

sexual preferences in the twelfth-century *Roman d'Enéas*, for example. *Perceforest* displaces that threat onto stated fears of incest, miscegenation, and endogamy. The threat of homosexuality lurks silently underneath.

Ultimately, Huot's study demonstrates that the orthodox romance *Perceforest* subverts any myth of British ethnic purity. The British are a hybrid, fused, and assimilated race—Celts, Romans, Angles, Saxons, Picts, Normans, etc. The history of Britain is one of conquest, ethnic rivalry, and colonization, even in the ancient and medieval world, and its empire building of later centuries is built on this ideological background, fictional as it may be in *Perceforest*. Huot's book has much to recommend it, both to the medievalist interested in intersections of race, ethnicity, and gender in the Middle Ages and to the modernist with an interest in the origins of the European colonial ideology and the literary imagination that constructed it. Huot's style and scholarship make this book accessible to those not familiar with either postcolonial theory or *Perceforest*. It is a good read.

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Theresa Earenfight, ed.  
*Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*. (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World.) Ashgate, 2005. Pp. 210.

The subject of this collection of essays, queenship in medieval and Early Modern Iberia, as editor Theresa Earenfight remarks in her preface, is “similar to but substantially different from that of northern Europe” (xiii). Beyond the principal queenly obligation to produce heirs, Iberian queens were often much more visibly active in politics and wielded greater public authority than their northern counterparts. Their power manifested itself in regencies, lieutenancies, military and administrative decision-making, and the artistic patronage that shaped monarchic images.

The ten chapters are arranged chronologically and in three thematic sections: “The Practical Limits of Partnership;” “Practicing the Politics of Religion;” and “Representing the Politics of Queenship.” The contributors are both well-established and newer scholars in the fields of history and art history. The first section opens

with Elizabeth Haluska-Rausch's "Unwilling Partners: Conflict and Ambition in the Marriage of Peter II of Aragon and Marie de Montpellier," which analyzes the power struggles that marked this unsuccessful, early thirteenth-century partnership. Marie strove to keep her power as the Lady of Montpellier, which was not in Peter's interests since he needed the city and land's revenues to finance his military. The tensions between them are a good example of the risks that becoming a queen could pose for noblewomen. The next essay, Joseph O'Callaghan's "The Many Roles of the Medieval Queen," is more broadly focused than any of the other essays. O'Callaghan presents the "code of proper conduct" (26) set out for an ideal queen in Alfonso X's *Siete Partidas*, composed between 1251 and 1265, and then surveys the roles of various "notable Castilian queens," including Urraca (1109-26), who stands out as queen and ruler in her own right; Violante (ca. 1255-1300), the wife of Alfonso X; and the powerful María de Molina (ca. 1265-1321), wife and political collaborator of Sancho IV and later regent during her son Fernando IV's minority. Theresa Earenfight's contribution, "Absent Kings: Queens as Political Partners in the Medieval Crown of Aragon," chronicles the position of queen-

lieutenants—"the embodiment of the king's personal authority and custodian of the realm"—in the Crown of Aragon. Due to the rapidly expanding empire and a dearth of suitable male stand-ins for kings, seven queens held the position of lieutenant in the Crown of Aragon, ruling in place of their husbands and even leading military campaigns and negotiating treaties, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The practice of naming queens lieutenants reached its apogee with the fifteenth-century reigns of María of Castile (1401-58, wife of Alfonso IV of Aragón) and Juana Enriquez (ca. 1425-68, wife of Juan II). Both women ruled outright during their husband's absences, setting, Earenfight asserts, important precedents for the extraordinary position their descendant Isabel la Católica would assume.

The second section contains essays on queenly involvement in politico-religious matters. Mark Meyerson explores the nature of Elinor of Sicily's (1349-75, wife of Pere III of Aragón) and María de Luna's (1396-1406, wife of Martí I of Aragón) policies towards their Jewish subjects during decades of heightened anti-semitism between 1348 and 1416. Meyerson points out that the queens were not moved by "philo-semitism,"



but, rather, by the practical and financial interests that so often explain the vagaries of Christian-Jewish relations prior to the Expulsion of 1492. Nevertheless, the "careful administration and protection of these two dynamic queens" were crucial in the survival and flourishing of Morvedre, an important center of Jewish culture.

Núria Silleras-Fernández's "Spirit and Force: Politics, Public and Private in the Reign of Maria de Luna," delves further into the queen-lieutenancy of the Crown of Aragón of María de Luna. María worked to support her husband's rule and to promote forcefully her own bloodline. María made strategic appointments to important ecclesiastical posts, intervened in the Franciscan reforms, founded convents, and sponsored public religious events that supported the image of the monarchy and the Luna family. Ana Echevarria-Arsuaga's essay, "The Queen and the Master: Catalina of Lancaster and the Military Orders," examines how Catalina (1372-1418, wife of Enrique III of Castile), as dowager queen and co-regent during the minority of her son Juan II of Castile, exploited the political power of religion to construct a network of support for her son after the death of her

brother-in-law and co-regent Fernando de Antequera.

The third section, "Representing the Politics of Queenship," turns to the construction of queenly images in chronicles, the visual arts, and material culture. Here all the authors negotiate the historian's continual problem of separating the ideal from the real in royal representations. Marta Van Landingham analyzes the descriptions of Violant of Hungary (1215-51) in her husband, King Jaume the Conquerer's, *Llibre dels feits* where Jaume presents her as a "model of a true queen—a reliable political associate rather than merely a childbearer" (110-11). Peggy Liss' essay, "Isabel of Castile (1451-1504), Her Self-Representation and Its Context," turns to Isabel's self-fashioning as the personification of "a place and a people engaged in a great enterprise," the conquest of Granada, and a crusade for Catholic orthodoxy. Liss' comparisons between Isabel's rhetorical and performative strategies and those of Elizabeth I of England are of particular interest. Jorge Sebastián Lozano continues the focus on queenly image-making in "Choices and Consequences: The Construction of Isabel de Portugal's Image." Lozano traces several distinct phases in Titian's portraits of

Isabel of Portugal (1503-39), commissioned and then used by her husband Charles V, as well as analyzing Isabel's own use of costume, appearance, and luxury items to create her imperial persona. The final contribution, "Conspicuous in her Absence: Mariana of Austria, Juan José of Austria and the Representation of Her Power," further nuances the "connection between political power and the visual arts." Rightly observing the contested symbolic space of royal portraiture, Eleanor Goodman reads both the presence and absence of Mariana de Austria (1634-96) in Habsburg portraits in the convent of Descalzas Reales and the Escorial as representations of the Queen Regent's changeable hold on power and influence in her son Carlos II's court.

These essays clearly show that there is no simple definition of medieval and Early Modern Iberian queenship. Moreover, the interdisciplinary scope of the collection and the authors' use of sources from both textual and material culture paint a rich picture of the constants and vagaries of queenship. The queens' roles varied considerably due to the demands of political circumstances as well as the dispositions of their royal husbands, children, and enemies. This will not be a surprise to scholars attentive to women's

historical roles, but given the traditional relegation of queens to the margins and anecdotes of historiography, each essay indeed reveals, in Earenfight's words, "how the structures of and ideologies of monarchy both influenced and masked the realities of power" (xxviii).

Iberian history revolves around multiple Juans, Juanas, Marías, Isabels, Ferdinands, and Alfonsos. Consequently, the addition of one or two genealogical charts would have made it easier to draw connections from one chapter to another. Translations of non-English quotes would also have made the collection more reader-friendly. Although essay collections cannot be encyclopedic without becoming unwieldy, consideration of the intersections of queenship and sainthood could have made a significant contribution to the section on the politics of religion. Such desiderata aside, there is no doubt that *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* makes an important contribution to our understanding of the multiple roles played by pre-modern Iberian queens.

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