

**Images of Royalty  
in the Nineteenth  
and Twentieth  
Centuries.**

**Tradition  
and Modernity  
in Italy, Portugal  
and Spain**

**Pierangelo Gentile  
Leonardo Mineo  
Miguel Metelo de Seixas  
Isabel Corrêa da Silva  
(eds.)**



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This volume emerges from an international seminar held at the Department of Historical Studies of the University of Turin on 2-4 October 2019, which brought together scholars from various academic and cultural institutions including, aside from the host department, the School of Social Sciences and Humanities of the NOVA University of Lisbon, the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon, the Complutense University of Madrid, and the Centre for Studies on the Royal Savoy Residences in Reggia di Venaria Reale, Piedmont. It combines the outcomes of this meeting with other contributions of scientific relevance to the subject.

The editors' aim has been to participate in the contemporary historical debate on monarchy, a topic of research that has accelerated markedly in recent years, as attested by the increase in academic colloquiums dedicated to it, such as the conference held in Cambridge in January 2019 under the title *Monarchy and Modernity Since 1500*, or the annual *Kings and Queens Conferences* that have been promoted by the Royal Studies Network since 2012. Hundreds of academics, researchers and enthusiasts from all over the world have assembled at these events to discuss the essence

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of monarchy and its protagonists, from the modern era right up to the present day, on a national and global level.

The discussions held in 2019 in Turin concentrated deliberately and fundamentally on a clearly defined space and timeframe. Along with the conviction that the modern era was an ideal studio for the development of classical models<sup>1</sup>, there persists a belief in the theoretical and objective potential of an interpretation of the contemporary era focused on the question of monarchy. This follows not only from the suggestions shared by Arno Mayer<sup>2</sup> over forty years ago, but also from the new methodological possibilities developed in the historical research on monarchy from the modern era<sup>3</sup>.

There is no need to enter into the debate around «secularized theological concepts»<sup>4</sup> to recognise that the civilising process that brought with it the gradual diminution of the theological body of kings also entailed the invention of new mechanisms with which to legitimise power. Among these were persuasion and the aesthetic and cognitive dimensions of Hobbes's theory of political representation, matters that approach theology only through their poetic or emotional quality, but which are part of a disenchanted, already deeply rationalised world. As a result, the political theory and history of the modern state have ceased to speak of "relics" or "political theology" and instead tended to focus on the "fabrication of", "propaganda", "invention of" ... all expressions which presuppose a cognitive framework based on reason, in keeping with ideas exempt from metaphysi-

1. N. Elias, *Die höfische Gesellschaft*, Luchterhand, Berlin 1969; P. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, Yale University Press, London 1992; J. Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles. The Courts of Europe's Rivals, 1550-1780*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003.

2. A. J. Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime. Europe to the Great War*, Pantheon Books, New York 1981.

3. Recent inspiring examples of this discussion are E. Woodacre, L.H.S. Dean, C. Jones, Z. Rohr, R. Martin (eds.), *The Routledge History of Monarchy*, Routledge, New York 2019; C. Verri (ed.), *Monarchie nell'Europa dell'Ottocento. Istituzioni, culture, conflitti*, «Annali della Fondazione Ugo La Malfa. Storia e politica», XXXIII (2018); C. Pinto, P. Rújula Lopez (eds.), *La monarchia dopo la rivoluzione. Europa e America Latina tra restaurazione borbonica e guerre civili (1814-1867)*, «Memoria e ricerca», 62 (2019), no. 3; G. Guazzaloca (ed.) *Sovrani a metà. Monarchia e legittimazione in Europa tra Otto e Novecento*, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli 2009; M. Meriggi, *The Nineteenth Century: A Monarchical Century?*, «Contemporanea» 24 (2021), no. 5, 553-564.

4. C. Schmitt, *Political theology II: the myth of the closure of any political theology*, translated and introduced by M. Hoelzl and G. Ward, Polity Press, Cambridge 2008.

cal sentiments such as faith, idolatry, veneration or belief. However, political theorists and historians also presuppose an intentionality on the part of political actors clearly linked with theories of domination. The ritual and symbolic dimension of the modern state is now understood exclusively from this viewpoint, above all as a calculated mechanism for the legitimisation and exercise of power. From this point of view, the second body of the king is, in the final analysis, a mere extension of the Leviathan.

More than thirty-five years ago, when Cannadine<sup>5</sup> denounced the lack of studies on the rituals and images of the English monarchy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this scenario was very similar to those of other European nations. Fortunately, though, this is no longer the case. Several studies on the “theatre of power” and images of royalty in the liberal monarchies of the nineteenth century, or on the requirements of performance and representation of constitutional kings, have emerged in the last two decades. The somewhat mixed nature of the monarchical-constitutional model which reconciles traditional and modern conceptions of the theory of representation, as well as the role of the monarchical institution in the nationalisation processes of European states throughout the nineteenth century, have been the subject of much reflection in last decades. This has been particularly so in the cases of Victorian England<sup>6</sup>, Germany under Wilhelm II<sup>7</sup>, France during the Restoration, the July Monarchy and the Second Empire<sup>8</sup>, Spain in the reign of Isabel II<sup>9</sup>, Italy during the *Risorgimento*

5. D. Cannadine, *The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition'*, in E. Hobsbawm, T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1984, pp. 101-165

6. M. Homans, *Royal Representations: Queen Victoria and British Culture, 1837-1876*. Chicago University Press, Chicago 1998.

7. J. C. G. Röhl, *The Kaiser and his Court: Wilhelm II and the Government of Germany*, Cambridge Uni. Press, Cambridge 1994.

8. C. and E. Saminadayar-Perrin (dir). *Imaginaire et représentation des entrées royales au XIX siècles: une sémiologie du pouvoir politique*. Press universitaires de Saint-Étienne, Saint-Étienne 2006. M. Truesdell, *Spectacular Politics: Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte and the Fête Impériale, 1849-1870*, Oxford University Press Oxford, Oxford 1997; S. Kroen, *Politics and Theater. The Crisis of Legitimacy in Restoration France, 1815-1830*, University of California Press, Berkeley 2000.

9. R. A. Gutiérrez Lloret, *Isabel II, de símbolo de la libertad a deshonra de España*, in E. La Parra López (eds.), *La imagen del poder. Reyes y regentes en la España del siglo XIX*, Síntesis, Madrid 2011, pp. 221-282.

and in the reigns of Victor Emmanuel II and Umberto I<sup>10</sup>, and Portugal under the constitutional monarchy<sup>11</sup>.

This scholarship has paid particular attention to the articulation between the elective legitimacy of national representation and the representative function of the king in the context of the shared sovereignty of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century constitutional monarchies. This is one of the main pathways that we have endeavoured to follow in the *Images of Royalty* conference we held in Turin and now in this book. Another axis is the more literal aspect of the visual construction of monarchy, in other words the visual and symbolic resources used by nineteenth-century monarchies for the purposes of self-representation and political communication.

Just as we have had no reservations on our chosen time period, we have also remained convinced about the validity of the geographical area of study that we have focused on: Italy, Portugal and Spain are places that not only share dynastic and historical ties but have also had similar political experiences, such as the wave of liberal revolutions in the 1820s, or the constitutional endeavours and challenges of the long nineteenth century (and beyond).<sup>12</sup>

Without confining the matter within any conceptual or nationalistic boundaries, the authors of this volume have tried to illuminate the historiographical question from different (and in many respects innovative) points of view. In

10. U. Levra, *Fare gli italiani. Memoria e celebrazione del Risorgimento*, Comitato di Torino dell'Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento italiano, Torino 1992; F. Mazzonis (ed.), *La monarchia italiana. Problematiche ed esemplificazioni*. «Cheiron», no. 24-25 (1996); Id., *La Monarchia e il Risorgimento*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2003; C. M. Fiorentino, *La corte dei Savoia (1849-1900)*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2008; C. Brice, *Monarchie et identité nationale en Italie (1861-1900)*, EHESS, Paris 2010; P. Gentile, *Lombra del re. Vittorio Emanuele II e le politiche di corte*, Comitato di Torino dell'Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano-Carocci, Turin-Rome 2011; A. Viarengo, *Vittorio Emanuele II*, Salerno, Rome 2017; S. Ghisotti, A. Merlotti (eds.), *Dalle regge d'Italia. Tesori e simboli della regalità sabauda*, Sagep, Genova 2017.

11. I. Corrêa da Silva, M. Metelo de Seixas, *Uncrowned kings: rituals and ritual objects in eighteenth – nineteenth century Portuguese royal acclamation ceremonies*, «European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire», 28 (2021), pp. 28-49.

12. J. Späth, *Revolution in Europa 1820-23. Verfassung und Verfassungskultur in den Königreichen Spanien, beider Sizilien und Sardinien-Piemont*, shVerlag Köln 2012; M. Isabella, K. Zanou (eds.), *Mediterranean Diasporas. Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, Bloomsbury, London 2016; R. De Lorenzo, R. A. Gutiérrez Lloret (eds.) *Las monarquías de la Europa meridional ante el desafío de la modernidad*, PUZ, Zaragoza 2020.

the first section the keys of interpretation have been those of roles and gender: stories about queens, but also their princely consorts, and the desperate search for a role in the world (San Narciso chapter *The Male Consort in Dispute. Ambiguities and Political Debate in the Iberian Context [1830-40]*); the private vices and public virtues of royal couples in light of issues of gender, honour, sexuality and emotions (Corrêa da Silva, *The Image of Pedro V and Stephanie of Portugal Between History, Legend and Gender*, and Sánchez, *National Honour and Monarchy in 19th Century Spain*); experiences and representations of the religious sphere and female royalty (Martínez Vilches, *The Spanish Monarchy in the Presence of God: Religious Advocations in the Court of Isabella II [1833-1868]*; Cozzo, *Maria Clotilde of Savoy-Bonaparte [1843-1911]: Hagiographic Connotations in the Italian Monarchy Between the 19th and 20th Centuries* and Lopes, *New Perspectives on the Political Role of Maria Pia of Savoy, Queen of Portugal [1862-1910]*); political and institutional interpretations of unresolved relations between sovereigns and prime ministers (Trapasso, *Monarchy and Fascism: Beyond Diarchy*).

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In the second part, the methodological partitions have instead fallen between place, heritage and representation: royal mythology bent to the ideological needs of the dynasty (Cavicchioli, *The Myth and Representation of Emmanuel Philibert in the Dynastic-National Project of Charles Albert*); books and documents as a reflection of the political and cultural power of kings (Panzanelli Fratoni, *A Library for the Crown. Charles Albert of Savoy and the Foundation of the Biblioteca Reale of Turin* and Mineo, *Dynastic Caskets, Arsenal of Authority, Laboratories of History: Royal Court Archives in Sabaudian Nineteenth-Century*); the use of coats of arms and decorations in the long-term process of nationalising monarchies (Metelo de Seixas, *Heraldry and the Dynastic Image of the Nineteenth Century Portuguese Monarchy: the Palace of Cidadela, at Cascais* and Merlotti, *Savoy Symbols in the Italy of Victor Emmanuel III. The Decorations of the Racconigi Castle Staircase [1900-1906] and the Royal Train [1925-1929]*); and the uses, abuses and suppression of the royal image (Gentile, *Using, Reusing and Removing Statues of the Kings of the House of Savoy in the Squares of Italy*). The aforementioned may seem like rhapsodic elements, but they have certainly not emerged by chance. They are

elements that we hope will stimulate more in-depth and timely research.

Pierangelo Gentile  
Leonardo Mineo  
Miguel Metelo de Seixas  
Isabel Corrêa da Silva