

Queenship and Power: The *Heart* and *Stomach* of a Book Series

Charles Beem

In the summer of 2007, Carole Levin asked me to be her co-editor for a book series on queenship for publishers Palgrave Macmillan, an invitation I was delighted to accept. At the time, we had only recently become friends and colleagues, but I was well aware of her work and her impact; back in 1990s, when I was still a graduate student at the University of Arizona fumbling for a dissertation topic, my advisor Laura Tabili handed me a copy of her 1994 opus *The Heart and Stomach of a King*. Reading this book was like a thunderbolt for me. Its deployment of gender analysis as a means to understand Elizabeth I's queenly power provided me with a methodological approach for a larger study of English queenship, which became my first book, *The Lioness Roared: The Problems of Female Rule in English History* (2006). I acknowledged the debt to Levin in my introductory chapter, in which I offered a survey of

See Appendix B for the list of books in the “Queenship and Power” series.

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Elizabethan historiography that came full circle with a discussion of the methodological breakthroughs of *The Heart and Stomach of a King*.

It was my good fortune to have Carole Levin as one of the peer reviewers for this book. I know this because after I received the contract for *The Lioness Roared* in the summer of 2005, I wrote to her and asked her. She confessed without hesitation and invited me to send in an abstract for a conference she was hosting with Stuart historian Robert O. Bucholz in Lincoln, Nebraska, entitled “Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England”, which itself was an outgrowth of the 2003 travelling exhibit “Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend”, sponsored by the American Library Association Public Programs Office, in partnership with the Newberry Library of Chicago and the National Endowment for the Humanities, for which Carole had served as a senior historical consultant. I submitted an abstract for an essay on the twelfth-century Empress Matilda, which was accepted, and in March 2006, at the very moment my first book was published, I flew to Lincoln, Nebraska, to meet Carole Levin. The conference was outstanding on a variety of levels, and Carole and Bucholz invited me to revise my paper for an edited volume derived from the conference, which was later published as *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England* (2009), which also included essays by several future contributors to the Queenship and Power series, including Sarah Duncan, Linda Shenk, and Anna Riehl Bertolet.

To become a friend and colleague of Carole Levin is to be admitted to a large, kinship-like network of scholars that stretches literally around the globe. While Carole is a scholar of protean abilities, she invents time literally out of thin air to help anyone who asks for it, but especially for her graduate students and younger scholars getting started who need advice, encouragement, and—most importantly—letters of recommendation. I have been the recipient of this generosity. We kept in touch, and later in 2006 Carole assisted me in formulating a successful proposal for a short-term fellowship at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Fortunately, I was in residence at the Folger in the summer of 2007 as Carole was wrapping up research for her book *Dreaming the English Renaissance* (2008). We got on famously, and it was at the end of my fellowship that Carole offered me the position of co-editor for a series she was contemplating on queens. As Carole related it to me, when she first brought the idea to publisher Palgrave Macmillan, the current History editor suggested that she find a junior scholar to do the grunt work

while she employed her scholarly fame to reel in the big names for the series.

Carole is still reeling in the big names, but I am still waiting for the grunt work to show up. From the beginning, the book series, for Carole and myself, has been a labor of edifying love. Just as one does with a book, a book series starts with a proposal, which was the first of a series of collaborations between us. For starters, we had to conceptualize what we wanted to do. Among the original motivations for a series on queenship was Carole's awareness that a number of junior scholars she had crossed paths with were working on queens and queenship projects and would be looking for a suitable academic press with which to publish, many of which were using gender and other feminist-inspired methodologies in their work. We agreed that gender analysis was a powerful methodological tool for understanding queens and that the series should be interdisciplinary, with books by historians and literary scholars of all stripes, with the widest parameters possible for analyzing queenly power through time and space in all of its different manifestations. Carole Levin lives and breathes an interdisciplinary professional life; while she wears the queenly crown of historian *extraordinaire*, she possesses a wealth of knowledge and understanding of early modern literature and theater, particularly the works of Shakespeare, as she aptly demonstrated in her first monograph, from 1988, *Propaganda in the English Reformation: Heroic and villainous images of King John*, and more recently her collaboration with John Watkins, *Shakespeare's Foreign Worlds* (2012).

After we conceptualized the scope of the series, we needed a title. First, we agreed that we were more interested in *queenship* rather than individual *queens*, which is usually the way queens have been studied in the past, often as atomized biographical subjects lacking any historical relationship to other queens. Instead, we wanted to focus on a series whose works could collectively broaden our understanding of the strategies which queens pursued in order to wield *power*, in myriad ways, within the structures of male-dominant societies, processes that collectively create something known as *queenship*. From the first, our aspirations were wide, and we continue to search for manuscripts on queenship as it manifested in all parts of the world, such as East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Islamic civilization, throughout all periods of historical time. Nevertheless, European and especially English queens receive a bounty of historical and literary attention in the English-speaking world; thus far, they have been the bread and butter of the Queenship and Power series.

Once conceptualized and approved, the series was launched in 2008 with a rechristened *The Lioness Roared* as the first volume, followed by paperback reissues of Carole's earlier volume *High and Mighty Queens of Early Modern England* (2003, co-edited by Debra Barrett-Graves and Jo Eldridge Carney), a volume that offered a signpost of Carole's evolutionary path toward the study of *queenship*, and Sharon L. Jansens's *The Monstrous Regiment of Women* (2002), a critically acclaimed comparative study of female rule in early modern Europe, which also considered the notion of queenship as a set of strategies to be pursued to gain and hold onto royal power.

But it was our first original titles that did much to establish the popularity and prestige of the series. First published was Arlene Naylor Okerlund's biography of the first Tudor queen, *Elizabeth of York* (2009). Okerlund had previously published a revisionist biography of Elizabeth Woodville, and she offered the same approach in her description of the creation of the most successful of Tudor-era queenships, an historical departure for a queen often obscured in the histories of the reign of her husband Henry VII (r. 1485–1509), which debuted to both positive press and robust sales. This feat was duplicated by the edited volume, *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (2010), edited by Anna Whitelock and Alice Hunt. This was the first time that the Tudor sisters were examined side by side, as historical equals, in a volume containing essays by scholars such as Susan Doran, Ralph Houlbrooke, and A.N. McLaren. This was also the first publication on two of the queens closest to mine and Carole's hearts.

Out of thirty-seven titles published thus far, eleven have dealt exclusively with both Elizabeth I and Mary I, and we are completely unrepentant about this fact. We are particularly proud of our Elizabeth I collection, which in the last six years has claimed an enviable place at that critical juncture where Elizabethan historiography meets Elizabethan literary studies. The first two monographs devoted to Elizabeth were Linda Shenk's, *Learned Queen: The Image of Elizabeth I in Politics and Poetry*, and Anna Riehl Bertolet's *The Face of Queenship: Early Modern Representations of Elizabeth I*, both published in 2010. Both Shenk and Bertolet are dear friends of Carole's and are prime examples of graduate students who had met Carole years before they published their first books in the series. Linda Shenk was a graduate student at the University of Minnesota when Carole offered to be an outside member of her dissertation committee after learning of her work on Elizabeth as a learned queen,

and Carole met Anna Riehl Bertolet at the annual Kalamazoo Medieval Congress in 2002 and later convinced her to turn her seminar paper into the work that eventually became *The Face of Queenship*. For myself, working with Linda and Anna on their books was rewarding both professionally and personally; their books aptly demonstrate the depth and power of an interdisciplinary approach as they identified the methods and strategies by which Elizabeth I and her subjects crafted various forms of representations of Elizabeth in words and in visual packaging.

Yet another fertile source for studies on Elizabeth were the annual meetings of the Queen Elizabeth I Society, which Carole founded along with Donald Stump in 2004. It was at one of these early meetings that Carole met Catherine Loomis of New Orleans University, whose idea for a monograph on representations of Elizabeth as she was dying and after her death resulted in the publication of *The Death of Elizabeth I: Remembering and Reconstructing the Virgin Queen* (2010), an imaginative interdisciplinary study of how Elizabeth's subjects comprehended her final illness and death in prose, poetry, and theater. Another colleague of Carole's, Ilona Bell, whom I first met at the 2011 meeting of the Queen Elizabeth I Society and who is a renowned scholar of John Donne, contributed *Elizabeth I: The Voice of a Monarch* (2012), which contextualizes Elizabeth's own words, in prose, poetry, and speeches with, as John Watkins once observed, the full literary attention that it deserves.

It was also my pleasure to publish a work on Elizabeth for the series, the edited volume *The Foreign Relations of Elizabeth I* (2011), which was culled from a rash of excellent papers on Elizabethan foreign relations delivered at the 2008 meeting of the Queen Elizabeth I Society in Kansas City, Missouri. At dinner, as we sat remarking upon this state of affairs, Carole suggested that I create an edited volume around these papers (by B.R. Siegfried, Nathan Martin, Nate Probasco, and Anna Riehl Bertolet). In addition, Carole and I put our heads together as we debated why Elizabeth never left England, a collaboration that served as the introductory chapter of the volume, which also included three essays on Elizabeth's relations with Islamic civilization by Nabil Matar, Bernadette Andrea, and Nandini Das, as well as Claire Jowitt's analysis of the Elizabethan representations embedded in Thomas Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West, Part One*.

A companion piece to this book was *Elizabeth I's Foreign Correspondence: Letters, Rhetoric, and Politics* (2014), edited by Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume

Coatalen, and Jonathan Gibson, which provided an incisive analysis of Elizabeth's foreign letters, in essays by a sterling team of British and Italian scholars, as well as Rayne Allinson, whose *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* was published in the series in 2012. 2014 also saw two more titles on Elizabeth, Mary Villeponteux's *The Queen's Mercy: Gender and Judgement in Representations of Elizabeth I*, a literary analysis of the question of queenly mercy and how it was contested and negotiated, and Jane A. Lawson's updated edition of Arthur F. Kinney's *Titled Elizabethans: A Directory of Elizabethan Court, State, and Church Officers 1558–1603* (2015), which expanded the categories of the original publication to include the ladies of the privy chamber and the wives of peers, a work entirely at home in the Queenship and Power series.

We are also very proud of our published works on Mary I. One of the major developments of recent Tudor historiography is the revision of Mary's historical reputation by scholars such as David Loades, Judith Richards, and Anna Whitelock. The Queenship and Power series has also contributed to this process, beginning with my chapter on Mary in *The Lioness Roared*, which analyzed a sixteenth-century manuscript, William Fleetwood's *The Itinerarium ad Windsor*, a description of a leisurely journey to Windsor in 1575 by Fleetwood, Robert, Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, that contains an astonishing justification for English female rule. By a curious twist of fate, I found out that Dennis Moore, rhetorician and self-proclaimed "quecnologist" who had contributed to one of Carole's earliest publications, *Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (1987), had constructed an annotated composite version of the three extant manuscript versions of the *Itinerarium*, which he was kind enough to share with me in 1999. Ten years later, I e-mailed Moore, asking him whether he ever published his work. He replied that he did not, so I asked him whether I could build a group of contextual essays around it so it could be published in the series. He took some wooing, but once he agreed, Carole and I collaborated again on the essay "Itinerarium and English Queenship" for the resulting book *The Name of a Queen: William Fleetwood's Itinerarium ad Windsor* (2013). The volume also included essays by Jacqueline Vanhoutte, Rivkah Zim, James Alsop, and Sarah Duncan.

By the time the *Itinerarium* book had come out in 2013, Sarah Duncan had already published her first monograph in the series, *Mary*

I: Gender, Power, and Ceremony in the Reign of England's First Queen (2012), a work that expanded the scope of what can be considered political activity in this account of Mary's imaginative use of ritual and images to craft the parameters of her queenship. Three years later, Valerie Schutte, in her book *Mary I and the Art of Book Dedications: Royal Women, Power and Persuasion*, uncovered still another layer of the means by which Mary communicated with her subjects. More recently, Duncan and Schutte teamed up for the edited volume *The Birth of a Queen* (2016), published on the 500th anniversary of Mary's birth and featuring a stellar cast of Tudor scholars, including Mary Hill Cole, Alexander Samson, Retha Warnicke, and Anna Whitelock, as well as the two editors of the Queenship and Power series.

The series also boasts of studies of other English queens, particular medieval consorts, with a particular emphasis on comparative studies of queenship. In 2012, we published two such titles: Lisa Benz St. John's *Three Medieval Queens: Queenship and the Crown in Fourteenth Century England*, an historical study of three successive medieval consorts—Margaret of France, Isabella of France, and Philippa of Hainault—and how they wielded power and authority, and Kavita Mudan Finn's *The Last Plantagenet Consorts*, which continues the tradition of interdisciplinary studies in her imaginative use of theater, history, and prose fiction to analyze the historical and literary reputations of England's final fifteenth-century consorts. Another of the comparative studies published in the series is Retha Warnicke's *Wicked Women of Tudor England: Queens, Aristocrats, Commoners* (2012), which develops the concept of wickedness as a means to re-examine the Tudor queens Anne Boleyn, Katherine Howard, as well as Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset, who attempted to wield a queenly power during the minority of Edward VI (r. 1547–1553).

The series has also published a diverse body of scholarship on European queenship. In 2010, we published William Layher's *Queenship and Voice in Medieval Northern Europe* (2010). This book was a great natural fit for our series, as it offered a study of literary artifacts as a means to analyze how Nordic queens created perceptions of themselves, which has always been an integral component of successful queenship. This was followed by Erin Sadlack's *The French Queens's Letters* (2011), which offered a striking revision of earlier historical opinion on the historical agency of Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII who married Louis XII of France in 1514, through the study of her letters. Carole had her eye on this project for nearly two decades; back in 1995, when Sadlack

was a student at New Jersey College, she heard Carole deliver a talk on Elizabeth I. Afterward, she had a chance to sit down with Carole, who listened with unfeigned interest as Sadlack described her work and ideas. They kept in touch over the years as Sadlack finished her graduate work, and Carole and I were standing by when Sadlack's project had reached fruition, a story evocative of Carole's tenacity and generosity. Another major coup was landing Theresa Earenfight's *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (2013), published in partnership with Palgrave's College series, which offered a sweeping survey of the strategies medieval queens deployed to consolidate and wield power and authority. It also served as the inspiration for my own *Queenship in Early Modern Europe*, my current manuscript in progress.

It was also my pleasure to publish a collection of essays on European male consorts, *The Man Behind the Queen: Male Consorts in History* (2014, co-edited by Miles Taylor), which collected revised essays presented at a conference (on male consortship) sponsored by the Institute for Historical Studies and the Society for Court Studies in London in December 2011. The chronological scope was wide, ranging from the medieval king consorts of Navarre to the twentieth-century prince consorts of Britain, The Netherlands, and Denmark. In 2015, the series published four further titles on European queens, each title with a decidedly interdisciplinary bent, *Scholars and Poets Talk about Queens*, which Carole edited with assistance from Christine Stewart-Nunez and which paired historians and literary scholars with poets to discuss and comment upon queens ranging from Hecuba and Cleopatra to Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots. We also published Derval Conroy's two-volume *Ruling Women: Configuring the Female Prince in Seventeenth-Century French Drama*, an ambitious interdisciplinary work that offered an analysis of the conflicting discourses concerning government by women in seventeenth-century France in over 30 plays published between 1637 and 1691, and Carolyn Harris's *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette*, a provocative comparative study of two queens who suffered miserably at the hands of revolutionary ideologies.

Elena Woodacre, lecturer in medieval and early modern history at the University of Winchester, has also emerged as a prolific contributor to the series. I first met her at the London conference on male consorts, where I enticed her to submit her manuscript for the series, and this resulted in the publication of *The Queens Regnant of Navarre: Succession*,

Politics, and Partnership 1274–1512 (2013), a first-time-ever study of Navarre's five medieval queens regnant. Woodacre is also the founder of the Royal Studies Network, which annually sponsors the Kings and Queens Conference, whose meetings, which Carole and I endeavor to attend as much as possible, have also provided the series with a number of titles. Among these are Woodacre's edited volume *Queenship in the Mediterranean: Negotiating the Role of the Queen in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras* (2013) and two further titles edited by Woodacre and her colleague at Winchester University, Carey Fleiner, who also attended that 2006 Queens and Power Conference in Lincoln—*Royal Mothers and their Ruling Children: Wielding Political Authority from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era* (2015) and *Virtuous or Villainess: The Image of the Royal Mother from the Early Medieval to Early Modern Eras* (2016)—titles which collectively had broadened our knowledge of queenship beyond Western Europe, with chapters devoted to central European, Nordic, Byzantine, and Mediterranean queens. At the second of these conferences in Winchester in 2013, Carole and I also met Zita Eva Rohr, whose *Yolande of Aragon (1381–1442) Family and Power: The Reverse of the Tapestry* was published in 2015.

The remaining titles do not fit into any of the categories described above. Debra Barrett-Graves's *The Emblematic Queen: Extra-Literary Representations of Early Modern Queenship* (2013) is a book where the Queenship and Power series meets cutting-edge material culture studies. Barrett-Graves and Carole go way back together; they met at the annual medieval congress at Kalamazoo in the early 1990s, when Barrett-Graves was still a graduate student. She was on her way to give her first conference paper ever. Entering the dorms after being soaked by a rainstorm, she bumped right into Carole, who it turned out was chairing her session. Years later, she heard from Carole out of the blue, asking whether she wanted to be her co-editor on the book that became *High and Mighty Queens*, whose third co-editor was Jo Eldridge Carney, another old friend of Carole's. Carole patiently nursed along Carney's project for the series, *Fairy Tale Queens: Representations of Early Modern Queenship* (2012), which offered an innovative approach to examining the early modern European imagination of queenship in fairy tales and making the connection between real queens and their fictional and sometimes monstrous fictional analogues.

Carole has always been entranced by imaginative studies such as Carney's, as she is of studies of queenship that appear in Shakespeare's

works, such as Sid Ray's *Mother Queens and Princely Sons: Rogue Madonnas in the Age of Shakespeare* (2012), a lively literary study of images of the ultimate queen, the Virgin Mary, as she was manifested in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Finally, in 2015, we published Branko F. van Oppen de Ruiter's *Berenice II Evergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, a book that had a long gestation in the series. Back in 2008, while surfing the web, I came across de Ruiter's recent dissertation from Hunter College on this topic, and I encouraged him to submit for the series. Although the initial peer review was not favorable and we declined to publish at that time, de Ruiter revised, and to our mutual delight we were able to offer a contract for our first title on queenship from classical history, a period rich with queens waiting to be explored.

We are hardly ready to rest upon our laurels; it remains our hope that we will publish titles on queenship as it was manifested in all parts of the world through all points of time. But what has been a constant in the series, for Carole and for myself, is the professional satisfaction derived from assisting first-time scholars in publishing their works on queenship. But almost as satisfying is the knowledge that we have assembled a formidable catalogue of queenly studies that is fast outgrowing the shelves Carole and I have made for the series at our respective offices. Even after a decade, I can still hardly believe I get to do this. Thank you, Carole!

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