen, or Elizabeth as a princess. Alongside these familial issues, Mary had continuous struggles with mental and physical illnesses from around 1531, initially believed to be caused by irregular menstruation. These sicknesses only worsened as the years passed, and she was continuously treated by royal physicians for her illnesses. It is known that she also struggled with depression continuously throughout her life. This issue was likely worsened by the emotional impact of her father's actions, and she was noted to be completely distraught by her lack of contact with Catherine before her death.

Later in their lives, Henry and Mary worked to restore their relationship. In 1544, Henry passed the Succession Act, reassigning Mary to the succession. Despite this, the young Edward VI

changed his succession plan shortly before his death to replace his sister Mary with his Protestant cousin, Jane Grey. Fortunately for Mary, the public deemed her the rightful heir. She gathered support rapidly and was able to take the throne from Jane after she had experienced only nine days in power. Though she initially proclaimed that her subjects could follow their choice of religion, Mary was a devout Catholic Queen from the beginning. She quickly made it her duty to overturn the religious settlements that her father began.



One of her first ports of action as Queen was to have an heir. As the only Catholic left in the Tudor dynasty, she was eager not to let her Protestant sister succeed the throne. So, Mary finally decided to marry and take Philip of Spain as her husband in June 1554. This proved to be a bad decision - both parliament and the public disliked Philip for his Catholicism, his Spanish heritage, and the fear that he would make England a dependent of the Habsburg Empire. As England's first undisputed queen regnant, there was no precedent for the position of power that the man who married Mary would take over the country. Queen Mary's Marriage Act was passed to solve this issue, deciding that her husband would receive the title of King of England and co-reign with Mary, while ensuring Mary maintained overall authority in England.

Tragically, Mary experienced a false pregnancy shortly after her marriage to Philip. She went through all the symptoms of pregnancy for a full nine months before her abdomen began to recede, even releasing her sister Elizabeth from house arrest to witness the birth in April 1555. Gossip spread rapidly through the court as no baby appeared, and Mary is said to believe that the event was God's punishment for tolerating

heretics in her kingdom. Philip left for Flanders soon after it became apparent that the pregnancy was false, and Mary fell back into a deep depression as a result.

In 1557 she believed she had fallen pregnant again. This time, however, it seemed she was experiencing physical illness rather than a false pregnancy. It is believed now that she was suffering from uterine cancer or ovarian cysts, which caused her immense pains and physical weakness. When March 1558 passed and no baby had been born, Mary was forced to accept that her Protestant sister would be her successor. She died on 17th November 1558 during an influenza epidemic, in pain from her illness and without a Catholic heir to succeed her.

Queen Mary I had a tragic, tumultuous life of repeated disappointments and failures. She was a deeply emotional woman who suffered from continuous physical and mental illnesses and experienced more than one life-changing event. Her religiously driven executions were a part of her life that should be remembered and condemned by history, but it is unfair that we so often disregard the immense emotional turmoil that she dealt with throughout her life.

(UN)POPULAR MEMORY: DUTCH DECOLONISATION

The Rijksmuseum displays Paelinck's state portrait of Willem I, the first King of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands swathed in the royal robe with the regalia. Willem's hand lays upon a map of Java; the centre of Indonesia's struggle for independence and the central source of income for the Dutch royal family for centuries through his ownership of the Dutch East India Company. In order to gain favour with the British, William I declared the abolition of the Dutch transatlantic slave trade in 1814 yet slavery survived in the Dutch colonies, upheld as a legal and economic system.



Referred to as 'emancipation' the abolition of slavery in the Dutch East Indies, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles in 1863 was accredited to Willem III. The Utrecht Provincial and Urban newspaper declared 'Remember the first of July 1863 as a happy day in Dutch history, as a fortunate moment during the reign of Willem II'. Despite the legal abolition of Dutch slavery as a direct consequence of British pressure and intervention, the public reaction interpreted the abolition as the result of the king's morality and humanitarianism, paralleling the moral force of William Wilberforce in Britain. Unlike in Great Britain, this emancipation was neither catalysed nor associated with a mass social movement against slavery as the Dutch rhetoric of freedom and democracy reigned. Today, this Dutch master narrative of a culture of democracy, freedom and tolerance is threatened by the discussion of and research into Dutch slavery and colonisation, enabling their culture of repressive tolerance. Until the end of the 20th century, Dutch involvement in the Atlantic slavery system

remained a non-issue in the public domain, largely absent in the collective memory of Dutch public institutions and society.

The current King Willem-Alexander during his trip to Indonesia in 2020 apologized for the use of 'excessive violence' during colonial rule. This was the monarchy's first admission of regret, succeeding previous apologies by Dutch government ministers. The monarchy has also returned historical artifacts and ceased the use of a historic golden carriage, De Gouden Koets which is decorated with an image that glorifies the country's colonial past. This display politics represents a significant forward shift for Dutch cultural memory, led by their monarchy. As the royal family holds itself as 'popular monarchy' with a position of unofficial influence as an emblem of Dutch nationalism, their role in amending such relations opens discussions and introduces these socially forgotten dark sides of Dutch history. Here, the Dutch monarch has led the way among former colonial powers in addressing the violence of their past. Yet such spectacle acts inherently fail to compensate previous Dutch colonies nor alter the national framework of slavery past. The opening of the Slavernijmonument (slavery monument) in Amsterdam exposed this distorted, dominant discourse as the ceremony was only attended by Queen Beatrix and political elites whilst crowds of people were stood behind a wall of police. Despite the initiative led by the Landelijk Platform Slavernijverleden, a group of organizations of Africans, Antilleans and Surinameses, their access was restricted whilst the Queen unveiled the monument as recognition of the Dutch slavery past. This public exclusion of these communities, many descendants of enslaved groups, demonstrates the national historical narrative of slavery and decolonisation held up by the monarchy, that continually fails to fully represent the impact of Dutch violence and exploitation. Thus, enabling the continuation of culturally repressive tolerance.

Flora Miller

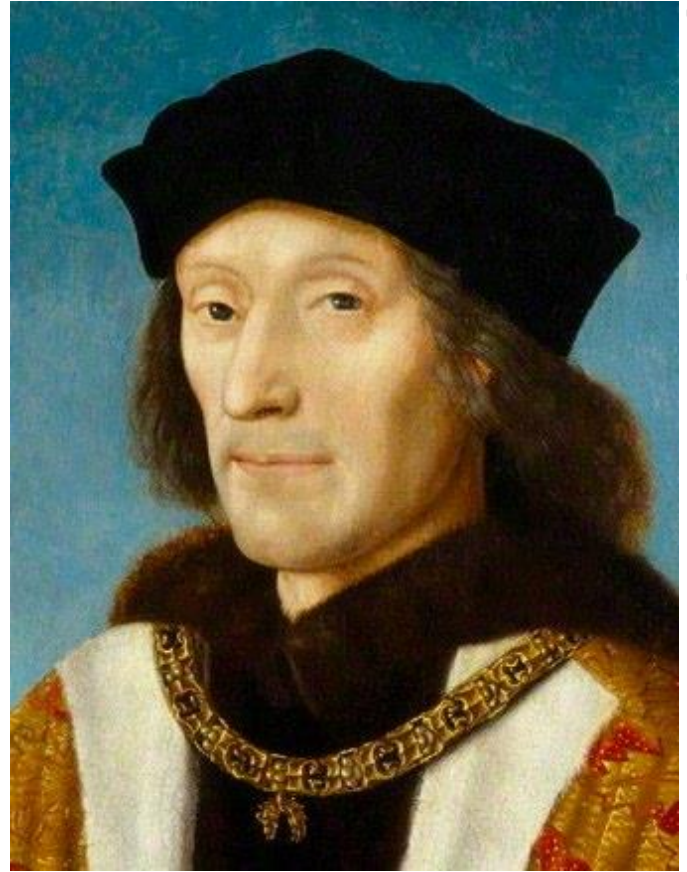
Henry VII: THE THEATRE OF MONARCHY

Max Hughes

Henry Tudor, an obscure descendant of Edward III, turned out to be England's unexpected answer to the question of the Wars of the Roses in 1485 after he claimed victory at the Battle of Bosworth. Henry defeated Richard III, the Yorkist king who had seized the throne from his young nephew Edward V; yet Henry's victory was not so much the end of a story as it was the prologue of a new one.

The English monarchy can be perpetually characterised as theatre, however the kingship of Henry VII altered the nature of the performance because of how obscure his claim to the English throne was. Henry's mother was a distant descendant of Edward III, and his father was the son of a Welsh servant. These were hardly suitable prerequisites for any fifteenth century king and Henry knew this. Claiming the throne by title of inheritance and by the judgement of God – in battle – was thus simply not enough because there still remained many individuals who could claim the throne with equal, if not more legitimacy. Therefore, over the course of his reign, Henry moulded the English monarchy into a pantomime of persuasion to buttress his claim and consolidate the Tudor dynasty. This allowed him to revitalise the previously medieval machinery of government and essentially enabled the emergence of the modern English nation state.

One of the first examples of Henry's showmanship can be identified as early as his arrival in London after his success at Bosworth. The city had been thrown into a state of anxiety by the news of Henry's victory, so much so that the Lord Mayor had imposed a curfew in order to prepare to receive the new king. Yet even at this early stage, Henry recognised the importance of showing himself to the people of his capital. When he entered the city on 3rd September, the streets were lined with citizens fighting to get a glimpse of their twenty-eight-year-old king. Henry rode through the city in a show of



pageantry and made straight for St Paul's Cathedral where he laid his standards from Bosworth – great flags depicting the Cross of St George, the Dragon of Wales and the Dun Cow of Warwick, the last being a symbol of the king's descent from the Lancastrian line. This was Henry's first great piece of theatre, the optics of which were likely something that Londoners had never before seen. Henry had purposely chosen to visit St Paul's because it was a hilltop citadel – one of the highest points in the city, and it was completely enclosed by a high wall which offered security in the uncertain days that lay ahead. To visit St Paul's was thus a calculated choice, not only was Henry protected there but the site also held important symbolism; it was essentially medieval London's equivalent to the Shard. The precinct atop Ludgate Hill, where St Paul's sat, was the most fitting stage for Henry's first performance because it enabled him to connect with his people in the sight of God.

As Henry's reign went on, he would continue to demonstrate the theatre of monarchy in a myriad of different ways, such as through magnificent architecture and opulence in his household. One of the most theatrical of tools which Henry used to ensure the permanence of his reign was undoubtedly his creation of the sovereign coin which depicted himself as 'sovereign' on one side, whilst on the other was an image of the Tudor rose superimposed onto the coat of arms of England. The coin's purpose was likely to be put into circulation not for Henry's own subjects, but for foreign visitors such as ambassadors and traders who would take them back to the continent, thereby spreading the word of Henry's power. Coins were the only real mass medium of Early Modern Europe and clearly Henry recognised this because he used them to advertise his legitimacy, extending the theatre of his monarchy onto the European stage.

Perhaps the most important way in which Henry used theatre though was by naming his first-born son Arthur, alluding to the legendary folklore of King Arthur and the roundtable. For many years before his death, Arthur was heir to the English throne and was hailed as the embodiment of his parents' union, which brought together the Houses of York and Lancaster, thereby ending the quarrels which had ignited the Wars of the Roses. Arthur was to be the Tudor dynasty's new leading man, and with a name which evoked thoughts of England's greatest king it looked as if Henry had assured the continuity of his dynasty. Arthur's death in 1502 was therefore, devastating to his father. Still, the theatrics of Henry's reign were constant. Henry continued to use appearances and

journeys to perpetuate what was expected of the English monarchy – grandeur, in the hope that this would deflect from the fact that he himself had invaded and usurped the throne. Henry had had no previous experience of kingship and had been a landless and penniless refugee for fourteen years. This makes it hardly implausible to suggest that his theatrical acceleration of the monarchy was an indication of his anxieties as well as a tactic to consolidate support. Whatever the motivation though, Henry's theatrics stabilised the medieval English kingdom and allowed him to focus on establishing a privy council and new financial chambers which gave new life to English government. This ensured the consecutive succession of his son, Henry VIII and three grandchildren, under whom, it is arguable that the modern English nation state emerged.

Therefore, what the English monarchy was, was theatre, and so the institution has remained until the twenty first century; just take the yearly state opening of parliament, royal weddings and the upcoming Platinum Jubilee as some notable examples. Whilst English history has experienced its ebbs and flows for over a thousand years, one thing has remained a constant, and that is the monarchy because its nature is to be expressive and malleable. Of course, the purpose of the monarchy is no longer to allow a sovereign to consolidate absolute power, but the theatrical elements are still there, being used to legitimise our government, laws and freedoms in much the same way that they gave legitimacy to Henry VII between 1485 and 1509.

A PATRIOTIC REGICIDE? The Legacy of Oliver Cromwell

Dominik Jesionowski

In January 1661, after Charles II sat upon the throne of England, restoring the monarchy, a mob decided to desecrate the burial site of Oliver Cromwell-The Lord Protector of the English Commonwealth (1652-1658), digging up his corpse and hanging it on the gallows. The period known as the interregnum (1649-1660) became remembered as a dark and unpleasant chapter in English history. Referring to someone as 'Cromwellian' would have been an insult similar to that of 'Machiavellian'. Yet less than two hundred years later, in 1840, the government commissioned a statue of the Lord Protector to be built in Westminster outside the Houses of Parliament. Ever since his death, Cromwell has been a polarising figure, the subject of many debates amongst not just historians, but the British public at large. Was he an evil tyrant? Or was he a strong, patriotic leader who embodied English values? In a country where the monarchy is still very popular, how is Cromwell to be remembered? It is an interesting question to ponder, especially as the country celebrates Queen Elizabeth's diamond jubilee.

Oliver Cromwell was a patriot who passionately defended England throughout his life. Of course, the idea of a nation state was not as defined as it is today. Many would have seen the King as being England. To Cromwell, a country was more than simply its ruler. In our times, this might not sound like the most revolutionary idea, but in the Seventeenth century it was almost unthinkable to put into practice. Every European state was governed by a monarch who was believed to have been chosen by God. We call this the 'Divine Right of Kings'. This is a significant reason for perceiving him as a symbol of British patriotism. Cromwell's drive for a constitution and a more democratic system of government could be seen as ahead of its time. His plan for a written constitution (The Instrument of

Government) was not passed in parliament but it was a very ambitious idea which would have predated the US constitution by over one hundred and twenty years. He embodied some of the political ideals popular during the French Revolution which occurred almost one hundred and fifty years later! (Inspired by Classical Rome.) With that being said, he did not live up to all of his pre-Civil War ideals. During his rule, frustrated by corruption and indecisiveness of government, Cromwell would dissolve parliament, thus himself becoming a dictator, although he refused the crown and wanted to determine a successor via an election. However, at the time, every ruler in Europe was in essence a dictator with absolute power, even more than Cromwell, see Louis XIV.

One of Cromwell's greatest achievements was the creation of the New Model Army, the first professional army in England and one of the first in Europe. I recommend having a look at surviving manuals which show how impressive this force was for its time.

It is not impossible to reconcile positive views of both Cromwell and the monarchy, as initially Oliver did not wish to execute Charles I. Following the loss in the Civil War, the King was in house arrest. Various lords and Members of Parliament including the Earl of Manchester visited him with reconciliatory proposals of settlement, which would essentially place the King back on the throne and return him to power. If such an agreement was to be reached, then all that the Parliamentarian forces fought for all these years, would be for nothing. Cromwell offered the King alternative (stricter) settlement terms multiple times. While they were not flattering for the monarch, they would have preserved his crown... and his head.

Cromwell has been remembered variously in culture. The 1970 film 'Cromwell' painted the Lord Protector in a positive light. He was the hero, standing up for the common folk and justice whilst having a vision of a strong, united England. For cinematic purposes of having a protagonist, Cromwell has been exaggerated. However, the film presents a solid argument against those who wish to portray him merely as a dictator and villain. Curiously enough, the monarchs who ruled before him held more absolute power, yet they do not seem to get as much of a bad reputation.

Decades later, Horrible Histories (the children's tv show) taught a generation of young people that

Cromwell was a deeply unpleasant and evil tyrant. This was an extension of a generally accepted sentiment. Yet historians, namely Christopher Hill and Antonia Fraser, wrote more positive biographies of this fascinating figure.

Cromwell showed that the King is not untouchable and exempt from responsibility. The regicide which occurred in January 1649 rang throughout Europe and the centuries to come. As a man of his time, he was a strong and pragmatic leader who strengthened England's position and deserves to be a symbol of English patriotism.



THE KING WHO RULED FOR 325 DAYS

Jessica Pitcher

King Edward VIII ruled for only 325 days, making him the shortest reigning monarch in British history and the only British monarch to voluntarily give up the throne. The story behind his abdication is one that is known around the world: he abdicated once it became clear that he could not remain King and simultaneously marry his partner, Wallis Simpson.

Various narratives exist around Edward, Wallis and their relationship. To some it's a love story for the ages: in which Edward sacrificed the crown, his right to live in England, and his relationships with his family to be with Wallis. To others Edward was a dangerous, war hungry king, whose abdication was a strategic move by parliament to remove him – a Nazi sympathiser – from the throne. There are also debates around Wallis' romantic feelings towards Edward: whether they were genuine or whether Wallis was a social climber with a desire above all else to be Queen.

Edward Windsor was born on June 23rd 1894 to King George V and Queen Mary of Teck. Edward ascended to the throne on January 20th 1936. Wallis Simpson was born Bessie Wallis Warfield on June 19th 1896 in Pennsylvania, America. Her first marriage was to Earl W. Spencer, an American pilot. The two married in 1916 and divorced in 1927. Her second marriage was to Ernest A. Simpson, a shipbroker, in 1928.

Edward and Wallis met at a house party in January 1931. The party was being held by Edward's then-mistress Lady Furness, and Wallis attended the party alongside her then-husband Ernest Simpson. Edward and Wallis developed a friendship, with Edward routinely visiting her and her husband's London home. The exact timeline of their romantic relationship is unknown, but it is clear that by January 1934 their relationship had become sexual, with royal staff claiming they witnessed the two in bed together. However, Edward always maintained that the two did not have a romantic relationship until Wallis filed for divorce in October 1936. The couple were actually photographed together on a cruise in August 1936, but due to a gag order on the English press the relationship remained hidden from the public until October.

So why was their relationship such a problem? And why did it lead to Edwards' abdication? Wallis had been twice divorced, with both her former spouses still living. This was a problem because at the time the Church of England did not recognise re-marriage in which former spouses were still living. As King, Edward was also head of the Church of England and therefore had to have a Church of England marriage – which he could not have with Wallis. Wallis being twice divorced was also a moral issue for the royal family, who did not consider Wallis worthy of the title of queen consort. Not only that but she was American, and at the time Anglo-American relationships were strained; it was believed, therefore, that the British public would not accept an American queen consort. Ultimately, it became clear that Edward could not marry Wallis if he wanted to be King.



In October 1936 Wallis filed for divorce from her husband Ernest Simpson. Her grounds were claims of adultery on his behalf, although it is widely assumed that these claims were false. The divorce proceedings set off alarm bells within parliament and the royal family, with insiders predicting that a marriage between Edward and Wallis, and therefore his abdication, was now inevitable. Indeed, on November 10th when the House of Commons met to discuss the coronation of Edward, MP John McGovern argued that it was a needless discussion as there likely wouldn't even be a coronation.

Edward made known his intentions to abdicate on November 16th 1936, when he met with Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin to inform him of his intentions to marry Wallis irrespective of the consequences. The abdication was finalised on December 10th and was announced to the public the following day via BBC radio broadcast in a speech by Edward himself. During this broadcast Edward famously explained his decision by saying: "I have found it impossible to...discharge my duties as King...without the help of the woman I love".

Edward and Wallis were married on June 3rd 1937 in France in a civil ceremony. Although they remained married until Edward's death in 1972, rumours have surfaced that Wallis cared little for Edward and the marriage – having affairs and treating Edward with disdain. However, it is worth noting that Wallis was villainised by the press and in the public; held responsible for the abdication. The strain of such a reputation and its foundation in her marriage may well have compromised her ability to be happy within said marriage. Wallis did not re-marry after Edwards death, herself dying on April 24th 1986.

The Palace that Remembers Everything and Hears All: **HAMPTON COURT AND THE POLITICS OF HENRY VIII**



Built on the banks of the Thames like most of its Tudor counterparts, Hampton Court Palace survives today as one of the most excellent examples of Tudor architecture despite its partial Stuart remodelling. Yet throughout its long history as a home to several English and British monarchs, it is hard to argue against the notion that its most famous resident was Henry VIII. Not only that but during his reign, Henry VIII would end up spending significant portions of his time here with grand moments such as the birth of his son Edward VI, the death of his third wife Jane Seymour and the marriages to his fifth and sixth wives Katherine Howard and Catherine Parr taking place inside Hampton Court's walls. But beyond these moments, the acquisition of the palace, its physical layout, and the additional structural features all allow for a deeper understanding of the politics of Henry VIII.

Interestingly the story of Hampton Court and its relationship with the politics of Henry VIII start not with a King but with a Cardinal – the previous owner, Thomas Wolsey. Cardinal Wolsey, known to some historically as alter rex

(other king), was unquestionably one of the most significant political figures of Henry VIII's early reign, and it was at Hampton Court that he settled when he leased the palace in 1515. This was beneficial because given the easy access it had to the Thames and its country surroundings, Hampton Court was ideally situated to provide Wolsey with both comfort of living and speedy access to the King. This was critical in an era of personal monarchical rule, and it was there that Wolsey entertained ambassadors and signed treaties on the King's behalf. During his time there Wolsey transformed Hampton Court into such a magnificent palace that contemporary poet John Skelton would remark, 'the kynges courte shulde have the excellence; but Hampton court hath the preemynence'; it is therefore, perhaps unsurprising to suggest Henry VIII may have formed some desire over the Cardinal's residence. In fact, this notion was enforced when, during his failure to provide Henry with his divorce from Katherine of Aragon, Henry took full control of the palace that he had partially owned since at least 1525.

Thereby demonstrating that not only was Hampton Court then on a royal residence, but that in the brutal politics of Henry's reign, everything could be lost if one failed to carry out the King's wishes.

As a royal palace, Hampton Court's layout was perfectly suited to its requirements as the physical manifestation of the personal politics of Henry VIII's court. This can be evidenced by the changing size of rooms in the palace from the largeness of the Great Hall to the smaller presence chamber, meaning those who managed to make their way into those rooms were able to inch closer to both the King's privy chambers and to his actual presence given the smaller size of the rooms. The closer one got physically to the King was a sign of political ascendancy, and this can be reflected in two contemporary examples. Firstly, John Heywood's *The Play of the Weather*, a satirical re-enactment on the Tudor court, shows the characters in favour moving towards Jupiter (representative of Henry VIII) and those out of favour forced to move backwards. Secondly, the Eltham Ordinances of 1526 by Wolsey took strict action against the privy chamber workers who, due to their proximity to the King, had amassed significant political influence. These included William Compton and Henry Norris. Overall, closeness to the king was essential for Tudor political ascendancy and the layout of Hampton Court provided the perfect vector for the physical regulation of that closeness with only the favoured being able to make it through various rooms.

But beyond the acquisition of Hampton Court and its physical layout, the additional structural features of the palace allow for some interesting insights into the politics of Henry VIII's court. Scattered throughout the palace, various symbols of the queens and ministers of Henry VIII can be seen, from the forgotten stone-carved pomegranates for Katherine of Aragon and painted over Cardinal badges to the accidentally left-behind H&A lovers-knot for Anne Boleyn, and the rushed lather-mache phoenixes of Jane Seymour. These symbols and their sometimes erasures, can be seen as a permanent reminder of

the dramatic rises and falls political figures who made their home at Hampton Court. But more sinisterly than that, the political paranoia and danger of Henry VIII's court was made perfectly clear through the human-faced eavesdroppers installed in the Great Hall by Henry VIII whose entire purpose appears to have been to show all those at Hampton Court that everything they said and did was watched and that even the walls of the palace were listening to them. From this, Hampton Court could, in many ways, be considered its own entity; an almost alive Tudor shapeshifter of a palace whose momentary appearance and layout demonstrated those who were in power and whose scars, in the form of time-forgotten structural features, reflected those who had lost that favour.

To Conclude, the history of Hampton Court Palace can allow for some unique personal insights into the political life of Henry VIII's court and the danger that came with it.

Additional Reading:

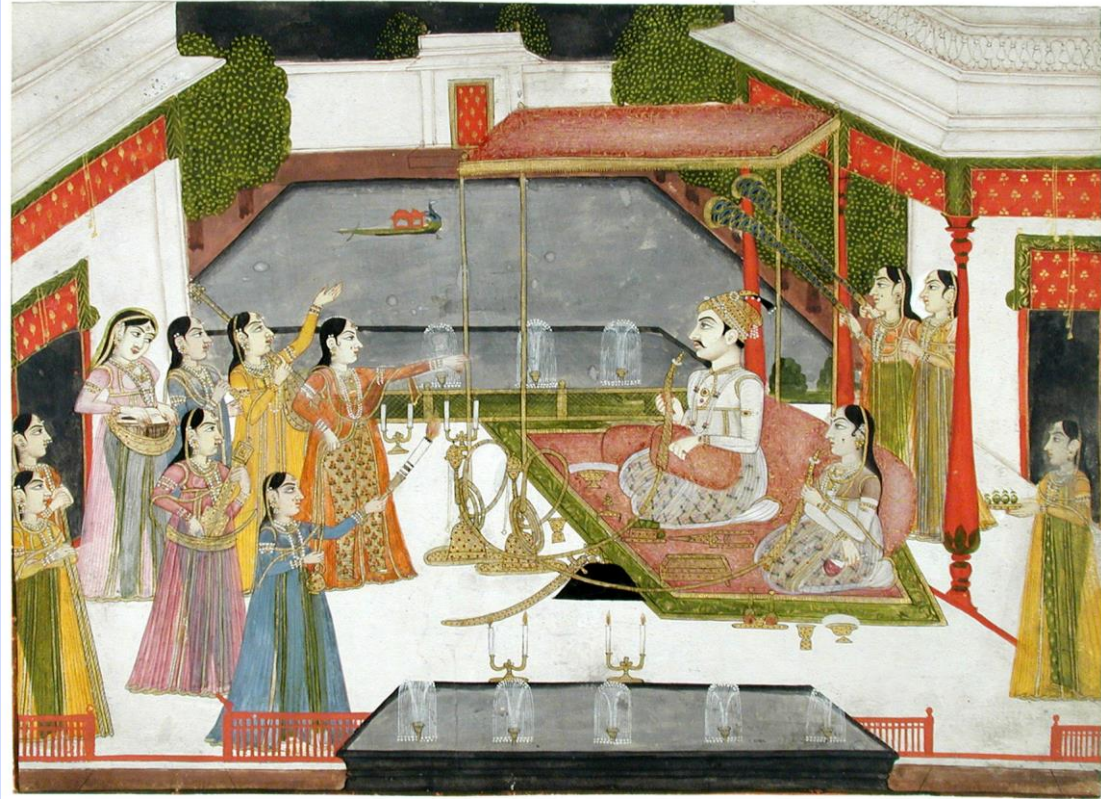
Peter J. Gwyn, The Kings Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey, (London: Pimlico, 2002)

Skelton Quote from: Sebastian Sobceki, 'Law and Politics', in A Critical Companion to John Skelton, ed. Sabastian Sobceki and John Scattergood, (London: D. S. Brewer, 2018), pp.37-52, p.41

Charlotte McDonnell

THE NAWABS OF BENGAL AND THEIR RESISTANCE TO COLONISATION

Sanath Sha



Mir Qasim was made the Nawab of Bengal in 1760 with the help of the British East India Company. He succeeded his father-in-law, Mir Jafar and established himself as an able administrator. The Province of Bengal at this point in history referred to the present-day East India. This area of the Indian Subcontinent is said to have one of the most fertile lands and abundant resources. Both Mir Jafar, and Mir Qasim were installed as the Nawab of Bengal with the help of the British East India Company (EIC) but there was a stark difference in their reign. Mir Qasim, unlike his father-in-law responded to British pressure with measures to curb the East India Company's power and authority. Mir Qasim foresaw the imperialistic ambitions of the British Company and tried to exert his own rule over Bengal. This inevitably led to a confrontation with the British turning into a military conflict between Indian rulers and foreign colonizers.

The Battle of Plassey in 1757 is spoken of as the start of British colonial rule. Fought between the Nawab Siraj-Ud-Daula's army backed by the French and the EIC troops under Major General Robert Clive (often referred to as Clive of India), the British company managed to clinch a decisive victory. The British had feared being outnumbered and as a result formed a secret alliance with Mir Jafar, the commander in Chief of the Nawab's army. After the British victory, Mir Jafar would be made Nawab. The British, however, had considerable influence over him and he was seen by the historians in general as a puppet ruler. After being installed as the Nawab, he was put under huge financial demands of the British. Unable to handle the financial burden imposed on him and not being able to stand up to the British, Mir Jafar was replaced by Mir Qasim as the Nawab of Bengal in 1760.

Mir Qasim, as the Faujdar (a military officer) of Rangpur, had already established himself as more capable than his father-in-law.

After usurping the position of Nawab, Mir Qasim paid the British with several gifts including individual grants to key officials. Southern districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong were transferred to the company. British officials kept striking individual deals with the Nawab and his courts men. This was in addition to the company's notorious traders, whose actions took away many sources of revenue from the Nawab. Mir Qasim soon realised the burden that his father-in-law was out under. The private interests of the British kept undermining his authority, threatening the position that he held. But unlike Mir Jafar, Mir Qasim would not sit idle and cripple under pressure. Mir Qasim shifted his capital to Mungher, away from the company who were present in Calcutta. Mir Qasim's officials began to seduce the troops of the Company to switch to his side, offering them higher wages. Another factor that is pointed out by Historians is that Mir Qasim was able to rally all sections of his population towards his cause.

The immediate cause that ignited direct confrontation between the Nawab and EIC was the Nawab's response to the trading privileges enjoyed by the British. The British had been given the power to issue Dastaks. Dastaks were passes that the company could use to trade freely in India and avoid duties. The British heavily abused this power as their officials used this dastaks for their own private trade and for their Indian agents. This considerably reduced the revenue of the Nawab. Mir Qasim responded by capturing European ships coming into Bengal and levying taxes on them. He further suspended all duties putting the Indian traders on equal footing as the British. The situation did not respond well to the British interests who needed the Nawab's influence to be for their gain. They disposed of Mir Qasim and Mir Jafar was put back in his place. The prestige of the Nawab was in terrible condition. Mir Qasim could not take the insult and fighting inevitably broke out between Mir Qasim's army and the EIC troops.

Mir Qasim's ill trained and ill equip army was pushed out of Bengal, and he took refuge in the neighboring territory of Awadh. He was not to sit idle as his title was snatched away by the imperialist powers. Determined to take back his reign, Mir Qasim returned with the capable army of the Wazir (ruler) of Awadh and the forces of Shah Alam II, the Mughal emperor (ruler of Delhi) of the time. The three Indian rulers combined forces and fought the British for the territory of Bengal. The superiority of British military and armaments held up against the Indian rulers and Mir Qasim was defeated in the Battle of Buxor, 1764.

Mir Qasim was the last independent ruler of Bengal. After his defeat, the British East India Company took absolute control of Bengal reducing the power of the Nawab to a mere figurehead. Mir Qasim's display against the colonial powers seemed to have put them on their toes. As the EIC took more territories and gradually colonised the whole of India, they never let any Indian ruler have any independent power. The British authorities wanted to prevent such an outbreak again. The defeat of the Nawab led to the unchecked plundering of Bengal's resources. The British colonialist had found their footing in the Battle and Plassey and their ambitions were spearheaded after the victory at Buxor. Mir Qasim's foresight of British imperialism and his resilience puts forward a history that would inspire later revolts in India such as the great Revolt of 1857.

Further Readings:

Marshall, P.J., The New Cambridge History of India: Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India 1740-1828 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)

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QUEEN CHARLOTTE: The Fact within the Fiction

In 2020 Netflix introduced viewers to Queen Charlotte in its regency drama *Bridgerton*. Played by Golda Roscheivel, Queen Charlotte is represented as an outspoken, gossip-loving socialite - her portrayal by a Black woman bringing both admiration from viewers, and criticism from those failing to comprehend the show's melange of fact and fiction and the possibility that a Royal could be Black. Roscheivel's Queen Charlotte was inspired by the real Queen Charlotte who was married to King George III and who reigned from 1761 until her death in 1818.

England's first Black queen?

The race and ethnicity of Queen Charlotte has been debated and disputed by historians. The theory that Charlotte was the first Black royal was introduced in 1996 in the genealogical studies of Mario de Valdes y Cocom. According to Valdes, Charlotte was a direct descendent of Margarita de Castro y Sousa, a Black branch of the Portuguese Royal House. Valdes referred to various portraits of Charlotte, citing her features and darker skin as evidence of her Black heritage.

However, the work of Valdes has been disputed and his use of outdated and racist language condemned. Regardless, even if Queen Charlotte's status as the first Black royal is solely a rumour, this rumour influenced a more diverse casting approach to the *Bridgerton* series. Chris Van Dusen, *Bridgerton*'s producer, saw this rumour as something that "really resonated with [him], because it made [him] wonder what that could have really looked like. And what would have happened? [...] Could the queen have elated other people of colour in society and granted them titles and lands and dukedoms?"

Marriage to King George III

Travelling to England from Germany in 1744, 17-year-old Charlotte married the King just six hours after her arrival. Together they had 15 children and it is believed that their marriage was indeed a devoted "love match". As seen in the *Bridgerton* series, King George did, however, suffer from mania earning him the name "the mad king". His first bout of illness in 1788 led to

a mental decline, and subsequent bouts in 1801, 1804 and 1811 made the king so violent that Charlotte had to avoid him, fracturing their previously close relationship. Despite this, Charlotte loyally acted as her husband's guardian up until her own death in 1818.

Interests and pastimes

Bridgerton's Queen Charlotte is presented as an eccentric social influencer who owned zebras and loved sniffing snuff as well as influencing the social life of the "ton". Snuff was a finely powdered tobacco that we see being snorted by the Queen in *Bridgerton*. The real Queen Charlotte was so fond of the stuff that she earned the nickname "Snuffy Charlotte". As also shown in the series, Queen Charlotte was one of the leading collectors of wild animals during the era. She owned zebras, elephants and kangaroos and even gifted these animals (as well as Pomeranians) to her friends.

Bridgerton's Queen Charlotte was central to the social life of the "ton" as was the real Queen. The first known debutante ball was hosted in her name when King George established the annual Queen Charlotte's Ball in 1780 to commemorate her birthday.

Just as *Bridgerton* entertains without being an accurate representation of history, its representation of Queen Charlotte is inspired by history, not a completely accurate reflection of it. Nonetheless, its representation of Queen Charlotte offers a glimpse into the Regency Era and her portrayal by a Black woman is a step in the right direction for on-screen representation.



Olivia Tait

LOVE AT THIRD REICH: EDWARD VIII'S WARTIME TREASON

CW: Antisemitism

Jenna Shamash



On December 11th, 1936, His Majesty, King Edward the VIII delivered a BBC radio broadcast that explained that he in fact was no longer “His Majesty the King.” This announcement was the outcome of one of the most scandalous royal crises in British history, as Edward elected to abdicate the throne in order to marry Wallis Simpson, a twice divorced American Catholic who was rejected as a suitable match by the British establishment.

This tale of “romance” is a largely well-known piece of British history. However, is that the whole story? Are there perhaps other reasons as to why Edward was not able to continue his kingship? Modern debates about the failed King argue that perhaps more was occurring than his

disreputable romances, that the opposition to his match with Simpson was an excuse to remove a monarch deemed unsuitable for the role.

How suitable would it have been for Britain to have a Nazi King at the time of World War II?

Up until World War I, the British Royal family maintained the surname of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and sustained close relationships with their cousins in the German Royal Family. Edward strongly embraced German culture and was appalled by the horrors of World War I. This conceivably led to his infatuation with rising Nazism as Edward praised the Nazi’s economic recovery of Germany.

The antisemitic policies of the Nazi party were not much more than a second thought to Edward who in 1933 allegedly told a German cousin that it was “no business of ours to interfere in Germany’s internal affairs either re Jews or re anything else.”

Edward would go on to show outspoken support for the British Union of Fascists, heightening the fears of the British establishment. The heir to the throne had to be much quieter when expressing his political sentiments. But Edward did not quiet down. He began an affair with Wallis Simpson who was well known amongst the British intelligence establishment for her romantic entanglement with Nazi official Joseph von Ribbentrop, Germany’s ambassador to Britain between 1936 and 1938. Simpson would purportedly give von Ribbentrop confidential state secrets from the British government.

After the abdication, Edward elected to travel to Germany with his new wife. Despite the British governments strenuous pleas to stay away from Germany, in 1937 the pair travelled there and received the royal welcome that they were denied in Britain. The trip was the perfect occasion¹⁸ for Edward to garner some European support for him

and his bride; they were greeted with curtsies and bows, lavish receptions and Nazi salutes.

Hermann Göring and Joseph Goebbles received the couple who would go on to tour the training grounds for SS soldiers. The highlight of the trip, however, was their private time with Adolf Hitler in his home in the Bavarian Alps. What exactly was discussed between the former British King and the German dictator is unknown to us now; but it perhaps has something to do with Operation Willi.

As World War II came to an end, a cache of files was uncovered at Marburg Castle. Included in the 400 tons of paperwork was files about a secret endeavour; *Operation Willi*.

In 1940, Edward and his wife, residing in Spain, voiced their displeasure with Winston Churchill and the Royal Family to those who would listen. Approached by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, the couple were encouraged to lend support to the German war effort.

What would they get in return?

Once Germany had won the war, they would be instated as the King and Queen of Great Britain. This was Operation Willi. The couple neglected to tell the British government about this offer, delaying their departure from Spain by over a month in order to continue colluding.

In one discussion from the German ambassador to Lisbon, the Duke is alleged to have told

Spanish agents that: “continued severe bombing would make England ready for peace”.

Eventually the couple departed to the Bahamas where the Duke governed on behalf of the British government.

Churchill begged historians not to release Operation Willi to the public. Publication was held off until 1957 at which point both the Duke and the British Foreign Office denied any collusion. The Duke and his Duchess would enjoy a life of celebrity, hosting lavish parties in France and being received by both Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon before the Duke’s death in 1972 and the Duchess’ in 1986.

Their affiliations, however, did not die with them. Almost 80 years after the end of World War II, the Nazi sympathies of the former King and his wife are being exposed.

Season Two of Netflix’s *The Crown* delved into the scandal in 2017, with a dramatic narrative of Queen Elizabeth’s rejection of her uncle when Operation Willi was presented to her. In March of this year, celebrated historian Andrew Lownie delivered “Edward VIII: Britain’s Traitor King” to Channel 4.

As more information is uncovered about Edward VIII, public opinion may change. Once known for the romantic story of how he left the monarchy for his love, perhaps soon he will be known for betraying his country when it needed him most.

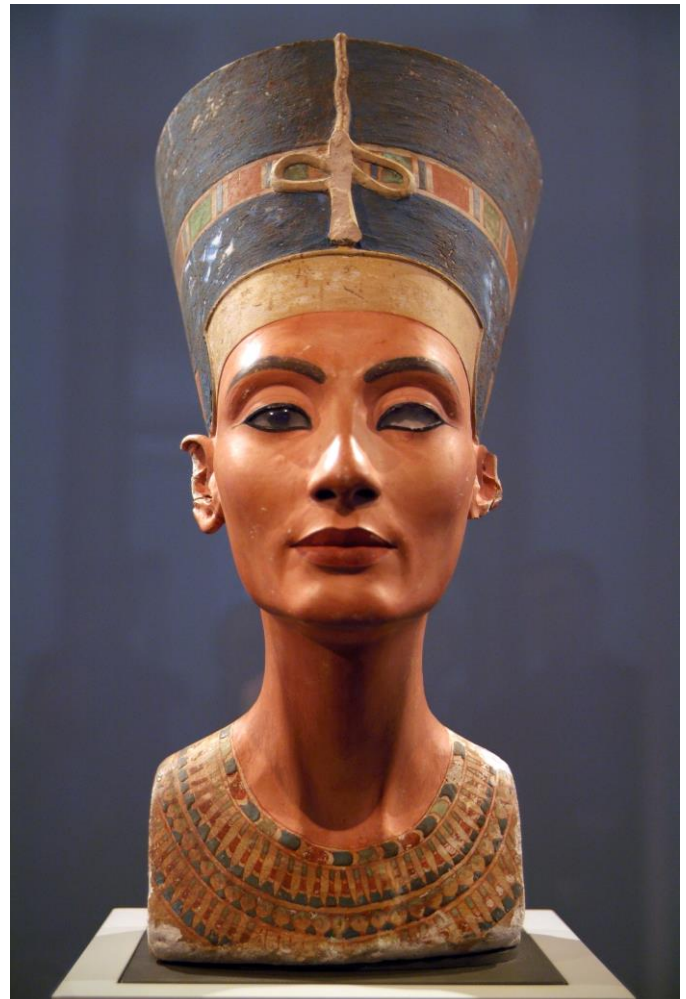
QUEENSHIP IN ANCIENT EGYPT

When discussing the history of royalty, it is easily assumed that queens played a secondary and inferior position to kings until the Tudor period. However, there is significant evidence from antiquity that women have not always been inferior to men, either publicly or privately. Ancient Ethiopian queens held genuine power, agency and sovereignty with their husbands often taking on the usually female role of consort. This article will look at queenship in neighbouring Egypt, predominately during the Middle Kingdom and focus on case studies of two Egyptian queens; Hatshepsut and Nefertiti.

Nefertiti ruled from around 1351-1334 BC alongside husband Akhenaten, most famous for replacing the previous religion with worship of solely the sun disk Aten. Their reign saw Egypt become an expansive empire with a wealthy and extravagant court at its centre. Nefertiti's bust was discovered in 1912 and in the decades since she has become known almost exclusively for her beauty. However, she had a considerable impact on her husband's regime, with the most evidence describing her role in his new religion. She is pictured taking an active role in the promotion of worship of Aten and is theorised to have taken on the tradition goddess role in their absence. In her portrayal in iconography, her femininity and sexuality are exaggerated, emulating fertility goddesses. This has left historians to conclude she rose to the status of a "semi-divine" being. Whilst it is unconfirmed, there is also suggestions she ruled alone after Akhenaten's death, adopting the role of female king.

In doing so, she followed a precedent set by Hatshepsut a century earlier. Hatshepsut became queen in 1473 BC. She was the only daughter of Thutmose I and his primary wife, thus having a stronger claim to the throne than her husband, half brother Thutmose II. Thutmose II died within just a few years, leaving Hatshepsut to act as regent for her nephew/stepson Thutmose III. However, by his majority, conventional regency

had turned into co-rulership with Hatshepsut acting as not simply king mother, but king herself. There is much conflicting evidence around their reign, with arguments ranging from an effective co-regency to Hatshepsut absorbing almost total control. Either way, during this period, undoubtedly the most powerful person in Egypt was a woman- Hatshepsut controlled the treasury and oversaw building projects such as the Dayr al-Bahrī temple and military campaigns into Nubia. The lack of evidence around Hatshepsut and Thutmose III's relationship and power struggle has meant Hatshepsut often falls into the 'wicked stepmother' trope in historiography. She is portrayed as scheming and overly ambitious for simply acting to maximise her own power; an action repeated by men over and over throughout history.



The most striking aspect of Hatshepsut's reign is her full embrace of the role of king, rather than queen. This changed over time, with her early reign characterised by traditionally feminine imagery, before masculine iconography increased in prominence, presenting herself first as androgynous and later entirely assuming male presentation. This could've been to conform to previous monarchs and assert her status as equal with ruling men but is also likely to have been an attempt to evoke her dead husband or father to consolidate her own power and legitimacy though emphasising her bloodline and divine birth right.

During Hatshepsut and Nefertiti's reigns, women enjoyed much of the same legal, property and

work rights as men. This is a huge variation from Egypt's contemporaries, such as the deeply patriarchal society of Ancient Greece, which, unfortunately, has had a unquestionably greater influence on the development of Western society. However, education and literacy rates were incredibly low and women in positions of power were still the exception, rather than the rule. Hatshepsut's adoption of male presentation shows that she needed to conform to be recognised as legitimate and gain maximum power. Nefertiti, although an influential co-ruler, was still secondary to her husband during his lifetime. Despite this, women could hold genuine agency and sovereignty, instead of just filling a traditional regent or consort placeholder role, Egyptian society was millennia ahead of Europe.

Olivia Thompson



HORRID HENRY: was Henry II victim of his own downfall?

Katie Winfield

Henry II was king of the Angevin Empire from 1154 before his death in 1189. A formidable king, Henry helped restructure his Kingdom including multiple recoinages, defeating many rebellions during his reign, and laid, as many argue, the foundations of English Common Law through his upheaval of the justice system. This article details his downfall leading to the 1189 rebellion involving his sons, debating whether Henry was at fault or rather the strength of his opposition in Phillip II.

Henry II

The 1189 rebellion was not the first time Henry had upset his family. In 1173 his son, along with many powerful barons of the period, launched an uprising against Henry supported by France and Scotland. Numerous factors led to the revolt including Henry's rumoured involvement in Thomas Beckett's death but the most personal included Henry's eldest son, Henry the Young King. Henry II had refused to grant the Young

King any responsibility in court and limited his financial income. He was also threatened with the possibility of his inheritance being split up amongst his younger brothers. Henry II managed to defeat this rebellion but this was just the beginning of his personal grievances.

After the Young King's death, Richard I (Richard the Lionheart) was heir to the throne. However, a similar pattern occurred. Henry's son John was deemed his favourite son by some scholars supported by the fact Henry wanted to give his younger son Aquitaine. Although Richard ultimately became Duke of Aquitaine in 1179, Henry's reluctance to gift it to him left a bitter taste in Richard's mouth. The issue was not helped by Eleanor, Richard's mother and Henry's wife, who was encouraging Richard to stand against Henry. She was then placed under house arrest by the King. Furthermore, Richard's power was limited in Aquitaine and the Third Crusade further exacerbated the issue. With the rise of Saladin, Richard wanted to go on a crusade, with French King Philip II to stop the spread of Saladin's Jihad and reclaim Jerusalem. Henry delayed the process by refusing to agree to a short-term peace treaty in an attempt to secure a long-term agreement, but Richard saw this as a way to delay his opportunity to go on crusade. Finally, at a peace conference between Henry and Philip II in November 1188, one of Philip's demands included naming Richard as his heir. Henry refused. Richard then addressed him personally but still Henry refused, some scholars believed he wanted to name John as his heir rather than Richard. Seeing his father's repeated refusal, Richard pledged his allegiance to the King of France and paid homage to Philip, betraying his father.

Henry's refusal to relinquish his power and give responsibility to his sons caused a big rift in family relations ultimately leading to his son's supporting his biggest rival, the king of France²².



Philip II

Although Henry took a large portion of blame for his demise, it is important to consider Philip II's position in the conflict. Louis VII, Philip's dad, had prolonged issues with Henry ranging from Henry marrying Louis' wife from an annulled marriage, Eleanor, to conflict over areas such as Berry and the Vexin. Although Louis struggled to gain ground against Henry, Philip took steps to change this. He managed to increase his income through the royal demesne through gaining counties such as his purchase of the County of Armians which ultimately helped strengthen his army. He also squashed a rebellion from his biggest internal French rival, Philip I of Flanders over Vermandois in 1181 not long after coming into power. All these show his capability as a King.

Moreover, Philip was not afraid of disagreements with Henry. In 1183 they disputed over ownership of the Vexin included in Philip's sister's dowry included in the marriage to Henry's son. After the death of Henry the Young King, Philip felt the Vexin should be returned to him. Philip won in negotiations eventually,

showing his skills as a strong leader. Philip was also clever in his manipulation of Henry's family. He held one of Henry's son Geoffrey at his court and regarded him as a close friend, he also welcomed Richard to court many times demonstrating his refusal to bow down to Henry by going through his family. These visits ultimately helped Richard switch sides in the rebellion as they already had a foundation in their relationship.

To conclude, Henry was largely at fault for his own demise. After Richard allied with Phillip, Henry was suffering major losses and declining health and ultimately had to submit to the pair. He gave up key castles, gave compensation and paid homage to Philip. After hearing John take Richard's side, Henry died not long after the end of the rebellion. Although his downfall was due to his refusal to respect his sons, especially Richard, it is important not to underestimate Phillip's capabilities. He strengthened France and helped cause the end of the Angevin Empire after forcing John to sign the Magna Carta in 1215. The 1189 rebellion demonstrates the force of two strong kings and the importance of family ties.



Philip II and Richard I on crusade

MAKING THE MONARCHY RELEVANT AGAIN: how *The Crown* revived the Royals



Nicole Butler

Queen Elizabeth II reached a historical milestone in February 2022 as the first British Monarch to celebrate 70 years of service. She represents one of the world's last surviving modern monarchies. Her Majesty has been a familiar face for most people's lifetimes; embedded into British culture and identity. It is not surprising, then, that her duty to service has witnessed the enormity of social change that the nation and the Commonwealth has experienced over the past seven decades. Across her realms, she has had 170 Prime Ministers serve under her, including 14 British Prime Ministers ranging from Winston Churchill to Boris Johnson. She has led the country through its' victories, failures, and scandals, and each time has had to find a way to adapt her establishment for survival. Alongside this service, Her Majesty must remain personally

removed, neutral and unwavering. This paradox, of being a global matriarch who has seen all, yet has not been truly seen – is what makes for a mutli-award winning historical drama.

The Crown, created by Peter Morgan, CBE (who studied at the University of Leeds!), has twice won the Golden Globe Award for Best Television Series for Drama, and twenty-one Primetime Emmy Awards. The show's huge cinematic achievements and praise, along with its \$260 million production budget (the most expensive TV series ever made, only right for their grand subjects, of course) has captured the attention of 21st century streamers and satisfied royalists' curiosity concerning the inside antics of Windsor. 73 million households have watched the show since it first aired.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/queen-england-elizabeth-ii-portrait-63006/>

It has even been brought to the attention of the Royal Family themselves - Prince Harry and Meghan in Oprah's 2021 televised interview both admitted they had watched some of the show and humoured who might be cast to play them in later seasons.

The show chronicles Queen Elizabeth's reign, embellishing well known Royal moments in a lavish production. Re-enactments of the Royal wedding in 1947, her coronation in 1953, the birth of her four children, Royal tours, and the tenures of famous 20th century Prime Ministers such as Wilson and Thatcher, positively connect British viewers to their history. The Crown's large appeal stems from Morgan's imaginative script writing that fictionalises the concealed dialogue, authentic emotions, hardships, and personal relationships that viewers are desperate to uncover. Disclaimers stress the fictional and entertaining purposes of the production out of respect for the Royals, the Queen's communication secretary stated that 'the Royal household is not complicit in interpretations made by the program'. However, one cannot help but feel thoroughly informed on the Queen's true life, it is not dismissed as tabloid news. Humanising the figurehead and her family creates this level of intimacy and sympathy - viewers feel like they now know their monarch, when they do not know her at all. The completion of the series evokes an emotional bond to the Queen. We see the portrayal of her complex double life: in her youth, a grieving daughter who is naive and vulnerable to the responsibility that awaits her - then as a wife, a mother, and sister. Her status has not diminished through this exposure, if anything it strengthens contemporary views on her position. We too see her as a powerful, independent woman who asserted her authority to the most ambitious political figures in the 20th century.

Whether the Royals wish to openly support the show or not, it is undeniable that The Crown's popularity has renewed the public image of the monarchy at a time where groups in society were questioning their relevance. Only 31% of 18-24-year-olds supported the monarchy's existence in 2021, and it has become common to hear mockery concerning 'what the Queen actually

does' with the increased involvement of Parliament over the decades. Morgan shows why she should be taken seriously through the difficult sacrifices she made for the sake of monarchical responsibly. Season one alone shows how she is pressured to overrule her husband's desires for their family, stripping him of his name and nationality, deny her sister Princess Margaret from marrying divorcee Peter Townsend, and deal with the Duke of Windsor's issues post-abdication, and is still shunned in the press, nonetheless. This conflict runs through so much of the series - the negotiation Her Majesty must have between ancient traditions and social change.

Queen Elizabeth becomes increasingly aware of the need for the monarchy to modernise and soften their image, (it is still seen today, the Royal Family's Twitter account speaks for itself). We see this in season one through the decision to televise her coronation, and in season three through the making of the documentary 'Royal Family' in 1969. The Crown cleverly functions in reviving the respect for the Queen through interpreting her past efforts to modernise, while appealing to a modern audience through a streaming platform. Popularity for the Queen ahead of her Platinum Jubilee ultimately does have some credit due for Morgan's dramatical efforts, despite what historical liberties he may have taken to get there.



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS HISTORY SOCIETY

Hello Historians!

Hopefully by now you are all enjoying a well-earned relax. Thank you to all who came to our last few socials and a big welcome to our new committee – I'm personally very excited to be taking over the reigns as President! So be sure that you'll be hearing a lot from me over the next year.

Mark September in your calendars as our big Fresher's drinks with – as usual – a hefty bar tab to kick start the year.

We are hiring!

I've loved my year as the editor for HST and though I'm sad it's coming to an end; I am so grateful for the opportunity to work with so many students from the School of History.

If you are interested in becoming the new editor for HST, please don't hesitate to contact me and ask a few questions about the role.

Henna Ravjibhai (Treasurer/President)

Thankyou to the 2021/22 Issue 3 Assistant Editing Team!

Olivia Tait, Jessica Pitcher, Chloe Haney, Olivia Thompson, Sanath Sha, Charlotte McDonnell, Max Hughes, Flora miller, Dominik Jesionowski, Nicole Butler

