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2022

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Neighbors , D M 2022 , ' Beyond the Public/Private Divide : New Perspectives on Sexuality, Hospitality, and Diplomacy within Royal Spaces ' , Royal studies journal , vol. 9 , no. 1 , pp. 1-17 . <https://doi.org/10.21039/rsj.356>

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<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/355196>

<https://doi.org/10.21039/rsj.356>

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*Beyond the Public/Private Divide:  
New Perspectives on Sexuality,  
Hospitality, and Diplomacy within  
Royal Spaces*

**Dustin M. Neighbors**



**Beyond the Public/Private Divide:  
New Perspectives on Sexuality, Hospitality, and Diplomacy within Royal Spaces**

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**Abstract:** This article presents the theme of the special edition, provides a case study, and sets out the ways in which the contributions consider how notions of privacy and the private emerged, influenced, or existed within and around the institution of monarchy. One of the key ways to tackle privacy is to investigate the idea of ‘access’ and ‘accessibility’, which is an underlying theme throughout the contributions of this special edition. Each contributor informs the phenomena of privacy, and thus privacy studies, through their research. These articles seek to understand the ways in which sexuality, hospitality, and diplomacy are shaped by notions of privacy and the private, as a means of contextualising and understanding the nuances of gender, power, and the interrelations of rulership.

**Keywords:** public/private; royal studies; sexuality; hospitality; diplomacy

In a recent modern-day depiction of a conversation between Queen Elizabeth II and her grandmother, Queen Mary, the two women discuss the role and duty of monarchy. Mary declares:

Monarchy is God’s sacred mission to grace and dignify the earth, to give ordinary people an ideal to strive towards, an example of nobility and beauty to raise them from their wretched lives. Monarchy is a calling from God. That’s why you’re crowned in an abbey, not a government building, why you’re anointed, not appointed...you’re answerable to God in your duty, not the public.<sup>1</sup>

Captivatingly, these lines depict the essence and embodiment of monarchy that many of us know all too well. Yet, the most interesting part of this dialogue was its emphasis of the fact that monarchy was not answerable to the public. The distinction between the public and private in this scene is so subtle that it is hard to distinguish the boundaries. Perhaps this is because Mary emphasises the characteristics that are directly linked to the visible, such as being “an ideal to strive towards.” The ideal, in Queen Mary’s time in the early twentieth century, was to be the symbolic representation of stability, continuity, faith, virtue, duty, and honesty that ensured “national greatness.”<sup>2</sup> Another link to the visible element of monarchy was being an “example of nobility and beauty” through graciousness and dignity, whereby the monarchy was the symbol of majesty, not beholden to anyone.<sup>3</sup> However, Mary’s reference to the “public” suggests that there is a limit to the relationship between monarchy and the wider public—it is a matter of access and accessibility.

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Morgan, “Act of God,” *The Crown*, episode 4, season 1, directed by Julian Jarrold (Netflix, aired 4 November 2016). Claire Foy played the role of Queen Elizabeth II and Eileen Atkins played the role of Queen Mary.

<sup>2</sup> David Cannadine, “The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the ‘Invention of Tradition, c.1820-1977,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 152.

<sup>3</sup> Cannadine, “Meaning of Ritual,” 136.

From the past to the present, the management or denial of access enabled the monarchy to control their image, their political power, and control the information that was shared about their lives and activities.<sup>4</sup> The history of the publicisation of monarchy is rooted in the rise of print media forms in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, of which access has been a key mechanism for public participation.<sup>5</sup> As Kevin Sharpe, David Cannadine, and others have shown, the publicisation of monarchy through print became increasingly dependent on access to and information on the personal interactions, activities, and beliefs of monarchs, thus providing the public with a means of communicating and criticising rulership.<sup>6</sup> As such, this publicisation gave way to the social interest in the phenomena of private lives, which continues to this day.

The publicisation of monarchy and the phenomena of private lives are rooted in the long and complex history of the public-private divide. The study and debates surrounding the public and private, stemming from legal thought and doctrine,<sup>7</sup> have frequently maintained the traditional perspective: that the public and political spheres are more important and should be protected.<sup>8</sup> However, the study of the public and private distinction has evolved and become a “powerful instrument of social analysis.”<sup>9</sup> As such, the perspective of the public/private distinction within historical studies has focused on tracing social changes of the past through modernisation, industrialisation, urbanisation, and the division of labour by the “gendering of the public sphere.”<sup>10</sup> In the field of royal and court studies, the distinction of the public and private has emerged from discussions surrounding the blurred boundaries between the royal household, royal courts, and patronage.<sup>11</sup> It is this tension between the public and private that often drives research within the field of royal studies and its examination of the boundaries and thresholds of rulership, particularly when it comes to the study of gender. The private distinction continues to be the locus in

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<sup>4</sup> A discussion of control of access by monarchs has been examined in the Tudor period. Dustin M. Neighbors, “‘With my rulling’: Agency, Queenship, and Political Culture through Royal Progresses in the Reign of Elizabeth I,” (PhD Thesis, University of York, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Kevin Sharpe, “Sacralization and Demystification. The Publicization of Monarchy in Early Modern England,” in *Mystifying the Monarch: Studies on Discourse, Power, and History*, ed. Jereon Deplouge and Gita Denecke (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 106.

<sup>6</sup> Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in the 16<sup>th</sup>-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); David Cannadine, *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> Morton J. Horowitz, “The History of the Public/Private Distinction,” *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 130, no. 6 (June 1982), 1423. This brief overview of the scholarship pertaining to the public/private is not detailed or exhaustive because there is a significant amount of source material. The pieces noted here are to highlight what has been published and studies within the context of the public/private divide.

<sup>8</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. T. Burger and F. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 74 (“the public sphere assumed central place”) and 246 (“the private spheres of life were still protected in their explicit orientation to a public sphere”).

<sup>9</sup> Jeff Weintraub, “The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction,” in *Public and Private in Thought and Practices: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*, ed. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 38.

<sup>10</sup> Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 2.

<sup>11</sup> Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Natalie Mears, “Public Worship and Political Participation in Elizabethan England,” *The Journal of British Studies* 51, no. 1 (2012): 4–25. Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983); Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

examining women's roles and activities,<sup>12</sup> though studies are increasingly examining women within the public domain, especially in connection with female agency.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, as this special issue highlights, the public-private distinctions do not always account for wider social and cultural elements that existed in connection with rulership in the premodern past, such as mobility, human-animal relations, or the senses. Along with its interdisciplinary nature and approaches, royal studies continues to make significant contributions through its investigation of the public and private aspects of monarchy, which also reinforces both the relevance of monarchy and royal studies in modern society. Royal figures and the culture of rulership are a huge part of the political, religious, and cultural histories of societies around the world. Rulership has been central to state formation, foreign relations, identity, and defined national narratives throughout history. Royal studies has evolved as “more than simply an examination of royals themselves,” but an examination of the interactions, impact, relations, mechanics, operations, and the gendering of monarchy and rulership.<sup>14</sup> Yet there is still so much to discover through royal studies. In recent years there have been a number of emerging interdisciplinary approaches and research trends that have expanded our knowledge of premodern societies, power relations, and the realities of rulership. This understanding, past and present, has even challenged traditional perspectives of royal studies, especially gender theory and the impact of royal women. Interdisciplinary approaches have explored the connections between monarchy, power, and the role of human-animal relations,<sup>15</sup> historical soundscapes,<sup>16</sup> datafication of ordinances,<sup>17</sup> the amplification of policing and surveillance,<sup>18</sup> and the impact of refugee and migrant conflicts.<sup>19</sup> As such, these interdisciplinary studies and methods have allowed us to gain further insights into rulership and its many corollaries. This special edition of the *Royal Studies Journal*, “Beyond the Public/Private Divide: New Perspectives on Sexuality, Rituals, Hospitality, and Diplomacy within Royal Spaces,” consists of contributions adding new perspectives to royal

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<sup>12</sup> Don Herzog, *Household Politics: Conflict in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 84–122; Lawrence Klein, “Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth Century: Some Questions about Evidence and Analytic Procedure,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, no. 1 (1995): 97–109; Nicholas McDowell, “Interpreting Communities: Private Acts and Public Culture in Early Modern England,” *Criticism* 46, no. 2 (2004): 281–298; Dena Goodman, “Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime,” *History and Theory* 31, no. 1 (1992): 1–20; Erica Longfellow, “Public, Private, and the Household in Early Seventeenth-century England,” *Journal of British Studies* 45, no. 2 (2006): 313–334.

<sup>13</sup> Neighbors, “‘With my rulling’”; Craig Taylor, Salic Law, French Queenship, and the Defense of Women in the Late Middle Ages,” *French Historical Studies* 29, no. 4 (2006): 543–564; Theresa Earenfight, “Maria of Castile, Ruler or Figurehead? A Preliminary Study in Aragónese Queenship,” *Mediterranean Studies* 4 (1994): 45–61; Margaret Homans, “‘To the Queen’s Private Apartments’: Royal Family Portraiture and the Construction of Victoria’s Sovereign Obedience,” *Victorian Studies* 37, no. 1 (1993): 1–41.

<sup>14</sup> Elena Woodacre and Cathleen Sarti, “What is Royal Studies?,” *Royal Studies Journal* 2, no. 2 (2015), 14.

<sup>15</sup> Along with the incredible collection of essays in *Animals and Court: Europe, c.1500-1800* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020) eds. Mark Hengerer and Nadir Weber, I am currently finalising an article entitled “From ‘She-wolves’ to Sweden’s Wolf Wars: An Exploration of Wolves, Hunting, and Notions of Privacy in Early modern Europe,” examining the regulation of wolf hunting by royal authorities.

<sup>16</sup> Christine Jeanneret is PI of SOUND, a project aimed at “listening, hearing, and reconstructing the soundscapes of the Danish court at Rosenborg Castle.” <https://teol.ku.dk/akh/ansatte/?pure=da/persons/502090>

<sup>17</sup> C. Annemieke Romein, Sara Veldhoen and Michel de Gruijter, “The Datafication of Early Modern Ordinances,” *DH Benelux Journal*, Volume 2: Digital Humanities in Society (2020).

<sup>18</sup> Sean Marrs gave a paper on based on his research focusing on “Royal Power and Police Surveillance in Eighteenth-century Paris” at the 2020 K&Q conference.

<sup>19</sup> Sari Nauman (Göteborgs Universitet) is working on a project entitled “Baltic Hospitality: Receiving Strangers and Providing Security on the Northern European Littoral, ca. 1000-1900,” exploring the regulation of migrants by royal authorities in northern Europe.

studies that are guided by one central question: how do sexuality, hospitality, and diplomacy intersect with notions of privacy?

With this in mind, a new research methodology has been developed—the study of historical notions of privacy and the private—that is transforming how we view the past and, thus, providing royal studies scholars with tools to tackle previously inaccessible aspects of rulership, enabling a reassessment of the institution of monarchy. Royal studies, including the examination of non-royal forms of rulership, focuses on “the exercise, extent, and limitations of royal power and authority as it changes over time and between different geographical, religious, and cultural settings.”<sup>20</sup> Within this rich field of research, the exploration of privacy in relation to rulership and court culture remains largely on the periphery and has never been directly addressed.<sup>21</sup> Over the past three years, researchers and scholars have come together to debate, argue, and study the existence of privacy in the historical past, often encountering assertions that premodern privacy did not exist.<sup>22</sup> However, the key to this innovative research has been to examine privacy not from modern conceptions and ideals, but through a reconstruction of “the scope and scale of such privacies” as they existed in the past, with a “precise view to the sources and their respective contexts.”<sup>23</sup>

To analyse privacies within the context of royal studies, a methodological framework has been established to clarify the ambiguous nature and complexities of notions of privacy and the private, as well as to avoid anachronism. The method of privacy studies stems from a dual approach that examines privacy terminologically and as a phenomenon; or, to clarify, the study of the term or variations used for notions of privacy and the private, and the ways in which the private is conveyed, expressed, or communicated by the actors of the period and the context in which they occur. The terminological approach considers the “words that derive from *privatus*” and its linguistic analogies, which are rooted in the idea of negation.<sup>24</sup> This concentration on the terminology, linguistics, and connotations of privacy can happen only through close analysis and interrogation of the historical sources. As a phenomenon, privacy as a definition cannot be anachronistically applied to explain premodern monarchy and practices of rulership but must be seen as context-dependent—as relational and situational. Therefore, the phenomenon of the private focuses on “artifacts, spatial markers, and vestiges of social practices” as a means of tracing past indicators or signals of privacy in “human lives, actions, and experiences.”<sup>25</sup> This is where the heuristic model of privacy studies helps to visualise and delineate the intersections where privacies

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<sup>20</sup> Woodacre and Sarti, “What is Royal Studies?,” 18.

<sup>21</sup> References to studies such as: Dries Raeymaekers and Sebastian Derks (eds.), *Keys to Power?: The Culture of Access in Princely Courts, 1400-1750* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Theresa Earenfight, ed., *Royal and Elite Households in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2018). Olivia Fryman, “Making the Bed: The Practice, Role and Significance of Housekeeping in the Royal Bedchambers at Hampton Court Palace 1689-1737,” (D.Phil Thesis, Kingston University, 2011); Paula R. Backscheider and Timothy Dykstal, *The Intersections of the Public and Private Spheres in Early Modern England* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>22</sup> Funded by the Danish National Research Foundation, the Centre for Privacy Studies (PRIVACY) consists of a team of researchers from five key disciplines (Legal, Architectural, Social, and Church History, along with the History of Ideas) who jointly focus on the period between 1500 and 1800 to “mobilize knowledge of past notions of privacy as a resource that can help decode the intricacies of present concerns related to the individual’s place in society.” Working collaboratively on eleven site-based case studies, these teams tackle the nuances and extensive amount of source material by engaging with leading experts and researchers related to the case studies. <https://teol.ku.dk/privacy/>

<sup>23</sup> Lars Cyril Nørgaard, “Past Privacy,” in *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches*, ed. Michaël Green, Lars Cyril Nørgaard, and Mette Birkedal Bruun (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 11.

<sup>24</sup> Mette Birkedal Bruun, “Towards an Approach to Early Modern Privacy: The Retire of the Great Condé,” in *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches*, 21–22.

<sup>25</sup> Bruun, “Towards an Approach,” 14.

emerge.<sup>26</sup> The terminological and heuristic approaches “offer a common analytical lens that is fit to bring out and analyse historical insight from various disciplinary angles.”<sup>27</sup> However, while this innovative research on the concept of privacy has progressed quickly, it has not yet considered the diverse perspectives or employed a refined analysis of the public/private divide within the field of royal studies. This special edition seeks to be a starting point to further this research, by moving beyond the conventional discussions of the public/private divide and concentrate on historical privacy and its impact on practices of rulership.

It is widely held that privacy did not exist in premodern and early modern societies, especially in the context of the monarchy, their household, and courts, because of the assumption that historical privacy “didn’t really exist before the rise of individualism (middle class)” or because “privacy is...so elusive [that] anything may be private.”<sup>28</sup> Elena Woodacre has rightly pointed out that “a ruler is, in theory, the most important and visible person in the realm—there is an assumption that they are also the most politically powerful individual in the realm. Yet is that always the case?”<sup>29</sup> This crucial question identifies that there is still so much that we do not know about the institution, practices, and realities of monarchy, as well as its effects. Furthermore, the specific reference to the visibility of rulership automatically implies and emphasises the public nature of monarchy. However, it would be a mistake to concentrate solely on the public significance of monarchy, its “exemplarity,” or to assume that notions of privacy did not exist because of the visible foundations of rulership.<sup>30</sup>

All too often, the focus of royal studies has been the public and visible interactions of the monarchy, from rituals and ceremony to the image and spectacles of rulership. However, this emphasis on the public suggests that it exists in opposition to something unseen, undone, or unknown. The use of rituals in royal and religious spaces has been studied to understand not only the ruler’s identity but also their character. However, rituals were defined by boundaries, “rules of conduct” and the “process of emotion evocation.”<sup>31</sup> Therefore, rituals were bound up in the seen and unseen, the public and private. Studies of historical rituals focus on their public use and the responses they elicited towards rulership. Yet, the unseen or private aspects of rituals have not been fully examined to understand how notions of privacy contributed to the impact of rituals and its influence on rulership, such as the coronations, religious ceremonies like the royal maundy, or religious worship. For instance, the ceremony of coronation visually defined the ruler as being “between the divine and human worlds” in many societies.<sup>32</sup> Yet within the variations and shifts of the anointing ritual within coronation ceremonies, through which the monarch can be concealed by a canopy or within holy closets, the sacredness, mystique, and majesty of the monarch take shape and are enhanced.<sup>33</sup> Alternatively, the royal maundy, though a public event, was only

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<sup>26</sup> Bruun, “Towards an Approach,” 23.

<sup>27</sup> Bruun, “Towards an Approach,” 24.

<sup>28</sup> J. Lepore, “Privacy in an age of publicity,” *The New Yorker* (24 June 2013). Lloyd Weinreb, “The Right to Privacy,” in *The Right to Privacy*, ed. E. F. Paul, F. D. Miller, Jr., and J. Paul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 27–28.

<sup>29</sup> Elena Woodacre, “Understanding the Mechanism of Monarchy,” in *The Routledge History of Monarchy*, ed. Elena Woodacre, Lucinda H.S. Dean, Chris Jones, Russell E. Martin, and Zita Eva Rohr (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), 4.

<sup>30</sup> Anne Régent-Susini, “How to Make Exemplarity with Secret Virtues: Funeral Sermons and Their Challenges in Early Modern France,” in *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches*, 190.

<sup>31</sup> Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 2–3.

<sup>32</sup> Woodacre, “Mechanism of Monarchy,” 8.

<sup>33</sup> Alice Hunt, *The Drama of Coronation: Medieval Ceremony in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

attended by select members of court, “the chappelan and poor folks...the almoner...thirty-nine ladies and gentlewomen.”<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the public-private distinction of religious ceremonies was blurred, as Michelle Beer highlights, when Catherine of Aragon was forced, due to her divorce to Henry VIII, to “keep her Maundy in her chamber” or “private chapel.”<sup>35</sup> In light of this separation, Beer points to public and private Maundies as being related to “a queenly maundy” or “non-queenly Maundies.”<sup>36</sup> Thus, the link between location and number of participants to public ceremonies also raises questions about the degrees of privacy—individual, a pair, families, households, courts, community, and state—which correspond with the heuristic model of privacy studies. Finally, the public presentation or performance of piety suggests that female piety was not always visible to the public.

Queenly piety and religious devotion were often performed to reinforce authority and influence, and as a means of “maintaining her status as an anointed queen.”<sup>37</sup> Similarly with the case of Elizabeth I of England, these performances of queenship also “fostered the moving display of the Queen’s magnificence, religious inclinations, and royal supremacy.”<sup>38</sup> This is evident in the description of Elizabeth’s visit to the University of Cambridge where, during the religious service, she performed the rituals of worship and then “going in her traveys” did pray privately.<sup>39</sup> Such rituals and ceremonies also raise other questions as to whether these were staged privacies or staged rituals that provided monarchs with private experiences. What do the unseen rituals and ceremonies of rulership tell us beyond enhancing the monarch’s divine majesty? One only need to look again at the recent Netflix series *The Crown* to get a sense of the impact of such an unseen moment in the anointing of Elizabeth II.<sup>40</sup> The episode shows the anointing taking place behind a partition that conceals the ritual from view. Once the anointing is over, the partition is removed. As this is happening, it is being described by the actor playing Prince Edward, the Duke of Windsor (formerly King Edward VIII), perhaps through reminiscing about his own coronation plans, and the meaning and power of the private moment. To further demonstrate the significance of these and other questions about privacy within royal studies, a brief Tudor case study provides an example of how employing the methods from privacy studies can cast a different light on aspects of royals in the field of popular history.

### **A Brief Case Study: A Private King?**

In thinking about this special issue it is crucial to provide an example that demonstrates the application of privacy studies, and how it can shape royal studies. Upon the conclusion of a project

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<sup>34</sup> John Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I: A New Edition of the Early Modern Sources*, ed. Elizabeth Goldring, Faith Eales, Elizabeth Clarke, and Jayne Elisabeth Archer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), Volume 2, 48. Based on William Lambarde’s (1536-1601) description of the ceremony. Original manuscript located at the British Library, Add. MS 32097.

<sup>35</sup> Michelle L. Beer, *Queenship at the Renaissance Courts of Britain: Catherine of Aragon and Margaret Tudor, 1503-1533* (Woodbridge: The Royal Historical Society/The Boydell Press, 2018), 136.

<sup>36</sup> Beer, *Queenship*, 136.

<sup>37</sup> Beer, *Queenship*, 125.

<sup>38</sup> Dustin M. Neighbors, “The Performativity of Female Power and Public Participation through Elizabethan Royal Progresses,” *Liminalities* 18, no. 1 (2022), 150.

<sup>39</sup> Account of the Queen’s reception at King’s College Chapel on 5 August 1564 in Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions*, volume 1, 401–402. Copy-text of the account is available at Cambridge University Library, University Archives, Misc. Collect. 4, fos. 68v-69r.

<sup>40</sup> Based on the real events in 1953, Elizabeth II’s coronation ceremony was the first televised royal ceremony. This depiction provides an opportunity to imagine such privacies within the institution of monarchy. Peter Morgan, “Smoke and Mirrors,” *The Crown*, episode 5, season 1, directed by Philip Martin (Netflix, aired 4 November 2016).



examining the royal progresses of Henry VIII of England (1491-1547), one question stood out regarding the realities of itinerant monarchy: where is the privacy—privacy for monarchs, the household staff, affairs of state, and even the court?<sup>41</sup> In the chaos and vibrant spectacles of royal progresses, did rulers have moments of privacy or forms of historical privacy, such as solitude, withdrawal, or intimacy? How was this forged? The study of spectacles and royal travels are often at odds with distinguishing the true purpose or significance of royal progresses. These studies concentrate either on the ceremonies, representations, meanings of plays, entertainments on progress, or on the recreational and personal aspects of royal progresses.<sup>42</sup> Yet, they do not consider how progresses were a blend of both ceremony and recreation, and what happens within the environs or the interactions that are not seen but often described. Even with the limited collection of popular historical biographies documenting royal private lives, the nuances of privacy and its significance are not sufficiently explored.<sup>43</sup> Tracy Borman has briefly assessed the private lives of the Tudors, stating that privacy in general was “disguised by a mask of invincibility.”<sup>44</sup> Yet the nuances of privacy within the lives of royalty need further examination, particularly when considering how privacies were forged or communicated. The physical spaces in which the Tudors lived and lodged “created a very deliberate distinction between the public and private worlds.”<sup>45</sup> Often, the need for privacy was associated with the need to escape or avoid something, whereby avoidance is connected to privacy through royal figures “closing themselves off,”<sup>46</sup> retreating or withdrawing, defining boundaries, or deciding to “control access.”<sup>47</sup> This is important to note because the moments in which Henry VIII gained privacy on progresses, despite being underexplored, were associated with very specific situations (conveyed in an array of correspondence): to evade certain affairs of state, obsessively avoid areas infected with illnesses, retreat from the watchful eye of or dodge audiences with political adversaries and diplomats, and

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<sup>41</sup> The research produced here comes from preliminary research conducted during a pilot project with Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) in the UK and a seminar presentation on “A Private King?: The Royal Progresses of Henry VIII.” In 2018, HRP launched a pilot project to conduct research on the royal progresses of Henry VIII of England. The project and its unpublished final report was used as the foundation of a successful Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Networking Grant, resulting in the research network “Henry VIII on Tour: Tudor Palaces and Royal Progresses” (<https://www.hrp.org.uk/about-us/research/henry-viii-on-tour-tudor-palaces-and-royal-progresses/#gs.o5j70s>). The presentation was given as part of the Tudor and Stuart Seminar series at the Institute for Historical Research on 25 February 2019.

<sup>42</sup> Neil Samman, “The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509-1529,” in *The Reign of Henry VIII: politics, policy and piety*, ed. Diarmaid MacCulloch (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995); Siobhan Keenan, *The Progresses, Processions, and Royal Entries of Charles I, 1625-1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020); Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight, ed., *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Sydney Anglo, *Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Michael A.R. Graves, *Henry VIII: A Study in Kingship* (London: Pearson Education, 2003), 57–58. David Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry, 1558-1642* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971).

<sup>43</sup> To name a few: Janice Hadlow, *The Strangest Family: The Private Lives of George III, Queen Charlotte and the Hanoverians* (London: William Collins, 2014) and Barbara Cartland, *The Private Life of Elizabeth, Empress of Austria* (London: F. Muller, 1959). More recently, Michael Paterson, *A Brief History of the Private Life of Elizabeth II* (London: Robinson, 2012) and Christopher Andersen, *Brothers and Wives: Inside the Private Lives of William, Kate, Harry, and Meghan* (New York: Gallery Books, 2021).

<sup>44</sup> Tracy Borman, *The Private Lives of the Tudors: Uncovering the Secrets of Britain’s Greatest Dynasty* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2016), 15.

<sup>45</sup> Borman, *Private Lives*, 16.

<sup>46</sup> Irwin Altman, “Privacy Regulation: Culturally Universal or Culturally Specific?,” *Journal of Social Issues* 33, no. 3 (1977), 67.

<sup>47</sup> Bruun, “Towards an Approach,” 13.

to stifle the criticism that the king encountered.<sup>48</sup> In June 1537, for example, Henry wrote to the Duke of Norfolk stating that the extensively planned progress to York was “put off” due to a number of reasons, one of which was recurrent fears of “rumours blown abroad of our absence” and “hearing that the B[isho]p of Rome and his cardinals intend to irritate both the Emperor and the French King and his nephew also against him, and to make use of Scotland as a means of attack.”<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, during Henry’s progress to York in 1541 he stopped at places “where he has not yet been during his reign” and were areas “where there is a great multitude of designs” against the King.<sup>50</sup> While it was this “danger of daily rebellions, [that Henry] wishes to be well accompanied [sic] by men...whom he has more trust,”<sup>51</sup> “others” identified that Henry “was in doubt of going beyond [Doncaster] and proposed to go back [to London].”<sup>52</sup> Additionally, while Henry was cautious about his visits and sought to avoid places where he might encounter rebellious subjects, he also changed his itinerary due to public criticism that he received. In July 1532 the Spanish ambassador, Eustace Chapuys, wrote to Emperor Charles V stating that “The King going northwards...though great preparations had been made, he has turned back...the cause is that, in two or three places that he passed through, the people urged him to take back the Queen,” referring to Catherine of Aragon.<sup>53</sup>

This specific incident of criticism regarding Henry’s divorce from Catherine highlights the ways in which notions of privacy, like avoidance, were communicated, through examination of sources relating to royal progresses. First, we are given a description of Henry responding to a particular set of circumstances; he was avoiding places where he would receive criticism or did not trust the people. Second, since Henry did not like or was uncomfortable with this critique, he was actively changing the itinerary and route of his progresses. Third, these episodes highlight how royal progresses were a response to or exchange between the monarch and the people, thus demonstrating the conflict that arises when the heuristic thresholds of the public and private intersect. While royal progresses were fundamentally visible and highly public, they were also personal and recreational travels that enabled the monarch to withdraw from the public. This is reinforced by the use of specific language that characterised progresses. The sixteenth-century source materials distinguish progresses through descriptions such as “removinge” from one location and going to another, or moving from the public palaces of London to the private royal

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<sup>48</sup> The royal progresses of Henry VIII have not been fully explored. In an unpublished report for HRP, the findings outline that “there is a substantial amount of evidence, artefacts, and historic structures” that has not been subjected to a “comprehensive study” in relation to Henry’s progresses. Of the limited existing scholarship on these progresses, only “two publications...are the foundations of studying” the progresses, their significance within early modern England, and UK’s cultural heritage. Both of these publications are the works of Neil Samman. See: Samman, “The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509-1529”; Samman, “The Henrician Court during Cardinal Wolsey’s Ascendency, 1514-1529,” (PhD Thesis, University of Wales, 1988).

<sup>49</sup> The National Archives (TNA), State Papers (SP) 1/121, f. 95, “Henry VIII to the Duke of Norfolk,” 12 June 1537.

<sup>50</sup> J. Kaulek, *Correspondance politique de MM. de Castillon et de Marillac, ambassadeurs de France en Angleterre (1537–1542)* (Paris, 1885), 326. Translated from the French “quant il passe par quelque ville où il n’a encores esté de son règne...” and “a grande multitude de daings.”

<sup>51</sup> Kaulek, 317. Translated from the French “il se veult trouver bien accompagné et mesmement des gentilzhommes de ces environs, èsquelz il a plus de fiancé qu’à ceulx du Nor.”

<sup>52</sup> Although Marillac reported that the claim that Henry didn’t want to go on to York and return to London “was found to be false/qui c’est trouvé notablement faulx” and based this on the fact that Henry had communicated that he would stay longer, this still demonstrates that Henry’s desire to withdraw away from discontent was part of the discourse of progresses. Kaulek, 360.

<sup>53</sup> “Chapuys to Charles V,” 29 July 1532, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 5, 1531-1532*, ed. James Gairdner (London, 1880), 526.

residences beyond the city.<sup>54</sup> It was the withdrawal into the private or unseen exchanges and interactions that both shaped and were shaped by events. More specifically, Henry's avoidance of places that were infected with the plague, or areas where he encountered criticism or opposition, was a catalyst for him to withdraw from the public (i.e., changing destinations on progresses or returning to London), further exposing his insecure, fearful, and cautious nature.

The act of withdrawing is also reinforced by the fact that, throughout his reign, Henry stayed mainly in places owned by the Crown and not at the homes of his courtiers. The first significant illustration of privacy was Henry's habitual use of royal palaces or lodgings while on progress. Given the importance placed on the politics of royal ceremony, this was quite unusual—royal progresses were centred around the idea of monarchs interacting with their subjects and displaying majesty. The progresses served to reinforce “[the king’s] authority and was presented to his subjects” within the localities “against a background of ceremony and ritualised splendour.”<sup>55</sup> However, visits to the homes of Henry's favourites were less about politics and more about trust in those “associated with...the inner court circle” or those who “had strong connections with the court.”<sup>56</sup> Trust is a crucial component in understanding of notions of privacy and private spaces, bound up with key concepts of access, intimacy, and familiarity—all notions of privacy. As such, access and familiarity were key to Henry's choices of destinations during his progresses. Neil Samman has presented an original and important statistical table indicating the “number of nights spent by the king outside royal palaces.”<sup>57</sup> The table shows that Henry's visits and progresses accounted for roughly 4 to 31% of the king's year. What Samman does not indicate by “outside royal palaces” is whether they were the palaces in London or different royal residences throughout England. This is significant because Henry was in possession of over sixty buildings (palace, castles, hunting lodges, and monasteries) within the royal residential system that he either inherited or built.<sup>58</sup> The estimate might therefore be higher if we include the stays in royal residences outside of those in London. Furthermore, if we consider the statistics related to his visits with courtiers, we also gain new insights about into Henry's situational notions of privacy. Samman seems to suggest that those visits beyond the royal palaces were instances where Henry primarily “lodg[ed] with courtiers or noblemen and visits to religious houses.”<sup>59</sup> While the research is correct, in reassessing this research with the new table data of Henry's progresses with a focus on privacy, we would find that of the nights spent “outside the royal palaces” in London, more than 65% of those nights were spent in accommodations within the royal residential system. This means that a

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<sup>54</sup> TNA, Auditors of the Imprest and Successors Accounts (AO) 3/127-128. For detailed information on the AO records see Neighbors, “Elizabeth I, Huntress of England: Private Politics and the Diplomacy of Hunting,” *The Court Historian* 27, no. 2 (forthcoming 2022), 15–17.

<sup>55</sup> Samman, “Progresses of Henry VIII,” 59.

<sup>56</sup> Samman, “Progresses of Henry VIII,” 67–68.

<sup>57</sup> Samman, “Progresses of Henry VIII,” 63.

<sup>58</sup> Given the fact that Henry VIII had a considerable number of buildings, all with different purposes, it is important to be aware of not only the architectural significance, but also the purpose of such royal buildings. Sanne Maekelberg, has provided an excellent study of different architectural buildings in the sixteenth century and applied the term residential system as “an umbrella term to cover the different typologies of buildings.” (26) Although Maekelberg focuses on the collection of buildings of the nobility and the term has not been used in association with Henry VIII's royal residences, the residential system of the nobility is relevant because the palace/castle system was “imitating the architectural policy of the rulers,” like Henry VIII. This proves important when we consider those buildings outside of the royal palaces in London, especially those residences that were used or connected to privacy. Sanne Maekelberg “The Residential System of the High Nobility in the Habsburg Low Countries: The Croÿ Case,” 2 Volumes (PhD thesis, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2019). This thesis is currently being prepared for a forthcoming monograph publication.

<sup>59</sup> Samman, “Progresses of Henry VIII,” 63.

significant portion of Henry's progresses were not visits to the homes of his courtiers but stays at his own buildings. Consequently, this information suggests that Henry either felt more comfortable with the familiarity of his own residences or actively sought them as a means of privacy or withdrawal. Either way, these new insights connecting royal progresses and privacy present a different perspective of Henry's kingship, highlighting how withdrawal, avoidance, and the activities in Henry's private life were the key sources of his public criticism.<sup>60</sup>

Tudor instances of privacy are also evident in the use of material objects during the premodern period. One of the ways in which privacy was set up during the monarch's visit was through the use of detachable locks that were fitted in the doors at the host's home, thus replacing the host's pre-existing locks.<sup>61</sup> The removal of locks indicates that, upon the monarch's visit, the host's home would serve as a royal residence, delineating the heuristic intersection of household and state. Progresses provide a key opportunity to see how the state and household intersected heuristically, while also revealing the clashes between public and private affairs. This is certainly evident when we examine the context surrounding the wives of Henry VIII, such as his 1541 progress to York, a mission to resolve tensions with his subjects in York, during which his wife, Katherine Howard, committed adultery, enabled by the spatial privacy afforded on progresses.<sup>62</sup> The public institution of monarchy included the political body and the court, of which only a small assemblage of courtiers would have travelled with the monarch and were accommodated either at the home of the host or nearby.<sup>63</sup> Thus, the host's private home was now a public space, invaded—a temporary royal residence where the affairs of state continued and the spectacles of court took over. Simultaneously, the use of the royal locks shows that these now royal spaces were made the private or intimate areas of the king or queen. As previously noted, the restriction of access and limiting of people's movements through various spaces highlights two things: the lengths that were taken to provide security and protection, even in the homes of Henry's courtiers; as well as the designation of private spaces.<sup>64</sup>

These detachable locks were made by the royal locksmith, a position within the Great Wardrobe, and physically replaced the existing locks on the doors of the home. There are two known examples of these detachable locks. Each of them is decorated with Henry VIII's coat of arms. The Beddington lock, located on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum, comes from Beddington House, the estate of the Carew family.<sup>65</sup> Henry visited Beddington in 1532, as Nicholas Carew was noted to have been a favourite of Henry VIII and was also his Master of the Horse.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> John Guy, *Henry VIII: A Quest for Fame* (London: Penguin, 2015), 11.

<sup>61</sup> I want to thank Victoria Nutt for sharing her MA research where she provided a brief overview of the use of changing locks in the houses of host of the Tudors, primarily Elizabeth I. I also want to thank Angela McShane for alerting me to Victoria's wonderful work. Victoria Nutt, "Making Progress with the Queen" (MA Thesis, Royal College of Art Joint Course with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 2007).

<sup>62</sup> Although disagreeing with the assertion that privacy was "fundamentally performative" (100), Nikki Clark's fantastic article connecting privacy and spaces on progresses, as well as within the context of the court, demonstrates the significance of examining privacy within royal and court studies. Nikki Clark, "Queen Katherine Howard: Space, Place, and Promiscuity Pre- and Post-Marriage, 1536-1541," *Royal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2019), 102. See also Lucy Wooding, *Henry VIII* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015); 264.

<sup>63</sup> Mary Hill Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony* (Cambridge, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 68–74.

<sup>64</sup> An assessment of the meanings of these locks has been provided in a previously published article. Neighbors, "The Performativity of Female Power," 129.

<sup>65</sup> The Beddington Lock, Henry Romaynes, c.1539-1547, V&A Museum, British Galleries, Room 58, case 4.

<sup>66</sup> Stanford Lehmberg, "Carew, Sir Nicholas (b. in or before 1496, d. 1539)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2007.

The lock could possibly have been fitted before that visit. The other example of removing locks is located at Hever Castle, unique because it is still fitted in the door.<sup>67</sup> When the lock was put in place is not clear: Henry is believed to have visited Hever Castle during his courtship with Anne, however none of the financial records indicate payments made for the preparations of Hever or the installation of such a lock there.<sup>68</sup> It is possible to conclude that the lock fitting was organised by George Boleyn who was a gentlemen of the king's Privy Chamber. As the Privy Chamber was involved in the organisation of progresses, this would explain how the lock came to be at Hever.<sup>69</sup> The use of removing locks signified royal ownership and authority of the spaces beyond where they were present. Only a few people had control and access to those spaces: the king and select high-ranking officers of the Privy Chamber would have possessed 'by-keys', specific to individual locks and "held by various officers on a 'need to access' basis."<sup>70</sup> This distinct creation of a private space within the home of a courtier demonstrates one of the ways in which monarch's and their subjects interacted.

With so much scholarship on the Tudors, we already know of Henry's insecurities and the complexities of his reign.<sup>71</sup> Accordingly, it is natural to wonder what this brief discussion of the king's progresses and notions of privacy tells us, and how it changes what we already know about the king and his reign. As an example, this brief examination of the royal progresses or itinerant monarchies and notions of privacy has revealed that these elements of rule were not on the periphery, but rather critical instruments in shaping authority, the negotiation of power, and the development of reputation and representation; and thus, examining progresses and privacy sheds new light on the realities of Henry's kingship. For example, these elements highlight the practices that cultivated "interaction[s] between central royal/crown authority" and the wider public, which have come to define the historical narrative of the Tudors, and more broadly, of royal personages, communities, and nations of the past.<sup>72</sup> Finally, this brief case study demonstrates how the examination of privacy through the specific framework of privacy studies can help enhance our understanding, and better situate the public nature and impact of monarchy within its historical context.

While a considerable amount of scholarly research has been undertaken to study the royal progresses, itinerant monarchs, and royal festivals of Europe, as well as some recent studies of private royal spaces, there are still unexplored areas through which to expand our understanding of the ways in which privacy existed in public spectacles, courtly interactions, and the exercise of rulership.<sup>73</sup> Future research must consider and build upon important work on the specific cultural

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<sup>67</sup> Paul Kendall, *Henry VIII in 100 Objects: The Tyrant King Who had Six Wives* (London: Frontline Books, 2020), 104.

<sup>68</sup> Financial evidence documenting the progresses of Henry VIII can be found in the Privy Chamber accounts, which record payments made to gentlemen ushers of the chamber and the yeomen of the wardrobe for the preparation of royal residences for the King's visit. See the various Exchequer records (E) at the UK National Archives (TNA) in London: TNA, E 101/416/5; E 101/418/14; E 101/419/1-4, to reference a few.

<sup>69</sup> Samman, "The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509-1529." Maria Heyward, *Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007). The best-known explanation and examination of the logistics of Tudor royal progresses is Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony*.

<sup>70</sup> Simon Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England: Architecture and Court Life, 1460-1547* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 83.

<sup>71</sup> Wooding, *Henry VIII*, 4; Thomas S. Freeman, *Henry VIII and History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 267-269; Tracy Borman, *Henry VIII and the Men who Made Him: The Secret History behind the Tudor Throne* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2018); Peter Marshall, *Religious Identities in Henry VIII's England* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 33.

<sup>72</sup> Neighbors "With my rulinge," 238.

<sup>73</sup> J.R. Mulryne, Maria Ines Aliverti, and Anna Maria Testaverde, *Ceremonial Entries in Early Modern Europe: The Iconography of Power* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015); J.R. Mulryne, Krista De Jonge, R.L.M. Morris, and Pieter Martens,

practices of rulership and understanding of privacy in a global and temporal context.<sup>74</sup> In examining spectacles and itinerant monarchies, we can comparatively analyse the public elements that influenced notions of privacy in Europe and beyond. Furthermore, we can delve further into how privacy was constructed and achieved within global spectacles and impacted interactions between royalty and their subjects, as well as how it shaped the everyday lives of royals, especially peripatetic monarchs and their courts across all periods. It would be interesting to identify what forms of privacy existed within rulership over different periods, thus mapping the shifts in privacy. By utilising the example of royal progresses as a lens through which to examine privacy in relation to public interactions, the negotiation of power, and the extent to which privacy was gendered, we can develop new case studies and conceptual frameworks to research notions of privacy in royal studies, including the influence of privacy between the ruling elite and those below them.

### **Privacy and Royalty in Context: The Special Issue**

As a means “to understand this timeless institution...examine both theory and concept...and [explore the] historical case studies of the practices and realities of rulership,” this special edition considers how notions of privacy and the private emerged, influenced, or existed within and around the institution of monarchy.<sup>75</sup> One of the key ways to tackle privacy is to investigate the idea, alluded to at the beginning of this article, of ‘access’ and ‘accessibility’, which is an underlying theme throughout the contributions to this issue. Although some of these pieces do not directly address the privacy methodology, they inform the phenomena of privacy, and thus privacy studies, through their research. These articles seek to understand the ways in which sexuality, hospitality, and diplomacy are shaped by notions of privacy and the private, as a means of contextualising and understanding the nuances of gender, power, and the interrelations of rule within the institution of monarchy.

While the royal palaces and the court created the illusion of public versus private, particularly in the arrangements of the monarch’s various rooms, in actuality the private and intimate spaces were not always so removed from public eyes, highlighting forms of access. This would have required, at a minimum, the architectural feature of hallways, or *enfilades*, that eliminate the need to pass through rooms and thereby isolate them from the rest of the living space.<sup>76</sup> In the first part of the sixteenth century, hallways were allocated to the wings that were reserved for the less important members of the household, where issues of privacy seem not to have been of great importance. The suite of rooms leading into the bedchamber grew, making kings and queens less accessible to members of their court.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, a number of fundamental questions follow from

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*Occasions of State: Early Modern European Festivals and the Negotiation of Power* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019); J.R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring, eds., *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics, and Performance* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017); John W. Bernhardt, *Itinerant Kingship and Royal Monasteries in Early Medieval Germany, c.936-1075* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>74</sup> An important study of rulership in a global perspective that deserves more attention is Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). There have also been some great examinations of rulership in a global context published in previous issues of the *Royal Studies Journal*, including (to highlight just a few): Masako Kamiya, “Is the Japanese Monarchy in Crisis Due to Its Gender Bias?,” *Royal Studies Journal* 7, no. 2 (2020): 117–132 and Jock Philips, “Māori and Royal Visits, 1869-2015: From Rotorua to Waitangi,” *Royal Studies Journal* 5, no. 1 (2018): 34–54.

<sup>75</sup> Woodacre, “Mechanisms of Monarchy,” 1.

<sup>76</sup> Dries Raeymaekers, “Access,” in *Early Modern Court Culture*, ed. Erin Griffey (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022), 128–129; Roger Luckhurst, *Corridors: Passages of Modernity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2019), 270.

<sup>77</sup> Amanda Richardson, “Gender and Space in English Royal Palaces, c.1160—c.1547: A Study in Access Analysis and Imagery,” *Medieval Archaeology* 47, no. 1 (2003), 133–134.

this filtering function of hallways and their distribution of accessibility. How did public displays of political authority, central to early modern rulership, put privacy to strategic use? How did private zones facilitate the “absolute” ruler with spaces of negotiation and political deliberation? In what ways were the private persona of the ruler part of his ceremonial representation? How did privacy, as a feature of political power, develop during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? Along with the preceding sections, these questions challenge the assumption that the private did not exist before its modern codification into law; the notion, clearly, took on different and even surprising meanings.

Furthermore, studies of gender have traditionally focused on the nature of women (lifecycle, sexuality, anatomy, etc.), female activities, male/female relations, and masculinity within the domestic sphere. More recently, scholarly research into queenship, the influence of women at court, female participation in knowledge production, and domesticity have documented the movement, or access, from the private or domestic sphere to the public arena.<sup>78</sup> Yet, beyond ideas of intimacy, familial duties, or personal physical spaces in the household, as well as religious life and devotion, very few sources directly address privacy within this context.<sup>79</sup> With the exception of Heide Wunder’s recently published chapter on gender and privacy in the German-speaking context, overall, the correlation between gender and notions of privacy remains underexplored, especially given the instances where patriarchal ideas of women intersected with privacy providing women with knowledge, abilities, and opportunities to push the boundaries of the public sphere and engage in unconventional ways.<sup>80</sup> This is examined in Justine Cudorge’s article, “Women’s Quarters, an Influential and Political Pole: A Study of the Frankish Inner-Court (Sixth-Seventh Century),” in which she directly addresses the problems of applying the traditional idea and structure of the gendered, public, and private, spheres to historical periods that did not have the fixed and hierarchical palace and court systems that existed in later periods.<sup>81</sup> Accordingly, Cudorge argues that these systems within early medieval societies did not constitute the same male, public sphere, and female, private sphere. Therefore, as an alternative model, Cudorge suggests a socio-political sphere in which royal women (wives, concubines, widows, sisters, nieces, daughters, and granddaughters) straddled the boundaries between the public and private, state and household, politics and domesticity. Within this sphere, the public and private were interdependent and illustrated the meaning and clashes that emerge when the different heuristic zones intersect. Yet, Cudorge develops this further by highlighting how royal women were able to exercise agency, wield power, and shape the culture of the Frankish palatial system through the “permeability of the social hierarchy” that blurred the public/private boundaries.<sup>82</sup> As a result of the author’s research connecting notions of privacy with the study of Frankish royal and court culture, we have a model that reconsiders and reframes the idea of the gendered spheres. Additionally, Cudorge also sheds new light on women’s role in and influence on the practices of Frankish rulership, and

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<sup>78</sup> Martine van Elk, *Early Modern Women’s Writing: Domesticity, Privacy, and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

<sup>79</sup> Lena Cowen Orlin, *Locating Privacy in Tudor London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 112–113; Philippe Ariès, George Duby, and Roger Chartier (eds.), *History of Private Life* (4 Volumes) (London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987-1991), 349 and 477–480.

<sup>80</sup> Heide Wunder, “Considering ‘Privacy’ and Gender in Early Modern German-Speaking Countries,” in *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches*, 63–78.

<sup>81</sup> Justine Cudorge, “Women’s Quarters, an Influential and Political Pole: A Study of the Frankish Inner-Court (Sixth-Seventh Century),” *Royal Studies Journal* 9, no. 1 (2022), 2.

<sup>82</sup> Cudorge, “Women’s Quarters,” 7.

explores how early medieval private networks were utilised by royal women to make themselves heard within the palace and politics of the sixth and seventh centuries.

More recently, research relating to LGBTQIA+ history, particularly in the medieval and early modern period, has increased.<sup>83</sup> However, the connections between queer relations and sexuality, homosocial bonds, and cross-dressing with notions of privacy are non-existent, thus providing a new avenue of research. Furthermore, studies of gender and masculinity have not explored the dynamics of warfare, violence, or recreational activities, like royal sports, alongside concepts of privacy. Gabrielle Storey's article, "Questioning Terminologies: Homosocial and 'Homosexual' Bonds in the Royal Bedchamber and Kingship in Medieval England and France," contributes a refined analysis of historical sexualities by exploring the terms and characteristics that are used to describe homosocial bonds between royals and their subjects. Storey's examination expands our knowledge of both individual royal figures and historical notions of privacy by emphasising moments of intimacy and closeness through homosocial bonds.

Friendship has often been studied within the context of female networks and epistolary culture. However, rarely has the idea of historical friendship been examined in the context of men, especially, as Storey points out, in relation to sexuality and gender. To fill this gap and tackle the issue of terms relating to sexuality, Storey seeks to examine the nature of masculinity and the significance of homosocial and same-sex bonds within the practice of medieval rulership. As such, this article considers how the use of private spaces and private activities within the situational and temporal context did not necessarily constitute homosexual relations but rather demonstrates "emotional closeness" that reinforced the warrior masculinity and the ideals of "brothers in arms."<sup>84</sup> Storey's research provides a new perspective on male-male royal relationships in medieval Europe by examining the phenomena of privacy through unseen moments and intimacy. Consequently, through the study of medieval rulership this research offers an approach to privacy as an extension of rulership and martial culture, and considers how to identify and characterise royal masculinity and sexuality.

Building on royal spaces, historical practices of hospitality were rooted in modelling the ritualised behaviours of honour and charity. Although hospitality consisted of its own rituals that publicly emphasised social honour and dignity, the act of hospitality also blurred the line between what was deemed public and private. This blurring of the lines became more distinct as "household ordinances indicated that access...[was] constantly to be controlled in order to balance" the generosity of openness with "practical obligations."<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, the complexity of the public and private distinction was evident through royal travels or the hosting of foreign powers. Thus, by exploring notions of privacy through the activities and spaces associated with hospitality, we can discern how individuals balanced their public duties with their private lives. This relationship between hospitality and diplomacy is considered in Stephen Griffin's article, "Between Public and

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<sup>83</sup> Norman Domeier and Christian Mühling, *Homosexualität am Hof: Praktiken und Diskurse vom Mittelalter bis heute*, (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2020). The special issue of the *Royal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2019) is dedicated to examining "Royal Sexualities," edited by Katia Wright, Edward Legon, and Matthew Storey. From this issue, there are two contributions that provide further examples of our examination of privacy and sexuality: Amy Saunders, "The Afterlife of Christina of Sweden: Gender and Sexuality in Heritage and Fiction," 204–221, and Robert Kusek and Wojciech Szymański, "Kings as 'Queens'—Textual and Visual Homophobic Fabrications of Two Polish Kings: The Curious Cases of Boleslaw the Generous and Henry I of Poland," 127–147.

<sup>84</sup> Gabrielle Storey, "Questioning Terminologies: Homosocial and 'Homosexual' Bonds in the Royal Bedchamber and Kingship in Medieval England and France," *Royal Studies Journal* 9, no. 1 (2022), 6.

<sup>85</sup> Felicity Heal, "The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England," *Past & Present* 102 (1984), 90.



Private Spaces: Jacobite Diplomacy in Vienna, 1725-1742,” which examines the interplay and complexities between the public and private within diplomacy and politics. Examining early eighteenth-century correspondence, Griffin argues that Jacobite diplomatic missions and relationships with the royal Habsburg court in Vienna were forged through private interactions that hospitality afforded these royal guests and the informal royal audiences.

Through consideration of the public and private situations and interactions between the exiled James Stuart and the Habsburg monarchy in Vienna, Griffin demonstrates how hospitality and spectacles often functioned as a means of access and influence. More importantly, Griffin highlights how the combination of public practices and private interactions came to define Jacobite and imperial relations in the eighteenth century. This analysis emphasises not only the importance of studying the privacies of rulership but also shows how royal power, diplomacy, and politics relied on the use of varying degrees of privacy—private audiences, secret meetings and negotiations, private agents, and the collection and use of personal information.

Finally, the very nature of diplomacy was public as it was embedded in protocols, ceremonies, and codes of behaviour. However, throughout history, diplomacy has also been based on the fundamental practices of “information gathering.”<sup>86</sup> Diplomatic agents used a variety of means to obtain information, including private methods such as secret meetings, surveillance, and unusual skills of extracting information. By exploring diplomacy through the lens of privacy, we can establish how notions of privacy were integral to the development and maintenance of diplomatic networks and their functions. Thus, the pervasive employment of notions of privacy or the private within foreign relations and the extent they were used by diplomats and rulers deserves more attention, especially surrounding women. Dustin M. Neighbors and Natacha Klein Käfer examine the diplomacy and the nature of transnational relations in the final article of this special issue, “Zones of Privacy in Letters between Women of Power: Elizabeth I of England and Anna of Saxony,” by concentrating on how notions of privacy and the private were instruments used in the epistolary practices and communication between powerful women. Analysing the unexplored letters between Elizabeth and Anna, the authors illustrate how privacy was a diplomatic and political tool deployed to cultivate strong Anglo-German relations and forge Protestant unity in early modern Europe, thus shedding light on the role of royal women in shaping sixteenth-century Protestant politics.

Although the idea of privacy within epistolary culture has been mentioned, Neighbors and Käfer provide a more nuanced analysis of notions of privacy and the private within the letters they have uncovered. As such, the authors not only highlight the ways in which to approach and identify the phenomena of privacy in relation to royal epistolary culture and diplomatic correspondence, but also demonstrate how female royal and elite power, alliances, and diplomacy relied on and employed a unique form of private politics.

### **Conclusion: Moving Forward**

In the modern era, the institution of monarchy has evolved into representative or constitutional monarchies, where power and politics have been enveloped into the institutions of government. Yet the conflict between the public and private continues to define the negotiation of power and political relations. Accordingly, the role and continuation of monarchical institutions has increasingly been called into question and “could yet build into a serious crisis for the royal

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<sup>86</sup> Jeremy Black, *History of Diplomacy* (London: Reaktion Books, LTD., 2010), 12.

family.”<sup>87</sup> Perhaps most prevalent among the problems surrounding modern monarchy, politics, and power has been the issue of privacy. In today’s political culture and amidst people in positions of power, the relevance of privacy is made evident by the unseen communication (written, spoken, and even now, digital), meetings, counsel, and diplomatic negotiations that involve a small group of essential leaders, politicians, diplomats, and experts. In essence, these private events and communications are key components of politics, particularly because they involve the public or occur on their behalf. Furthermore, these common private activities are generally accepted because there is a certain level of accountability by the political institutions. However, the increasingly conflicted public discourse around issues of privacy boils down to transparency with the public—or in many instances, the lack thereof. We need not look far to see examples of issues connected to private politics, such as the 2018 United States-Russia summit in Helsinki, where the two presidents had a private meeting with only translators present.<sup>88</sup> There is also the recent incident of multiple private parties at 10 Downing Street taking place, despite the strict COVID lockdown restrictions that were imposed for the whole of the United Kingdom at the time.<sup>89</sup>

As for modern royal figures and families across Europe, issues of privacy also pose a threat to the public support of monarchies. This includes the legal case pertaining to media privacy for the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, and the institutional privacy of the British monarchy and lack of transparency being viewed as oppressive and racist relating to the treatment of Meghan Markle by members of the royal household and court.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, the secrecy around the “love child,” Princess Delphine, of King Albert II of Belgium, highlights the impact of privacy on royal institutions.<sup>91</sup> Finally, there is the battle over privacy relating to the publicising of royal wills, such as in the case of Prince Philip.<sup>92</sup> By examining notions of privacy and the private—private activities, secret exchanges, intimate interactions, or withdrawal—through the lens of sexuality, hospitality, and diplomacy, our understanding of rulership, monarchy, and power increases. Not only do we distinguish the human need, past and present, for such privacies that are key to “our interpersonal encounters and our functioning in society,” but we also elucidate the complex relationship between personal and institutional monarchy, absolute and constitutional power, and personal interests and the common good.<sup>93</sup> Consequently, we reveal a continual tug of war in the public and private divide that links both the past and present together. Yet, as this special issue will show, it was often the phenomena of privacy that shaped and influenced the public nature of rulership, perhaps at times even defining the situations or relationships within the lives of kings, queens, princes, and princely consorts.

An investigation of how privacy and agency are closely intertwined with the realities of rulership and the social and cultural conditions of politics and power has remained unexplored,

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<sup>87</sup> Andrew Anthony, “The monarchy: so what are they for?,” *The Guardian* (14 March 2021).

<sup>88</sup> Chris Cillizza, “Trump and Putin met one-on-one in a room for 2 hours. Here’s why that’s a problem,” *CNN Politics* (17 July 2018).

<sup>89</sup> Tom Edgington, “Downing Street parties: What Covid rules were broken?,” *BBC News* (1 February 2022).

<sup>90</sup> Michael Holden, “UK court will ‘take time’ to consider Meghan’s privacy case,” *Reuters* (11 November 2021). Caroline Davies, “Palace under pressure to respond to Harry and Meghan racism claims,” *The Guardian* (8 March 2021).

<sup>91</sup> Megan Specia, “A Princess, Long Denied by Belgium’s Former King, Meets with Her Father,” *The New York Times* (27 October 2020).

<sup>92</sup> Max Foster and Lauren Said-Moorhouse, “Analysis: A court battle is brewing over Prince Philip’s will,” *CNN World* (19 November 2021).

<sup>93</sup> Natália de Silva Perez, “Privacy and Social Spaces: An Introduction,” *TSEG: The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History* 18, no. 3 (2021), 5–6.

providing fertile ground for new studies. In a forthcoming publication stemming from an interdisciplinary collaboration and conference on “Privacy at Court” in December 2020, Elena Woodacre and Dustin M. Neighbors begin to explore the connections between privacy and agency. Woodacre examines how privacy hindered Joan of Navarre’s agency through interference within and outside of her household, while Neighbors considers how privacy strengthened agency by scrutinising Elector August of Saxony’s planned hunting excursion for Emperor Maximilian II at the electoral court in Dresden.<sup>94</sup> The contributions of this special edition and other noted studies demonstrate that there is a theoretical and methodological framework through which the examination of privacy and agency can drive research forward within royal studies. With this in mind, we invite scholars working on various royal figures or within the field to consider how the lens and methodology of privacy and the private can enhance the conceptual, theoretical, and practical knowledge of monarchy, royal power, and royal spaces.

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<sup>94</sup> Dustin M. Neighbors and Elena Woodacre, “Agency within Privacy? Considering the Future of Court Studies and Beyond,” in *Notions of Privacy at Early Modern European Courts: Reassessing the Public/Private Divide, 1400-1800*, ed. Dustin M. Neighbors, Lars Cyril Nørgaard, Mette Birkeedal Bruun, and Elena Woodacre (Amsterdam University Press, forthcoming).