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Alyssa Penn

Western Oregon University, karatepenn@hotmail.com

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Queenship: A Study of What it was to be a Queen in Europe during the
11th-16th centuries

Primary Reader: Professor Trousdale
Secondary Reader: Dr. Jensen
Professor of Course: Dr. Geier

Author: Alyssa Penn
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Alyssa Penn

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Dr. Geier

Queenship: A study of what it was to be a Queen in Europe during the 11th-16th centuries

In Europe, there was a very simple way that a kingdom was run. It was set up as a monarchy that contained the following: a king, a queen, their heirs, and then advisors of the court. This remained the case for most of the 11th-16th centuries. But, when the 17th century came around, something changed, a monarchy did not have to follow the original formula of the 11th-16th centuries. It was perfectly alright, for some of the European realm, for only a queen to rule. This queen is one that is very well known to historians: Elizabeth I of England. The concept of queenship, within the context of a monarchy, changed from the 11th-16th centuries. This thesis will look to explore this concept and the way it has changed by using different queens in the 11th-16th centuries.

For a proper examination of the changing concept of queenship, several monarchies will be looked into. The paper itself will be structured with three distinct sections; which will allow readers to understand each monarchy. The first section will give readers that do not understand what queens did a better understanding of what all is involved. For the next section, Queen Elizabeth I will be discussed at length; which will primarily cover the realities she faced by being a lone female ruler, and then use speeches or images to show the way she wished to be represented. The final section will show comparisons section based on queens used in the first section to show the differences between queens of the 11th-16th

centuries. This will be done to better highlight what the changes were between the 11th-16th centuries.

The sources for this work had many forms. One primary source is a speech by Queen Elizabeth I. This speech will be examined more in the second section to illuminate on her public persona. Other sources are images of the queen, Emma of Normandy and Queen Elizabeth I, to show how they wished themselves to be seen. Further sources come from scholars that have chosen to delve in to the individual queens at length, many times discussing their prowess in the political arena.

Queenship: An Introduction on what is it to be a European Queen.

During the 11th-16th centuries, in Europe, there was a general consensus that many scholars are familiar with. This consensus was that a kingdom, especially in Europe, was made up of the following: a king, queen, heirs, and then the advisors of the court. But, the queen herself had tasks within this formula to keep things running smoothly. What tasks did she have? What was expected of her? This section will give future scholars a better idea of what it meant to be a queen.

To begin, kingdoms need some kind of ideal to look at for guidance. In this case, many kingdoms looked toward the “heavenly kingdom”. This kingdom was what everyone strides toward. In many cases, there would be titles that would be used by queens of the 11th-16th centuries so as to connect themselves to one of the many religious women in the bible. The main woman that many queens wanted themselves to be allied with was the Virgin Mary, and a quote by Pauline Stafford illustrates this idea:

“Lady of the world, queen of heaven, bride of Christ and fruitful mother of the only son of God.”¹²

The quote contains titles that were used frequently during the 11th century when describing a queen's attributes. They had to be a “lady” of the world, become the mortal “queen” of heaven, the bride of the mortal “Christ”, the king, and a fruitful “mother” in the sense of having many children. The titles used here are very frequently described with queens of the 11th-16th centuries. To further examine the point of queenship, the terms used with regard to queens need to be defined. The first word of the quote “Lady”, which has a Latin term, known as “Domina”; this is the female version of the term "Domino". According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, this term means: “a woman of rank, or a woman holding a barony in her own right.”³ It would make sense that 11th-16th century scholars would translate the term to mean “Lady”. “Queen” is very obvious; she is of noble status and married to a king. After this the last two parts of the quote refer to the religious aspect of many European kingdoms. As explained earlier, this was done to firmly connect to the Virgin Mary.

Now that the titles used for a queen are better understood, the discourse now moves on to what queens did in the general consensus. A queen's major role was to be the wife of the king, and have many sons to continue the line. There were other tasks that she would

¹ The “heavenly kingdom” mentioned is that of Jesus, his mother Mary, and his disciples. Many scholars continually relate to the idea of heaven being an early kingdom that “mortal” ones should emulate to be successful.

² Pauline Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 55.

³ “domina” Merriam-Webster.com. 2013 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/domina>. (06/02/2013).

accomplish during the time of her being the queen. Another part of the queenly role was that of patronage. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, this term is defined as the “support or influence of a patron”.⁴ The patron in this case, is the ruling family. This patronage would then allow for future deals to be struck; a return of the favor given by the family. Again, once patronage was done, it would bleed into a term called “intercession”. The Merriam-Webster dictionary states that intercession means “prayer, petition, or entreaty the favor of another”.⁵

An example of patronage comes from Eleanor of Aquitaine. She was a lover of poetry and writers.⁶ This particular queen made a habit of inviting troubadours to come to her home and entertain her guests.⁷ From here these same people, if they were having issues, could come to her for help. She would then give them help due to the patronage of the past. Eleanors’ use of patronage is but one example of a queens’ role. A further example of patronage comes from a female monarch of Spain; Queen Isabel of Castile.

As a part of her rule, she wished to connect herself with the Virgin Mary. A way that this was done was by showing the ways in which the Virgin Mary was better than Eve. As many are aware, the original sin of Adam and Eve was the eating of an apple from the tree of knowledge, Eves’ punishment was to have pain during childbirth. Isabel was able to mitigate this by bearing a male child, which was the same way that Mary brought redemption to the

⁴ “patronage” *Merriam-Webster.com*. 2013 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/patronage> (06/02/2013).

⁵ “intercession” *Merriam-Webster.com* 2013 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intercession> (06/02/2013).

⁶ Alison Weir, *Eleanor of Aquitaine: A Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2000), 17.

⁷ Alison Weir, *Eleanor of Aquitaine: A Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2000), 28.

world.⁸ The patronage continued when monks would sing praises to Isabel for providing a pure lineage for Castile. This was especially true for the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception; again showing the triumph of Isabel birthing Spains' salvation. Isabel gave a generous stipend to those literary figures that would show her in this light; one of which was a female nun by the name of Isabel de Villena.⁹

Another example of the patronage and intercession relationship comes from Queen Emma of England along with Queen Edith of England. Patronage was a normal part of ruling, a kind of give and take. The items in question varied; some queens doled out sums of money, while others gave physical items like textiles or books. For example, Queen Emma was a generous patron; her main place that she gave to was churches.¹⁰ She was also a queen that gave patronage by building. But, other queens were not so kind. In Stafford's text, Queen Edith is shown to not be such a generous giver. In fact, she seems to be more of a taker of treasure; which shows that some queens were not fitting the general consensus of their role.¹¹

From here the discourse now changes to the idea of motherhood and the queen.

In her book, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England*, Pauline Stafford explains the situation when a royal child is reared by someone other than their own parents:

⁸ Elizabeth A. Leffeldt, "Ruling Sexuality: The Political Legitimacy of Isabel of Castile," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 1, 50, accessed June 14, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2901532>.

⁹ Elizabeth A. Leffeldt, "Ruling Sexuality: The Political Legitimacy of Isabel of Castile," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 1, 53, accessed June 14, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2901532>.

¹⁰ Pauline Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 143.

¹¹ Pauline Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 145.

“It may be no accident that Athelstan is the nearest thing to a male regent tenth-century England produced.”¹²

In this case, it is seen that Athelstan was a young ruler; much too young to make political decisions. This gives way to the idea of queen as regent; the queen would step in for the young king on political issues. The young king would still be “the face” of the kingdom and retain the inherent maleness of ruling a kingdom. From here, one gets the idea that a regent could exist in any kingdom, not even his own. A way to explain this is to understand that when sons or daughters are born they are not always raised with their birth family. Truly, many rulers sent their children to other lands for rearing. It would then foster a friendship with the two families which would allow for political ties. This then, shows the power of the bonds of mother hood, even between two different mothers. Being a mother was, at times, more important than just being a queen. To be a mother of the king means to be conditioning, and teaching, the next generation. Motherhood adds more complexity to the concept of queenship.

With the birth of heirs, comes the concept of motherhood and all that it entails, along with its complexities. Mothers were one of the most high profile people in English royal families they were talked of by everyone. The power of these talked about women comes from their motherhood. This is due to the fact that they have produced the next king for their country. Childbirth was yet another part of this complex aspect of queenship. It provides a unique connection to the child, something that cannot be replicated. It is interesting to note

¹² Pauline Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 76.

that childbirth seems to be more important than motherhood itself. The child is coming directly from the queen, again emphasizing that link.

At this point, the discourse of queenship must go toward what the marriage of the king and queen meant. For starters, a common woman of the 11th-16th centuries was not considered an adult until she married and, as stated before, produced heirs. The sequence of events was that both families would meet and discuss a proper dowry, to provide for the future family, and would culminate in the final rights being performed at the husband's home. If any of those stages were missed then it would be considered invalid.¹³ The situation with the king and queen is similar but it deviated in a unique way.

At the beginning of the ceremony, the bride is led in and prostrated before the altar.¹⁴ This was done to show that the woman had left her life of a commoner for that of the "holy" queen of the realm; and was ergo cleansed of any impurities from her former station. What can be inferred from this addition is that she is to be shown as submissive to her king, and relinquishing her control of herself.

Now, before the marriage between the king and queen, the advisors were in a quandary. What kind of woman was she? They feared the closeness that she would share with the king after the marriage. Advisors had a fear for what her reputation may have been

¹³ Pauline Stafford, "Family: Structures and Ideals," in *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 66.

¹⁴ Pauline Stafford, "Queen and Queenship," in *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 165.

before she married; ¹⁵the king has his own ideas, but advisors feared that the new queen's agenda would negatively affect the king and his own plans. This idea gives way to a partnership that was common for many monarchies of the 11th-16th centuries. Said partnership was something different, it was separated from the general issues of the daily life.

To connect back upon the tasks of the queen, they were much like a common wife's duties, with more stress to them. For example, she had to produce a child that would be able to continue the line of the ruling family. The priority, as far as children were concerned, was to have many sons. A queen might end up divorced due to the lack of male heir. From here, scholars have given to the idea that any children, no matter the woman that they came from, were a blessing. A king could take on other lovers, as he saw fit, and name the first son of those unions as the heir. These men were folks that would go through the process stated above, and have heirs. Then, the man would no longer have intimacies with her, and move to another woman, while still keeping the first wife around. There were always ways for the king, or husband, to call off a marriage. One of the most common ways to do so was to call her on being adulterous.¹⁶

The conclusions drawn from this section are that, there were many pressures on a queen. For instance, as this section and scholars tell, there was a "heavenly kingdom" that every monarchy looked to. From here, this would dovetail into the kinds of titles that could

¹⁵ Pauline Stafford, "Family: Structures and Ideals," in *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 67-68.

¹⁶ Pauline Stafford, "Family: Structures and Ideals," in *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-century England* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 69.

be applied to a queen. Examples that are from scholarship are “Domina” or “lady”; this was a liberally used word. “Queen” was used to show the status of the woman and the way that she fit in with the kingdom.

Another idea that comes from the section is that there was a general consensus of how a kingdom was run. It was something that many kingdoms could agree upon. Within this, it was agreed that acts of patronage would be performed if members of the kingdom did nice things with regard to the queen. One example was Isabel de Villenas’ glorification of the Immaculate Conception doctrine and its connections to Isabel of Castile. Eleanor of Aquitaine gave her patronage by having her poets and writers perform for her.¹⁷ Scholars saw that Emma gave high patronage to the church. This was only part of the process; intercession would come later when those same groups that were given to would ask favor from the queen.

A further aspect to queenship is the importance of the marriage, and motherhood that came with it. The marriages of men and women were a turning point during the 11th-16th centuries. A woman became an adult when she married and bore male heirs for her husband’s line. The royal marriage was no different, except for the relinquishing of the old life in way for the new. Dovetailing from here is the importance of motherhood. For mothers, they had a link to the child that was unique, and could not be severed. They were teaching the next generation of kings and queens. It was habitual for the blood heirs to be raised in another location; it was an incredibly common practice.

¹⁷ Alison Weir, *Eleanor of Aquitaine: A Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2000), 28.

It can be concluded that advisors had a fear of women. A marriage between any couple was a partnership that would be seen in the social context. But, for the royal family, theirs was taken out of the public context; it was a world of its own. Advisers may have feared women due to the idea perpetuated in the doctrine of original sin; Eve tempted Adam, this could be a similar case with a new queen tempting her king to different ideas.

Queen Elizabeth I: The Change of the 16th Century

From here, the task now comes to discovering the way things changed for the 16th century queen. This section will discuss a queen that has been studied by numerous scholars. Queen Elizabeth I is one of the most studied queens of the 16th century; there are many books that range from her life, her politics, and even how she was represented to her people. A discussion of the realities of Elizabeth's rule will show the ways that she still was following the general consensus of queenship but just changed a few things. It will then dovetail into the way that she wished to be shown; an image of the queen in all her finery will be used as a final analysis, and speeches to see the wording that she used.

Queen Elizabeth I is one of the most written about queens in Europe, there are many texts written about her. She was one of the few English queens that ruled on her own. But, this caused different issues as far as her rule was concerned. The first aspect that she dealt with was the fact that she was a female ruler. The problem she faced was due to another consensus that much of Europe reached; if female rule could be avoided, do avoid it. One reason for this idea was that women are fickle and weak, these are not very good things to have when ruling. Women also lacked several qualities that were desired for a monarch:

reason, courage, and strength being the main ones.¹⁸ For Elizabeth, this might have been the case. It hit a point that even her own preachers would attempt to correct her in her ability to rule, but those attempted corrections were met with little success.

A journal by Margaret Christian shows the way in which her preachers attempted to correct her in various matters, with little success. In the article, the term “professional schizophrenia” is used.¹⁹ This term implies that her preachers would view her in one manner, or personality, then completely switch gears to another viewpoint; hence the schizophrenia. This lines up perfectly when scholarship based around how she viewed the clergy is delved into.

In Elizabeth’s England, she viewed her preachers as a “government functionary”.²⁰ This meant that she wholly believed that they were necessary for her government, but that did not mean that she had to listen solely to them. Her preachers, on the other hand, were very vocal on the idea that they were integral to her rule as queen. Within the religious context, God could call anyone to power. Many people of the era did not have this same viewpoint, most felt that women were too weak to rule. But there was one very ardent supporter of Elizabeth. This man was John Aylmer. When others of Elizabeth’s preachers continually talked badly of her, he would step in to defend her. His most ardent support is

¹⁸ Elizabeth A. Leffeldt, "Ruling Sexuality: The Political Legitimacy of Isabel of Castile," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 1, 33, accessed June 14, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2901532>.

¹⁹ Margaret Christian, "Elizabeth's Preachers and the Government of Women: Defining and Correcting a Queen," August 1993, accessed May 8, 2013, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2542109>. 562.

²⁰ Margaret Christian, "Elizabeth's Preachers and the Government of Women: Defining and Correcting a Queen," August 1993, accessed May 8, 2013, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2542109>. 562.

clear when he states that a woman can be called to rule, by God, in the same manner as a man; there is no difference.²¹

At times, her preachers would out right attack her based on her inability to provide for a church who shared themes she did not care for. These themes were that preachers were spokesmen of God, and held his voice. This position implied that they were more important than that of the queen. This is something that Elizabeth did not like due to the competition between the two positions.²² The following quote emphasizes the preacher's belief:

“For this cause king Salomon both the mightiest and the wysest king that euer was, called himself a Preacher.”²³

Elizabeth did not enjoy this idea whatsoever. But, that was not all she had to deal with. Another issue that she suffered through was the problem of marriage. As most know, a queen had to be married. This stemmed from an earlier argument about women becoming adults in this time period: they had to marry to be considered such. In this case, Elizabeth deviated from the general consensus. Norman L. Jones gives credence to the idea behind Elizabeth not marrying. There was an issue with the fact that there was no suitable man in her home area.²⁴ It would make sense because if she felt uncomfortable with any of the men there, her public would follow that example. Two other issues related to this come about. The first is her

²¹ Margaret Christian, "Elizabeth's Preachers and the Government of Women: Defining and Correcting a Queen," August 1993, accessed May 8, 2013, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2542109>. 572.

²² Margaret Christian, "Elizabeth's Preachers and the Government of Women: Defining and Correcting a Queen," August 1993, accessed May 8, 2013, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2542109>. 563.

²³ Margaret Christian, "Elizabeth's Preachers and the Government of Women: Defining and Correcting a Queen," August 1993, accessed May 8, 2013, <http://ezproxy.wou.edu:2095/stable/2542109>. 563.

²⁴ "Elizabeth's First Year: The Conception and Birth of the Elizabethan Political World," in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh, by Norman L. Jones (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984), 29.

refusal to have a repeat of marrying a foreign husband like her sister Mary had done.²⁵ That marriage turned out quite badly. The last reason was due to her upbringing. She had many unfortunate step mothers that were cast off when the king took his fancy with someone else, such as Catherine of Aragorn, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, and others.²⁶ With a firm grasp on the way that Elizabeth managed herself with her suitors, or lack thereof, the conversation now turns to how she ran her parliament.

As far as politics were concerned, Elizabeth was a master and was able to surround herself in a cabinet of experience. This stemmed from her attachment to her people which allowed them to be on her side when she decisions.²⁷ An interesting part of this is the fact that all of her parliament was male. In an all-male parliament, one of her most favored men was William Cecil; he was appointed Principal Secretary of State on the morning of her accession to the throne.²⁸ Neville Williams identifies his good reputation, as known by all, in particular during an incident where Cecil was being attacked for his abilities, by the Earl of Leicester, to assist Elizabeth in the management of her country. The following quote shows the level of favoritism shown toward Cecil:

“You see, my Lord, how the Earl of Leicester is favored so long as he supports the Secretary, . . .”²⁹

²⁵ "Elizabeth's First Year: The Conception and Birth of the Elizabethan Political World," in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh, by Norman L. Jones (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984), 29.

²⁶ "Elizabeth's First Year: The Conception and Birth of the Elizabethan Political World," in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh, by Norman L. Jones (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984), 29.

²⁷ J. E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth* (London: J. Cape, 1938), 61.

²⁸ Paul Johnson, *Elizabeth I. A Study in Power and Intellect*. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974), 63.

²⁹ Neville Williams, *All the Queen's Men; Elizabeth I and Her Courtiers*. (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 117.

What does this show? It shows that Elizabeth favored her cabinet to a large degree. She would defend any of them from each other. This defense of Cecil demonstrates that she is able to effectively rule by “taking out” those that are against her; this includes those in her circle. Another individual that gained her favor was Francis Walsingham. He was favored, and respected, to an extent that without him cabinet meetings would be unproductive.³⁰ This leads in to another aspect of her reign which has not been mentioned. One of her favorite tools was that of patronage, to the extent that she would not relinquish it. While most scholars do not expose her views on patronage, Williams shows that she held patronage in high esteem as a political tool. “Elizabeth was well aware that whoever disposed of patronage would become ruler of the court.”³¹ This gives reason to the importance of patronage, but what of its following act, intercession?

The intercession of the queen to her king is well known. As we learned in the earlier, the general consensus for a queen was that she would intercede for her husband on matters that were of interest to her. But, Elizabeth was alone; she had no husband to intercede on behalf of. This would imply that because she had no husband, no intercession would occur. This is not the case; she did have others to intercede on her behalf. Take her councilmen, they are all male. What would happen if an issue came up, but she did not know how to respond? She would turn to the councilmen with the most experience on the matter, would gain advisement on the matter, and would then step up to make an effective decision. A

³⁰ J. E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth* (London: J. Cape, 1938), 228.

³¹ Neville Williams, *All the Queen's Men; Elizabeth I and Her Courtiers*. (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 221-222.

different example here would be when she would journey to a university to insure that its students were getting a proper education.³² These same men would, essentially, rule while she went about those ventures, and would make decisions as if she was guiding them. This also relates back to the level of trust that she held for her cabinet.

From there, a new idea comes to the fore: how did the queen wish to be seen to the public? Well, this came from within the parliament itself. As has been seen already, Elizabeth surrounded herself with experienced people that would assist her in the day to day activities of parliament. What happen upon their death? The idea of change so upset her that she did several things to make sure that change did not truly occur. One manner, from the parliament standpoint, was to immediately put the sons of her favored men in that position upon death. This gave Elizabeth an unchanging landscape from which to rule.³³ This would keep within her version of the general consensus of a queen.

From the discussion of her parliaments' immortality, the conversation now turns to how she chose to represent herself in the eyes of her people. She chose to represent herself as a force that listened to her people for guidance, and loved them for it. The following quote from her "Farewell Speech" to her parliament in 1601:

³² Paul Johnson, *Elizabeth I. A Study in Power and Intellect*. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974), 232.

³³ Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics, 1588-1603* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 542.

“There is no jewel, be it of never so rich a price, which I set before this jewel: I mean your love. For I do esteem it more than any treasure or riches; for that we know how to prize, but love and thanks I count invaluable.”³⁴

This means several things with regard to her view of the public. The first can be seen in how she views the peoples’ love for her. She views them as a precious jewel that has no price; its value is too high to name. Elizabeth sees the love and thanks from her people as more valuable than anything else. This is true of any kingdom; the love and support of the people is very important. Elizabeth has shown this time and time again, she adores her people and will listen to them. She also is aware of how her people see her. A further reading of the speech shows that she is more than willing to bestow the same thanks back onto her people.

“What you bestow on me, I will not hoard it up, but receive it to bestow on you again.”³⁵

This quote shows that Elizabeth did not hoard the knowledge of her people’s wants and needs. Elizabeth received the advice, or needs, and then bestowed this in the form of laws so as to keep her peoples favor. She might bestow lesser taxing laws, or continue with what she was doing so as to retain her peoples’ favor. That was the way she wished to be shown in her home country. Another avenue that has been taken, with regard to how she

³⁴ Paul Halsall, "Modern History Sourcebook: Queen Elizabeth I of England (b.1533, R.1558-1603) Selected Writitng and Speeches.," Internet History Sourcebooks, July 1998, Farewell Speech, 1601, accessed May 27, 2013, <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/elizabeth1.asp>.

³⁵ Paul Halsall, "Modern History Sourcebook: Queen Elizabeth I of England (b.1533, R.1558-1603) Selected Writitng and Speeches.," Internet History Sourcebooks, July 1998, Farewell Speech, 1601, accessed May 27, 2013, <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/elizabeth1.asp>.

wanted to be shown, can be seen in the numerous images of the queen. The queen has been shown in many lights in images. But first, there is an idea that she herself perpetuated: she was her father's daughter.

An example of this is shown in Louis Montrose's work. He is describing one of the many meetings that she would have with foreign dignitaries. As she entertained the dignitaries, she would place herself in front of a very specific painting: the image of her father Henry VIII. Her father is standing in a very manly fashion; he is facing his entire front towards the onlooker. The posture that Henry takes is very strong; it shows his strength during his rule. But, when Elizabeth stood in front of the painting? She was demonstrating to the dignitaries that she was exactly like her father, even if she was a woman. Elizabeth also did this so that she could quell any thoughts of her being weak due to her being a woman.³⁶

Another example of this comes from a famous painting. This portrait titled "The Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth", shown as fig. 2, shows several facets of the queen.³⁷ The portrait was done between the years 1600-1602. There are a few interesting aspects to the portrait, the finery is very well represented. This finery, the cloak, necklaces, and others represent the wealth and prosperity of her nation; they also show the connection to the king. There is one other aspect to the image. Her age seems non-existent to the viewer, especially in her face; she would have been 69 when the painting was commissioned. Yet, the common

³⁶ Montrose, Louis Adrian. *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. 20-21.

³⁷ Oliver, Issac. *The Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I*. 1600-1602. Marquess of Salisbury, Hatfield House., Hatfield, Hertfordshire. Accessed 5/12/2013:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cf/Elizabeth_I_Rainbow_Portrait.jpg

signs of age: crinkles along the eyes, mouth, and forehead are not shown. She maintains a smooth expression. She is shown as being young, vibrant, healthy, and above all beautiful. These were qualities that continued throughout her other portraits; she would be seen as an unchanging monarch.

As far as Elizabeth is concerned, she is a queen worthy of the scholarship surrounding her. She is a powerful queen which showed with everything that she did. Even though she was not “traditional” in various senses, she was still able to rule in such a way that she is still remembered. Several conclusions can be drawn from this section.

A primary conclusion was the power that Elizabeth was able to command. Her cabinet was a powerful force that had the experience Elizabeth needed to succeed in ruling her people. With this, her court was able to step in for her during times that she was unable to be in her home. Thus, the intercession idea common to kingdoms was still kept. Her patronage was well known; it was very important to her.

For Elizabeth, change was something that she did not wish to occur. It made her feel insecure. She combated this by making sure that whenever death took her favored councilmen, she replaced them. The replacements were the sons of those men. This created an environment full of people that she knew well. This also gave way to a very peaceful well-being for the queen. This may well have made her rule stronger.

A final conclusion was that Elizabeth wanted to be seen as someone who loved her people. She valued their opinions, and love, more than any treasure she had; which was something that she conveyed to grand effect. She wanted to show herself as powerful by

using her father's portrait as a medium; this was a well-received idea. Lastly, she wanted to show herself as a powerful monarch that showed the power and prestige of any before her.

Elizabeth and other Queens: A comparison

This final section will detail the differences she had with other queens that fit with the general consensus discussed earlier. She will be compared to several queens to get an idea of what she did differently. Queen Emma and Edith will be mentioned. New queens will be added to give readers a better understand of what those queens had to do in their role. All of this will be illuminated while linking back to queens mentioned in previous sections. All while continually linking back to the concept of queenship discussed earlier.

The first example of a queen that is similar to Elizabeth, of being a lone queen, is Catherine I of Russia. She was the queen-consort of Peter I of Russia. Lindsey Hughes work on Catherine shows the trials she faced during her reign of the kingdom. She was crowned as Peter's consort in 1724.³⁸ This shows a slight difference to Elizabeth in that she was married and had several children with Peter I. But after Peter's death, she was the lone ruler. Catherine herself was different in that she was not a secluded queen as most women of Russia were. This came from an old idea that the women of Russia were downtrodden slaves to men.³⁹

Another queen that ought to be mentioned is queen Isabel of Castile, 1451-1504. She is the very same Isabel, along with Ferdinand, that sponsored the famous journey of

³⁸ Lindsey Hughes, "Catherine I of Russia, Consort to Peter the Great," in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*, ed. Clarissa C. Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 140.

³⁹ Lindsey Hughes, "Catherine I of Russia, Consort to Peter the Great," in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*, ed. Clarissa C. Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 141.

Christopher Columbus in 1492. But, how is her reign different than the other queens mentioned? She was marrying to Ferdinand, which fits with the general consensus as has been discussed. What makes her rule any different? For starters, she and Ferdinand did not rule in the same area, they ruled in their inherited lands.⁴⁰ Isabel ruled Castile, while Ferdinand ruled Aragon.

That harkens back to an earlier idea that the women were supposed to be subservient to the men in their lives. Catherine was definitely not a weak “slave” to Peter; she participated in all forms of court. She had moments of intercession. One example of this is when she was able to intercede for a supposed enemy so that Peter would allow him to marry his peasant mistress.⁴¹ She would also intercede on the appointments of leaders of churches; giving her opinion on them as she saw fit. Now, we turn back to a queen mentioned earlier: Emma of England.

Another queen that was powerful was Maria Giovanna Battista of Savoy, 1644-1724. She participated in many forms common of queenship. One manner in which she is powerful is by her patronage to common sports of the era. The sport that she gave to was hunting.⁴² Her liking of this sport is shown in the commissioning of two statues, each depicting important people of Russia. The people that had been carved were the former rulers of

⁴⁰ Theresa Earenfight, "Without the Persona of the Prince: Kings, Queens and the Idea of Monarchy in Late Medieval Europe," *Gender & History* 19, no. 1 (April 2007): 7, accessed June 14, 2013, Academic Search Premier.

⁴¹ Lindsey Hughes, "Catherine I of Russia, Consort to Peter the Great," in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*, ed. Clarissa C. Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 143.

⁴² Robert Oresko, "Maria Giovanna Battista of Savoy-Nemours (1644-1724): Daughter, Consort, and Regent of Savoy," in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*, ed. Clarissa C. Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 24.

Russia, but styled like the gods Adonis and Venus. This was her way of staying with the aspect of patronage from the previous section on queenship.

Again, we connect back to our 11th century queen Emma. She was, for all intents and purposes, a “traditional” queen. She held all the ceremonial rights of marrying a king, and then bearing him children. But, there is an interesting difference here. The rule of her and her husband, Cnut, had a heavy symbolism with the “heavenly kingdom” idea that was mentioned in the first section. It is obvious in an image of her and her husband Cnut. This image was yet another form of patronage to her churches. The place that this portrait comes from is the church of New Minster. The portrait, fig. 1, is obviously of Emma and her husband Cnut. An interesting point to note is the name on the portrait. The name seen on the portrait is not Emma, as History knows her, but of another entirely. The name that is seen is *Ælfgifu*, which is the name that she took upon her marriage to *Æthelred*.⁴³ The whole picture can be read in a few ways. The first way is similar to Catherine I of Russia’s problem of being considered subservient to her husband, but it could be seen as Emma being a pawn in the complex world of politics. The other way that it can be read is as an expression of how a king and queen are supposed to look; they are partners who share in everything that happens in England. They also look to the “heavenly kingdom” for advice; this is seen by their glances being turned upwards. How does this image compare with the one of Elizabeth I?

⁴³ Anne Duggan, "Emma: The Powers of the Queen in the Eleventh Century," in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe: Proceedings of a Conference Held at King's College London, April 1995* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 1997), 3.

It compares in the idea of the marriage aspect. Unlike Elizabeth I, Emma was married to Cnut. Elizabeth I chose not to be married. The image also shows that Emma and Cnut are working together. Whereas Elizabeths' paintings show only her, there is no one else in her paintings. That makes one ponder why Elizabeth would do this. She did so to show a "strong front" for her subjects. Emma and Cnuts' portrait shows the people that they are doing everything as a unit. In Elizabeths' painting, there does not seem to be any religious imagery. But, Emma and Cnuts' painting has religion as the theme; it was central to their rule. Religion had a bearing with Elizabeths' reign as well.

Several conclusions can be drawn from these queens. Each had their similarities and differences, and yet still managed to rule their kingdoms with finesse. As we saw with Emma, she fit very easily in to the general consensus on European queens. She ruled alongside her husband, Cnut, and helped him when she was able to. Isabel of Castile ruled in a completely different area than Ferdinand and managed to unite Spain by doing so. Catherine I of Russia ruled alone for two years, but showed a similar idea of Elizabeth not being weak. Like Elizabeth, she did not prostrate herself to men. She did what she had to so that her kingdom could survive. Elizabeth did not take any utterances against herself.

Another conclusion is that the queens wanted themselves to be seen as good. They did this by way of patronage. Maria Giovanna Battista of Savoy did this by giving to the sport of hunting by bestowing two pillars upon a frequently used hunting court. Emma gave her patronage to the churches in whatever way she could. Elizabeth gave her patronage by

showing favor towards her cabinet by awarding them important positions, like with William Cecil by electing him to her cabinet as Secretary of the State.

Conclusion

During the course of the research, several conclusions have come about. One conclusion that one can easily see is the capability of the women. Women are capable of maintain their role within the court. With Emma, we saw the ability she had to intercede on the behalf of her king. Elizabeth gave credence to the concept of a woman being able to rule on her own. Catherine I showed that women were not weak or subservient to men; Elizabeth also showed this during her rule. Eleanor of Aquitaine was a prime example of what a queen did. From the following research, and past, the concept of the heavenly kingdom was used to show what the goal was. But, the queen had her own accomplishments to add to the reign. Her accomplishments were more subtle.

From there, readers can see the importance of patronage within the concept of queenship. Patronage was a way for the queens to form ties with other kingdoms. This is easy when such extravagant gifts are given for the betterment of the kingdom. Eleanor gave aspiring poets and musicians the ability to perform their works in front of her. Maria gave in the manner of extravagant busts to show the importance to the kingdom, and its sportsmen. Emma did her due diligence by way of giving to the church. Isabel of Castile gave her patronage to those that glorified the Immaculate Conception and her connection to it.

The conclusion of the subtleties can summed up with the idea of intercession. Intercession was one of the many ways that a queen could exert some form of power while

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still allowing the king to retain his image. Her ability to intercede is attributed to the gentleness that exists in the individual queen. For the queen, this is where she is truly seen at her utmost powerful. Again, relating to the example of Maria interceding on behalf of a supposed enemy to the king for him to marry his mistress. The king was still able to save face while she insured that everything went in a manner that he would approve of.

A further conclusion comes to us from the various roles that a queen maintained in ruling a kingdom. The first of these is that she needed to have heirs so that the line of the king could continue. It was a security for the queen; she would be seen as the mother of those that want the kingdom to succeed. But, as has been seen, one does not need to physically birth children for heirs to exist. Although Elizabeth I did not have children she was still able to rule successfully by using her ever present cabinet of advisors.

Another aspect of queenship is that of marrying and having children. Research shows that many queens did marry and have children. Maria, Emma, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Catherine I of Russia, and Isabel of Castile all fit this common pattern. But, with Elizabeth, the lengths to which a queen would go for her people are readily shown. She made the constant decision to not marry for the safety and health of her kingdom and to also preserve her power. She did not wish to repeat the same mistakes of past rulers, nor did she wish to marry someone that did not fit with what she needed. Scholars have equally vilified, and respected, Elizabeth. She did not have any children, and yet she is still remembered as one of the greatest English queens known to current scholarship.

A conclusion that is again drawn is that all kingdoms have a heavy basis on the heavenly concept, and religion. This is deeply rooted in the point that every kingdom uses religion in several ways. Elizabeth's preachers are one example of this. They felt that they were the spokesmen of God that had more power than Elizabeth. She did not like this, as is known, but only put up with it because of the fact that it was part of her government.

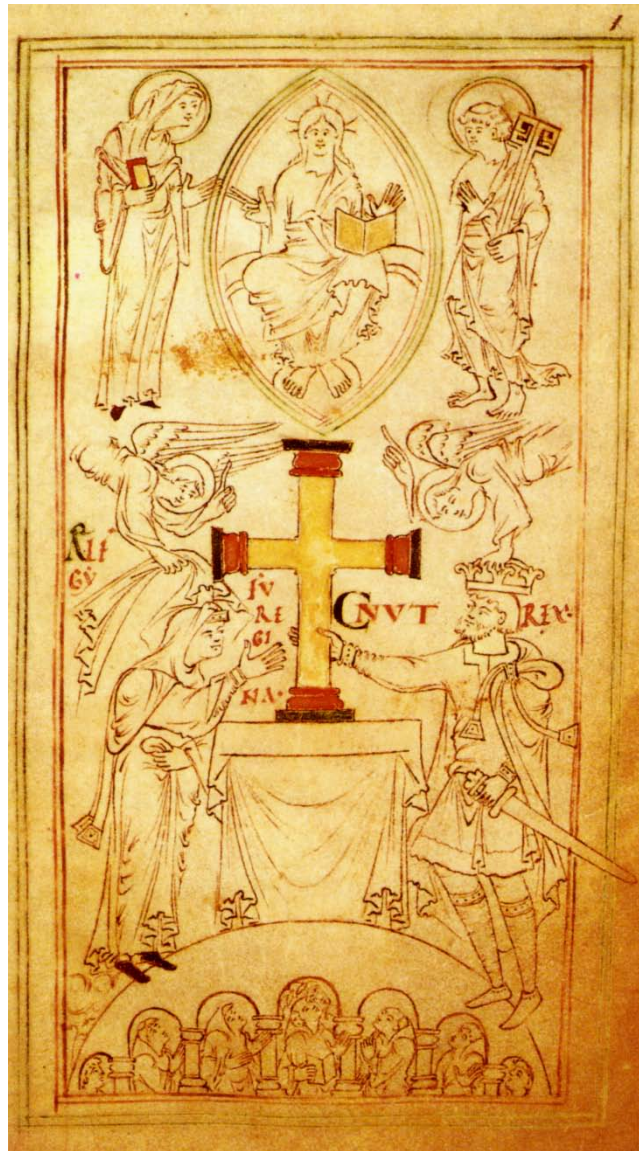
A last conclusion that can be drawn is based on the representations of the queen. Queens used whatever means they could to show themselves as being good for the kingdom. As was seen with Elizabeth, she used portraiture to show not only her finery, but to also pay homage to her father the king. Her paintings could be a form of propaganda geared towards how she wanted the story of her rule told: her as the successful monarch bringing England to its highest peak. Other images showed that the relationship between king and queen was a partnership that was separated from the common life.

The concept of queenship itself is a tricky concept to master. This is why more work should be done. It is an unsung aspect to the court. History is filled with the stories about the king and his accomplishments. Now, it is time for the queen to come into the spotlight and show just what being a queen is all about, to show the subtleties that came about during the time that they assisted the king. The sources used within this paper show the wealth of information with the topic in question. They show that during the 11th-16th centuries the concept of queenship changed from being securely involved with the king, and pushed to the wayside, to being front and center.

As has been seen from previous scholarship, the queen tended to be pushed to the back for many years. This was the tradition that many kingdoms had, at least for the 11th-16th centuries, but we saw that this changed during the 16th century with the crowning of Elizabeth as queen. She showed the first step for other queens after her. Elizabeth showed that women were able to rule in the same manner as men.

So, what type of conclusion can be drawn on the concept of queenship? One unifying thought is that it should be studied more than it has. It is a very important part of the workings of the court. Stories of the king are all fine and good, but that is only one part of the unique puzzle that queenship gives. It is easily seen that the concept of queenship is a subtle art. The rules regarding it can change based on the position of the realm at the time of that queens rule. Queenship has stood behind the king for much too long. Now, it is time for more research, more books to be done. This work is one of the many that appear about queenship, there are many other works to use. The study of the queen's role is interesting due to the intrigue that arises; we see a more intimate side of the kingdom.

Appendices



Seen in the above painting is an Image of King Cnut and his Queen, Emma of Normandy. The image comes from David Williamson's text The National Portrait Gallery History of the Kings and Queens of England. The original work was created by Ms. Stowe in 1031. It is a religious painting that shows the relationship between the two along with the relationship with God. (Fig. 1)



Pictured above is Queen Elizabeth I. She is seen in all her splendor of the age. She wears a cloak with eyes and ears, various necklaces, and is seen holding a rainbow. The caption painted is Non sine sol iris. It means: "No rainbow without the sun". It was painted between 1600-1602. Figure 2.

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