

All Abstracts

Helen Newsome, *Peace-keeper or spy? Mediation as a means of personal empowerment and protection in the letters of Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scots (1489-1541)*

On 19th October 1523, Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scots, sent two holograph letters to the English nobleman Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk. At this time, Howard was stationed on the Anglo-Scottish borders with a small army of soldiers, preparing to counter a Scottish invasion led by John Stewart, Duke of Albany. In the first letter, Margaret claimed that she was keen to perform the role of diplomatic mediator and personally organise peace between England, Scotland, and France. However, in the second letter, Margaret instead acted as a spy for the English faction, and relayed important intelligence regarding the preparations of the Scottish army, in return for permission to flee Scotland and seek refuge in England.

But why did Margaret send two letters on the same day, to the same recipient, which sought to achieve such contrasting communicative goals? In order to answer this question, this paper will show that Margaret conveyed these two letters to Howard via two separate channels of communication. Such a strategy allowed Margaret to maintain the facade of willing mediator to the Scottish faction, and was used strategically by Margaret as a means of personal protection in the event that her requests to come to England were denied by her brother, Henry VIII. This paper will argue that performances of mediation were thus one of the main avenues through which Margaret could wield greater power and agency in a society which traditionally regarded female power and authority as ‘illegitimate and unnatural’ (Dixon 1992: 211).

Joseph Massey, *The Anglo-Saxon connection: St Margaret of Scotland’s significance in Jacobean genealogies*

When James VI of Scotland succeeded to the English throne in 1603, most of the genealogies made to promote his hereditary right focused on his relationship to Henry VII, the most recent English monarch he was descended from. However, some artists thought it was necessary to look further back—all the way to St Margaret of Scotland, an 11th century Anglo-Saxon princess. They did this to demonstrate that James’s hereditary right to the English throne could be traced to the very foundation of the kingdom of England itself, bypassing the Norman Conquest. There could be no greater endorsement of the hereditary nature of his succession.

In this paper I analyse some of the surviving genealogies, the evidence of James’s patronage of them and their display at his court, and the political and legal implications of what they depict. I argue that James was actively engaging in a propaganda campaign, using genealogies to present his own view of the past—and, as a result, his own interpretation of his power and status in the present.

Demonstrating James’s Anglo-Saxon descent, however, also had controversial political implications. The Jacobean period saw many writers debating the origins of England’s laws and institutions, due to their concerns that they would be abolished by an Anglo-Scottish union. These genealogies contributed to the debate, by presenting James as successor to the founders of both England and Scotland—as a result, could James also abolish both kingdoms and replace them with a united ‘Great Britain’?

Laura L. Doak – Performing an uncontested succession: James duke of York and Albany in Scotland, 1679 – 1682

This paper will explore the royal progresses staged in Scotland between 1679 and 1682 by the controversial heir apparent James, duke of York and Albany. Widely condemned for his Catholicism, James' succession to the Stuart kingdoms was threatened at this time and he sought to use these events to depict himself as an uncontested heir, both directly to Scottish spectators and, through print, to his English opponents.

At Stirling, in February 1681, James broke precedent to carefully choreograph a march of armed residents outside the home of the earl of Argyll, whom he considered his biggest Scottish threat. The men reportedly affirmed their loyalty 'with great Shouts and Acclamations of Joy'. But, describing a previous journey through Fife, another printed newsheet claimed that the Scots' enthusiasm for the duke had been 'manufactured' by the 'Politick Managers' of the court.

Using print and new archival material, this paper will examine these political performances as platforms for conflicting versions of their success. James' Scottish progresses prove invaluable case studies for the use and importance of performing royal authority to sustain the relationship between ruler and ruled. Yet these events also demonstrate how such performances extended beyond the physical and into printed media, and that this could be as either a product or victim of contemporary propagandists.

Marta Celati, *Maiestas: The Virtue of Performing Power in Early Modern Italy*

This paper investigates the concept of *maiestas* in Early Renaissance political thought and its connection with the idea of performing power. The analysis focuses on two per-Machiavellian mirrors for princes written in Italy in the second half of the fifteenth century in the kingdom of Naples, under the Aragonese monarchy: Giovanni Pontano's *De principe* (1465) and Giuniano Maio's *De maiestate* (1492), respectively in Neo-Latin and the vernacular. These works are particularly innovative since they are the first political treatises where the concept of majesty is systematically theorized and it is directly linked with the practical aspects of the performance of power. In particular, the whole second part of Pontano's text defines and illustrates the virtue of majesty, which coincides with the 'external' image of power and with all concrete strategies deployed to gain the people's consent. This concept is recovered and emphasized in Maio's *De maiestate*, the first treatise entirely devoted to this key aspect of princely authority, to the extent that the figure of ideal prince and the perfect art of governing are encapsulated in the virtue that becomes the most important royal attribute: majesty. Thus, this new theory of statecraft and kingship, with a specific focus on the image that the ruler is able to give to his subjects and on the importance of the people's consensus, displays some pioneering perspectives: a groundbreaking attention to the actual performance of power and a blossoming notion of *Realpolitik*, which would develop in more mature forms in the following century.

Oliver Mitchell, *Reinventing the wheel: mechanical wheels of Fortune and the articulation of imperial power in sixteenth-century Bruges*

In April 1515, the inhabitants of Bruges staged a series of pageants for the ceremonial entry into the city of the future Emperor Charles V. The imperial procession passed through a sequence of

temporary triumphal arches, under a shower of wine projected from a fabulous mechanical fountain, and past a series of tableaux depicting episodes from the semi-mythological history of Bruges acted out by both human performers and automata. The spectacle culminated in two remarkable wheels of Fortune, which actors playing the young prince miraculously immobilised. Ignoring out of hand Lady Philosophy's admonition of Boethius in his *Consolatio* as the 'stupidest of mortals' for wishing the wheel of Fortune would cease its constant revolution, these performances expressed on Charles's behalf a bold assertion of semi-divine power and unassailable right.

Though the Bruges pageants represent a striking break from the Boethian model of Fortune's wheel, the ideas they expressed and their articulation through mechanical aids can be shown to have deep roots in medieval art and thought. For centuries, rulers and their panegyrists had seized on the potent symbol of Fortune's wheel to express sometimes daring ideas about power and kingship. This paper will explore the imagery of the Bruges pageants through their official manuscript (and later printed) record by court chronicler Remy du Puys, situating the audacious claims they make in the context of these medieval discourses on power and Fortune's wheel.

Thom Pritchard, *From Hostilities to the Halcyon Days: Bellicose Polemic during the onset of Charles I's reign*

Peter Paul Reubens presented his dramatic Peace and War to Charles I at a vital crossroads of the Stuart Kings reign. Following the disastrous expeditions to Cadiz in 1625 and La Rochelle in 1627-8, the bellicosity that typified the early years of Charles's reign had abated. This brief violent period is often seen as a footnote to the years of the Personal Rule of Charles I, and the visual and textual polemic which justified the necessity of armed intervention against the Spanish Habsburg's and the French Bourbons respectively, has often been dismissed as ineffectual propaganda: either guilty of too limited a dissemination or too idealistic in its narratives of defeat. However, the polemic of this bellicose era which supported royal foreign policy is far more nuanced than mere propaganda. For example, the state approved news-books of Thomas Walkley portrayed harrowing accounts of the siege of the Isle of Rhé; A true and most exact map of the siege of Rochel re-appropriated European maps to inform a domestic audience of the siege. Whilst the Earl of Morton's poem Encouragements for the vvares of France, provided a rallying call for 'gallants' to join the expedition abroad through a decidedly apocalyptic lens. Whereas in 1625 Reubens painted a heroic painting of the duke of Buckingham, ready to launch aggressive royal intervention abroad, by 1629, Reubens's Peace and War trumpeted the necessity for peace. This paper will explore the complex polemics that supported royal intervention before this withdrawal from the Thirty Years War.

Lynsey McCulloch, *The Effigial Body: Funerary Theatrics and Posthumous Power in the Early Modern Era*

In 1612—after the death of James I's eldest son and heir, Prince Henry—the Lord Chamberlain's Office commissioned the joiner Richard Norrice to produce a waxen funeral effigy of the young royal. The specification for the figure makes reference to 'several joints both in the arms and legges and bodie to be moved to sundrie accions first for the carriage in the chariot and then for the standinge and for settinge uppe the same in the abbeye.'¹ The animacy of this model—designed to fulfil the duties of a royal progress and lying-in-state—challenges concepts of the effigial body as a straightforward monument to the dead. It also points to the performativity of such a figure. In early modern London, monumental art and stage design were trades plied out of Southwark, often utilising the same craftsmen. John de Critz, during his

career, was both a painter of masque sets and the gilder of Elizabeth I's funeral monument. Indeed, the funeral effigy exhibits the same combination of opulent costuming and cheap materials seen on the stage. But how does the relationship between royal ritual and the theatre inform our understanding of monarchical authority? This paper—using both historical and literary examples—identifies the funeral effigy as a theatrical property and asks whether the performance of power integral to the royal funeral was enhanced or enervated by this movable stage object.

Hannah Straw, “Everybody’s King”: Commemorative Ceramics and King Charles II

Every significant royal event in contemporary memory has been accompanied by a slew of mass-marketed royal memorabilia. In the last year, the Royal Collection Trust recorded an almost £4million increase in the sale of royal memorabilia – thanks in a large part to commemorative china. This paper will examine the origins of this wildly popular form of royal representation, which began with the restoration of King Charles II. By examining these pioneering - and largely overlooked - objects, we can trace the beginnings of a new form of royal representation – one based as much in mutual investment as deferential servitude.

Following fifteen years of rebellion, regicide, and republican rule, the task of representing to the monarch to the people became uniquely complex – and the invention of the commemorative royal ceramics would prove to be a uniquely successful innovation. Produced in a period associated with the rise of baroque extravagance, it is perhaps unsurprising that these charming but often crude objects have received little historical attention. This paper will seek to contextualize these objects as part of a wider post-republican experiment in ‘marketing’ the monarchy. By analyzing these objects, we can enrich our understanding of many of the innovative methods that Charles II employed to negotiate the unique political climate of England in the 1660s. Through the production and sale of this kind of memorabilia Charles II was able to be, quite literally, everybody’s King.

Sonja Kleij, *Performing the Many Roles of Queenship: Mary II as a Character in English and Dutch Popular Performances, 1689-1694*

During her reign as Queen of England, many Dutch and English songs, poems, and plays were written about Mary II, but only a few performative pieces include her as an explicitly named character. In these various performances Mary plays the roles of daughter, wife and naval commander, and above all else, Queen of England. On the one hand it is risky to put words in the mouth of the monarch, on the other hand explicitly casting rulers in specific roles is a useful tool for critical political discussion. By analyzing two dramas, one English, one Dutch, and three Dutch dialogue songs in which Mary II speaks with William III, James II and admiral Cornelis Tromp, all estimated to have been written and first performed between 1689-1694, I will interrogate how the Queen performing in these roles allowed the public to discuss the recent events which consolidating her rule, as well as look ahead to further conflicts with France in a clear and explicit manner. Moreover, I will demonstrate how for a queen, especially Mary II, being cast in the role of a wife whose husband is your co-monarch, or a daughter whose father was forced to abdicate to make way for you, goes beyond stereotypical gender roles, as these are significant political relationships and governmental circumstances, worthy of public discussion. As such, the various roles Mary plays demonstrate the multifaceted nature of her person, her position as ruler, and ultimately of queenship itself.

Liam Lewis, *Sovereign Faces: Lions in Medieval French Manuscripts*

This paper focuses on the performance of power through depictions of leonine faces in two early French ‘texts’—the twelfth-century Anglo-Norman bestiary by Philippe de Thaon and Villard de Honnecourt’s thirteenth-century Picardian sketchbook. I argue that the illustrations in these texts in particular emphasise the lion’s status as King of Beasts and perform ontological forms of power that challenge the presumed authority of the idealised figure of the human king.

My two primary texts depict moments of encounter between lions and other creatures, including humans. In these moments, the lion’s physical activities overlap with symbolic ecologies: the bestiary lion faces the figure of Christ, and turns back to thwart its hunter; the lions of the sketchbook gaze back at the reader from the membrane of the manuscript. In each case, the associations between lions and royal power are emphasised: in the bestiary this is reinforced by a dedication of the text to Adeliza of Louvain, wife of Henry I of England; in the sketchbook images of lions are cross-referenced with depictions of kings.

My paper argues that the bestiary and the sketchbook offer examples of how sovereign power was opened to interpretation through the filter of the nonhuman realm. This is a power both human and nonhuman, which is generated by the fusion of text and image. Drawing on scholarship in critical animal studies, I consider how leonine faces in the multimedia interfaces of these two texts enjoin audiences to think critically about the performance of royal power.

Laura Melin, *Edward IV’s ‘Coronation Roll’ and its Audience, Home and Abroad*

My conference paper will focus on the imagery within the *Chronicle of the History of the World from Creation to Woden, with a Genealogy of Edward IV* (Free Library of Philadelphia Lewis 201), otherwise known as the ‘Coronation Roll’, to see what its content reveals about possible audiences. The Roll was commissioned c. 1461 by Edward IV to legitimise his usurpation of the English throne from Henry VI in order to gain the support of both the English nobility and international noble (and royal) audiences. I will argue that the artists of the Coronation Roll appealed to both sets of audiences through the creative use of traditional iconographies of kingship within the genealogical format. After emphasising the common use of genealogies among the nobility, both at home and abroad, I will examine three key artistic clues within the Coronation Roll: the emphasis on Edward’s personal heraldry and badges, included to appeal to the nobility’s sense of heritage and lineage; Edward’s equestrian portrait, which echoes similar portraits found on seals and manuscripts across Europe; and the inclusion of emblems, such as the Order of the Garter, which would have been equally familiar to an international noble audience. I will conclude by assessing available evidence to determine how the Roll might have been displayed to reach Edward’s audience.

David Harrap, *Consecratio Navis: Performing the Alliance between Church and State in Ship Blessings*

Religious ceremony is central to the performance of royal power. Yet, while there has been much scholarship surrounding coronations and processions, the blessing of royal warships has never been examined in great depth. Yet, a ship blessing, composed around 1413 and contained within the pontificals (repertories of rituals to be performed by a bishop) of Henry Chichele Archbishop of Canterbury (1363-1444), shows how ships could function as symbols God’s sanction for royal policies and the unity between church and crown. Composed during the reign of Henry V (1386-1422) and a period of massive naval expansion, this ceremony was a radical departure from earlier ship-blessings. Whereas older blessings were short and often

unremarkable, this ritual (titled *In Consecratione Navis* – On the Consecration of a Ship) ostentatiously recalled the symbolism much older rite for the dedication of a church. It called for the warship to be given a blessing using words and symbols usually reserved for ecclesiastical property alone. Indeed, it turned the vessel into a temporary sacred space and culminated in the celebration of five masses, simultaneously, on the top-deck. In doing so, the ritual vaunted Henry as the defender of the Church against its enemies (particularly heretics) and dramatized ecclesiastical support for the king and his military ambitions.

Tania Lévy, *Pageantry and Performance: Staging the King in France (1480-1570s)*

Several royal entries are well known for the Renaissance period in France. From Charles VIII (1483-1498) to Charles IX (1560-1574), kings and queens visit their towns, on the way back from Italian wars, for example, or during their great tours in the Kingdom. These journeys are accompanied with banquets, feasts and especially pageants, plays, process or ballets. Pageants and plays are good occasions for the municipalities to stage the figure of the king and/or the queen and princes, by representing or even involving them. How are these royal speakings, these court and king representations staged? Who are the actors involved in such roles? What is the word they are allowed or asked to pronounce at these feasts?

This communication aims to explore several entries in the whole french Kingdom, by the archives, the contemporary chronicles but also by the images of these events that have come to us. Printed entry books (livrets) begun to be widely created and distributed in the sixteenth century France, and some illustrated manuscripts are also kept. These documents are an extraordinary material to address the question.

Chrissie Maroulli, *Uneasy Lies the Head That Wears the Crown: The Ballad as Historical Document and the Case of Queen Jane Seymour's Death*

“Rip open my two sides, and save my baby!” cried Queen Jane Seymour when she was in labor with Edward in 1537. According to the balladry that publicized the royal birth’s account, the queen was in unbearable pain for numerous days and eventually Edward was delivered by caesarean. The heir survived but Jane did not. This version of the events was engraved in the popular mind and Queen Jane’s death was legendized through the persistent reproduction of the ballads, some of which are still being performed today. The ballads, however, are contradicted by some historical accounts, which support that Jane most probably had a natural birth and died a few days later. In early modern England, a broadside ballad was source of entertainment but also a propaganda vehicle; it circulated news rapidly, but the narratives were manipulated to satisfy the interests of particular parties and the public’s thirst for gossip and gore. “(All news-ballads) were written down to the level of the least intelligent reader”, wrote Hyder Rollins. Available to all classes and easy to memorize, a ballad could creep into the public’s conscience and establish knowledge of uncertain validity. Comparing ballads and historical evidence demonstrates that oral tradition could prove more powerful than history. Therefore, the ruled are potentially stronger than the ruler because they can disseminate certain perspectives through performance. The essay employs formal and vernacular ballads on Jane Seymour’s death to demonstrate the authority given to the ruled as ballad performer, to perpetuate the ruler’s legacy regardless of fact.

Mel Evans, *Power as Speech and Word: Exploring the Multimodal Performance of Tudor Royal Proclamations*

Among the diverse strategies of rule employed by the English Tudor monarchy, royal proclamations are especially ‘characteristic’ (Hughes and Larkin 1964: xxii) as vernacular texts that conveyed and legitimised the royal will through oral pronouncement and written display. Whilst scholars have traditionally focussed on their content (e.g. Heinze 1976), in this paper I argue that the significance of Tudor proclamations for royal power extends to their linguistic and material form. In this view, proclamations exemplify the performative dimensions of royal Tudor *textual power* (as argued broadly by, e.g. Sharpe 2009), tapping into wider cultural practices that legitimised the social hierarchy.

As multi-modal texts, situated between oral traditions and printed innovation, the Tudor proclamation provide a space through which changes in communication technologies are refracted and, perhaps, instigated. Proclamations make use of the affordances of manuscript and print, of speech and of writing, to construct a version of reality that ceremonialises the royal will. Using EEBO-TCP texts, and applying corpus linguistic and multimodal analytic frameworks, I discuss some of the key verbal and visual properties characteristic of Tudor royal proclamations, noting that continuity is itself a form of power, as much as strategies of change (such as the increasing “epistolarization” of Elizabeth I’s proclamations). To conclude, I examine contemporary accounts of proclamation reception and evidence of the appropriation of textual form, to show how even texts at the heart of the royal prerogative accrue their power through dialogic exchange, and their embedding in wider cultural practices of literacy and communication.

Martina Russo, *Performing Power: Emperor and Courtier in Seneca the Younger*

In this paper, I would like to flesh out the performative aspect of power, as exhibited from both the *princeps* and his subject. Julio-Claudian emperors are usually characterised through a theatrical paradigm by which the *principes* and their subjects take in turn the role of actors and spectators. Starting from Bartsch’s study ‘Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian’ (Cambridge, 1994), I want to draw my attention to some historical *exempla* in Seneca’s narrative in which both the dominant (emperor) and his subjects (courtiers) should perform a specific role. In this context, flattery emerges as a crucial instrument not only for courtiers to achieve the old age at the imperial court but also for men at power who accept and long for flattery from subjects as an external demonstration of their supremacy. The necessity of flattery implies that both the *princeps* and the courtiers are represented as ‘performer’. The ‘performing’ aspect of power is staged in Seneca’s *Thyestes*, where Atreus plays impeccably the role of the performer in front of his brother, who, instead, is unable to perform the role that he is expected to fill. This myth mirrors the complex dynamic of communication at the very heart of an Imperial power struggle.

Harrison Otis, *The Royal Mirror: James VI and The Furies*

Despite a recent resurgence of interest in the writings of James VI of Scotland, his 1591 translation of Du Bartas’ *Les Furies* remains relatively unstudied. I argue that a close attention to James’ *Furies* reveals his efforts to marshal rhetoric and theology in support of his own authority. Specifically, James’ preface to the poem invites his readers to focus on the rhetorical device of paradiastole: the redescription of vice as virtue. This device raises questions of epistemological and ontological uncertainty, questions that accord well with Du Bartas’ characterization of the

postlapsarian world. In response to this psychological chaos, James proposes himself and his poetry as a source of unsullied order by comparing his work in the translation of Du Bartas' poem to God's work in the preservation of the world. The king thus stands untouched by the uncertainty raised by paradiastole: in the midst of a chaotic world, his words, partakers of divine inspiration, can be trusted.

David Fletcher, *The Ballad of Lady Bessy: A New Play about Women and Power in Late-Fifteenth-Century England*

This new play tells the story of three women who were at the centre of power in late 15th century England – Elizabeth of York, her mother Elizabeth Woodville, and her mother-in-law Margaret Beaufort. The play assumes that, behind the scenes, these women held significant influence over their more publicly visible men and were also involved in power struggles of their own. Elizabeth of York (daughter of Edward IV, sister of the Princes in the Tower, wife of Henry VII, and mother of Henry VIII) is seen by history as a quiet, obedient pawn in the power games. But there is one source – *The Ballad of Lady Bessy* - that paints a very different picture of a highly intelligent and resourceful woman, and this is the basis of my play. This paper will address the reliability of the original ballad, the place of such ballads in cultural history, the issue of the responsibility of modern writers of historical fiction, and will include extracts from the play performed by two actors from the original production at the Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa.