



Heir of the Month: The First Year (2013-2014)

www.heirstothethrone-project.net



Preface

A research grant awarded by the AHRC has enabled a small team of researchers at the University of St Andrews to explore the roles played by the men and women destined, one day, to inherit a crown in the workings of Europe's monarchies in the course of the Long Nineteenth Century.

In addition to the researchers directly supported by the AHRC-grant, other historians with cognate interests are actively contributing to the work of the "Heirs to the Throne Project". They help us to generate a lively, energetic atmosphere and to reach out to as many interested audiences as we can. We are delighted to provide more information about their work on our website.

One of our on-going activities in this respect is the regular **Heir of the Month** feature: a monthly biographically-focused essay, published online, written to appeal to wide readership with interests in historical issues, especially the history of 19th-century monarchy. Each essay draws on the current research pursued by the author, but we aim to present our findings in an accessible, thought-provoking and lively fashion.

October 2014 marks a first milestone for this part of our project: we have completed a full year in our "Heir of the Month" series. In order to make these essays more easily accessible, we have collated them in the shape of a first "Royal Annual".

We hope that "our" heirs – some of them sadly forgotten – will meet with renewed interest and afford our readers both enjoyment and food for thought.

St Andrews, October 2014

Heidi Mehrkens

Frank Lorenz Müller

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“Beware of this Man in Germany, he is dangerous and deceitful!”

Prince Ludwig of Bavaria as a *Reichsfeind*

Frank Lorenz Müller

The 19th century was an age marked by some enormously long monarchical reigns. Even against this background, though, the length of Prince *Ludwig*’s wait for the Bavarian throne was nothing if not epic. By the time he eventually assumed royal power in Munich in 1912, his sparse white hair, white beard and portly appearance made him look every one of his 68 years. His path to the crown had not exactly been straightforward. Born in January 1845 Ludwig was the son of Prince Luitpold, the younger brother of King Maximilian II. Yet since the king’s marriage had remained childless for more than two years, Luitpold’s first-born briefly seemed headed for a future on the throne. Hopes of a direct succession were quickly dashed, though, when, only seven months later, Maximilian’s wife Friederike was safely delivered of a crown

prince – also called Ludwig. The older Ludwig’s mother, Auguste Ferdinande, an ambitious Habsburg princess, could not contain her disappointment. “Up till now you were something,” she acerbically cooed into her infant son’s cradle upon receiving the news of the royal birth; “now, you are nothing anymore.”

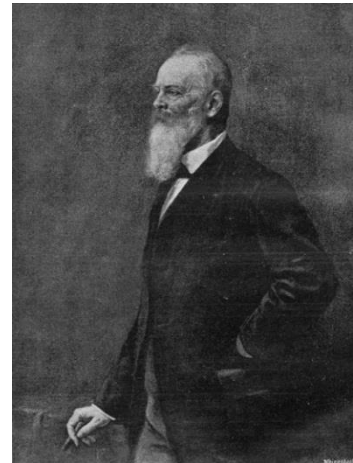


King Ludwig II of Bavaria (1845-1886) as a 20 year-old

But this was not the end of Prince Ludwig’s long and twisted royal road. In 1864 he witnessed his eighteen year-old cousin accede to the throne. Two years later, when Bavaria fought alongside Austria in the war against Prussia, the prince found himself on the front line. The bullet that embedded itself in Ludwig’s thigh during a skirmish near the Franconian village of Helmstadt eluded all surgical attempts at removing it. The piece of Prussian lead remained a painful souvenir of a lost war for the rest of his life and contributed to making Ludwig a most unenthusiastic soldier. In stark contrast to the increasingly eccentric behaviour displayed by his royal cousin and

namesake, Prince Ludwig went on to build a life of exemplary if dull dynastic probity. His marriage to Marie Therese of Austria-Este produced 13 children. As the proud owner of the model farm at Leustetten, Ludwig became a widely recognised specialist in matters agricultural and he campaigned tirelessly for the improvement of the country's antiquated infrastructure. The devout Catholic also discharged his duties as a member of the upper chamber of the Bavarian parliament with unceasing assiduity. The year 1886 was to change Prince Ludwig's future dramatically. For years the political establishment in Bavaria had grown concerned about King Ludwig's pathological reclusiveness, his reckless spending on gargantuan building projects and his predatory homosexual behaviour. Now a decision was taken to grasp the nettle. He was removed from the throne on the grounds of insanity. While the royal title was to remain with the deposed king – and would then, after King Ludwig's mysterious drowning two days later, devolve unto his unquestionably incapacitated younger brother Otto – his monarchical functions were assumed by the unhappy brothers' venerable uncle – Prince Luitpold.

Prince-Regent Luitpold of Bavaria (1821-1912)
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As the eldest son of this 65 year-old regent, 41 year-old Prince Ludwig suddenly found himself closer to the throne than he had been since receiving the bad news in August 1845. And it showed. He immediately redoubled his efforts to gain popularity by travelling the length and breadth of the country, addressing farmers, singers and writers, as well as generally waxing lyrical about the unparalleled record of the Wittelsbach dynasty. That all this hard work paid off was revealed by the warm expressions of affection that poured in from all over Bavaria on the occasion of Ludwig and Marie Therese's Silver Anniversary in 1892. As the future monarch he also attracted attention from further afield: the German Emperor Wilhelm I considered it advisable to flatter the Bavarian prince and Bismarck immediately agreed Ludwig's request to be saluted with just as many naval guns as a Prussian prince. This somewhat petty issue, which occupied the admiralty, the German chancellor, the Prussian Foreign Office and the Bavarian government within months of the death of King Ludwig, was a sign of things to come. For in the course of the ensuing decades, during which the world

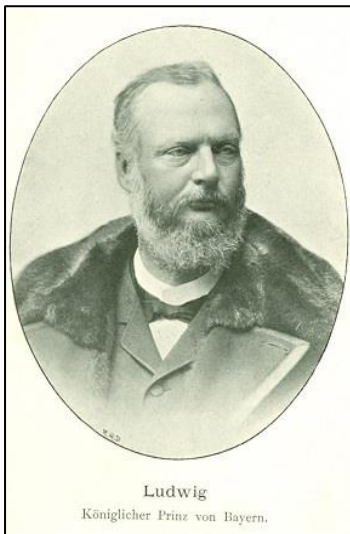
marvelled at the indestructible health of the ancient regent Luitpold, his impatient and cash-strapped son Ludwig grew increasingly crabby. In private, his general grouchiness damaged his relationship with his eldest son Rupprecht, but publicly it discharged itself through ill-tempered complaints about the alleged lack of respect accorded to Bavaria and her ruling house within the German Reich.

The reduction in sovereignty and general loss of status that accompanied Bavaria's entry into the German Reich in 1871 was a bitter pill for the proud and ancient Wittelsbach dynasty. King Ludwig II, whose reluctant approval had been extracted by applying enormous political pressure as well as lavish bribes, never fully accepted his relegation. He escaped from the consequences of his actions by drifting into a world of fantasy and self-indulgence. Prince Ludwig reacted differently, but his views were much the same. In a long speech to the Bavarian upper chamber in December 1870 he grimly listed all the injustices and missed opportunities that had led to the current situation and then, through gritted teeth, announced that he would vote for the treaties now proposed – “but truly not with a light heart.” The main reason for this, he explained, was his fear that the country would otherwise be forced to accept “much worse conditions”. Hardly a warm welcome for the German Reich!

In the years that followed Prince Ludwig made a number of attempts to prettify his grudging toleration of the status quo – an inescapable dictate of *realpolitik* – by adding the flimsy garlands of an all-German loyalty. His gestures never escaped the eagle eyes of the Prussian envoys posted in Munich, but their reports to Berlin tended to be laced with a generous helping of scepticism. In 1885 Ludwig assured the Prussian diplomat von Werthern on a number of occasions that he was keenly interested in “our” German fleet. The unusual name “Helmtrud”, with which he had saddled his unfortunate new daughter, the prince explained in the following year, had been chosen to honour Emperor Wilhelm through the use of the second syllable of his name. A speech Ludwig gave in August 1888 attracted attention because of its “German sentiment”, but, the Prussian envoy added, it was probably too early to take this as evidence of a change in attitude. When, in 1897, Emperor Wilhelm II stage-managed a nation-wide series of celebrations to mark the centenary of his late grandfather's birth, Prince Ludwig dutifully attended the various Munich events and even chose to speak at one of them. Such good behaviour struck the Prussian envoy as remarkable. But these moments

smacked of insincerity. His Highness had been utterly affable towards him, the Prussian envoy Count Monts observed in 1900: “the usual, unmistakeable sign of a guilty conscience.” The Wittelsbach prince simply appeared to be protesting too much when, as in 1910, he sought to flatter Wilhelm II by calling him a “true friend” and the “main force” behind the creation of the German navy; all the more so since, on this occasion, he could not help adding: “naturally with the help of all the German monarchs and the representation of the German people.”

When the Kaiser read an account of this event, he scribbled a baffled “Hello??!” on the margin of the report. By the standard of Wilhelm II’s usual remarks on the heir to the Bavarian throne, this was an unusually mild reaction. Commenting on one of Ludwig’s speeches in May 1900, he accused the Bavarians of behaving not like brothers, but like “distant cousins.” A few days later he added a few lines to a report from Munich. The late Archduke Rudolf of Austria had once warned him against Ludwig, he wrote:



“Beware of this Man in Germany, he is dangerous and deceitful!” Four years earlier the emperor had telegraphed Chancellor Hohenlohe to accuse Ludwig of “unpatriotic and un-German behaviour.” Each of these imperial vituperations was triggered by an unwelcome public demonstration on the part of Ludwig. These éclats were perceived as substantiating the belief, tirelessly confirmed by Count Monts, that the prince was a dyed-in-the-wool Ultramontane, firmly in the grip of Wittelsbach hubris and pathologically jealous of Prussia’s Hohenzollern dynasty.

While his attitude may have made him a beacon of hope for Catholic particularists and the future co-operator with the Centre Party, Ludwig certainly gave his Prussian detractors much to work with. His most famous outburst occurred in the full glare of an international celebration. In June 1896 the prince travelled to Moscow to represent his father at the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II. At a garden party organised by the city’s German community, some hapless functionary offered a toast in honour of Prince Henry of Prussia – the Kaiser’s younger brother, who attended on behalf of the Prussian monarch – and the German princes who had travelled to Russia “in his entourage”. Before the raised glasses could be emptied, however, Prince Ludwig intervened

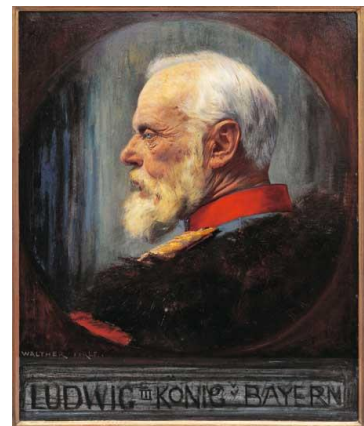
indignantly. The German princes were not vassals of the Kaiser, but his allies, he snapped at the speaker, and Prussia owed them a great deal – including the imperial crown. While the icy silence that ensued and Prince Henry's swift exit made clear that he had caused offence, Ludwig showed only scant remorse. Even when forced to visit the Kaiser in person to rectify the situation a few weeks later, the Bavarian prince still complained that Germany's non-Prussian princes, were often unjustly treated like vassals. The Kaiser may have crowed about having forced Ludwig to "go to Canossa", but Catholic and particularist circles and their newspapers celebrated the gutsy Wittelsbacher for clarifying that Bavaria would give the Reich its due – but no more. The "Moscow Incident" made the headlines not just in Germany, but in Russia, Austria, France and Switzerland with questions being asked about the unity of the Reich.

In 1900 Ludwig was on the warpath again. He gave a speech in Straubing in which he rejected the notion that Bavaria's membership of the Reich was the result of a gracious act and instead insisted that German unity had been "welded together with Bavarian blood just as much as with the blood of other German tribes [*Stämme*]." Once again the reaction was wholly predictable. While Prussian and liberal voices condemned the prince's harsh words about the allegedly strained relationship between Bavaria and North Germany, Catholic papers lionised the "hero of Straubing." Fully aware of the attention Prince Ludwig's words were attracting in the international press, the Kaiser fumed at the "tort now done abroad" and joined "all true patriots" in their wish never to see Ludwig as Bavaria's ruler.

Such views were certainly reinforced by the latter's very emphatic public professions of his Catholic faith – an issue with obvious and powerful political connotations. After attending mass in Altötting in September 1910, Ludwig publicly stated his conviction that Catholicism was "the only true and genuine religion" and thanked the Almighty for making him the child of Catholic parents and for having been brought up within the Catholic faith. Once again, there was a lively press echo across the whole of Germany. While liberal papers attacked the intolerance of a religious zealot, the Catholic "Germania" hoped that "Prince Ludwig's creed may reverberate in Catholic hearts everywhere and inspire emulation."

All this squabbling between Ludwig and the Prussians, between pro-Reich liberals and particularist ultramontanists took place against the quiet and steady background of ancient Prince Luitpold's low-key stewardship of the kingdom of Bavaria. Unlike his son, the prince-regent did not seem to chafe too badly under the Reich, kept away from controversial topics, rarely gave speeches and let it be known discreetly that he was embarrassed by the bouts of ill feeling stirred up by Prince Ludwig. Luitpold successfully cultivated an image of modest dignity which eventually won him considerable respect and affection. The prince-regent's remarkable fitness had long been favourably compared with his son's prematurely aged appearance, but, with the passing of the decades, his great age was taking its toll. Round about the time of his 90th birthday some people cruelly quipped that Luitpold was already dead, but that no-one had the courage to tell the old gentleman for fear of over-exciting him. The inevitable eventually happened in December 1912 and Prince Ludwig succeeded his father first as prince-regent and then, after some nimble legal footwork had solved the tricky problem of poor King Otto's continued existence, even as king of Bavaria.

King Ludwig III of Bavaria (1845-1921)



A seasoned and politically active operator, with the scars to prove it, King Ludwig III made a competent and generally well-received start to his reign, fulfilling his duties knowledgeably and conscientiously. He also began a massive effort at popularising and legitimising the monarchy through the use of media and a clearly recognisable desire to gain approval. In so doing, he benefited from and contributed to the Wittelsbach dynasty's success in generating a broad political culture within which almost all sections of Bavarian society could be seen as fundamentally pro-monarchy. His noisy insistence on Bavaria's specific rights and her rank within the Reich may well have played a positive role in this process. By extension, it was the accusation of Ludwig's excessive subservience to the Supreme Warlord in Berlin that probably fuelled his unpopularity during the First World War more than anything else. Too closely identified with a war that had caused untold suffering, the last king of Bavaria was eventually swept away in November 1918 by the people's yearning for

peace. Along with him went the monarchical system in Bavaria and across the whole German Reich.

Suggested further reading:

Beckenbauer, Alois, *Ludwig III. von Bayern 1845-1921. Ein König auf der Suche nach seinem Volk* (Regensburg, 1987)

Schmid, Alois and Katharina Weigand (eds), *Die Herrscher Bayerns* (Munich, 2001)

März, Stefan, *Das Haus Wittelsbach im Ersten Weltkrieg. Chance und Zusammenbruch monarchischer Herrschaft* (Regensburg, 2013)

Möckl, Karl, *Die Prinzregentenzeit. Gesellschaft und Politik während der Ära des Prinzregenten Luitpold in Bayern* (Munich-Vienna, 1972)

Weiß, Dieter J., *Kronprinz Rupprecht von Bayern. Eine politische Biographie* (Regensburg, 2007)

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“Our four heirs to the throne”:

Emotional identification with the success of the Glücksborg dynasty in 19th-century Danish family magazines

Miriam Schneider

On 27 December 1874, the Christmas edition of the Danish illustrated weekly *“Illustreret Tidende”* featured as its cover illustration a charming group portrait: it depicted four chubby-cheeked children ranging from the age of ten to four, wearing sailor suits and baby gowns according to contemporary fashion. The boys, led by a confident-looking teen, were named Albert Victor, Konstantin, Nicolaus, and Christian and as the caption revealed, they were “Four heirs to the throne” (*Fire Thronarvinger*).



Fire Thronarvinger, Illustreret Tidende, 27 December 1874 (all images in this text: Royal Library, Copenhagen)

Turning over the page, one would be able to read a sentimental Christmas poem by the popular

Hans-Christian-Andersen-confidant Nicolai Bøgh which was to serve as a Seasons' greeting (*Julehilsen*) to the four boys. Picture and poem can be interpreted as illustrations of the emotional relationship that developed between the young Danish dynasty of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderborg-Glücksborg and the people of Denmark in the second half of the nineteenth



Julehilsen til fire Thronarvinger.

Nu ligger Sommeren i Skjul,
Og kun en enkelt, stille Fugl
Sig holder endnu vaagen;
Men tindrende som Sirius
Slaaer tusind klare Juleblus
Sin Glands igjennem Taagen.

Og ud fra Danmarks gamle Land
Gaaer Julehilsen over Strand
Til Bretlands Kongesale,
Til Hellas' Kyst i Laurens Læ.
Og til det ranke Granetræ
I Ruslands Vinterdvale.

Og hvert et Sted den træffer paa
Vor Konges Børn med deres Smaa
Om Juletræets Stjerne;
Vor Hilsen flyver som en Fugl
Og ønsker en velsignet Jul
Til Eder i det Fjerne!

Men først og sidst vor Hilsen naaer
Op til vor egen Konges Gaard,
Hvor den fornøiet finder
Den lille Dreng, for hvem i Løn
Der næres Haab, der stiger Bøn
Fra danske Mænd og Kvinder.

Af Barneglæden voxer Mænd
Med freidigt Sind, som veirer hen
Det usle og det Lave;
Af Juleglæden voxer Tro,
Som kaster kjækt og sikkert Bro
Ud over Tidens Grave.

Lad Barneglæde, Julefryd
Hos disse Kongebørn faae Lyd
Og skabe lyse Minder;
Det vil dem give Vingefang,
Naar de skal stige op engang
Til Magtens høie Tinder.

Fra Danmarks Folk skal Ønsker gaae
Af Hjertens Grund for disse Smaa
I deres Fremtids Dage,
At de maae voxe op til Mænd
Med Friheds Sind og Sværd ved Lænd
Og Mod foruden Mage;

Med Ordets Snille, Tankens Kløgt
Og med en Villie vel forsøgt
Og Hjerter tændt i Flamme,
At deres ridderlige Færd
Maa kaste Ærens lyse Skjer
Paa Danmarks Kongestamme!

Nicolaj Begh.

century. The poem described the European reach of the Glücksborg dynasty in poetic terms. From their ancient shores, the Danish people sent their Seasons' greetings to the children living in the royal halls of Britain, among the laurel trees on Hellas' coast, and under the fir trees of Russia's winter hibernation. Their addressees were the eldest sons of the four eldest children of King Christian IX (also known as the "Father-in-law of Europe") – four boys who were all destined to become reigning sovereigns one day:

Albert Victor (1864-1892), the confident teen on the picture, was the firstborn of Princess Alexandra of Denmark, who had wed Albert Edward Prince of Wales in 1863. Her marriage had aligned her small and vulnerable mother-country with the mightiest power of the age, a protector, as it was seen back then, against the potential aggression of Prussia-Germany.

Konstantin (1868-1923, the future Constantine I), the little sailor suit, was the heir-to-the-throne of King George I of Greece, formerly Prince Vilhelm of Denmark, who had been elected to the throne of the first of many newly-emerging nation-states in the Balkans in 1863.

Nicolaus (1868-1917, the future Nicholas II), the curly-haired boy on the right, was the eldest son of Tsarevna

Maria Feodorovna of Russia, née Princess Dagmar of Denmark. Her marriage to Tsarevich Alexander (III) in 1866 had allied the naval power Denmark with the then dominant power of the Baltic Sea region.

The shy-looking **Christian** (1870-1947, the future Christian X), finally, was the firstborn of Crown Prince Frederick of Denmark and his wife, Louise of Sweden. Their wedding

had represented a kind of reconciliation between two rivalling countries, and it was perceived by many as a harbinger of a potential future Scandinavian Union.

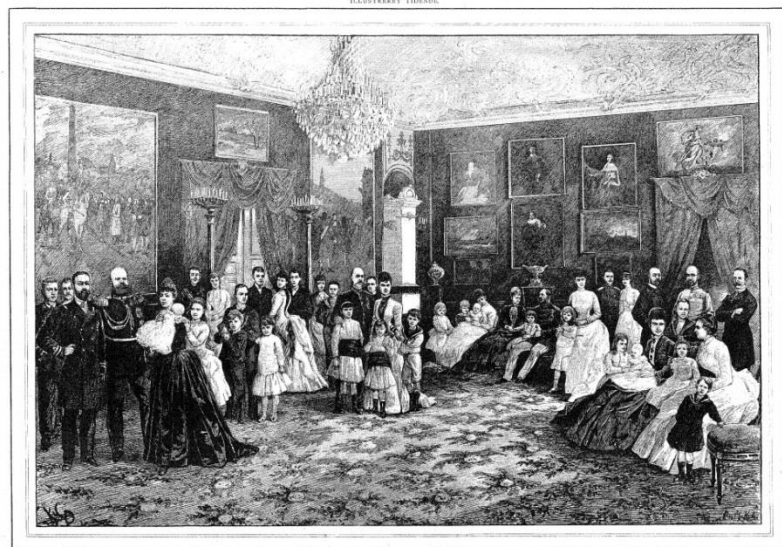
Together, the four princes epitomized the fairytale success of the **Glücksborg dynasty**. It had all started in 1853, when Prince Christian of Glücksborg, a poor younger son of one of the many ducal houses of Schleswig-Holstein, and his wife Louise, née Princess of Hesse-Kassel, were established as heirs to the soon to-be-vacant throne of the Kingdom of Denmark. While their predecessors had caused the extinction of the main branch of the family by failing to produce sufficient offspring, Christian and Louise's dynastic marriage had combined the claims of two remote side branches of the Danish royal house.

A group portrait of the
Family of King Christian IX,
Illustreret Tidende, 8 April
1888

Even before they ascended the throne upon the death of King Frederick VII in 1863, the couple continued the dynastic marriage policy,

which had already earned them a kingdom, by marrying their own numerous pretty daughters and handsome sons into the most powerful royal houses of Europe. By following the demands of Danish security policy, they hoped to complete their main task of safeguarding the territorial integrity of the Danish Monarchy, a conglomerate state consisting of disparate components with varying succession rights (the core Denmark, the duchies Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg, the provinces Iceland and the Faroe Islands, as well as the colonies Greenland and the Danish West Indies).

As Jes Fabricius Møller has only recently stressed in “Dynastiet Glücksborg”, however, this marriage policy was to no avail. Within a year of Christian IX's succession, war broke out between Denmark and the executive powers of the German Federation over



the Schleswig-Holstein question. The conflict, which pitted against each other the liberal national movements that had emerged in both core Denmark and in the duchies, ended with a Danish defeat and the loss of a substantial part of territory which reduced Denmark to small-power status. Although British public opinion favoured the Danes, neither Britain nor Russia would intervene in 1864, and for the rest of the century, the tiny nation-state would grapple with its reduced role in the mounting shadow of the German Empire, without receiving from its dynastic connections any material gains in the shape of active political or military support. With dynastic legitimacy fading into the background, the German-born Christian IX (who, in the words of Herman Bang's novel "Tine", had "no Danish heart in his breast") suddenly faced the challenge of "nationalizing" his dynasty and of becoming the representative of a newly-formed nation-state and newly-negotiated national identity. Scholars agree that, over the next few decades, the Glücksborgs were remarkably successful in gaining popularity, despite King Christian's prolonged support of conservative minority governments. But the question remains, how their transnational dynasty managed to transform itself into an emotionally invested epitome of Denmark. Here as well, our "Four heirs to the throne" provide an intriguing answer. For they encapsulate the blend of ancient, dynastic and modern, "domesticated" features that characterized many popular European monarchies in the second half of the nineteenth century.



Christmas scene, Illustreret Tidende, 20 December 1874

In this period, the representation, public perception, and increasingly also self-understanding of dynasties changed: from transnationally acting, state-defining formations of relatives in the pursuit of power to depoliticized units seemingly adopting the middle-class values and domestic tastes of tightly-knit, emotionally attached nuclear families. In tune with this trend, the carefully designed Glücksborg

dynasty was transformed, almost overnight, into the first family of a miniature nation-state. Their close family structure and public accessibility in Copenhagen's bijou society lent themselves to emotional identification.

The four princes featured on the cover of *Illustreret Tidende* had been conceived according to an ancient dynastic logic, and they would further the influence of their dynasty by becoming reigning sovereigns of some of the major powers of Europe. But in an age of contested monarchical power and nationalization, their relationship was depicted as that of little cousins, devoted to each other in a middle-class fashion. The accompanying poem evoked feelings of innocent child's joy and laughter (*Barneglæde*) with which the bourgeois readers of *Illustreret Tidende* could easily identify. Moreover, the boys were imagined in a **Christmas setting** spanning Europe, a gigantic celebration of the domestic, Christian values epitomized by 19th-century family magazines. The projected image of diverse families gathering round a festively decorated fir tree (*Om Juletræets Stjerne*) reflected Danish-German Christmas culture and assumed a uniformity of tradition uniting East and West which might even have been an export success of the Danish Royal Family.

Far from being a-political, however, the poem had a clear vision of the destiny awaiting the four princes, wishing them to grow up into wise men and strong, but liberal-minded monarchs (*med Friheds Sind og Sværd ved Lænd*) worthy of their Danish progenitors (*Danmarks Kongestamme*). In this final twist, the dynasty turned family was claimed as a symbol of its people; the four crown princes were imagined not as scions of a young, transnational dynasty, but as children of Denmark; and the success of the dynasty was re-interpreted as the success of the nation.

Prince Christian of Denmark, *Illustreret Tidende*, 3 October
1886

The Glücksborgs, a small royal family which, within one generation, managed to become a legitimate and prominent member of the European family of dynasties, were characterised by a clever dynastic policy, a strong



family-sense celebrated in constant family re-unions, and a remarkable devotion to tiny Denmark, which resulted in typically split national identities and (mainly futile) behind-the-scenes political maneuvering on the part of its transplanted members.



**The Coronation of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia,
Illustreret Tidende, 14 June 1896**

Danish publics were closely acquainted with all of King Christian IX's children, and the Danish "boulevard press" would follow their lives abroad almost as closely as at home, glossing over any issues which the political press might have with them.

While national security policy had to come to terms with the fact that no help was to be expected from anywhere, vulnerable and neglected Denmark nevertheless took pride in and gained new confidence from the prestige and soft power advantages attached to royal family relations.

Especially in the private (international) business sector, Danish enterprises such as Great Northern Telegraph or East Asiatic Company would benefit from the small-power niche inhabited by a country which could hardly be called a rival to anyone. And they profited from the diplomatic and economic guardianship of benevolent powers such as Russia and Britain. The participation, both real and imagined, in the wide world of big politics opened to the Danish public via identification with the successful Glücksborg

dynasty, offered a break from the provincialism it had been confined to in 1864.



**Crown Prince Constantine of Greece and
Princess Sophia of Prussia, Illustreret
Tidende, 20 October 1889**

From 1874 onwards, *Illustreret Tidende* would also take increased interest and pride in, nay lay claim to

the third generation of the Glücksborg dynasty epitomized in our “Four heirs to the throne”. It would report regularly on the various rites of passage and family events taking place in the lives of the well-known future monarchs of Britain, Russia, Denmark and Greece, four youths who were united by their common origin and strong family bonds, but divided by their roles as first “natives” of increasingly nationalized individual dynasties and by the power conflicts fought out by their countries.

The Death of Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence, Illustreret Tidende, 14 January 1892

They would return to the cover of *Illustreret Tidende* on selected birthdays, like sweet-sixteen-year-old Prince Christian in October 1886. Their weddings were high points of media interest, e. g. when Prince Constantine married Princess Sophie of Prussia in October 1889. Greatest attention was paid to them when they succeeded to the throne, as Nicholas II did at a remarkably young age in 1895. And their



lives were trailed unto the bitter end, which Prince Albert Victor, the confident teen on the cover, reached in 1892 – long before he could grow up to become the wise man and monarch prayed and wished for in the 1874 Christmas edition.

Suggested further reading:

Møller, Jes Fabricius, *Dynastiet Glücksborg: En Danmarkshistorie* (Copenhagen, 2013)

Møller, Jes Fabricius, Domesticating a Nineteenth-Century Dynasty: A German Successor to the Danish Throne, in: Mehrkens, Heidi/Müller, Frank Lorenz (eds.), *Sons and Heirs. Dynasty and Political Culture in 19th-Century Europe* (forthcoming)

Schama, Simon, ‘The Domestication of Majesty: Royal Family Portraiture, 1500-1850’, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17 (1986), 155–183

Sevaldsen, Jørgen et al. (eds.), *Britain and Denmark: Political, Economic and Cultural Relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Aarhus, 2010)

Petri, Gerda, Forbindelserne mellem det danske og det russiske hof i det 19. århundrede, in: Christensen, Svend/Henning, Gottlieb, *Danmark og Rusland i 500 år* (Copenhagen, 1993)

The Prince, the President and the Cholera

Heidi Mehrkens

One fine day back in April 1832, while staying in Paris, the German poet Heinrich Heine had the impression that writing was becoming an increasingly difficult task: “I felt much disturbed at work”, he wrote sarcastically in an article for the Augsburg Gazette, “mostly by the gruesome screaming of my neighbour who was dying of cholera.” The Parisian spring clearly was no romantic experience that year, neither for Heine nor for the other inhabitants of the capital - including the royal family. The “Citizen King” Louis-Philippe of Orleans who had come to power only two years previously after the 1830 Revolution,

faced the severe task of calming a furious population struck by the cruel epidemic that had reached Paris end of March 1832.



Heinrich Heine, painted by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim (1831)

While thousands of people were dying at home and in the hospitals – according to official figures there were some 18,000 deaths – and uprisings were keeping the military in a high state of alert, the royal family stayed in Paris. This proof of sangfroid earned the dynasty respect even from the July Monarchy’s opponents, since many nobles had decided to get themselves out of harm’s way and head for the countryside. During the crisis, the royal family dedicated much of their time and a considerable amount of money to helping the persons affected by cholera. Queen Marie Amelie gave away waistbands she had sewn herself from flannel (a cure Heine also applied: “I am wrapped in flannel up to my neck and methinks I am cholera-proof now!”). The children of the royal family were still seen in public; the Duke of Aumale, ten years old, went to school as usual and, after he had finished his homework, distributed soup to the poor. The young princes and princesses all contributed to the subscription on behalf of the suffering from their pocket money.

The King’s eldest son, dashing 22-year-old Prince Ferdinand Philippe, Duke of Orleans, was singled out for special praise in the regime-friendly Parisian newspapers. Le

Nouvelliste wrote on 31 March: “In the last three months, 2,000 rations of food have been distributed in the different quarters of Paris, at the expense of the Duke of Orleans. We learn that His Royal Highness intends to add to this benefaction a distribution of medicines. It was by chance that we became acquainted with this new act of humanity, which will not surprise anyone.”

The young crown prince had already earned the reputation of a philanthropist; he did not intend to leave it at charitable donations. On 1 April 1832, Ferdinand Philippe went in person to the hospital of the Hôtel de Dieu and visited the cholera patients, accompanied by the president of the council Casimir Pierre Perier. Both men showed great courage in order to demonstrate the closing of ranks between two leading institutions of the French state, the monarchy and its government, during the crisis: It was a considerable risk to expose oneself to victims since there was no scientific knowledge of the cause and transmission of cholera until the discoveries of John Snow (1854) and Robert Koch (1883) helped to further explain the disease.

Portrait of Louis-Philippe of Orleans with his two eldest sons, the Duke of Chartres (future Duke of Orleans) and the Duke of Nemours by Louis Hersent (1830)



Evenly concerned and deeply impressed by the foolhardiness of the successor to the throne, Leopold I, King of the Belgians, sent a letter to Ferdinand: “You have shown [...] courage more noble and calm than many men who have experienced long military campaigns. Walking right into the centre of this horrible illness, which is, as your physicians claim, contagious, will forever stand as a beautiful historic action; in all good and noble hearts you will maintain a lively and lasting recognition.”

The crown prince repeated this act of bravado by spending time with cholera patients at the military hospital of Val de Grace; the London Times appreciated that “to every one [...] he spoke with kindness and encouragement, taking the hands of many to ascertain the degree of their disease.” The French anti-monarchical party, on the other hand, was not at all impressed by the prince’s humanitarian commitment and distributed agitating

proclamations: “The cholera is a plague less cruel than Louis-Philippe’s government. Louis-Philippe sends his son to the Hôtel de Dieu so that he can observe the misery of the people from close-by.” The revolutionaries were not the only opposition. With both the legitimist Bourbon and the Bonapartist pretender waiting impatiently for their dynasty to return to power in the early 1830s, the Orleans family worked tirelessly towards stabilizing the July Monarchy.

Catherine J. Kudlick has hinted at the fact that ideas of religious and secular authority were constantly in motion in post-revolutionary France and that crises like the cholera epidemic further stimulated negotiation of authorities. Commissioned by the king, Alfred Johannot painted the encounter of the crown prince and President Perier with the people affected by the disease: “Le duc d’Orléans visitant les malades de l’Hôtel-Dieu pendant l’épidémie de cholera” (1832) depicts Ferdinand Philippe in uniform, surrounded by patients and their relatives, his right hand raised in what resembles the act of a Christian saint giving a blessing. This carefully arranged piece of political art evoked the association of the “king’s touch” (*touche des écrouelles*), which was based on the ancient belief that the kings of France and England could heal scrofula (“the king’s evil”) by touching the abscesses. Louis XVI had practiced the rite at Versailles, the miracle of healing manifesting his divine right to reign. The ceremony was last performed during the coronation of Charles X in 1825 (when in fact it had lost most of its awe and already seemed strangely out of place for a 19th century monarchy).



Honoré Daumier: *Souvenirs du choléra-morbus à Paris* (Réf. image : 02536), Graveur : A. Plon ; extrait de François Fabre: *Némésis médicale illustrée*, Paris: Béthune et Plon, 1840

Even though the idea of the doctrine of divine right faded over time and the notion of a king – or his royal offspring – magically healing by touch was difficult to sell in 1830 France, Johannot's artistic interpretation invited the viewer to regard Ferdinand Philippe as the Bourbon's rightful successor. Moreover, both the crown prince's visit to the hospital and Johannot's art wove another thread into the history of France's heroic monarchs: Jean Antoine Gros's painting of "Napoleon Bonaparte Visiting the Plague-Stricken in Jaffa" (1808) glorified the future Emperor's act of courage in 1799, when he exposed himself to the disease. Gros, like Johannot, arranged the composition of the painting around the protagonist's magical gesture, transforming Napoleon into a saint-like figure, a modern type of Christian saviour.

Henri IV, roi de France et de Navarre, touchant les écrouelles (Réf. image MEDIC@ : med26755x0043) ; extrait de Augustin Cabanès, *Le costume du médecin en France*, Paris : Laboratoires P. Longuet, 1921

On a very worldly level the administration of the July Monarchy – the regime was known for its anticlericalism – had taken over the Church's traditional responsibilities to cope with the cholera crisis. It was noted in the press that the



Archbishop of Paris also visited the hospital, but only *after* the crown prince and the president of the council had been there. The government coordinated the large part of the collection and distribution of relief efforts. "Charity gave a powerful voice of authority to whoever could claim to run it." (Kudlick)

The crown prince's visit to the hospital thus became charged with a highly political meaning intended to reinforce the dynasty's public acceptance. First, Ferdinand Philippe appeared as the rightful successor in a long line of ancestors claiming the throne of France. Secondly the crown prince embodied the future of a secular, charitable monarchy, promoting progress, caring for its subjects and sharing power with elected institutions. Casimir Perier represented the new bourgeois political elite promoted by



the July Monarchy: son of a rich banker and manufacturer, former president of the French house of deputies, he often opposed the king as president of the council and chief of the “party of resistance”.

Portrait of Casimir Pierre Perier by Louise Adélaïde Desnos (1832)

By a cruel irony of fate, the visit at the Hôtel de Dieu marked the end of Perier’s career: Johannot’s painting shows the minister in the shadows behind Ferdinand Philippe, his face has an otherworldly expression; the skin is pale and greenish... Of delicate constitution, the prime minister fell ill directly after the visit and died in terrible agony of cholera on 16 May 1832. The crown prince attended his funeral. “A deathly silence is hovering over Paris”, wrote Heine.

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Margherita: Italy's First Heir

Maria-Christina Marchi

If monarchy is played out on a stage for the whole country to see, then which act is the most important in securing the people's hearts and interests? Matrimony, naturally. A lavish celebration to remind the people of their rulers and the essential part they play in the unity of the kingdom. At least, this was the case in Italy when Umberto, the first heir to the Italian throne, married his first cousin Margherita. The ceremony was meant to demonstrate to the recently united Italian peninsula the debt people owed to the monarchy for finally bringing the country together under one crown, one government and one label: Italians.

However, the first marriage of the House of *Savoia* as ruling house of Italy got off to a rather rocky start. In 1866, once the Kingdom of Italy had made peace with its Austrian neighbours, a union between the Italian heir Umberto and the Austrian Archduke Albert's daughter Matilda was decided on. Unfortunately this bond was never formalised, as the young girl tragically died when her dress caught fire from the cigarette she was secretly smoking. Although they had never met, Umberto was very shocked by Matilda's sudden death and plans of a new match for the prince were put on ice for almost two years.

Nevertheless, in January 1868 a suitable replacement for Matilda had finally been identified: Margherita of *Savoia*, the king's niece and prince Umberto's first cousin. Not only was she to become the first queen of Italy, but she would also be a wholly *Italian* queen. After having had a peninsula ruled by "foreign" princes for centuries, this was an ideal trait to publicise. When the engagement was announced, the *Savoia*-friendly newspapers exploded in a patriotic frenzy. Francesco Crispi, a leading Italian statesman, had hoped that this union would solidify his claim that "monarchy unites us, and a republic would divide us," by providing a great show of monarchical grandeur in the name of the people. The Turin-based *L'Opinione* wrote that the news of the engagement had travelled like a "spark of light" down the whole peninsula, heightening national sentiments that had already been strong. Although not universal, one can see that popular interest for the Italian monarchy, which focused primarily on the "young and

happy couple,” was built up during the first few months of 1868 and reached its pinnacle on 22 April: Italy’s first royal wedding day.

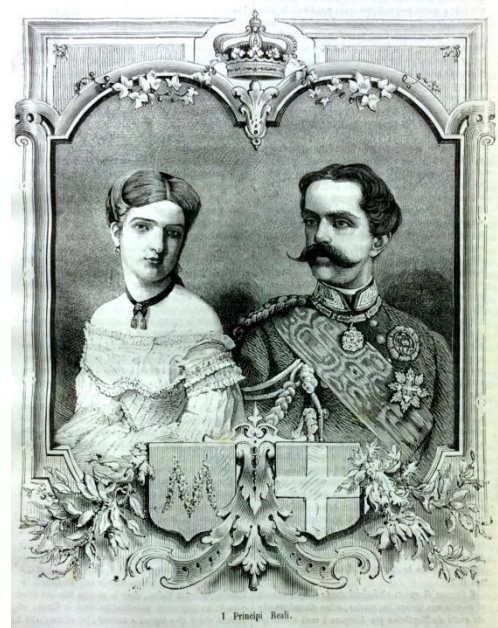
The young couple, Civiche Raccolte Storiche, Museo del Risorgimento Milano, Archivio Achille Bertarelli, Busta S 91

The descriptions of the wedding as a glorious event were probably exaggerated, and Margherita’s reported desire to involve the people, so frequently mentioned in the newspapers and her later biographies, may well

have been the stuff of legend. It was rumoured, for instance, that she begged the king to allow her to wave to the crowd before the religious ceremony – breaching protocol, but demonstrating her fondness for the masses.

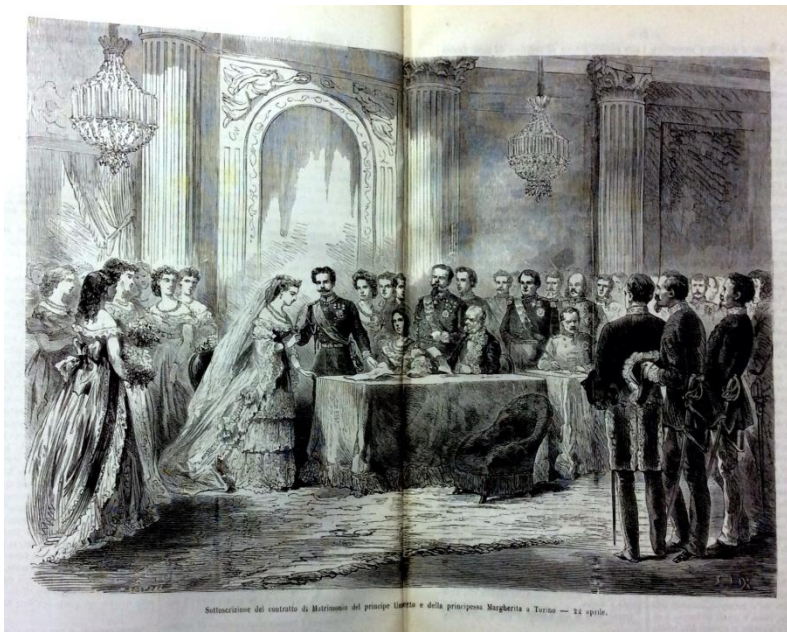
During the wedding the focus was undoubtedly on Margherita, especially in the retelling of the event in later years, where her white gown with silver embroideries of daisies (Margherita means daisy in Italian) and diamond stars in her hair (symbol of the Italian monarchy), completely overshadowed her husband’s presence, even though he was clad in a highly decorated military uniform. Moreover, the pearl necklace left to Margherita as the future queen of Italy by the king’s late wife, Maria Adelaide – who had died in childbirth long before Italy had been unified – also sent a strong message of continuity and the tradition that the young bride was meant to represent. Thus, the wedding took on powerful symbolic meanings aimed at legitimising both the ancient dynasty and its right to rule Italy, whilst at the same time presenting the country with a new, young couple, representing a new chapter for the Italian people.

This new chapter of Italian life was dominated by Margherita and her talent for her new “job.” As the couple set off on their “political honeymoon” across Italy, the new heiress began to demonstrate her adeptness at manipulating her public image both as a princess of her time, wrapped up in the mystique of royalty, and as a modern royal, interacting with the people on a more “normal” level. This dual image won her popularity and turned her into one of Italy’s first celebrities, alongside the quasi-



mythical Garibaldi. Her popularity was amplified by rumours of gestures she had made in honour of her people.

For example, it was believed that in Bologna she had knelt down in order to kiss young schoolgirls as they came by the train station to greet the newlyweds. Consequently, even the staunchest anti-monarchist, the poet Giosuè Carducci, who had initially refused to meet the royal couple, was conquered by the princess' manners and, by 1878, was composing odes in her honour. It is suggested in numerous biographies that, unlike her husband, Margherita understood the importance of mass support and worked hard to secure the love, or at least interest, of the people.



The wedding as remembered in the journal *Ricordi* summing up the year 1868 and its most important events, *Civiche Raccolte Storiche*, Museo del Risorgimento Milano, *Archivio Achille Bertarelli*, Busta S 91

A year after their wedding Margherita's pregnancy was announced and in November 1869 she gave birth to a baby boy in

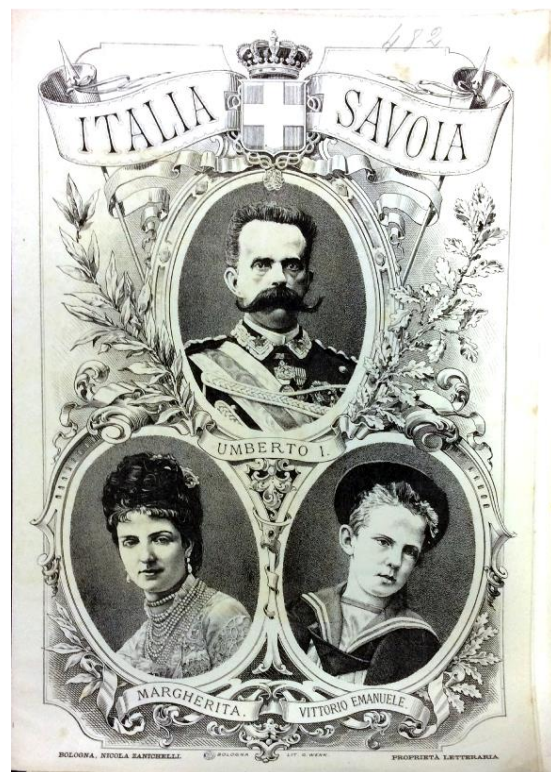
Naples. Once again she was lauded for her displays of charity. According to contemporary articles, the previous rulers had always asked for money when a prince or heir was born – Margherita did the opposite. She donated money to the poor, and launched an appeal for people to follow her lead in order to celebrate her son's birth. It was also rumoured that this people's princess attended the city's market with her newborn in order to show it off to the local women and allow them to share in the joy of birth. All of this positive publicity, whether based on fact or rumour, brought about a new national understanding of the monarchy and its intention to become a monarchy of the people. The following year Margherita and her husband – rather than the king – were even sent to Rome to represent the monarchy, because, as Margherita's

biographer Onorato Roux stated in his *La Prima Regina*, the government knew that only she could succeed, “with her grace, in breaking the ice that distance the majority of the Italian high aristocracy, which remained loyal to the Vatican, to the court.”

Her role was to maintain the balance between embodying female, familial and national ideals, whilst breaking the boundaries of traditional female limitations. She was able to do so thanks to her modern understanding of the constitutional monarchy and her interest in actively nationalising the Italians through mass communication. Much more energetic than her husband during his reign as Umberto I, Margherita showed how important marriage politics continued to be for contemporary monarchies that could no longer claim to be legitimised by divine right. In short, she became the Italian monarchy’s “best asset.”

**Civiche Raccolte Storiche, Museo del Risorgimento
Milano, Archivio Achille Bertarelli, Busta 482**

During the nineteenth century not only had female monarchical roles evolved and found in Queen Victoria an example of strong leadership, but the explosion of the mass press also created a growing cult of celebrity around certain figures. This new “politics of fame” involved people from a wide spectrum, from poets like Byron, to actresses like Sarah Bernhardt, and it also included royal figures, especially female ones, with Queen Victoria perhaps being the best-known of them all. The new attention given to royalty in this aspect meant that the importance of marriage politics went beyond the high politics sphere and became of interest to the masses. In nineteenth century Spain, the marriage between Alfonso XII, the recently restored and crowned king, and María de las Mercedes, fuelled a cult of romance that enveloped the couple who had supposedly married for love. Her death, only six months after their marriage and a few days after her eighteenth birthday, was publicly mourned, and the memory of her quickly grew into a myth. The notion that she had



married Alfonso for love, and not for political arrangement, turned the couple into an epitome of *true love*. This notion was extremely popular with the masses, and poems and songs were written about this tragic love story, which is still present in contemporary popular culture. Although, Alfonso's second wife was not as popular as the first, María de las Mercedes helped boost the crown's popularity and allowed it to be enveloped by romantic notions that not only brought crown and people closer, but also allowed monarchy to be akin to more "human" emotions. Alfonso's first wife became a celebrity of sorts, just like Queen Victoria and Margherita, who, actively or passively, showed that the female power of celebrity could be used as a political tool to aid the survival of monarchies in the 1800s.

In her transition from princess to queen, Margherita continued in her mission to help with the process of nationalisation. The myth that surrounded her person continued to grow and she and Umberto became known for their continuous travels across the country and the help they provided disaster-stricken areas with. Since the generation of *Risorgimento* heroes had died out, including Garibaldi and the "father of the fatherland" Vittorio Emanuele II, the new king and queen had to mould the people's perception of monarchy, turning it into a modern monarchy that could unite its people. Whilst still remaining strong, monarchical figures, the rulers needed to adapt to a middle-class, egalitarian world, and become more approachable and "normal." Margherita did this through her travels, her presence and her style.

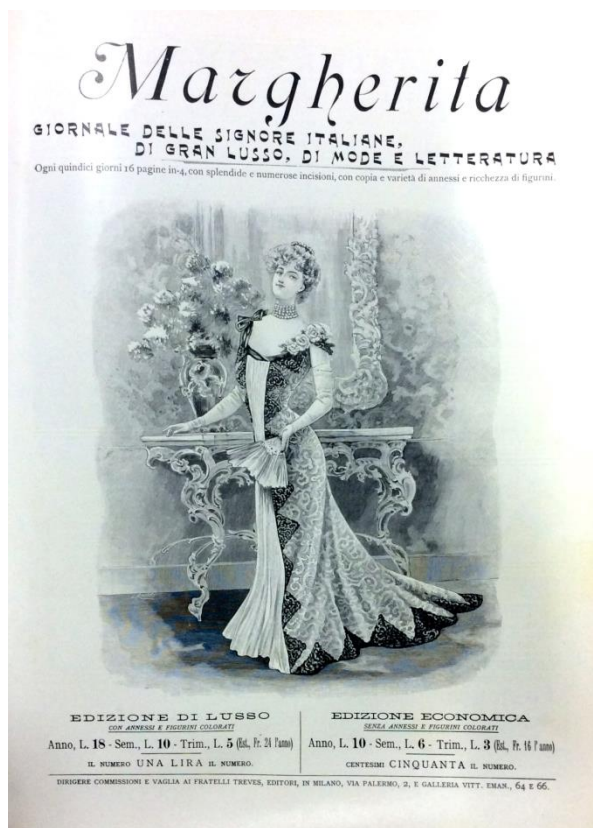
Queen Margherita in 1900, Civiche Raccolte Storiche, Museo del Risorgimento Milano, *Archivio Achille Bertarelli*, Busta 486

She became a fashion icon for all Italians, and refusing to follow Parisian trends that most of her contemporaries adored, she created her own *Italian* style, which was admired even by Queen Victoria. Her name was even used to name one of Italy's trademark culinary achievements: the pizza Margherita, which was supposedly made in her honour and



REGINA MARGHERITA

embodied the Italian national spirit (and flag) with its green, white and red ingredients. Whether her time as ruler helped consolidate the monarchy and nationalise the people is debatable, but it is undeniable that the construction of her persona was a successful tool of monarchical propaganda, just like that of Queen Victoria and María de las Mercedes, which allowed to showcase both the monarchy's grandeur and its humanity.



The cover of *Margherita*, “a newspaper for Italian ladies,” Civiche Raccolte Storiche, Museo del Risorgimento Milano, Archivio Achille Bertarelli, Busta 546

The power of female celebrity and “normalisation” of the monarchy, or just the importance of marrying the right person for the “job,” were key factors for the popularisation of late nineteenth century monarchies. Margherita managed to guide the House of Savoy in this direction by attempting to balance the image of herself as traditional female figure and as “modern monarch.” Advocating traditional opinions, whilst at the same time encouraging the

nationalisation of the people, she took on the active role of heir to the throne and demonstrated how, through her growing popularity (everything from hospitals to fashion magazines would be named after her) how marrying the right woman was the Savoy monarchy's best move in their attempt to secure national popularity – a key ingredient in every monarchical success story post-1800.

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Isabel II: *niña de la libertad*

Richard Meyer Forsting

The birth of Isabel on 10 October 1830 was near miraculous. Ferdinand VII's three marriages had failed to produce an heir, and it was only his fourth wife Maria Cristina that finally gave birth to the child he was longing for. While Ferdinand would certainly have preferred a boy, he had made sure during the early stages of Maria Cristina's pregnancy that a female would be able to succeed him on the throne. The Pragmatic Sanction, which reversed the Salic Law, antagonised Ferdinand VII's brother, Don Carlos, who lost his right to the throne after more than two decades as heir presumptive.

Franz X. Winterhalter: Isabel II of Spain (1852)

While Ferdinand VII was not a liberal, his wife recognised that in order to cement their daughter's right to the throne she would have to gain the support of the liberals and embarked on a reformist course. The temporary revocation of the Pragmatic Sanction during the illness of the king in 1832 further demonstrated that the ultra-conservative elements in Spain would not support Isabel's claim.

The Queen, now invested with executive powers as "Gobernadora", was persuaded by eminent moderate liberals and reformist absolutists that only a change in government, a purge of parts of the administration, and replacing certain key military commanders could rescue her daughter's cause. This reconfiguration of government in conjunction with a political amnesty allowing liberals to return from exile was the first step toward



the association of Maria Cristina and Isabel with the liberal cause. When King Ferdinand died in 1833 the confrontation over the succession escalated into a full-blown civil war. The absolutist, ultra-catholic forces of Carlos V, as Don Carlos proclaimed himself, confronted the liberals who were firmly wedded to the cause of Isabel II.

The infant Queen's image acquired major symbolic significance in this bellicose confrontation. Isabel II was to represent the new union between constitution and monarchy, embody the liberals' hope of progress and prosperity as well as the rallying point for the different factions opposing Carlism.

Before this close association between the queen and liberalism, the historic legitimacy of her succession was asserted. This involved justifying the Pragmatic Sanction as well as rooting her claim more deeply in Spanish history. A flood of pamphlets debated the judicial legality of the Pragmatic Sanction, which – as a sovereign act without sanction by a popular body – was not easy to defend for the opponents of absolutism. Liberals found a way around this problem by arguing that in 1789, during the reign of Carlos IV, the Cortes had approved the sanction without publishing it. In this roundabout way it had the approval of the nation as represented in the Cortes and was in line with liberal principles.

The concern with historic legitimacy was apparent in the naming of the future queen. Isabel evoked the memory of the reign of Isabel the Catholic who, as several pamphlets pointed out, also had had to fight off a challenge to her throne early on in her reign. This historical comparison was particularly useful for political propaganda. It allowed the liberals to connect the young female monarch with the legacy and achievements of the Catholic queen. Isabel II was to stand for the union of Spain, its imperial and internal regeneration and progress; all accomplishments attributed to her namesake who had united Castile and Aragon through her marriage with Ferdinand II, given the impetus for the discovery of the Americas and had furthermore started the transition of Spain into modernity.

The legitimacy of her claim was cemented when she was sworn in as Princess of Asturias in front of the Grandees of Spain with all the pomp, solemnity and public celebration that traditionally accompanied this ceremony. The link to the past was amply reinforced in literary, judicial and iconographic production. One example is

Vicente Lopez's painting of the oath, which shows Isabel II guided by Isabel the Catholic to a temple of light, an allegory for the brighter future promised to Spain. The painting was hung in a public space and copies of this imagery were widely disseminated. However, as Ana Gutiérrez Lloret has pointed out, this historic symbolical power of Isabel II's image needed to be reinforced by new sources of political legitimacy to guarantee its survival in the face of the Carlist challenge.

This was to be achieved through the representation of Isabel II and her mother, now Queen Regent, as the defenders of liberty and promises of political and economic progress. By the middle of the 1830s the liberals formed the core support of Isabel II, which found its expression in iconographical and literal output. As Jorge Vilches has argued, romanticism allowed for paintings and writings to reinforce the historicism of



Isabel's claim and led to the heavy use of allegories and the idealisation of her personality.

Jose Ribelles y Helip *Alegoría de España con la Reina Maria Cristina e Isabel II* (Museo Nacional del Romanticismo)

The popular projection of the infant queen encouraged a veritable fascination with the *niña de la libertad* ('girl of liberty'). Thus the infant queen became the icon of liberty, political reform and socio-economic progress, cast in sharp contrast to the reactionary and regressive nature of Carlist absolutism.

This notion found its expression in hymns dedicated to her liberal spirit and evoking the regeneration of the *patria*, as well as officially sanctioned poetry contests, such as that held by the Art and Literary School. Praise of the queen's liberal virtues reached as far as Cuba, where poems in her honour were published in the *Diario constitucional de Santiago de Cuba* and the *Eco de Cuba*. Perhaps even more important, if we consider the high rates of illiteracy in early nineteenth century Spain, were the visual representations of the Queen. While some of the allegorical and classical references

would have been lost on the wider public, it is not unreasonable to assume that its political message was still readily apparent to most.

Key components of the Queen's image frequently recurring in graphical representations were her angelic and relatively austere appearance within a highly symbolic setting. A great example is José Ribelles Helip's painting *La Reina gobernadora con Isabel II niña, cogiendo España*, which contained many symbols that were to become associated with the new monarchy. On the left the allegorical representation of Spain as a woman whose chains have been broken by three liberals, one of whom can be identified as Martínez de la Rosa (wearing the blue ribbon), a prominent leader of the movement and a minister of state under the regency. Martínez de la Rosa is placing his foot on the man who kept the nation in shackles, which can be interpreted as the victory of liberalism over absolutism. The tempest in the background with Minerva, goddess of just war and intelligence, in the clouds alludes to the Carlist war. In marked contrast we see on the right the bright future that the new regime promises to deliver; justice as symbolised by the scales of *Justitia*, material well being represented by a cornucopia and vibrant commerce as alluded to by the ships in harbour. The infant Queen is in the centre with her mother, guiding the nation to her daughter. The image links the new monarchy, including the Queen Regent, closely to progress, liberty and the fight against absolutism. Other examples using similar symbols and allegories can be found in the paintings of



Manuel Breton de los Herreros and Vicente López. These images were often presented publicly to be admired by the people at large and were copied and spread widely throughout Spain.

Isabel II and the 1837 Constitution (Biblioteca del Senado)

As time went on, an even more powerful legitimisation was to appear as part of the image of Isabel II. This was the concept of her queenship being grounded on the will of the people, the foundation of the new

constitutional monarchy. With the declaration of the 1837 constitution, the monarchy and constitutionalism became increasingly fused and were represented as forming the supreme expressions of the national will. The image of a bright, cheerful queen, surrounded by angels chasing away the demons of absolutism, while the Spanish lion lies peacefully beneath the column of the constitution, is exemplary of the union between constitution and Crown – between peace, liberty and the monarch.

The connection between the queen and peace is another important feature in the image of Isabel II. Several paintings show her holding a white dove, giving her a nickname: *iris de paz* (rainbow of peace). The more progressive forces particularly came to



appropriate the queen's association with liberty when they feared a conservative turn in government. Thus during rioting in Madrid in 1835 those opposed to the installation of a more conservative ministry would cry '*Viva Isabel II, viva la Libertad!*'.

Isabel II as a child (anonymous artist)

The more moderate factions, critical of justifying riots in the name of the monarch, regarded this use of Isabella's name as a misappropriation. This foreshadowed the divisions within

the liberal movement, which were to contribute to the decline of the positive image created in these years. For now, however, Isabel II was the queen of all of liberal Spain.

In the meantime other significant changes occurred to which the image of the queen had to be adapted. Maria Cristina, who had been an integral part of the association made between liberty and Crown and often referred to as 'mother of the Spanish', experienced a marked decline in her reputation. This was reflected in her image. As we saw in the Ribelles picture, Maria Cristina as Queen Regent featured prominently in the depictions of Isabel and was generally portrayed as a strong, liberal, motherly figure.

However, as she became more closely associated with the moderate faction of the liberal party and with even more conservative tendencies, progressive elements used her private indiscretions against her. It had been rumoured for some time that the Queen Regent had become engaged to Fernando Muñoz, and her multiple pregnancies could not be easily hidden from view. In his testament Ferdinand VII had provided, rather cruelly, that Maria Cristina would have to renounce the regency if she remarried. If she had not married (it was not clear whether she legitimately was) she would have been living in sin, and if she had, then she would have forfeited her position.

The Queen Regent Maria Cristina and her daughters (Biblioteca Nacional de España)

When her hostility to the liberal elements became more apparent and the end of the civil war in 1839 eliminated the necessity of upholding her image against the Carlist threat, the attacks on her person came out into the open. Thus, writing under the pseudonym of Ibrahim Clarete in the satirical newspaper *El Guirigay*, Gonzalez Bravo, later an important progressive politician, defamed the Regent as an 'illustrious prostitute' (*illustre prostituta*). He revealed the details of her illegitimate

marriage to a wider public. By 1840 the image of the Regent as the defender of liberty was sufficiently damaged to be surpassed by the prestige of some of the successful military leaders of the Carlist war, in particular General Espartero (or to use his rather immodest title of the Duke of Victory), who deposed her as Regent in 1840 with the aid of the progressives.



While, in this instance, the defamation of her mother did not rub off on Isabel II, it is interesting that toward the end of her reign her private life was the subject of similar scrutiny and scandal. For now, however, Espartero was happy to keep up and even further the representation of the young Queen as the *niña de la libertad*. Thus, the image to be popularised was that of the '*alumna de la libertad*' (the student of liberty), studying the liberal principles and receiving instruction in her constitutional functions. This entailed a change in her court entourage, including the introduction of more progressive educators. José Luis Comellas among others has convincingly argued that this was more of a propaganda act than a radical practical change: Isabel's political instruction was to remain underdeveloped. Yet references to the '*alumna de la libertad*' appear frequently in literary and iconographic representation. One picture by Vicente Lopez depicts the young Queen studying geography. This linked her not only to liberal and national education but also to the bourgeois ideal of a well-rounded individual.

The break with Maria Cristina also led to the development of one of the most enduring images of Isabel II – that of the victim of court intrigue and bad advisors. This concept was not new but had been used previously by the liberals during the three-year liberal interlude (1820-1823) to excuse the reactionary policies of the then constitutional king Ferdinand VII between 1814 and 1820.



**Isabel II studying geography (Vicente López
Isabel II niña estudiando geografía)**

Shifting the blame on courtiers and ministers was a useful tool to deflect criticism from a monarch one could not or did not want to break with completely. During Espartero's regency it was even easier to exempt the monarch from responsibility, as the queen was still a child and of course female. The failed attempt to kidnap the Queen and her sister in October 1841 further contributed

to the image of the young monarch as an orphaned, innocent and vulnerable child. In this construct Espartero figured as her protector watching over her and consequently over the civil liberties of the Spanish people.

The moderates' conception of the queen remained surprisingly similar; they also saw the queen as vulnerable and innocent but to them the capturing was being done by Espartero and the progressives. Unsurprisingly the fall of Espartero did not hurt the image of the Queen; on the contrary, Her swearing an oath on the constitution on coming of age and the commemorations and public festivals accompanying this event strengthened her association with the people and liberty. Across the political spectrum the hope was expressed that her reign would produce unity, bring international recognition and further progress. Even the first controversy of her reign surrounding the signing of a decree of dissolution of the Cortes in November of 1843, shortly after being declared off age, did not yet damage her image. Under pressure from her advisors she alleged that Olózaga, the progressive minister of state, had forced her physically to sign the decree despite her initial refusal. Although this ushered in the so called 'moderate decade', both the progressives and moderates regarded her as a victim; the former saw in the allegations the machinations of a conservative camarilla misleading the queen. The latter blamed Olózaga for forcing himself onto an impressionable young girl.

The image of the vulnerable Queen was to survive even long after her association with liberty and constitutionalism had been shattered by her increasing identification with the moderate party, Catholicism and debauchery. Having said that, the representation of Isabel as innocent also suffered as her sexual indiscretions and loveless marriage became the subject of pornographic cartoons. Nevertheless after her descent into political insignificance it was the image of an insufficiently educated, manipulated and weak Queen that survived in the popular imagination as well as in her early biographies.

**The queen on her way into exile (Vanity Fair
Sep 18, 1869)**

Isabel Burdiel has only recently cleared up many of the myths surrounding the Queen and perpetuated by writers such as Valle-Inclán during the late 19th and early 20th century. Jorge Vilches argues that the frequency and viciousness of the attacks on Isabel II was in part a reaction to the success of the previously constructed, highly positive image of Isabel II as *niña de la libertad*, the 'illustrious orphan' and 'the innocent girl'. Once the civil war was over and the Queen became increasingly identified with a single party, the success of the image of Isabel as the protector of liberty, peace and union was a threat rather than an asset to more progressive liberal forces.



The image of Isabel II as defender of liberty and peace did not survive, but the hopeful, promising symbol the infant queen had once presented contributed to the enduring image of her painted by Perez Galdos, as an unhappily married, manipulated and deceived monarch; "*la de los triste destinos*" – the one of sad destinies.

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Prince Wilhelm of Prussia: The unwanted successor

Heidi Mehrkens

No adventure story without a true villain. When, in March 1848, the revolutionary movement spread and reached Berlin, crowds in the streets were convinced that the part of the scoundrel was performed by Wilhelm of Prussia, younger brother of the childless King Friedrich Wilhelm IV and heir to the throne. Prince Wilhelm (1797-1888) was targeted as a figurehead of the counter revolutionary movement. Condemned for his conservative politics and for his siding with the military, Wilhelm's palace was attacked and his family felt seriously threatened. Public fury eventually became unbearable and following the street fighting on the days of 18 and 19 March the Prince was forced to leave the country: At the King's bequest, Wilhelm went on a diplomatic mission – swiftly invented in order to keep up the appearance of a planned journey to London. "My situation is almost desperate!" the Prince wrote gloomily to his brother, repudiating the accusation that he had ordered troops of the Berlin garrison to open fire

at demonstrators: Nothing, he protested, could be further from the truth.



**Prince Wilhelm of Prussia as a general in the early 1840s:
Portrait by Franz Krüger (1797-1857).**

Prince Wilhelm became heir to the throne in 1840, at the age of 43, when his childless brother acceded to the throne. His conservative views and opposition to the planned introduction of some constitutional elements of government did not contribute to his popularity with his future subjects. His military position as general of the Prussian infantry added to this unfavourable image. Even though King Friedrich Wilhelm IV himself was far from keen on constitutional progress in Prussia, in the 1840s growing dissatisfaction concentrated on the heir to the throne rather than on the king himself. It is clear now that the Prince's flight from Berlin affected his political thinking: The revolution that spared both king and heir but threatened both of them with the collapse

of Hohenzollern rule seems to have taught the royal brothers a lesson, even though the decade following the counter revolution of 1849 secured the monarchical prerogative as fundamental to the new constitutional order that had been conceded. In fact, as David Barclay points out, the old order “was harsher than ever before”. Still, “politics and public life were in the process of becoming modern”, and the king and his heir both expressed their conservative point of view in different ways, gradually acknowledging elected chambers and their moderate representatives as inevitable for the political future of the Prussian monarchy.

This essay will focus on the threat to the line of succession that boiled briskly during the Prussian Revolution: The Hohenzollern dynasty had to face the fact that the tradition of hereditary principle – set in stone for centuries – seemed to have become negotiable. Very different agents and parties engaged in a dustup about whether the male royal bloodline was still accepted as the sole necessary quality characteristic of a future king – or if the royalty of the blood could nowadays be expected to be accompanied by a convenient set of (liberal) values and a favourable public image. The case of the Prince of Prussia sheds some light on expectations towards the future ruler and strategies of how to establish an idea of “modern” monarchical succession even if it collided with conservative ideas of the high-born personalities concerned.

Contemporary satire on King Friedrich Wilhelm and Prince Wilhelm of Prussia struggling to shut the door in the face of petitioners: Isidor Popper (1816-1884): “No sheet of paper shall come between me and my people”, lithographic print, 1848-1849, Satyrische Zeitbilder.



His expulsion from Berlin was a severe blow to Prince Wilhelm; in his letters from London he fulminated against a conspiracy surrounding him – sinister plans carefully prepared by Friedrich Wilhelm’s court camarilla in order to replace him as next in line to the Prussian throne: “The party of movement”, he wrote to his brother, “that is the friends of the sovereignty of the people, cannot wish for more than to make a hole in the legitimate order of succession and thus to demonstrate their power.” Wilhelm felt strongly that he had been prevented from fulfilling his duty towards the King and Prussia: “I always remained true to the fatherland, I wanted to go down with you”, he complained. “Now I have to accept an – honourable – exile... why?”



**Street
fighting at
Alexanderpl
atz in Berlin
in 1848
during the
German
Revolution**

In fact no-one at court could have ignored that the royal brothers were at loggerheads about how to react to the threat of the revolution. When on 13 March the military moved forward against the people of Berlin for the first time, Prince Wilhelm criticised the government’s reaction as indecisive and hesitant. He pushed for a rapid, brutal breakup of the demonstrations and petition campaigns, at gunpoint if necessary. It was for a reason he became known as “Prince Case Shot”. Having fled to the royal palace from a menacingly growing crowd beleaguering his residence, the Prince and the King signed a document on 18 March abolishing censorship, re-convening the United Diet and paving the way for a constitution. This concession, on the part of the heir, was given

less than half-heartedly; Wilhelm still opposed a ministry composed of moderate conservatives and liberals and pushed for a military solution.

When on 19 March, in the wake of severe fighting in the streets, Friedrich Wilhelm withdrew his troops from the city to avoid further bloodshed, the furious heir to the throne yelled at the King whom he took for a coward and a blabbermouth. Promptly the demonstrating crowds demanded that Prince Wilhelm renounce his right to the Prussian throne. The King tried to calm the situation down by publicly showing himself and paying homage to the men who had been killed during the fights and were paraded past him and the Queen: Apparently the revolution had triumphed and the monarchy had to bow its head.



Ludolf Camphausen (1803-1890)

The King and his newly appointed chief minister Count Adolf Heinrich von Arnim-Boitzenburg decided that Wilhelm's bad reputation not only impeded an understanding with the revolutionary forces but might, in fact, endanger the dynasty. So by sending him away the government were willing to sacrifice the heir – at least for the time being – in order to reconcile the King with the groups within the bourgeoisie favourable of a constitution that supported a strong monarchy. By no means had this implied that Wilhelm's right to become King of Prussia had been renounced. There was at that time no alternative, no official plan B for changing the line of succession.

In London, where he arrived on the 27 March 1848 after an adventurous flight and having left his wife and children behind, Wilhelm explored new political territory. In fact he had not much to do, except, of course, conversing and dining with the highest political circles and members of the royal family. It seems that especially Prince Albert, Victoria's German husband, made an impression on the heir to the throne. He discussed the British monarchical system and visions of a future united Germany with him. "The poor Prince of Prussia", Albert wrote in a letter to Prince Charles of Leiningen on 30 March, "has been shamefully slandered by a party which would gladly see the best of

princes cleared out of the way. (...) He was not in favour of a change, but he is loyal and will stand or fall by the new, as he was ready to do by the old."

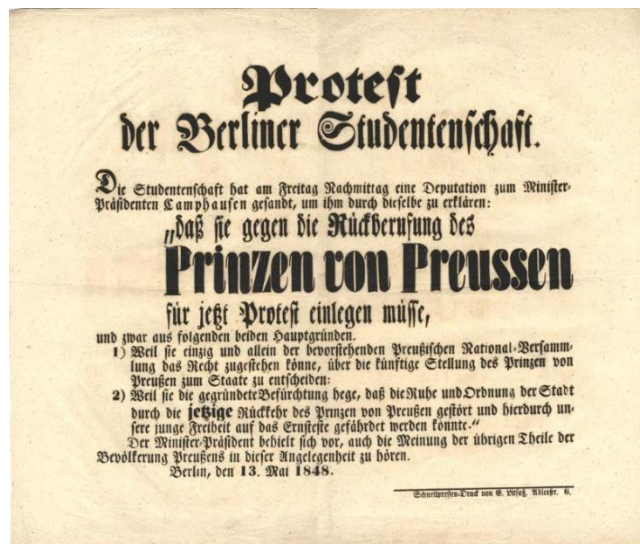
In fact Wilhelm adopted some (from his perspective) fairly advanced ideas during the two months he spent in London. He was well aware that something had to be done about his reputation as an unwavering hardliner in order to prepare his triumphant return to Prussia. In Berlin the first constitutional government had lasted only ten days. On 29 March the liberal Cologne businessman Ludolf Camphausen became first minister; the entrepreneur David Hansemann was appointed finance minister. In April, the young ministry Camphausen/Hansemann prepared elections for both a Prussian and a German National Assembly. Their main task would be to approve constitutions for Prussia and a united Germany.

Protest of the students of Berlin against the return of the Prince of Prussia, 13 May 1848
(Historic Collection, Library of the Humboldt University Berlin).

After his favourite plan - to be given a military command - had failed, Wilhelm instead adopted Prince Albert's idea that all German Princes should actively shape Prussian and German politics

rather than refusing to play a part in a changing political environment. Prince Wilhelm intended to become a representative of the Prussian National Assembly – provided there would be a clear chance of a successful election; otherwise he expected a devastating effect from furious press campaigns on his already shaken public image. The Prince was elected in the tiny constituency of Wirsitz in Posen and impatiently prepared his return to Berlin in time for the opening session of the National Assembly.

"I think we can dare to bring him back", King Friedrich Wilhelm announced in a written conversation with Camphausen at the beginning of May. According to the king, his younger brother deserved every effort to re-establish him in Prussia: Having suffered personally and experienced gross insult, Wilhelm nevertheless had declared his



willingness to accept the new political course. Not to mention his importance for the crown and the future of the dynasty.

On 10 May the ministry Camphausen officially recommended the King to cut short Prince Wilhelm's stay in London in order to allow him to be in Prussia for the approval of the new constitution. When the King confirmed that the Prince of Prussia would be returning soon, the public outcry in Berlin was enormous. With demonstrations of 10.000 men and women in the streets, petitions, public speeches and charivaris revolutionary forces sought to undermine the decision. A popular folk song announced unmistakably:

“Master Butcher,
Prince of Prussia,
dare come, dare come
to Berlin.
We will throw
stones at you,
And mount
the barricades!”¹

Camphausen and his fellow ministers were threatened, yet the monarch was adamant: Every step back would now endanger the succession and with it the Prussian throne; and Friedrich Wilhelm had no intention of negotiating the ancient rules of succession - neither with the crowds in the streets of Berlin nor with the National Assembly. If matters of the Hohenzollern succession would be dragged before the National Assembly, then, he stated, “I should send this assembly packing, and if the city supports this cause, then weapons will do the talking!”

¹ „Schlächtermeister / Prinz von Preußen / Komme doch, komme doch / nach Berlin / Wir woll'n dir / mit Steine schmeißen / und auf die / Barrikaden ziehn.“



The Prince of Prussia as Representative in the National Assembly, 8 June 1848 ("Berliner Zeitung", Multimedia Archive)

Luckily, when Prince Wilhelm made his carefully prepared entrance in the Prussian city of Magdeburg on 6 June, he was greeted with cheers and comforting applause and not with stones. For the time being the situation had calmed down. Two days later Wilhelm made his appearance in the National Assembly and gave a short and rather stiff speech, confirming his loyalty to this new form of government that had been granted by the King. It was his last official act as representative of Wirsitz. A year later Wilhelm would personally command troops to invade the southern duchy of Baden and crush republican forces.

Still, the upheavals of the revolutionary years had clearly left their mark on the Prussian monarchy and on the unwanted heir and villain. He had suddenly found his position within the dynasty a matter of public debate. The great pains taken to improve the heir's image, by himself as well as by others, clearly show that the Prussian royal family was aware of their new public role and that it mattered for the future King to be accepted – even loved – by the people.

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Alfonso XII, Prince of Asturias: A Prince educated in Exile

Carmina López Sanchez

On 30 September 1868, Isabel II, *la de los tristes destinos* (*she of the sad destinies*), as the novelist Galdós called her, left Spain in the wake of the so-called Glorious Revolution. She reached the train station in Biarritz accompanied by her family: her husband, Francisco de Asís, and her children, Alfonso, Prince of Asturias, and the Princesses Pilar (1861-1878), Paz (1862-1946), and Eulalia (1864-1958), as well as Carlos Marfori, her confessor, Father Claret, and Sor Patrocinio. Emperor Napoleon III welcomed the royal party directly at the station. The family first took up residence at Pau Palace, close to the Spanish border, before deciding to move on to Paris. In March 1869, the Queen bought the Basilewsky Palace (which was immediately renamed *Castilla*). For his part, Francisco de Asís experienced this exile like a liberation from court life and from his marriage; he settled independently in Épinay-sur-Seine, in the outskirts of the French capital.

The Queen's eldest daughter Isabel, known widely as *la Chata* – affectionately referring

to her cute snub nose – was not in Spain during the revolution. She had married Count Cayetano de Borbón-Dos Sicilias of Girgenti in spring 1868 and happened to be in Paris on her honeymoon. When he heard about the revolution, the Count of Girgenti left for Madrid to take command of his regiment of hussars, eventually fighting at the battle of Alcolea.



Isabel II with her daughters Pilar, Paz and Eulalia

Princess Isabel, born in 1851, held the title of Princess of Asturias until the birth of her brother Alfonso, since, traditionally, it was the male heir to the throne, upon whom the title of Prince of Asturias was conferred. Any daughters, even if they were first-born, were simply addressed as “Infantas” (princesses). The title “Princess of Asturias” could only be granted by the King. Article 201 of the Spanish Constitution of 1812 states: *The first-born son of the King will be called the Prince of Asturias*. This designation would be confirmed again in the 1869 Constitution (Article 79): *When the King dies, the new King will swear to observe and enforce the Constitution and the laws in the same way and on the same terms that the court declared the first King should follow the Constitution. The Prince of Asturias will swear the same oath when he turns eighteen years old*.



Isabel de Borbón and her husband, the Count of Girgenti

The later Spanish constitutions of the 19th century do not explicitly mention the “Prince of Asturias” but refer to the “successor”, “first-born”, or “heir”. However, on 30 May 1850, under the reign of Isabel II, a Royal Decree appeared in the *Gaceta*. Its single paragraph stated: *the immediate successors to the Crown, according to the Constitution of the Monarchy, without distinguishing between males or females, will continue to be called the Prince of Asturias, with all the honors and prerogatives that come with such a high position*. This Royal Decree made Isabel de Borbón y Borbón the Princess of Asturias from her birth in 1851 until her brother Alfonso was born six years later. Isabel was re-titled the Princess of Spain, but upon her family’s restoration to the Spanish throne she would once again become Princess of Asturias – until the birth of Maria de las Mercedes, King Alfonso’s first-born daughter.

Although the Royal Decree of 1850 allowed women to be Princesses of Asturias, there is no doubt that all Spaniards wished for a male heir to be born. On 29 November 1857 the newspapers reported that *at a quarter to eleven at night twenty-five cannons and tolling of bells announced to this capital that the queen had given birth to a prince*. The next day

the *Gaceta de Madrid* officially announced the birth. The prince was baptized on 7 December; his godparents were his sister Isabel and Pope Pío IX, who was represented by the nuncio monsignor Berili. Alfonso would receive his first communion from that same Pope years later, on 8 March 1870, at Saint Peter's Basilica.

Alfonso XII



The birth of Alfonso XII filled the royal family with happiness. It is important to remember that in the 19th century Spain went through three civil wars, the so-called “Carlistas Wars” that were originally caused by dynastic motives. The birth of a male heir granted the Spanish throne safety from the immediate danger caused by Carlista pretenders. Without a doubt, the child Alfonso was a great hope for Spaniards, but no one knew yet how short and intense the life of this recently-born Prince of Asturias would be.

The Prince spent his first years in the Royal Palace in Madrid, in a very tense political atmosphere amid schemes plotted by people as loyal as his own father or his uncle, the Duke of Montpensier. Despite this atmosphere of continual intrigue, the prince was carefully educated to prepare him for his future as king of Spain. The Marques of Alcañices was appointed head of the court the Prince of Asturias. In 1865, when Alfonso turned seven, the Marques was succeeded by the Archbishop of Burgos, Fernando de la Puente y Primo de Rivera (1808-1867). The boy prince was frequently ill, so physical exercise was a very important part of his education. Francisco de Aguilera, Count of Villalobos, was personally responsible for Prince Alfonso's physical exercise and a formal regimen started in 1863. In these early years we already find William Morphy at Alfonso's side as one of the prince's chamberlains. Morphy accompanied the Prince to the Theresianum grammar school in Vienna and remained his personal secretary until his death.

From the very beginning, Prince Alfonso accompanied his parents on a series of royal visits that took the family all over Spain. The visits had a clear propagandistic intention.

Alfonso often wore the regional costumes of the places he visited, much the same as his sister, Isabel, who was one year older. On a trip to Asturias, the Prince was introduced to the Virgin of Covadonga, and it was there that he was given the name *Pelayo*: A symbolic name that referred to the initiator of the *Reconquista*, the historical process during which the Christians conquered the territory under Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula between 722 and 1492. These visits sought to strengthen the image of the Spanish monarchy, and there is no doubt that the tender image of the prince and princess dressed in the traditional regional costumes contributed significantly to popularise the royal family.



The Abdication of Isabel II (La Ilustración Española y Americana, 13 July 1870)

When the royal family was forced into exile in 1868, Alfonso was eleven years old. The exile

enabled the young prince to experience other European countries, see different systems of government, and learn new languages; Alfonso spoke French fluently, also German and a bit of English. When he arrived in Paris, the Prince's education had to continue, and the Stanislas School in the 6th arrondissement was selected for him. He took up his studies in this private catholic institute in February 1869. In addition to his classes at Stanislas the Prince had private lessons in international politics with the Count of Benalúa, nephew of the Duke of Sesto. While in exile the young prince continued his education, the “Alfonsian circle” began to develop in Spain. The majority of Spaniards, who supported the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty, were aware that Isabel II could not return to Spain to rule as queen; instead, her son Alfonso was supposed to be King.

On 25 June 1870, Isabel II decided to abdicate. Thus, the twelve-year old Alfonso became the bearer of all historical rights of the House of Bourbon in Spain. From the very beginning of her exile, many advisors had suggested that the Queen abdicate in favour of her son, but Isabel wanted to avoid a regency for her under-age son at all cost. In June 1870 she eventually yielded to pressure from Napoleon III, to whom she had promised in 1869 that she would abdicate at an opportune moment. This moment had arrived when, after the Constitutional Courts declared that Spain would remain a monarchy, Leopoldo de Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was presented as a candidate for the Spanish throne. This candidacy not only provoked the Queen's abdication; it also made the consequences of the 1868 revolution visible on an international scale. The Franco-

Prussian war erupted in July of 1870 over the question of the Spanish succession.



Alfonso XII and the Duke of Sesto

During the war, in October 1870, the Spanish royal family had to move from Paris to Geneva. From May 1870, Thomas O’Ryan (1821-1902) was responsible for directing the prince’s education; the prince studied Latin, Greek, French, Geography, History and Mathematics with Professor Víctor Duret; he also attended a physical education class and continued his exercise regimen. In autumn 1871, O’Ryan looked for an adequate school for the exiled heir to the Spanish crown. Finally, the Theresianum in Vienna was chosen, and he matriculated there at the beginning of 1872.

Alfonso was accompanied to Austria by O’Ryan, who was soon replaced by William Morphy, who assumed responsibility for the prince’s education. Morphy, along with the Duke of Sesto, José Osorio y Silva-Bazán, son of the Marquis of Alcañices, and the assistance of the valet Ceferino Rodríguez, would remain with the prince until the end of his life.

Meanwhile in Spain, various people were entrusted with the task of laying down the foundations for the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy: the Count of Cheste, Eusebio

Calonge, Francisco Lersundi, Montpensier himself after the Treaty of Cannes, and lastly Cánovas del Castillo, who was overall in charge of the process that would lead to the restoration of the Bourbon under Alfonso XII in 1873.



Monument dedicated to Alfonso XII in Parque del Retiro (Madrid)

The great change in public opinion in favor of the prince started with the Alfonsian Liberal Circle. The Alfonsians were even able to gain control of a few newspapers, such as *La Época*, *El Tiempo*, *La Política*, or *El Eco de Galicia*. Cánovas del Castillo's goal was to present the Spaniards with a more mature image of the young prince, suggesting that he was capable of becoming the King of Spain. For this reason Cánovas recommended that Alfonso matriculate at the Military Academy of Sandhurst, where he could acquire a good military education. From the beginning, Cánovas hoped to create the image of a “king-soldier,” which he believed to be an absolute necessity for the King of Spain – because of the many revolts of the 19th century.

Accompanied by Colonel Juan de Velasco Alfonso arrived at Sandhurst on 5 October 1874. On 28 November Alfonso received many well-wishes for his birthday. In order to make the most of the opportunity, Cánovas del Castillo sent a thank-you card to all well-wishers. This letter ended up becoming known as the famous “Sandhurst Manifesto”. The manifesto contained a pithy statement: “I will neither stop being a good Spaniard, nor, like all of my ancestors, a good Catholic, nor, as a man of this century truly liberal.” In his book *Cánovas*, Benito Pérez Galdós captured this apparent contradiction of being both Catholic and liberal in a dialogue at the end of the book’s first chapter: *Liberal and Catholic? But the Pope has said that Liberalism is sin! Unless Prince Alfonso has discovered the secret of inserting the soul of Pío IX into the body of Espartero...*

The Manifesto was published in Spain on 26 December 1874. The *pronunciamiento* of General Martínez Campos took place three days later. This military revolt precipitated the return of Alfonso XII to Spain. Having stayed in Paris with his family for Christmas, the new king entered Spain via the city of Barcelona on 9 January 1875. When he arrived in Madrid five days later he was received with huge enthusiasm. At that moment, a new life began for the man that was now King Alfonso XII, who would be known as “The Pacifier.”

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Morandi's Italian Job: Nationalising Italy's First Heir

Maria-Christina Marchi

"When reading in *My Prisons* by Pellico the story of Maroncelli's poor leg, tears came to [Vittorio Emanuele III's] eyes, and he burst into an exclamation of scorn, which obliged me to remind him of our present good relations with Austria. It was easy to build upon such foundations of culture, intelligence and heart."



Young Vittorio Emanuele III (Museo del Risorgimento, Milano, 30110)

This extract from the memoirs of Luigi Morandi, who taught the young heir to the Italian throne, is only one of many anecdotes that reflect Vittorio Emanuele's (1868-1946) innate "Italianness". The book mentioned, *My Prisons*, published in 1832, was the autobiography of a *carbonaro* (i.e. freemason): Silvio Pellico was arrested by Austrian troops in Milan because of his ideals of Italian patriotism and desire to free the Italian nation from foreign rule. A bestseller in the nineteenth century, the book toed the post-unification government's line of thought, insisting, as it did, that a unified Italy, freed from the impostors that had ruled it for centuries, was inevitable. Pellico and his friend Maroncelli, who had suffered incarceration for their fervent patriotism, sacrificed their freedom for the *patria* and Maroncelli even lost a leg during his imprisonment. The bravery and pure *amor di patria* displayed in the memoirs is the very stuff that post-Risorgimento education in Italy focused on. Vittorio Emanuele's emotional reaction, as though unable to contain his intrinsic patriotic feelings, is Morandi's way of showing that the prince's sentiments regarding Italy were pure and he was aware, from a young age, of his link to his people and duty to his country. Not only was the education of the

heir key in turning him into the first Italian-born king, but it also framed the laws and curricula that were created for the primary education of the masses.

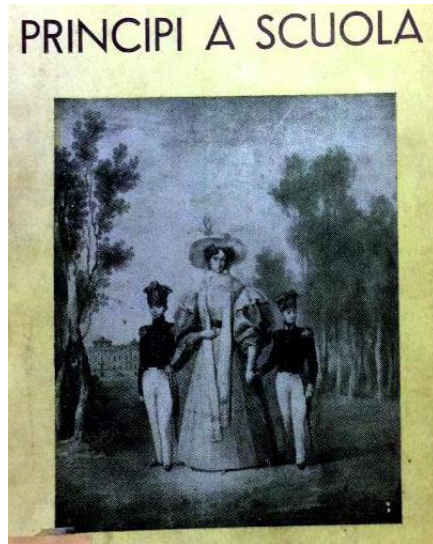
Oxilia's book on Vittorio Emanuele II's education, "The Princes at School" (1900) (Museo del Risorgimento, Milano, 11360)

The instruction received by the young Vittorio Emanuele played an important role in differentiating him from his Piedmontese predecessors. It framed his future in the new national narrative. Unlike him, his father and grandfather had not been extensively educated, focusing more on military training. In the Savoia tradition schooling a future ruler was not seen as a vital component.

In fact, in 1882 Umberto I, who was attending Vittorio Emanuele's exam session, was surprised both by the range of his son's curriculum, as well as the child's deferential behaviour towards his academic tutors. The Court Chaplain retorted that the king's consternation was to be expected seeing as during his own childhood Umberto and his younger brother Amedeo, 'commanded; the tutor sitting on a chair, [the princes] sitting in an armchair... and they would study only when they felt like it.' Umberto's education was consequently relatively unsuccessful and it was later noted that the king felt very uncomfortable when having to sign his own name in the presence of others.

Even Vittorio Emanuele II – the 'father of the fatherland,' the hero of the *Risorgimento* – was famed for his lack of educational sophistication. Aside from the fact that he did not speak Italian very well, preferring the Piedmontese dialect and French (most of his correspondence being in the latter language), he was also seen as a 'mediocre scholar.' A 1900 publication, *I Principi a Scuola* (The Princes at School), which was part children's book, part manual, told the story of how Vittorio Emanuele II and his brother Ferdinando were educated during their childhood. The book's moral comes as a separate final chapter, where the author duly states that:

"Vittorio Emanuele was extraordinary in everything he did, and thus managed to be a great King even though he was only a mediocre scholar. But you, o child of Italy, that are



not Vittorio Emanuele, will not be a good citizen, you will not be a good Italian, if you are not a good scholar.”

Although the book suggested that monarchs did not need a thorough education, the way in which Vittorio Emanuele III's schooling was organised was very different from that of previous Savoia rulers. Naturally, the focus on the military education was not neglected and Vittorio Emanuele served his time in various military academies, first in his native city of Naples and then in Florence. However, the approach taken to his early schooling was more varied than the traditional Savoia one. Although directed by Colonel Osio, a veteran of the Risorgimento wars, the prince's education also involved teachers with a civilian background – like Luigi Morandi.



Luigi Morandi, Vittorio Emanuele's Italian teacher 1881-86 (Museo del Risorgimento, Milano, Opuscolo 8916)

Morandi was born in Umbria in 1844 and had become an Italian teacher by the age of nineteen. Early in his career he taught at various schools and he was very active in engaging with students. He set up evening classes in the towns where he taught and even started his own newspaper, *L'Umbria e le Marche*. His activities and dedication were noticed by the Court and, in 1881, he was appointed as the Italian teacher of the heir to the throne. He spent the next five years at the child's side and, in 1901, after Umberto's assassination and Vittorio Emanuele's accession to the throne, Morandi published a collection of his memoirs during his time as the new King's tutor: *Come fu educato Vittorio Emanuele* (How Vittorio Emanuele was educated, 1901).

This book, published just after Vittorio Emanuele's accession, was supposed to shed light on a prince who had previously avoided public attention. Helen Zimmern, who published *Italian Leaders of To-Day* in 1915, claimed that the prince could not be called popular, because of this reticence, but that according to Queen Victoria he was 'the most promising of all the heirs to European thrones.' The attempt to familiarise Italy's

reading public with their new ruler seem to only be the continuation of a nationalisation of the country's history, making it "Italian" and Savoia-centric, which had begun post-unification. The trend was reflected both in Vittorio Emanuele's individual education and in that which was imparted on the masses.

Luigi Morandi's book shows that the Italian curriculum followed by the young prince was made up of a canon of "Italian" works, which defined Italy before it was even Italy. He had focused on the works of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, all composed long before unification (in the 14th Century), and all written in Florentine, which – according to Alessandro Manzoni – was the purest form of the Italian language.



Colonel Osio, the prince's tutor (Museo del Risorgimento, Milano, 89)

Manzoni was a nineteenth century Italian novelist, author of *The Betrothed* (1827), and one of the appointed members of the commission for the unification of language in post-1860 Italy. Moreover, the intense focus on the grammar, spelling and pronunciation of Italian during the five years of Morandi's teaching is one of the themes that runs through his memoirs, again and again, highlighting the importance of the language itself for creating an 'Italian' monarch.

In one account Morandi describes Colonel Osio's reaction to a mistake made by the prince in his written assessment: "On the morning of 9 December 1882, namely after a year and a few days that the Prince had begun studying the Italian language and was practicing his writing, the Colonel saw in his work a spelling mistake, one of those spelling mistakes that, as he repeatedly stated, no matter how insignificant, were enough to discredit a man's reputation.' In fact, Osio's harsh ways caused him to berate the royal student continuously. On one such occasion he made it clear that "both the son of a King and the son of a cobbler can be dunces!" Not even the son of a King could be above stupidity.

This treatment was part of Prince's education. Osio believed that he should not be treated in any special way, rather that he had to understand and appreciate his own position of responsibility. Similarly to Wilhelm II's tutor, Georg Hinzpeter, Osio believed in 'Spartan ways' of education and that privilege would not help the Prince develop into a convincing leader. Osio instructed Morandi never to make his pupil's life comfortable: if there was a book he needed then the Prince should stand up and get it himself. Once Morandi, who was running late, picked the book the Prince was to study from the shelf and placed it, open, on his desk in order to speed things up. Seeing this, Osio took the book and returned it to its place. The Prince then got up and went to get it. Such were the lengths to which Osio was willing to go in order to make sure that the Prince would never take his position for granted. On another occasion, when the Prince was sick, Osio made him go on his daily ride regardless of his cold. When Morandi tried to stop him,

Osio replied: 'And if we went to war tomorrow, would the Prince not ride because of his cold?' Thus severity and discipline were key factors of his education, and although harsh, Morandi did see worth in the idea since the Prince was 'well-aware of the singular obligations that the singularity of his position imposed upon him.'



The front page of Morandi's memoirs, "How Vittorio Emanuele III was Educated" (1901) (Museo del Risorgimento, Milano, 30110)

In the same way that the young Prince was being taught his moral duty to his people, school curricula were being written in order to teach pupils their civic duty to their nation. The choice of history texts, which focused heavily on the Risorgimento and in the period between 1870 and 1890 gave a particularly Savoia-centric account of the happenings, were meant to mould the students into ideal citizens. Even the written syllabi took on strong nationalist and monarchic tones, defining both Italy and the schoolchildren using predominantly all-inclusive language: Italy is *our Patria*, the *patria* of all *us* is dear Italy, *we are* Italians. The monarchy also played a role in national instruction. In Giuseppe Fiandra's *Sillabario figurato per l'insegnamento simultaneo della Lettura e scrittura, ad uso della prima classe elementare* (1889) he portrays the King as the figure who enables education:

The portrait of the King reminds us that he, *like a father*, provides us with our education so that we can become virtuous men in order to be useful to our families and to the *patria*. In another syllabus, the focus is on Queen Margherita and the fact that she ‘loves us children very much...’ and that the freedom that the Savoia won for Italy can only be rewarded through the students’ nationalised schooling.

Thus, the curricula and syllabi were political tools in the same way that Vittorio Emanuele’s own education had been determined by the politics of court. Morandi’s role was to make the Prince as “Italian” as possible in order that he could then become a pervasive symbol of “Italianness.” Throughout his memoirs in fact, he recounts episodes, like the one described at the very beginning of this piece, where the Prince demonstrates passionate patriotism and the awareness of his intrinsic “Italian” soul. Morandi also highlights various acts of the Prince’s bravery, to clarify that although reserved he did possess the House of Savoia’s mythical traits. In 1885, for example, he was injured by an explosion in a university lab, and those present were very impressed by the prince’s *sang froid*. Moreover, his sense of duty was also underlined and Morandi proudly recounts how the boy refused to be promoted in the army because of his background – he instead demanded to be promoted by merit, just like everyone else.

Morandi was also at pains to show that the Prince was not a simple-minded personality. Although his schooling included a focus on his family’s history and their role in the unification, the boy still managed to display a sharp mind. In 1886, as Morandi explains, the prince presented a thesis on his ancestor, Carlo Alberto and ‘he spoke at great length of [his] virtues and shortcomings (...), like the most impartial of historians would have done (...) after all, his education was informed by the cult of truth...’. This display of critical thinking (in fluent Italian, naturally) was supposed to paint the picture of a just and thoughtful monarch, who, though linked to tradition, was nevertheless prepared successfully to lead the country into the twentieth century.

For a number of reasons Morandi’s memoirs must be read with caution. Despite the fact that most contemporary characterisations of the prince were not as positive as his and many believed him to be both dull and completely obsessed with his diminutive stature, Morandi recounts the story of a quiet but intelligent boy, capable of sharp thinking and affection, inquisitive and bound by duty. These were, according to his narrative, the

characteristics that an “Italian” heir should strive for. The portrait thus paints a clear picture of what the court and parliament believed a modern monarch should embody. Not only does it give us insight into contemporary interpretations of monarchy, the timing of the memoirs’ publication and the compliment-strewn nature of his writings also show the attempts made in order to make the new King better known to his people. By telling the stories of his childhood Vittorio Emanuele would become more endearing, more human, and thus closer to the Italians.



Overall, despite the not wholly truthful narrative and alterations that might have occurred in Morandi’s recollections, the memoirs provide a rich insight into what was expected of an “Italian” heir and how central the nationalisation of the royal image was. However, whether or not these expectations were met and the Prince was successfully Italianised is a completely different story.

The Prince of Naples in military uniform (Museo del Risorgimento, Milano, 30110)

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Losing “Our Louise” and Winning the Saxons’ Hearts: The Trials and Tribulations of Crown Prince Friedrich August of Saxony

Frank Lorenz Müller

Whatever other failings he may have had, the chief prosecutor at the *Landgericht* in the Saxon city of Leipzig could recognise irony – especially when it was laid on with a trowel. In January 1903 he contacted the Saxon Ministry of Justice to accuse the Social Democrat *Leipziger Volkszeitung* of an act of *Lèse-majesté* (*Majestätsbeleidigung*) against the country’s Wettin dynasty. The paper, he reported, had described the royal heir,



Crown Prince Friedrich August (1865-1932), as severely compromised by the recent scandal, but had predicted that he would nevertheless retain his place in the succession. Rather than abdicating, the article concluded, Friedrich August would surely “follow his father in his glorious reign.”

Crown Princess Louise and André Giron in Geneva (December 1902)

Given the paper’s political leanings, the prosecutor concluded somewhat ponderously, such a description of the reign of his Majesty

King Georg of Saxony (1832-1904) was clearly ironic and meant “to express the opposite of glorious.”

Upon this occasion, the Ministry of Justice decided not to pursue the matter further, but the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* was clearly skating on thin ice. When, a few weeks later, the paper had the temerity to observe that the “reputation of the king and the crown had greatly suffered in the wake of the recent marriage scandal,” the authorities responded promptly and without mercy. On 14 April 1903, the Ministry decided to prosecute Karl Albert Paul Lensch, the editor responsible for this outrage, and on 9 July a sentence of four months’ imprisonment was handed down to the unfortunate journalist.

The background to this tetchy watchfulness and somewhat trigger-happy flexing of Saxony's authoritarian muscle was one of the greatest scandals to engulf European royalty during the Belle Époque. On 22 December 1902, after much of Europe had already been abuzz with rumours for several days, the Saxon government's official publication, the *Dresdner Journal*, stiffly reported that Crown Princess Louise (1870-1947), the pregnant wife of Friedrich August and mother of their five children, had gone abroad "in a pathological moment of emotional turmoil, thus severing all the ties" that linked her to her Saxon family.

Eleven years after marrying the heir to the Saxon throne, the 33-year-old Habsburg princess had absconded during a visit to her ailing father in Salzburg. Louise crossed the border into republican Switzerland, where she was reunited with André Giron. This moustachioed Belgian had, until recently, been employed as her children's French tutor. Showing herself in public with her young lover as they promenaded along the lakeside in Geneva and liberally dishing out the dirt about court life in Dresden in interviews to the world's press, Louise quickly turned into veritable bugbear for the Saxon royal family.

The strictly legal side of the scandal was complex, but dealt with very promptly. A special court, convened by King Georg in accordance with the stipulations of the family statute (*Hausgesetz*) of the Wettin dynasty, swiftly found Louise guilty of several acts of adultery. The marriage was formally dissolved on 11 February 1903. This was a purely civil process, though, which had no bearing on the sacrament of marriage. The unfortunate Friedrich August, a good Catholic, was thus left in a state of matrimonial limbo and unable to remarry. Louise renounced all her rights and privileges as a former member of the royal family, but received a generous annual allowance. She was banned from ever returning to Saxony and denied access to her children. Arrangements were even made for her yet-to-be-born child to be handed over to her former family in due course – discreetly avoiding the obvious questions about the paternity.

These legal headaches were a mere trifle, though, compared to the public relations nightmare that was unfolding. For the future queen to run off with a lounge lizard and wash her dirty linen in public was bad enough. So the government-friendly papers tried their best to contain the damage. First they studiously ignored the story everyone and

their dog was talking about and then they heaped all the blame on the allegedly hysterical and immoral Louise, an individual King Georg publicly condemned as a “deeply fallen woman”.

But to make matters worse, Louise immediately became the poster-girl for anyone who wanted to stick the knife into the Saxon government, into members of the Wettin monarchy, or into the monarchical principle more broadly. Armed to the teeth with many ghastly tales about her years spent at the Dresden court, radicals, democrats and socialists found that Louise’s story was a gift that just kept giving: a wronged yet mesmerising woman and doting mother cruelly cast aside by bitter and powerful figures at the court and in government. Soon “Our Louise”, the people’s princess, was born.

In February 1903, after Louise’s request to rush to the bedside of her sick son Friedrich Christian had been turned down, the radical *Dresdener Rundschau* adorned its front page with a facsimile of a letter the crown princess had written to a “simple, humble woman”. Thanking this “Good, Dear Woman” for her support, Louise affirmed the “infinite tenderness and love” she felt for her “5 little ones”. She would never leave them or “my Saxons, my people, to whom I am attached with the innermost love.” The “dear, simple people” of Saxony, she wrote, would not have to wait for her in vain. In its editorial, the *Rundschau* contrasted this “document of human greatness” with the goings on at the palace, where “courtly ritual, the great lie, and bony, ice-grey torpor are the almighty rulers – today as much as in the dark ages.”

A booklet entitled “The Truth about the Flight of the Crown Princess of Saxony. By an Insider”², rushed out within weeks of the event, offered a little more context. It described the estrangement between the Saxon people and their monarch that had gathered pace since the accession, in 1902, of the strictly catholic and distant King Georg. The king’s children had failed to compensate for their father’s lack of warmth, with Crown Prince Friedrich August caring only for hunting and the military. Louise, however, marked the only exception. She was a little ray of sunshine and popular with the people – and it was this, the anonymous author explained, which made her many enemies at court.

² *Die Wahrheit über die Flucht der Kronprinzessin von Sachsen. Von einem Eingeweihten* (Rudolf Lebies Verlag: Dresden, 1903).

Postcard:
 "Saxony's Dream
 – Hail! Hail! Hail!
 Our Louise"



Claiming to apply a strictly Socialist mode of analysis, the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* identified an underlying structural reason for Louise's elopement. "Monarchical marriage and family scandals have been a regular feature of monarchy," it observed on 27 December 1902. It suggested that this was a case of nature wanting "to exact a revenge for the unnatural quality of an institution, in which a single individual is put in charge of the destiny of a whole nation." Yet in spite of the Social Democrats' protestations that they preferred a sober socialist analysis to cheap sensationalism, the *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* could not resist re-printing the long interview Louise had given to the *Wiener Zeit*. So Jesuit-ridden was the Dresden court, Louise explained, that even laughter was frowned upon. And the fate princesses had to endure was unbearably cruel, the princess insisted: ordered into a dynastic marriage and expected to be lifeless, without wishes and without a will of their own. Liberal papers joined in, too. "We all had taken her to our hearts," the *Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten*, observed on Christmas Eve 1902: "this spirited, beautiful, charming, exalted woman, whose keen and unlimited concern for charity was well-known all over Dresden."

The cult of "Our Louise" grew and proved lasting. Soon, it spilled over into different media. Poems such as "And forgive us our trespasses", which celebrated Louise's "loving, motherly heart" or songs such as the *Luisalied* with its more or less tuneful celebration of "the pearl of Saxony" did their bit to keep the flame burning. But perhaps the most eye-catching aspect of the campaign was the use of visual images – mainly



picture postcards – which soon flooded the country. They depicted the former crown princess surrounded by her former family or as “Saxony’s Dream”. And the buzz showed no sign of abating. In September 1904, the *Dresdener Rundschau* still opened with “Our Louise as an Angel” and a year later the same weekly lavishly celebrated her 35th birthday.

“Our Louise as an Angel” – *Dresdener Rundschau* (17 September 1904)

As the charismatic figurehead of the opposition “Our Louise” quickly became a most unpleasant thorn in the flesh of the monarchy. King Georg – soon lampooned as “Georg the Grisly” (*Georg der Greuliche*) for his less than winsome ways – was held responsible for the bleakness and bigotry of the court which had driven the princess away. His seemingly unforgiving attitude after Louise’s escape and his public denunciation of her as a “deeply fallen woman” also turned him and the government into targets of fierce attacks. “Sadly, King Georg is not surrounded by advisers that would convey to him the opinion of the people warts and all,” the *Dresdener Rundschau* observed in March 1903: “For otherwise this announcement could not have contained this embittering comment directed against Princess Louise.”

Louise’s 35th birthday – as marked by the *Dresdener Rundschau* (2 September 1905)

But neither King Georg nor his much-reviled minister Georg von Metzsch were the individual whose standing was most gravely affected by the Louise scandal. That dubious prize went to her husband of eleven years, the man the princess had left behind: Crown Prince Friedrich August. Louise spoke freely and excruciatingly about him. He had been too



weak to protect her against those wielding real power at court, she told the *Wiener Zeit*, and the manner in which he showed his affection to her had been “too rough, and, with its complete lack of inhibition, had been torture” for her. She also denied that Friedrich August had any sense at all of culture, learning, music, literature and arts. As someone brought up by priests, she explained, the crown prince could not but regard such pursuits as dangerous and sinful.

The experience of the of the unfortunate Karl Lensch, who spent the summer of 1903 behind bars, showed that Saxon papers had to be careful about criticising the crown prince too openly. The democratic *Volkswacht*, however, was published in Austria and thus laid freely – and unfairly – into Friedrich August, that “drunkard and randy skirt chaser” who was really to blame for the “deep fall of his unhappy wife.” To get a sense of the mood of the people, all the prince had to do was to go for a walk in Dresden – as was his common practice.



Friedrich August III upon his accession to the Saxon throne (1904)

For unlike before, when people in the streets welcomed him cordially and warmly, the Prussian envoy reported in February 1903, Friedrich August was now rarely greeted at all and had to suffer catcalls from a curious throng following him. Some deranged individuals even went as far as sending anonymous letters to court representatives such as the lawyer Dr Emil Körner, who had acted for the crown prince, and was now threatened with dynamite attacks if he continued to bother “the woman who now belongs to the people.”

Little in his trouble-free previous life could have prepared Friedrich August for this kind of crisis. Born in 1865, when his grandfather, King Johann (1801-73), was still on throne, Friedrich August’s youth had been almost entirely uneventful. Brought up by two strict Catholics, Prince Georg and his wife Maria-Anna (1843-84), he received a standard princely education, including the usual military stages as well as a couple of years at university. Amiable, physically fit and unencumbered by excessive

intellectualism, Friedrich August became a keen hunter and horseman. He travelled widely and served as an aristocratic part-time officer, who was popular with his men. In 1891 he married the Archduchess Louise of Habsburg-Tuscany, a vivacious catholic princess from one of the most senior dynasties in Europe. The Saxon public received the newlyweds with great warmth, and the couple swiftly produced a flock of princes and princesses. The impressively fertile family idyll was proudly documented on picture postcards bought by those with a penchant for monarchical bliss.

In June 1902, Friedrich August's uncle, the venerable King Albert of Saxony (1828-1902) died. The childless monarch was succeeded – to the surprise of some, who had hoped the crown might pass directly to the younger generation – by his elderly brother Georg. The new king, an ailing widower, did not enjoy a propitious start. Coming, as it did, in the middle of a severe recession, his decision to accept a significant uplift of the Civil List, paid to the crown out of public funds, struck several observers as ill-advised. Moreover, Georg's demonstrative catholic piety was compared unfavourably with his predecessor's more subtle religiosity. Friedrich August barely had six months to acquaint himself with his new role as crown prince when Louise went on the run and the scandal broke.

In response to the crisis triggered by the collapse of Friedrich August's marriage and the triumph of the "Cult of Louise," the Wettins pursued a two-pronged approach. On the one hand, the force of the monarchical state was employed to suppress it, and several cases of *Lèse-Majesté* were brought. Soon Bernhard Peters of the *Dresdener Rundschau* met the same fate as Karl Lensch before him. Four months imprisonment was the price he had to pay for publishing his tongue-in-cheek "Fairytale of the Princes, who didn't Know how to Pray". Beyond the borders of the kingdom, however, the power of the Saxon authorities was clearly limited. In April 1905 a trial in Stuttgart – brought against the editors of the satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* – ended in an embarrassing defeat for the Saxon prosecutors.

Even at home the legal course did not always run smoothly. Attempts by the police to stop the display and sale of postcards with images of Louise – an act, it was claimed, which demonstrated "crass tactlessness against the sensitivities of his Majesty the King" – eventually led to a class action by postcard sellers against the government. The police

lost the case at the High Court in Dresden in August 1905 and the postcards could go on sale again, to howls of derision from the opposition press. Crown Prince Friedrich August clearly backed this component of the response. In October 1903 General Friedrich von Criegern, the prince's chamberlain, informed the Dresden police that Friedrich August had not given permission for the dissemination of photographs showing him and his children together with his ex-wife and he now expressly forbade their reproduction. The courtier also informed the police that he had come across a few prints of the ghastly Louise-as-angel photograph in the palace. With the crown prince's permission, he had destroyed them immediately. Nor did the repressive approach did stop in 1904, when Friedrich August succeeded to the throne.

But there was more than one string to the crown prince's bow. In February 1903, the Prussian envoy had been anything but sanguine. It would take "a long time and an unusual adroitness, which sadly he does not possess," for Friedrich August to regain "the affection of the masses," Count Dönhoff predicted. But the crown prince would prove the sceptics wrong and successfully fought for his popularity. Taking on Louise at her own game, he threw himself into the role of loving father of a large brood, subjecting himself – and his children – to an ruthless public routine of tender family relations and folksy affability. His children would later remember the close attentions of the "omnipresent father," who insisted on a daily and flawless pursuit of the royal family's charm offensive, with mixed feelings. But the plan bore fruit. Slowly, but surely Friedrich August clawed his way back into the affections of "his" Saxons – helped, unwittingly, by Louise, whose re-marriage (in 1907 to a much younger Italian musician) and second divorce undermined what was left of her popular appeal.

The welcome Friedrich August received from the press upon his accession in the autumn of 1904 marked a first milestone. The politically non-affiliated *Dresdner Anzeiger* praised the new king for coping with Louise's desertion of her family and noted how he had "dedicated himself, as a tender father, with re-doubled love and faithful care" to his motherless children. "For years, residents of Dresden and [of the summer retreat of] Wachwitz, have had the opportunity of greeting Prince Friedrich August and his jolly band of children on their many outings." The liberal *Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten* similarly praised the new king's generous attitude to his estranged

wife, the “great love, with which he cares for his children” and his gregariousness (*Leutseligkeit*) – all of which had helped him to win the hearts of the Saxon people.

Two brief hagiographical lives of the new king, both published within months of his accession, mined the same emotional seam. Friedrich August is devoted to his children, Richard Stecher observed, and after the calamity of 1902 it was “from their joyful chatter, from their sparkling eyes that happiness again shone at him.” A second pamphlet confirmed that the king “visits the nursery frequently and happily; he supervises not only the training of the mind, but also ensures well-planned physical exercises.” The latter publication already contained what would eventually become the hallmark of public persona ascribed to King Friedrich August: a long anthology of

humorous anecdotes illustrating the ruler’s down-to-earth character, his affability, generosity and native wit.³



Friedrich August: King and Single Dad

(The photo must have been taken after 1904 but before Princess Anna Pia [born 1903] joined the royal family in 1908)

Over the years, King Friedrich August morphed into a much-loved figure, widely perceived as a thoroughly likeable, largely non-political, quirky and somehow characteristically Saxon monarch. Mindful not to transgress the boundaries of a narrowly defined role

as constitutional monarch and careful not to be associated with unpopular policies he took his duties seriously – especially that of public visibility and cultural patronage across his little realm. The historian Hellmut Kretzschmar has gone so far as to detect in Friedrich August a new “type of monarch-made-middle-class,” a phenomenon that could justify the hope that Germany’s monarchies might have undergone a process of democratic evolution. This remains speculation, though, since notwithstanding his personal popularity, the king of Saxony lost his crown in the strangely low-key revolution of 1918– along with all the other German monarchs.

³ Richard Stecher: *König Friedrich August III. von Sachsen. Ein Lebensbild* (Dresden, 1905), 22-3; *König Friedrich August III. von Sachsen. Ein Lebensbild zusammengestellt nach dem „Kamerad“* (Dresden, 1905), 27.

A remarkably serene ex-king, Friedrich August remained a popular figure until his death in 1932 and beyond. Louise outlived him by 15 years. After a few restless years spent in Italy, England and Mallorca, she had settled in Belgium in 1912 after her second divorce. It was there, in her flat in Ixelles, a suburb of Brussels, that she died, penniless, in March 1947.

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*More royalist than the King, more Catholic than the Pope.***Don Carlos María Isidro de Borbón***Richard Meyer Forsting*

When Don Carlos was born on 29 March 1788, his grandfather Charles III was delighted to have another male grandchild who would be able to guarantee the succession. Partly this was due to the feeble health of Carlos's elder brother, the future Ferdinand VII. It was only logical to prepare. Almost from the outset Don Carlos was groomed as if he was in fact the heir to the throne. Upon his brother's accession to the throne in 1814 he was officially instigated as Prince of Asturias and would remain the heir apparent until 1830.

**Carlos V Borbon (1788-1855) by Vicente López Portaña**

Throughout his life Don Carlos would distinguish himself by his absolutist conception of monarchy, his deeply rooted religiosity and extreme loyalty to his brother. During the Liberal Triennium (1820-23) the radical liberal paper *El Zurriago* in its typically mocking style described Don Carlos as “more royalist than the King, more Catholic than the Pope”. Religion indeed formed a key element in his political thought and informed all his actions in the political, public and private sphere. His relation with the Catholic Church, one of the most powerful institutions in nineteenth-century Spain, was not linear but his religious sentiment was of decisive importance in his decision-making.

The roots of this piousness lie in childhood education. His parents, Charles IV and Louisa Maria of Parma, surrounded their children with ecclesiastical teachers and firmly grounded them in a religious setting. Among the teachers of the *Infantes* were some of the leading religious scholars of Spain, such as Felipe Scio de San Miguel (1738-1796) and Fernando de San Antonio Scio (1756-1806); both had been extensively experienced educators even before they took up their palace posts. Religion was not the only subject

on the curriculum of the young princes. Don Carlos was educated in military history by the distinguished instructor and brigadier Don Vicente Maturana and received lessons in art from the court painter Antonio Carnicero. The curriculum was completed with lessons in modern and classical languages, horsemanship, dance, and court etiquette. Juan Arzadun's description of the princely education as a 'regime of the seminar' is influenced by the negative image that was posthumously painted of Ferdinand VII and his brother. There is no doubt, however, that the spiritual education of the princes received special attention. Catholicism was still seen as the most solid foundation sustaining the unity of Spain and its monarchy. The historical events that had shaped Spain, such as the *Reconquista*, the union of Aragon and Castille and the discovery of America could hardly be understood without a reference to religion and the Catholic Church. Don Carlos readily absorbed Catholic dogma through popular and historic catechisms, such as that written by Abbé Claude Fleury (1640-1723).

Don Carlos as a child, painted by Goya

His teachers instilled in him the idea that good government was based exclusively on the application of Catholic principles. While Ferdinand VII had received a similar upbringing he did not show the same religious fervour as his brother. Early nineteenth century sketches of Don Carlos's life are filled with attributions of a deep morality, evangelical charity and Christian rectitude. They describe him as a true man of virtue. At 11 years old the daily routine of Don Carlos involved mass, the praying of the rosary and confession. This deep-seated religiosity is reflected in his personal library. Antonio Manuel Moral Roncal, arguing that libraries reflect the ideological preoccupations of their owners, has shown that religious works dominated Don Carlos's book collection. Despite having a similar upbringing, Ferdinand's library shows more of an interest in history and geography. Religious teaching seems to have had a much deeper impact on Don Carlos than on his brother.



Nevertheless the two brothers were close and among other things shared their dislike of their parents' court favourite, Manuel Godoy. From an early stage the two princes were very close and remained so for most of their lives. Goya's family portrait has sometimes been interpreted as foreshadowing the brotherly conflict that erupted in the last three years of Ferdinand's reign. Looking at the portrait it is difficult to find these signs without applying the benefit of hindsight. Instead Don Carlos, in agreement with his religious principles, was developing an intense and unswerving loyalty to his older sibling, who to him was anointed by God to become king.



The family of Charles IV as painted by Goya. On the very left is Don Carlos, to his right and in front of him stands Ferdinand

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the family idyll had been severely disturbed by court rivalries which pitted Ferdinand against his parents and Godoy. The position Don Carlos took in this infighting is not entirely clear but it is believed that he sided with his older brother. However the dispute over the crown was ultimately settled from outside Spain. Napoleon Bonaparte made his brother Joseph the new king of Spain and banished the Bourbons into exile in France. Under the close supervision of Talleyrand in his Chateau at Valencay, the religious devotion of Don Carlos intensified further; the Catholic faith helped him to cope with feelings of displacement and the disgrace of exile.

He once more filled his private library at Valencay with catechisms, hagiographies of saints and other religious tracts.

It was only six years later that Don Carlos returned to Spain at his brother's side, now king of Spain after his father's abdication. The return of the king put an end to liberal hopes of reform as expressed in the 1812 Cadiz constitution. Instead Ferdinand VII aimed to restore the absolutist monarchy and its traditions with full force. The theocratic ideology of Don Carlos led him to support his brother fully, in particular in rolling back measures curbing the power of the Church. While Charles IV had followed the example of his father, Charles III, of delegating very little responsibility to his immediate family, Ferdinand VII allowed Don Carlos to be heavily involved in politics.



Although one major factor was certainly that Ferdinand had not produced an heir, one should not underestimate the bond of affection and mutual trust that existed between the two. Thus Don Carlos had a seat on the Council of State and even presided over it when his brother was absent. He was also in charge of the *Junta por la Reconquista de las Americas* whose task it was to organise the subjection of Spain's rebellious overseas territories.

Ferdinand VII, painted by Goya

The term *Reconquista* was traditionally associated with the expulsion of the Moors from Spain in the Middle Ages, which had guaranteed the predominance of Christianity on the Peninsula. The invocation of the *Reconquista* is not only a demonstration of the historical importance the Crown attached to the American territories but also of the religious significance of the colonial project. Don Carlos appears to have been a firm believer in Spain's sacred duty to rule over and uphold the Catholic religion in the Americas. Later on, when much of the overseas empire seemed irredeemably lost, Don Carlos took a special interest in the campaigns against Berber piracy. Stopping Muslims from capturing Spanish men and goods was to Don Carlos a natural extension of the principles that had motivated the expulsion of the Moors during the *Reconquista*.

The trust Ferdinand placed in Don Carlos was rewarded by the latter's complete devotion to his official responsibilities and to the monarch personally. As Prince of Asturias Don Carlos lived in the royal palace of Madrid and reported almost daily to the king. When Ferdinand was absent, Don Carlos kept his brother informed by writing him detailed letters with reports and suggestions. During the Liberal Triennium Don Carlos's loyalty was put to the test. Despite his revulsion at the liberal reforms and the anti-religious rhetoric of the government, there is no evidence that he swerved in his loyalty to his brother. According to some contemporary newspapers he would have had ample opportunity to further his own ambitions; as early as May 1821 there were reports of the first 'vivas' for Charles V. The radical *El Zurriago* even urged Ferdinand to rid himself of his brother's influence, while ultra-Catholic and royalist opinion was looking to Don Carlos in case Ferdinand's governments would continue on a course of liberal reform. As Antonio Pirala has put it "Don Carlos came to be seen by his partisans as one of the most complete princes of Christianity".

While this meant that intrigues were hatched against Ferdinand in support of his brother's ascension to the throne, evidence and the character of Don Carlos equally suggest that he never authorised these movements. After the absolute monarchy was re-instated, Ferdinand continued rewarding the loyalty of his brother. Don Carlos once again had a busy schedule, meeting ministers, ambassadors and generals, who thus acknowledged his influence at court. The concession of the honours of *Infantes* of Spain to the sons of Don Carlos, usually reserved for the sons of the king, are another demonstration of the close bond between the king and his brother's family. When the Supreme Junta of the Cavalry, which had a similar standing to the War Council, was re-established in 1829, Don Carlos was put at its head. The resulting daily contact with the military establishment allowed him to forge strong bonds with the high command and favoured his prestige among the armed forces. This would be an important factor in attracting leading generals to his cause after the death of his brother.

The area that mattered most to Don Carlos during his time as heir remained always the Church. As soon as he returned to Spain Don Carlos publicly demonstrated his pious devotion and traditional religiosity. As mentioned before his strong beliefs were reinforced by the experience of exile; his religious devotion was to come to the fore during his time as heir apparent.

Defence of the Sacred Rights D. Carlos V. de Bourbon by a Spanish nobleman, 1836

To him the Catholic faith was not only a system of moral values to be followed but also an ideological instrument in the fight against the advance of revolution and liberalism. His conservative Catholicism informed his beliefs on the nature of monarchy – he was always a firm believer in the divine right and providence of kingship. A constitution restricting the actions of the monarchy was hence completely antithetical to him. Furthermore Don Carlos was convinced that the destiny of the monarchy and the Catholic Church were closely linked. The two institutions should aid and support each other against the impending onslaught of liberal and atheistic thought. This conception of state-Church relations harked back to the times of Felipe II; his father and grandfathers had instead sought to limit the influence of the church in public affairs. Don Carlos was a fervent supporter of the ecclesiastical policies of the restoration of 1814, which abolished anti-clerical legislation, returned church property previously expropriated and re-established the Inquisition. While other areas, such as the military and the economy, did not experience a complete return to the status quo ante, the regime almost completely restored the Church to its old standing; a development Don Carlos could not have been happier with. However, after the Liberal Triennium he was pragmatic enough to realise that another full restoration of the privileges of the Church was not possible due to the current financial state of Spain and the unpopularity of the Inquisition. Throughout his time as heir Don Carlos maintained a particularly close relationship with the Jesuit order. Thanks to a letter asking for his brother's consent to his attendance we know that in 1816 he took part in

MANIFIESTO DEL DERECHO SAGRADO

CON QUE CINE

LA CORONA DE ESPAÑA

EL SEÑOR

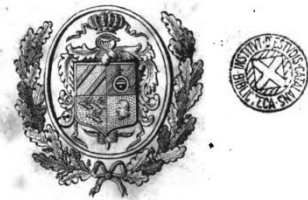
D. CARLOS V. DE BORBON

(QUE DIOS GUARDE),

POR

EL BARON DE JEFFES REALES,

DEL CONSEJO DE S. M.,
EN EL REAL Y SUPREMO DE CASTILLA.



DE REAL ORDEN:

SETIEMBRE M. DCCC. XXXVI.

the opening of a Jesuit college in Madrid. Later on he was involved in the re-establishment of the Order of San Ignacio and the building of a new Jesuit seminary. He frequently visited seminaries, presided over exams in Jesuit colleges and attended mass and religious celebrations, urging his older brother to do the same on his travels. His affinities for the Jesuits went so far that one provincial priest suggested investing him with the title of *Protector de la orden de Jesús*. The Jesuits were keen to nurture this bond with the royal family due to the opposition they often encountered from other ecclesiastical and secular authorities. Alonso Tejada has argued that they invested their hopes and ambitions primarily in Don Carlos, who seemed almost certain to succeed to the throne before the birth of Isabel II in 1830 (Ferdinand had remained childless in his previous three marriages). His proximity to the order is also exemplified in his choice of Mariano Puyol, a Jesuit priest, as teacher for his two eldest sons. The teacher who replaced him and the personal confessor of Don Carlos and his wife were also Jesuits.

His commitment to Catholicism was no mere window-dressing, as demonstrated by his private behaviour. It was said that Ferdinand had to urge his brother to give up on the celibate life that he had planned for, and marry Maria of Portugal. Once married he would, however, present himself inseparable from his wife. He was certainly no womaniser and did not keep any mistresses, as opposed to his brother and many previous and future Spanish kings. Don Carlos took the sacred commitment of Catholic matrimony very seriously. He furthermore made it his private mission to use his influence over his brother as best he could to ensure there was a harmonious relationship between monarchy and Church. In his private correspondence he urged his brother to attend religious ceremonies, visit convents and monasteries and pray in front of important relics.

Sketch of Don Carlos at the head of his troops during the Carlist War by an unknown artist



Even though some proposals had little chance of success Carlos used his influence to defend the Church: He supported the separation of the oath sworn by priests to the pope and that sworn to the king despite the opposition of his brother and his advisers to this measure. The proposal ultimately failed because there were strong forces advocating against it.

Don Carlos carefully avoided a head on confrontation over such issues; he was prudent enough to know that clashing with his brother and his advisers would affect his position and hence his ability to defend church interests at court. In addition, he used his family's private rents to build a discrete church and convent in Orihuela (Alicante) aimed at providing a haven for religious women who had been displaced by the Napoleonic wars and revolutionary expropriations.

The publication of the 1830 Pragmatic Sanction removed Salic law and allowed for Ferdinand's daughter Isabella to eventually succeed, thus replacing Don Carlos as heir to the throne. This was the end of the largely harmonious relationship between Ferdinand and his brother. While Don Carlos did not actively intrigue against his brother, supporters of his cause, in particular the clergy defended his rights against that of Isabel. Don Carlos did not take any immediate action but was sent away from court and later into Portuguese exile. After the death of his brother in 1833, Don Carlos proclaimed himself Carlos V, thus initiating what was to become the Carlist War. His opponents interpreted this as an expression of personal ambition and fundamental opposition to reform. However, Antonio Manuel Moral Roncal has argued that it was actually Don Carlos' religious beliefs that motivated his rebellion against Isabel and her supporters. Don Carlos based his claim to the throne on the belief that the right to rule was given to him by God and thus could not be revoked by the Cortes and the king's advisers. Once these questions got entangled with the political conflict between liberal reformers and conservative royalists they caused the perfect storm that led to the following bloody and destructive seven-year civil war. During this conflict Don Carlos sought to underline the connection between his cause and that of the Catholic Church. He invoked the *Dios de las batallas* in his military proclamations and declared the *Virgen de los Dolores* to be a *Generalísima* of his armies. While he did not re-institute the Inquisition in the territories he controlled, he did pursue the closer connection between Church and state that he desired so much.

Don Carlos' respect for the Church never diminished and ultimately even played a decisive role in his decision to abdicate. He was unwilling to give up his right to the throne after he had been militarily defeated, holding on to the belief that the crown of Spain was his divine right. However, he continued to solicit the advice of the Pope and it was only when Gregory XVI recommended he relinquish his claim that he abdicated in favour of his son in May 1845.

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“Prince Alfred’s Romance”: Which crown will he choose?

Miriam Schneider

On January 24 1863, the illustrated periodical “Once a week”, one of the leading magazines of its kind, published a commentary on recent political discussions concerning Queen Victoria’s second son, Prince Alfred (1844-1900). “**Prince Alfred’s Romance**” dealt with the Prince’s proposed election to the vacant throne of the troubled Kingdom of Greece. Signed “From the mountain”, the essay came from the pen of the famous professional writer and social thinker **Harriet Martineau** (1802-1876). With its idiosyncratic blend of critical, political judgment and feminine, domestic musings it lent a very peculiar touch to the theme of royal princehood.



“Our Sailor Prince”, A portrait of Prince Alfred in The London Journal, 16 April 1864.

Ever since the inglorious deposition of King Otto I in October 1862, the question who would succeed that unfortunate monarch on the **Greek throne** had been discussed with great ardour in Britain – not least since it was likely to recalibrate the European balance of powers in the intractable Eastern Question. But while Prince Alfred, the darling candidate of the Greeks, had been ruled out by the logics of international power politics, Martineau decided to ponder on his own “**feelings and sayings**”. She refused to believe in “a mere tame obedience to other people’s decisions”, longing instead “to know how the youth himself felt when a crown was offered him [...] and he was not allowed to accept” it. After all, Prince Alfred was “eighteen – [...] at the very age of enthusiasm and confidence, when all things seem possible to an heroic spirit.” He must have felt the romance attached to the prospect of kingship. In her short piece, Martineau set forth to uncover the “**struggle at heart**” she suspected to have taken place in the winter of 1862-1863.

Harriet Martineau in her later years

In hindsight, it is safe to say that Prince Alfred never had the slightest inclination to become King of Greece. He was second-in-line to the English throne, loved his life as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, and had before him the prospect of inheriting the small, but idyllic duchy of his childless German uncle. But, nevertheless, it might be worthwhile to follow Martineau's method of "personal talk" which allows us to follow closely the junctures in the biography of one single prince, and to scrutinize the intricacies of



royal life-decision-making. As we shall see, the years 1863-1865 opened a 'window of opportunities' to Prince Alfred, the **potential heir to three thrones**, and there was indeed a "struggle at heart" going on at the time – though not the one Martineau imagined.

The many prospects of a minor Prince

In January 1863, Prince Alfred was in the comfortable position of being spoilt for choice.

Britain As Queen Victoria's second son, he enjoyed a life comparatively far off from the limelight surrounding his elder brother. But as long as the recently married Albert Edward, Prince of Wales remained childless, Alfred occupied the linchpin role of a **second-in-line**. "[...] there are only two eyes between him and the throne", his father Prince Albert had remarked in 1857. If his mum and brother should die prematurely – sadly not an uncommon possibility – he would be King.

Coburg Prince Alfred's parents had successfully used the argument that he was a much-needed reserve in order to wrench their son from the influence of his **infamous uncle**, Prince Albert's elder brother, Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. This iridescent, licentious German Pumpernickel Prince had been

unable to produce legitimate offspring, which meant that his young nephew was likely (and from 1852 officially designated) to inherit his 700-and-something-square-mile patch of a duchy. Prince Albert and Queen Victoria were enthusiastic about the prospect of yet another child's eventual return to the Prince Consort's beloved homeland Germany. As Martineau shrewdly observed, by marrying their two eldest daughters to German princes, they had already inaugurated a dynastic programme aiming at "an English growth of German liberties and [... a] strengthening intimacy between the peoples". But they were determined to keep their son away from Duke Ernst's immoral lifestyle.

Navy

The surest way of doing so was by giving in to the boy's "spontaneous wish" (Prince Albert) and educating him in the Royal Navy – no ship having ever entered the mountainous region called "Franconian Switzerland" where Coburg was situated. This practical decision also had the welcome side-effect of turning Prince Alfred into Britain's popular first modern "**Sailor Prince**". He had entered the prestigious service in 1858 and, after a period of intense training in line with current middle-class ideals, was preparing for his lieutenant's examination in January 1863. His dedication to "real work of head and hands" and his "subjection to professional discipline" (Martineau) had endeared him to the sea-loving English nation.



DIOGENES RESUMES HIS SEARCH FOR AN HONEST MAN—1862.

„Diogenes resumes his search for an honest man“, Cartoon in *Punch* or the *London Charivari*, 20 December 1862

Greece The Greek people had likewise fallen for Prince Alfred's middy's uniform and simple dignity, when he had visited Greece and the British protectorate of the Ionian Islands on one of his many cruises in 1859. It was only natural, therefore, that they should revert to his person, when, in 1862, after revolting against the unpopular regime of their previous King, they were looking for a decent successor. A veritable "**Alfred movement**" swept the country, equating the "Sailor Prince" with the liberal protection of British super power and – dreaming allowed – also with the generous gift of further (Ionian) territory to an expansion-minded youngster kingdom.

In their exuberance of feelings, the Greek people, in Greece's first modern referendum, elected the unsuspecting Prince as their sovereign. It remained for the diplomats of the various great powers involved to re-negotiate the tricky candidature. While Harriet Martineau mused about Prince Alfred's feelings – he might see in his election the "noble task" of "retrieving a kingdom" by "good government" – the youth was probably never involved in the discussions. His mother's simple reaction that it **could "never be"** (15 November 1862) "on family and political grounds" (25 November) decided the matter, even if the British government might have been willing to negotiate.

By "family" she meant herself and her unwillingness to expose her dynasty to the deathtrap that was Greece. And by "political grounds" she referred to the terms of the 1832 London Protocol, which excluded the reigning families of Britain, Russia and France from providing the King of Greece because they were all compromised by their respective nations' interests in the region. But although Prince Alfred got out of the Greek election unscathed, another conflict soon arose in its wake, which displayed all the elements of Martineau's youthful romance and which, in fact, reads like a modern coming-of-age story.

The 'real' Struggle at Heart

Although he was spoilt for choice, Prince Alfred might have felt trapped in his prospects as the year 1863 progressed.

Greece or Coburg Once the Greek throne had been rejected in his name, it was offered to various other minor princes. Among them was his very own uncle, Duke Ernst, who appeared to be the next best choice given that no son of Queen Victoria's was available. For a few days, it seemed that the adventurous Duke might take on the challenge, and Victoria became overexcited with the prospect of Alfred being placed **"at once on the Ducal throne [...]"** in his blessed father's Dearly loved Home – able to do much good, to Germany, to Europe & England, possibly to become a great Prince, & the father of more" (2 January 1863).



Ernst II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha

Her unsuspecting son, stationed in the Mediterranean, was telegraphed immediately and must have felt shocked, since he soon developed a fever which kept him from taking his lieutenant's examination. As it turned out, Duke Ernst's conditions were untenable (he wanted to remain Duke of Coburg and install a regency in Greece). But even though the storm passed, both he and Prince Alfred remained alert to the uncomfortable necessity of making arrangements for the future.

Britain or Coburg In his memoirs, Duke Ernst outlined how the Greek intermezzo awakened in him the determination to settle his inheritance. With the eighteenth birthday of his heir looming large, he wanted Queen Victoria to deliver on her promise that Prince Alfred would end his "maritime project" and fully commit to his

Coburg destiny once he had come of age. He bombarded her with letters detailing the **proper education of a future German prince**. A veritable war of words ensued, in which Queen Victoria and her advisors proved masters in disguising the fact that they were winning all across the board. Duke Ernst wanted his nephew to begin his studies at a German university – it was determined that he went to Edinburgh first to accommodate British sensibilities. Ernst preferred his local university of Jena – Prince Alfred ended up in Bonn in the Prussian Rhineland close to his sisters... The Duke's wish that his nephew end his naval career, finally, had no success whatsoever. And this time, it was Alfred himself who suddenly spoke up.

Coburg or the Navy The Prince was comfortably settled in Edinburgh, attending lectures on natural science and enjoying life in the Scottish countryside, when, all of a sudden, he threatened to bring down the carefully erected edifice of plans that had been built for his future. On the 1st of February 1864, Queen Victoria had to inform her brother-in-law that her son held the conviction that he was “not cut out for the Coburg position”, that he “wished to stay in the navy” and that he “did not want to make use of his right of succession”^[ii]. His British and his German destiny had finally conflicted. And while Harriet Martineau, one year previously, had surmised that Prince Alfred might have loved to accept the Greek crown, it now turned out that he would rather have chosen **no crown at all**.



„Our Sailor Prince“, A portrait of Prince Alfred in the magazine *Kind words*, 1869

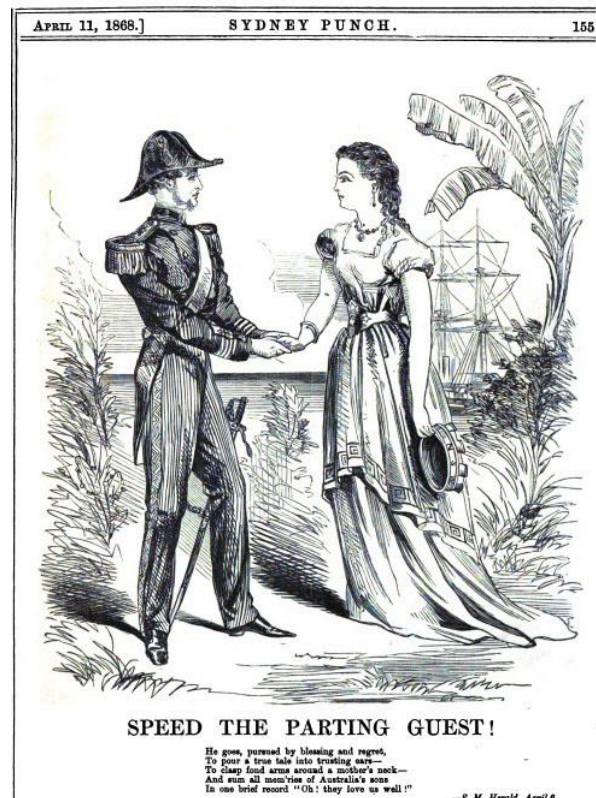
As Queen Victoria suggested, his change of heart was probably due to his “being together with English seamen”. His service in the navy had made him “one-sidedly English”^[iii] and, as the sage King Leopold of the Belgians added, “in England you have many things which Germany in particular

lacks; if a young man is ultra-English he will feel comparatively uncomfortable in Germany”^[11] (13 February). Prince Alfred argued along similar lines telling his uncle that he could not satisfactorily “undertake a task in which my whole heart and mind were not engaged and which I did not feel able to do well” (16 March). He dreaded the thought of having to end his hitherto adventurous life to live in a small German provincial town and hoped for an escape route whilst there was still time.

**Coburg
or
Canada**

That a Dukedom in the middle of Germany represented a steep fall for a British “Sailor Prince” had also been Martineau’s verdict. “He, who is every inch a sailor now, is to be the sovereign of a country which has never smelt the sea”, she remarked in 1863. And she had added that following the end of the promising ‘New Era’ in Prussia **the signs of German politics** had become increasingly dreary for people such as the Queen’s liberal-minded sons and daughters. Reforms ushered in by King William I of Prussia, the father-in-law of the Queen’s eldest daughter, had come to a standstill in 1862, and the ensuing constitutional conflict had all but nullified the political position of the Crown Princely couple. Why send another treasured royal child to a small duchy likely to be engulfed by what seemed to be a Prussian return to autocracy? Very much in keeping with Prince Alfred’s own feelings, Martineau suggested instead that his “chief ambition” should be his professional advancement and that as a British naval officer he could “attain to higher personal dignity” than in any other capacity.

**Prince Alfred and the personified
Australia, Sydney Punch, 11 April
1868**



If he needed a “noble enterprise as a fit aim and occupation for princes”, she added, it need not be the worship of Orientals or the dullness of German court life – but he could “go out [...] to our possessions on the Pacific, and lay, broad and deep, the foundations of a new England in Vancouver Island and British Columbia!”

Instead of the three crowns Prince Alfred had been likely to inherit at different stages, Martineau suggested the creation of a fourth one, the **Crown of Canada**. Her pride in the British Navy reflected the self-evident maritime patriotism of the mid-Victorian age; and her idea to strengthen the bonds between England and the settler colonies by sending Queen Victoria’s sons out there presaged the federalist programmes of the 1870s “Greater Britain” movement. In early 1864, her adventurous vision might well have appealed to Prince Alfred, who was desperate to live a life to his own liking.

How the story ended

But the Prince’s real prospects were neither as grand nor as open as Martineau liked to paint them in 1863. In fact, the window of opportunities closed as fast as it had opened, and by the end of 1865, his alternative life choices had gone.

Greece As outlined above, the first window to be closed was the one with **the Greek view**. After having been advertised to an embarrassing number of princelings, the throne of Greece was bartered away to an inexperienced younger Prince of Denmark in March 1863. King George I, as he was henceforth called, was full of the sort of romantic dreams Harriet Martineau had envisaged for Prince Alfred. But his main advantages were actually his close relationship with the Prince of Wales and the British gift of the Ionian Islands. His success would be measured by his ability to win European support for further Greek expansion.

Navy The second window closed in August 1865. After his big confession – and considering the success of the public persona “Sailor Prince” – Alfred was granted his wish to stay in the Royal Navy. But, although there were some vague plans for a transfer to his younger brother, he eventually also **had to**

accept his Coburg destiny. Dynastic success trumped personal self-determination. Following a two-track education in Britain and Germany, the Prince was invested as Hereditary Duke of Saxe-Coburg on his 21st birthday. Then he returned to the naval service, where he was allowed to remain until the death of his uncle – a lucky reprieve of 28 years.

Canada In his capacity as a Royal Navy officer, he would travel the British Empire far and wide. But although he was considered as a candidate for many a (real or imagined) crown or governorship, he **never became King of Canada** – nor indeed Scotland, Ireland, Australia, or India. This window had never really been open.

Britain Since the Prince of Wales, soon after his wedding in 1863, began to produce a bunch of sons and daughters, of whom almost all survived into adulthood and produced children of their own, Prince Alfred was also **no longer needed as a "spare heir" for the British crown.** Thus, a final window closed. Increasingly, the duchy of Coburg came to be considered as "a dignified mode of escape from an unsatisfactory situation" (Saturday Review, 19 August 1865) which saw Queen Victoria's useless younger sons floundering about in the financial backwaters of her civil list. Britain's infatuation with her "Sailor Prince" ended with the annual allowances he received upon his peerage and marriage, in 1866 and 1874, respectively. No amount of naval service, welfare work or love for his country could make up for the waste of money.

The town of Coburg, from the article „The Coburgers and the English“, English Illustrated Magazine, October 1893



Coburg In August 1893, Prince Alfred's dynastic fate finally caught up with him. Barely missed by his English countrymen, and tepidly welcomed by his German subjects, he followed the coffin of his uncle to the **dull idyll of Coburg**. He died there, only seven years later, from the consequences of excessive alcohol consumption and a licentious lifestyle.

37 years before, it had pleased Harriet Martineau to convey to her comfortable British middle-class audience the impression that she had found a peep-hole into the thoughts and feelings of a then beloved prince of the royal family. Her sentimental Victorian tastes, not far removed from contemporary personal-interest formats, created a "**romantic story**" of Oriental crowns and youthful enthusiasm, which gained in appeal because "in his case, the thing is true". Shrewd political observations, self-confident projections of British naval might, and optimistic plans for imperial federalism rounded off a perfect picture. But whether there was actually much romance in Prince Alfred's story is another matter. If there was any romance at all, he probably found it not in the shape of a crown, but in his life out at sea.

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For quotes from Queen Victoria's journals, confer:

<http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org/home.do>

[i] „Er glaube nicht, dass er sich je in Deutschland wohl fühlen werde; er sei überzeugt, daß er für die Koburger Stellung nicht gemacht sei; er wünsche in der Marine zu bleiben und halte es darum für unrecht mich nicht auf die Möglichkeit vorzubereiten, daß er geneigt sein dürfte von seinem Erbrecht auf Koburg keinen Gebrauch zu machen!“

[ii] „Der Seedienst hat ihn sicherlich bei aller seiner Liebe zu Deutschland & zu Koburg im besonderen, einseitig Englisch gemacht.“

[iii] „England hat gar vieles was zumal in Deutschland fehlt, und ist ein junger Mensch ein Ultra Engländer so fühlt er sich in Deutschland verhältnissweise *uncomfortable*.“

Ernst of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha: The Importance of being Albert's Brother

Charles A. M. Jones

"I was to separate from my brother, and the earnest duties of life pointed out to each of us his particular path".

This excerpt from Ernst's *Memoirs*, describing the first time that he and Albert were separated after completing their University studies in 1838, illustrates the expectations of the duty required of royal progeny. Both young men were to be groomed for high office. What is striking about the preparation the brothers completed, however, was the difference in emphasis. Ernst, as the heir apparent to the duchy of Saxe-Coburg, was not the main focus of the academic curriculum. His brother Albert, on the other hand, a viable prospect for the role of consort of the monarch of a powerful nation, was. To prepare for Albert's unique role, an innovative programme of study had been carefully crafted. In essence, the training Ernst received was a direct result of Albert's specific anticipated path.



Ernst II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha in hunting costume c.1856 by Richard Lauchert

Ernst August Karl Johann Leopold Alexander Eduard was born in the gothic surroundings of Schloss Ehrenburg on 21 June 1818. He was the first son and heir apparent of Ernst III Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld and Princess Louise of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg. His christening on 24 June at the church of St Moritz was celebrated with great ceremony, even receiving 12,455 florins from the people of Coburg-Saalfeld as a baptismal gift.

The birth of the young prince was closely followed by the arrival of his brother Albert on 26 August 1819. The two brothers would prove to be inseparable and were reared essentially as twins.

In 1824, when Ernst was six years old, he would experience the loss of a loved one for the first time, not to an early grave but to a family scandal. His mother, Louise, who was still a young woman and ignored by her philandering husband, was suspected of having had an affair of her own. In a revealing act of hypocrisy and cruelty, Duke Ernst publically banished his wife. Young Ernst was never to see her again. Infidelity was not unusual for the Royal House. Ernst himself had two illegitimate children. But, the mere rumour that his young wife was having an illicit affair was enough cause to sever the relationship. By 1825 he had formally divorced her. As a consequence of the regional political situation and the dissolution of the marriage, in 1826 Ernst became Ernst I of the newly created duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

In his memoirs, Ernst II skims over this clearly painful period, noting only that he was saddened to lose his mother. With regard to the relationship with his father, he paints an idealised picture. The father is portrayed as an educator and mentor, an object of both idolization and fear. The reality was starker: put simply, he was seldom around and when he was, he was a rigid disciplinarian who demanded manly behaviour from his young sons.

Ernst's primary education began when he was scarcely five years old. He and Albert were removed from the nursery and their nanny. They were placed in the sole charge of Johann Christoph Florschütz. Florschütz, lovingly called 'the Rath', due to his official capacity as a Coburg councillor (GR "Hofrath"), was an experienced tutor with a liberal mindset. Under Florschütz, the princes were provided an education that was, in Ernst's words, "then quite uncommon in Germany". In addition to the usual fare of classics, art, and music, he was introduced to the natural sciences and history. Rather than learning Greek, as was customary at the time, a focus of their study was in modern languages. They also received additional instruction in religion and church history in preparation for their confirmations.

One of Ernst's first recollections of international events was his visit to his uncle Leopold, the recently elected King of the Belgians, in July 1832. This trip provided him with a personal collection with a cosmopolitan and liberal court. Liberalism was modeled by the new dynastic house and the revolutionary origins of the Belgian crown. This led to the Coburg family acquiring a dubious image amongst the more conservative German states. Ernst related that this perception resulted in an ostracism that deeply influenced him. It was around this period that Leopold and his private secretary/advisor Baron Christian Friedrich von Stockmar began to consider Albert's and, in consequence, Ernst's future paths.



Engraving of Ernst and Albert c.1835 by Carl Mayer / Royal Collection Trust

In May of 1836 Ernst and his father accompanied Albert to England for his first meeting with Princess Victoria. Albert's health was tested by the demanding variety of entertainments provided. Ernst, being the more social and robust of the two, turned his attentions to what London had to offer. The visit, which lasted four weeks, was not the resounding success that had been hoped for. Albert, though unquestionably bright, was lacking in social graces and was often ill during the visit. Despite these youthful deficits, he did manage to leave a good impression on the young princess. As for Ernst, he preferred the visit to Paris on the return trip to Brussels. In addition to the extravagance of the Orleans' court, his father introduced Ernst, much to his brother's disgust, to the city's more sordid delights.

It was decided by Leopold and Stockmar that it would benefit both princes immensely to spend the ten months before they were to begin university experiencing Brussels, rather than a return to Coburg. During the brothers' stay, Leopold spared no expense to further his nephews' education. Instruction for French and English was provided by Dr.

Pierre Bergeron, Professor of rhetoric at the University of Brussels and the poet Dr Henry Drury. Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, Secretary of the English legation was brought in for history and foreign affairs. For lessons on government administration, Leopold had his Cabinet Secretary enlighten the eager princes. Adolph Quetelet, the most prominent of their tutors, was engaged to instruct them in mathematics and statistics. Quetelet also introduced the young princes to prominent men living in Brussels.

A house was provided for the princes' use and they were free to entertain the expansive sea of scientists, intellectuals, and politicians that flooded the liberal environment of Belgium's capital. The young princes were exposed to the inner workings of a constitutional government and were not shielded from public affairs. One of Ernst's fonder memories of this period involved their freedom to visit and converse with exiled Italian nationalists.

In addition to academic pursuits, Ernst was also provided with the military training befitting his station. Even in this area Leopold had been careful to ensure high quality instruction, choosing military writer Col. Charles Guillaume Bormann as the tutor in charge. It also worked to the educational advantage of the two princes that – as a result of the Dutch King's refusal to accept Belgium as an independent state – the Belgians and Dutch were still engaged in a cold war. This state of affairs allowed the princes to learn military skills in a fully operational training environment. Ernst, acting as General Staff Officer, was assigned Colonel Prodzinsky as a personal instructor.

Medal commemorating the confirmation of Princes Ernst and Albert of Saxe Coburg, 12 April 1835

On 3 May 1837, Ernst began his studies at the University of Bonn. The choice of Bonn was made after much careful deliberation between Leopold and Stockmar. Munich was seen as too 'formal and priggish'; Berlin was too conservative; Jena and Göttingen were also



ruled out. Bonn, a moderate and newer university, with an already excellent reputation for scholarship, was chosen as a good compromise. During his three semesters there, the young prince pursued studies, in addition to other subjects, in Jurisprudence and History. Though they were matriculated as nobles, the brothers made a great effort to fraternize with their fellow students. They hosted dinners in their semi-detached house and attended public lectures. Notes from these, were in Ernst's words, "taken down in our beloved notebooks and gone over with the greatest conscientiousness". In addition to academia he pursued athletics, notably fencing. During shared holidays, Ernst and Albert broadened their education with trips to northern Italy and the Swiss cantons.

When the brothers' time at Bonn came to an end, Albert was sent on another tour of Italy. Ernst entered the Saxon military service at Dresden as a captain in the King's regiment of Mounted Guards, after being denied a similar position in the Austrian service. While at the Saxon Court, Ernst was able to carry on his education and continued to live, with great pleasure, "amidst a stream of art and literature". He also became well acquainted with the state's administration and many of its elements. These were later integrated into his own government. Though he would remain in residence at Dresden until 1842, Ernst made many extended excursions during this period including his brother's wedding and a tour of Spain and Portugal.

On 10 Feb 1840, he attended Albert's wedding and was able to witness first-hand the beginnings of Albert and Victoria's relationship. Ernst remained in England for another three months occupying himself with learning the peculiarities of English society. He then availed himself of an opportunity to visit relatives in Portugal and Spain. During his travels, he kept his brother abreast of the political conditions in both countries. In Spain, he witnessed firsthand the insurrection at Barcelona of General Espartero against the regency of Queen Maria Christina in June 1840. He then returned to Dresden after a short trip to Coburg. These travels afforded Ernst, and to an extent other princes, an opportunity for first-hand exposure to international politics and an array of different cultures. In Ernst's case, these proved especially instructive for he was provided with working examples of governance that he would later apply during his reign.

In January 1842 Ernst went to Karlsruhe to seek the hand of Princess Alexandrine of Baden, Albert's candidate. In one of the most blunt proposals ever uttered, Ernst declared,

'Either tell me that you consent, and then I shall stay and we will learn to know one another better, or simply say one word which your parents perhaps kept back out of anxiety and consideration for me. I shall in that case leave this house with the firm conviction that no one else will ever know anything of what has taken place to-day.'

The Princess was obviously swept off her feet for she agreed to the marriage. It took place on 3 May 1842, with Ernst I and the Prince of Leiningen as the only family members present. After a brief stay at their new residence Schloss Callenberg, a family estate on the outskirts of Coburg, the royal couple honeymooned in Brussels and London.

**Watercolour Miniature on
ivory c. 1831-32 by
Sebastian Eckardt / Royal
Collection Trust**



Upon Ernst's return from London, his father embarked on a serious course of instruction designed to equip his successor with a firm grounding in the affairs of government. He was given a position in the Ministry, with an active role in meetings and a substantial workload. Though there were disagreements between father and son on administrative questions, there were not, according to Ernst, any significant quarrels. In April of 1843, he acted as his father's representative at the wedding of his cousin Augustus and Princess Clementine in Paris. In addition to his duties as heir, he continued his service with the Saxon army, earning the rank of Major-General shortly

before his marriage. Unexpectedly, on 29 January 1844, Ernst I died, making twenty-six year old Ernst the new duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

Over the years, the brothers who had been inseparable in their youth did come to disagree with one another on many political and familial issues. Ernst became more conservative in his maturity, supporting plans of actions directly opposed towards Albert's beliefs. This however, did not destroy the close sentimental relationship they shared. Ernst would outlive his younger brother by three decades. On recalling the morning he received the news of Albert's death he stated "Just as, in early years, I had lost my father and my mother, so was I now, a childless man, destined to see my only brother die in the prime of his life". In the aftermath of Albert's death, Ernst's relations with the British royal family markedly declined. Despite this breach and his increasingly conservative anti-English views, he accepted his brother's second son Alfred as his heir. On 22 August 1893, Ernst died.

Suggested further reading:

Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Ernst von, *Memoirs of Ernst II, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha* (London: Remington & Co., Publishers 1888)

Grey, Lt. Gen. C., *The Early Years of His Royal Highness The Prince Consort. Compiled Under the Direction of Her Majesty The Queen* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1867)

Martin, Theodore, *Life of the Prince Consort*. Vol. 1-5 (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1876)

Weintraub, Stanley, *Uncrowned King: The Life of Prince Albert* (London: The Free Press, 1997)