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HENRIETTA MARIA: CONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING EARLY MODERN ROYAL MOTHERHOOD AND CONFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Amy Saunders
(University of Winchester)
amy.e.saunders@outlook.com

ABSTRACT

This article examines representations of Henrietta Maria's (1609-1669) Catholicism and motherhood in a variety of artistic mediums and analyses how these objects are now reinterpreted within heritage sites and museum spaces in England. Henrietta Maria's patronage, agency, motherhood, pregnancy, and confessional and foreign identity are often omitted from these heritage reconstructions despite the centrality of these themes within the artworks themselves. Her confessional and foreign identity places her in a liminal position within heritage spaces, where she is situated in opposition to Protestant queen regnants and queen consorts who are represented as more admirable or 'successful', due to their politics, identities, and activities. Furthermore, this article suggests that the continuation of a Protestant monarchy in England into the twenty-first century has influenced these representations with Henrietta Maria's narrative not aligning to retrospectively applied ideals of the later royal family.

KEY WORDS: Henrietta Maria; Catholicism; Patronage; Motherhood; Heritage.

HENRIETTA MARIA: CONSTRUCCIÓN Y RECONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA MATERNIDAD REAL Y LA IDENTIDAD CONFESIONAL EN LA TEMPRANA MODERNIDAD

RESUMEN

Este artículo examina las representaciones del catolicismo y la maternidad de Henrietta Maria (1609-1669) en diversos medios artísticos y analiza cómo se reinterpretan en la actualidad estos objetos dentro de los espacios patrimoniales y museísticos de Inglaterra. El mecenazgo, la agencia, la maternidad, el embarazo y la identidad confesional y extranjera de Henrietta Maria se omiten a menudo en estas reconstrucciones patrimoniales a pesar de la centralidad de estos temas en las propias obras de arte. Su identidad confesional y extranjera la coloca en una posición liminal dentro de los espacios patrimoniales, donde se la sitúa en oposición a las reinas regentes y consortes protestantes, representadas como más admirables o «exitosas» debido a sus políticas, identidades y actividades. Además, este artículo sugiere que la

continuación de una monarquía protestante en Inglaterra en el siglo XXI ha influido en estas representaciones, ya que la narrativa de Enriqueta María no se ajusta a los ideales aplicados retrospectivamente de la familia real posterior.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Henrietta Maria; Catolicismo; Patronazgo; Maternidad; Herencia.

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HENRIETTA MARIA: IDENTITY, PATRONAGE, AND HERITAGE SITES IN ENGLAND

Henrietta Maria (1609-1669), the youngest child of Henri IV, King of France (1553-1610), and his second wife Marie de Medici (1575-1642) was born in 1609 in Paris. For her father, the price of acceding to the French throne twen ty years previously had been his conversion to Catholicism[1]. For Henrietta Maria, her dedication to the Catholic faith later caused significant problems when, in 1625, she married Charles I (1600-1649), the new Protestant King of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Although the marriage contract protected Henrietta Maria's religious practices, her confessional and foreign identity caused concern for English Protestants, with some expressing hopes that she would convert and «by God's blessing become ours in Religion»[2]. In relation to these fears and expectations, Erin Griffey highlights «that anxiety around foreigners in early modern England was closely tied to fears of Catholicism» and often conceptualised «in spiritual terms, distinguishing Catholics from Protestants»[3]. Henrietta Maria's position as a foreign queen consort was not unprecedented but when combined with her expressions of Catholicism in post-Reformation England and the contemporary religious divisions she became «a deeply polarising figure»[4], a binary that continues to be reflected in modern heritage sites.

This article examines the construction of Henrietta Maria's confessional identity within a variety of seventeenth-century artistic mediums, as well as their presentation of the queen's fertility and her role as a mother. Further, it explores how modern heritage sites in England have since reconstructed these themes, both in recent

[1] The author wishes to thank Peter Cherry, Alejandra Franganillo Álvarez, and their teams, as well as AGENART and ELITFEM, for organising the conference, *Representar la reginalidad en la Monarquía de los Austrias (siglo XVII),* held in Madrid in 2023, providing funding for the speakers, and coordinating this subsequent publication opportunity. Further thanks are owed to Joshua Green, Ellie Woodacre, Simon Sandall, Johanna C.E. Strong, Aoife Cosgrove, Ashlee Johnson, and Rob Runacres. This article is dedicated to Rosalind Saunders, Joshua Green, and Rhea Score.

[2] Henry Ellis ed., *Numerous Royal Letters: From Autographs in the British Museum, and one or two other collections. With notes and illustrations. Vol. III* (London: Harding, Triphook, and Lerpard, 1824), 169.

[3] Erin Griffey, "Home Comforts: Stuart Queens Consort and Negotiating Foreignness at Court," in *Rank Matters: New Research on Female Rulers in the Early Modern Era from an International Perspective,* ed. C. Strunck and L. Maier (Erlangen: FAU University Press, 2022), 122-123.

[4] Erin Griffey, "'Her Majesty's pictures': Henrietta Maria's taste, patronage and display of pictures at the Stuart Court," Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D88QSV5sqGA&feature=emb_title (accessed October 24, 2020).

temporary exhibitions and in permanent displays. These heritage case studies demonstrate the continued presence of an anti-Catholic sentiment which is situated in opposition to a sense of 'Englishness' within modern reconstructions of the historic English monarchy. They highlight the exclusion of Henrietta Maria from the narrative of her children's birth and upbringing within these representations, arguing that the physical realities of women's experiences of pregnancy and birth are treated dismissively within modern heritage sites. Furthermore, it will suggest that, whilst Charles I is placed at the centre of an international artistic network, the queen's agency and patronage activities are continually reduced and omitted. This is despite significant developments in academic scholarship as aptly demonstrated by the *Charles I: King and Collector* exhibition and its related events examined later within this article. This discussion unites queenship studies, art history, and heritage and museum studies, arguing that whilst the queen's fertility and confessional identity were on display in these seventeenth-century engravings, medals, and paintings, these qualities are now interpreted through an English Protestant lens in heritage sites which leads to Henrietta Maria being placed in a liminal position within these reconstructions. Based on the author's recent doctoral work, this article highlights some of the project's key conclusions examining these through depictions of Henrietta Maria and the redisplay of these artworks within modern settings.

NARRATIVES OF ROYAL ART COLLECTING

Henrietta Maria is the subject of numerous biographies and academic works across disciplines and features prominently in a range of modern popular culture depictions, including fictional books and films from the 1920s onwards[5]. Whig historiography placed the blame for the civil wars and King Charles' execution on Henrietta Maria, with George Macaulay Trevelyan describing her as leading Charles «in silken bands straight to the scaffold»[6]. Later historians disagreed, arguing that «Charles' political course would not have been very different» without his wife's involvement. Whilst more sympathetic towards Henrietta Maria, these interpretations fail to recognise her agency and influence, and imply a sharp distinction between

[5] See: Carola Oman, *Henrietta Maria* (London: Hooder and Stoughton Limited, 1936). Katie Whitaker, *A Royal Passion: The Turbulent Marriage of Charles I and Henrietta Maria* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2010). Leanda de Lisle, *Henrietta Maria: Conspirator, Warrior, Phoenix Queen,* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2022). Susan Dunn-Hensley, "Conniving Queen, Frivolous Wife, or Romantic Heroine? The Afterlife of Queen Henrietta Maria," in *Remembering Queens and Kings of Early Modern England and France, Reputation, Reinterpretation, and Reincarnation*, ed. Estelle Paranque, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 279-300. Sarah Betts, "Henrietta Maria, 'Queen of Tears'?: Picturing and Performing the Cavalier Queen," in *Remembering Queens and Kings of Early Modern England and France, Reputation, Reinterpretation, and Reincarnation,* ed. Estelle Paranque (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 155-178. For fictional books, see: Ella March Chase, *The Queen's Dwarf* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2014). Fiona Mountain, *Cavalier Queen* (London: Arrow, 2012). For films, see: Edwin Greenwood (Dir.), *Henrietta Maria; or, the Queen of Sorrow* (1923). Joe Wright (Dir.) *Charles II: The Power & The Passion* (BBC, 2003).

[6] George Macaulay Trevelyan, *A History of England, England Under the Stuarts* (London: The Folio Society, 1996), 177.

political and personal influence which is not reflective of reality[7]. More recent work on Henrietta Maria has come from a variety of fields including art history and literary studies, and some have purposefully utilised interdisciplinary approaches. Within this article the work of scholars such as Griffey, Karen Hearn, Pauline Croft, and Karen Serres are of particular relevance, as are theories of othering, first discussed by Edward Said in 1978[8].

Difficulties initially arose between Henrietta Maria and Charles I during the early years of their marriage, some of which were connected to their differences in confessional identity but were also due to the influence of those close to the king and queen. Carolyn Harris argues that «Henrietta Maria arrived in England in 1625 with a clear conception of her role as head of the queen's household» where she expected to retain the «comparatively informal character and French Catholic staff» of her childhood establishment. Harris states that this caused dismay for Charles' English courtiers and servants, not only due to the foreign, Catholic nature of the queen's household, but the loss of «opportunities for employment and advancement» for the English within it[9]. This exacerbated an already difficult situation where the death of James VI & I had «put pressure on existing household places, as the new king attempted to accommodate both his own and his father's old servants»[10].

The presence of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (1592-1628) and his family did not improve the situation. He had previously been a favourite of James VI & I and, as the king's life drew to its end, become a close friend to Charles, even traveling with the prince to Madrid in pursuit of a Spanish marriage prior to negotiations between England and France. Paul M Hunneyball argues that Buckingham adapted his persona to better ingratiate himself to Charles as James grew older in an attempt to futureproof his position at court [11]. This in turn led Buckingham to view the new queen as «a potential rival for influence and [thus he] attempted to bully or manipulate her»[12]. Buckingham's position provided opportunities for his

[7] Quentin Bone, *Henrietta Maria, Queen of the Cavaliers* (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1973), vi. For further discussion of Henrietta Maria's historiography see: Michelle Anne White, *Henrietta Maria and the English Civil Wars* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006),1-10.

[8] See: Erin Griffey, *On Display: Henrietta Maria and the Materials of Magnificence at the Stuart Court* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015). Griffey, "Home Comforts." Karen Hearn, *Portraying Pregnancy from Holbein to Social Media* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing and The Foundling Museum, 2020). Pauline Croft and Karen Hearn, "'Only matrimony maketh children to be certain…' Two Elizabethan pregnancy portraits," *The British Art Journal* vol.3, No. 3 (Autumn 2002), 19-24. Karen Serres, "Henrietta Maria, Charles I and the Italian Baroque," in *Charles I: King and Collector,* ed. Desmond Shawe-Taylor and Per Rumberg (London: Royal Academy of the Arts, 2018), 171-188. Edward W Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Random House, 2019).

[9] Carolyn Harris, *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 82.

[10] Caroline Hibbard, "Translating Royalty: Henrietta Maria and the Transition from Princess to Queen," *The Court Historian,* vol. 5, issue 1, (2000), 18.

[11] Paul M. Hunneyball, "James I and the duke of Buckingham: love, power and betrayal," The History of Parliament, https://thehistoryofparliament.wordpress.com/2019/02/21/james-i-and-the-duke-of-buckingham-love-power-and-betrayal/ (accessed September 14, 2023).

[12] Caroline Hibbard, "Henrietta Maria," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12947, (accessed 30 June, 2024).

family to serve the new queen and when a large group of Henrietta Maria's French servants were removed from her household in July 1625 they were replaced by «English court ladies, some of whom where Buckingham's relations»[13]. Whilst this was a difficult time for Henrietta Maria Caroline Hibbard argues that she was not as isolated as is often suggested with «more than a dozen French attendants in chamber positions of relative intimacy» being retained after the expulsion[14]. Buckingham's assassination in 1628 is often upheld as a turning point in the royal couple's relationship which was then further cemented by Henrietta Maria's early pregnancies, the second of which resulted in the birth of the future Charles II[15]. Buckingham's death also allowed Henrietta Maria to form new networks at court which were mutually beneficial with the queen «as a potentially ally who had the king's ear» and Henrietta Maria finding her new friendships personally fulfilling[16]. Although Buckingham's presence clearly caused problems for Charles and Henrietta Maria Hibbard argues that «[t]he integration of Henritta Maria into the English Court» did not require the duke's death, the couple's newly developed emotional bond, «nor the dissolution of the confessional divide» which did not come. Instead, she argues that the removal of the French household «was almost certainly a necessity» and that «what was…needed was mutual recognition, supported by both families, that the [union] was important and should succeed»[17].

Charles and Henrietta Maria shared a deep interest in and understanding of the power of art, display, and performance, and this led to the royal couple engaging in a wide variety of artistic activities through which they sought to present a united image of mutual love and devotion. This image remains a central aspect of their narrative today. Whilst various scholars, predominantly Whig historians, informed by anti-Catholic sentiment and misogynistic attitudes, have negatively interpreted this unity, the centrality of this narrative in academia as well as some modern heritage reconstructions, such as at the Queen's House in Greenwich, suggests that their attempt at self-fashioning has endured successfully despite civil wars, religious conflict, and a gap of nearly four hundred years[18].

Although Charles is often central to the narrative of Stuart art patronage, recent research has sought to recognise Henrietta Maria's «sophisticated understanding» and to highlight the 'fluid' nature of their collective activities and the formation of the Royal Collection. Henrietta Maria's upbringing had instilled in her a «strong sense of religious obligations and piety» but had also shown her «the value in magnificent display»[19]. In comparison, Charles' visit to Madrid, when Prince of Wales,

[13] Hibbard, "Translating Royalty," 18.

[14] Hibbard, "Translating Royalty," 26.

[15] See: Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 172. Sara J. Wolfson, "The Female Bedchamber of Queen Henrietta Maria: Politics, Familial Networks and Policy, 1626-40," in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-waiting across Early Modern Europe*, ed. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 311-341. Sarah Poynting, "'In the Name of all the Sisters:' Henrietta Maria's Notorious Whores," in *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens*, ed. Clare McManus (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 163-185.

[16] Hibbard, "Henrietta Maria."

[17] Hibbard, "Translating Royalty," 28.

[18] Label Text, *Charles I,* Queen's House, Greenwich, (accessed July 19, 2021).

[19] Griffey, "'Her Majesty's pictures'".

is often noted as a turning point in his artistic endeavours and interests. This trip influenced Charles and saw his art collection grow to include works by Paolo Veronese and Diego Velázquez and, among other pictures, he personally received Titian's 'Charles V with a Dog' as a gift from Philip IV[20]. However, this narrative of Charles' art collecting omits the influence of his family prior to 1622 and suggests that Charles' connections were unprecedented, ignoring the international ties and gift exchanges of his mother, Anna of Denmark[21]. Charles and Henrietta Maria's patronage and involvement in a variety of artistic mediums led to artworks and performances that celebrated their union, the birth and survival of their children, and suggested the long-term stability of the Stuart dynasty. These endeavours highlight their own personal tastes and interests as well as their influence on one another and the fluid nature of their collecting practices.

Artworks depicting the queen can now be found in museum collections worldwide. Anthony van Dyck's portrait of Henrietta Maria in a yellow dress is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and, in Czechia, van Dyck's double portrait of Charles and Henrietta Maria is located in the castle of Kroměříž[22]. Whilst van Dyck is most commonly associated with the royal couple, this article will also explore works by Daniel Mytens as well as examining various engravings and a medal celebrating the royal marriage. Demonstrating the diversity of objects depicting Henrietta Maria, the Royal Collection Trust's online 'explore the collection' tool returns over 230 prints, paintings, coins, pieces of jewellery, books, and other objects related to the queen, including 19 that are directly recognised as having been commissioned or acquired by her[23]. Where known, the lifecycles of these objects highlight the presence of international networks of patronage, exchange, and gift-giving, often forged through familial and confessional connections, as well as demonstrating the effects of civil war and conflict. The commissioning, purchasing, display, sale, and restoration of a range of artworks from various points of the seventeenth century Stuart royal collection can be examined through the survival of several inventories, including Abraham van der Doort's *Catalogue of the collection of pictures, medals, agates, and the like, of King Charles I,* completed in 1639, *The Sale Inventory* which aimed to record the royal families possessions and evaluate their potential sale value after Charles' execution in 1649, and Henrietta Maria's post-mortem inventory of 1669[24]. As Griffey states, «[d]uring the Stuart period, there was no methodical tracking of all works of art at every palace. Instead, inventories were occasioned by a number of different factors – personal,

[20] *RA Large Print, Charles I King and Collector Gallery II* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018), 1-14. *RA Large Print, Charles I King and Collector Gallery III* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018), 1-12.

[21] See: Jemma Field, *Anna of Denmark: The material and visual culture of the Stuart Courts, 1589-1619* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).

[22] Figure 1. Gardens and Castle in Kroměříž, "The Castle Gallery," World Heritage Journeys Europe, https://visitworldheritage.com/en/eu/the-castle-gallery/09705886-0c4d-41c0-a286-e92b1aeaf87d (accessed September 11, 2023).

[23] Royal Collection Trust, "Explore the Collection," https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/#who (accessed September 11, 2023).

[24] Royal Collection Trust, "The Inventories," https://lostcollection.rct.uk/charles-i/inventories (accessed September 11, 2023). Erin Griffey, "Van Dyck paintings in Stuart royal inventories, 1639–1688," Journal of the History of Collections vol. 30 no. 1 (2018), 49.

political and practical» demonstrating that there will have been artworks that went un recorded and information that the modern historian cannot access[25]. The «unprecede nted» nature of van der Doort's inventory has allowed for a detailed examination of royal art collecting and this information has recently been used to reconstruct the interior of three rooms of Whitehall Palace[26]. Despite artworks connected to Henrietta Maria being recorded in these documents art historical approaches have often focused on «individual artists…and patrons» such as Charles I[27]. In relation to this, Griffey argues that «[a]n understanding of Henrietta Maria's agency in court display has been hampered by several related factors: the negative historiography of the queen, the king's [connoisseurship and] large-scale acquisition of pictures; and most importantly, the traditional view of what constitutes patronage»[28]. Part of the difficulty in exploring early modern female patronage is related to documentary survival bias, and the contents of financial and official records. For example, whilst «financial accounts show that [Charles] paid for the majority of the artworks produced for the court…a substantial amount of their output was for works destined for the queen's rooms…palaces…and in some cases, for overseas recipients»[29].

Whilst the study of queenship began to take shape in the 1970s Henrietta Maria has received significant attention in the last two decades from scholars including Hibbard, Michelle Anne White, and Griffey[30]. Through new interdisciplinary approaches to Henrietta Maria «the story of her display, as embodied in her presence in court ceremonial, her palaces and her portraiture» is only now receiving greater attention[31]. This article further contributes to this discussion, examining how these themes are reinterpreted and presented to the public within heritage and museum spaces in England. Throughout, written interpretation produced by heritage sites and presented either online, through 'search the collections' tools and virtual exhibitions, or in-person in temporary exhibitions and permanent museums spaces,is analysed and discussed in relation to Henrietta Maria and Charles' approaches to and experiences of parenthood, religion, and patronage.

Theories of the Other, othering, and otherness are also central to this discussion. With their roots in Said's 1978 work these theories propose that «individuals [are] classified into two hierarchical groups: them and us»[32]. This creates

[25] Griffey, "Van Dyck paintings," 49.

[26] Adelaide Izat, Niko Munz, and Letizia Treves, "A Royal Rediscovery: Artemisia Gentileschi's Susanna and the Elders painted for Henrietta Maria," London Art Week, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_MzlG8Rguc0 (accessed 30 June, 2024). Royal Collection Trust, "The Rooms," https://lostcollection.rct.uk/rooms (accessed September 11, 2023).

[27] Griffey, *On Display,* 14.

[28] Griffey, *On Display,* 13.

[29] Griffey, *On Display,* 15.

[30] See for example: Hibbard, "Henrietta Maria." Hibbard, "Translating Royalty." White, *Henrietta Maria and the English Civil Wars.* Griffey, "Van Dyck paintings." Griffey, *On Display.*

[31] Griffey, *On Display,* 2.

[32] See: Jean-François Staszak, "Other/Otherness," in *International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography* (Elsevier, 2008), https://www.unige.ch/sciences-societe/geo/files/3214/4464/7634/OtherOtherness.pdf (accessed September 23, 2022). Zuleyka Zevallos, "What is Otherness?" *The Other Sociologist,* https://othersociologist.com/otherness-resources/ (accessed September 23, 2022).

'in' and 'out' groups which are the building blocks of communities and of identity and can be based on a range of characteristics including gender, race, age, country of origin, language(s) spoken, sexuality, and economic status. Whilst Henrietta Maria occupied a privileged position, she has also been othered, by her contemporaries, subsequent commentators, and in modern heritage sites. This othering is not and should not be seen as comparative to the othering of groups subjected and persecuted during the seventeenth century and beyond, such as enslaved and First Nations people who suffered at the hands of White colonialists. However, Henrietta Maria's position as a Catholic woman in a Protestant country and royal court meant that she was regularly criticised by her English contemporaries in relation to her confessional identity. As Frances E. Dolan argues in the seventeenth century «Catholics were central figures in narratives and fantasies – the obstacles to and underminers of England's peace and» and Catholic women in particular were a threat to this stability[33]. This article suggests that her gender and confessional and foreign identity continue to place Henrietta Maria in an unfavourable position in modern memory and heritage sites. In these spaces Protestant royal men and women take centre stage where their narratives are often reformed as 'English' or 'British'. In comparison as a French Catholic royal woman Henrietta Maria's agency is reduced and her activities oversimplified[34].

[33] Frances E Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender and Seventeenth-century Print Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 3.

[34] For further reading see: Amy Saunders, *Construction, Deconstruction, and Reconstruction: Stuart Kings and Queens in Heritage Sites* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Winchester, 2023).

Figure 1: Anthony van Dyck, Queen Henrietta Maria, 1636, oil on canvas, 105.7 x 84.5 cm, The MET, Accession Number: 2019.141.10.

MARITAL COMMEMORATION AND THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION

As with the marriage of any European monarch in the seventeenth century, the union between Charles I and Henrietta Maria resulted in the production of various commemorative items including medals and engravings, most of which were created outside of the royal couple's control. Some of these were clearly created after the marriage contract was agreed but prior to the union taking place, such as an engraving attributed to Willem de Passe, who at this time lived in London. This image celebrates the marriage but refers to Charles as prince and includes the arms of the Prince of Wales. However, James VI & I's death in March 1625 meant that, by the time of the proxy marriage in May, Charles had already become king. The engraving highlights the precedent of Anglo-French marriages through the shields used to create the border, which emphasised that the two countries had historically been connected through multiple royal marriages. Also included in the image are the Scottish thistle and English

rose which are each combined with the lily of France. Griffey argues that «Henrietta Maria was upheld as 'the rose and the lily queen,' her body symbolically joining the Stuart rose with the Bourbon lily» upon their marriage[35]. Furthermore, by including both the Scottish and English national flowers, the engraving reminded the contemporary viewer that Charles would inherit both realms from his father and that the hoped-for heir of the Anglo-French union would also be joint monarch of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. This not only demonstrates Charles' position but reinforces the sense of connection between the kingdoms, as Scotland also had historically close ties with France and Charles' grandmother, Mary Queen of Scots, had briefly been Queen of France[36]. Reinforcing this sense of historical precedent may have been seen as particularly important within the context of Charles and Henrietta Maria's marriage due to their differing confessional identities, which had not been a concern in previous Anglo-French royal marriages as these had all taken place prior to English Reformation and Henry VIII's break from Rome. Charles and Henrietta Maria's marriage was also the first of a reigning monarch of England since the marriage of Mary I to Philip II of Spain. Whilst Elizabeth I had been seen to entertain the possibility of foreign marriage negotiations and James VI & I and Anna of Denmark's daughter, Elizabeth Stuart, had married the Protestant Frederick V Elector Palatine in 1613, Charles and Henrietta Maria's marriage was the first of an English heir apparent/monarch to take place in sixty years. The couple's contrasting confessional identities caused significant concern during the negotiations, especially in the context of Charles' previously failed proposed marriage to María Ana, the Spanish Infanta[37]. In relation to previous English royal marriages, Johanna C. E. Strong has recently explored the connections made between Mary I and Henrietta Maria by contemporaries from 1625, arguing that continued vilification of Mary in the historical narrative meant that authors «turned to memories of Mary's Catholicism as a warning against Stuart recusancy and Catholic influence»[38]. The de Passe engraving appears, however, void of overtly religious connections with the focus on England, Charles, and previous Anglo-French marriages, distracting the viewer from their possible fears relating to Catholic influence and confessional differences. In support of this understanding of the image, Griffey argues that «using generic language of court marriage portraits [allowed] such images to distance themselves from polemical religious issues»[39].

In comparison, another engraving, published in Paris, instead places religion at the centre of the depiction, rather than focusing on dynastic precedent and avoiding

[35] Erin Griffey, "Blooming Fertility: Henrietta Maria and the Power of Plants as Iconography and Physic," in Susannah Lyon-Whaley, *Floral Culture and the Tudor and Stuart Courts* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. 2024), 154.

[36] Figure 5.

[37] See: David Coast, "Secrecy, Counsel and Public Opinion during the Spanish and French Matches," in *Stuart Marriage Diplomacy: Dynastic Politics in their European Context, 1604-1630* ed. Valentine Caldari and Sara J. Wolfson (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018), 189-202.

[38] Johanna C.E. Strong, *The Making of a Queen: The Effect of Religion, National Identity, and Gender on Mary I's Legacy in the English Historical Narrative* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Winchester, 2022), 164.

[39] Griffey, *On Display,* 55.

potential confessional conflict. The depiction shows Charles and Henrietta Maria accompanied by a male figure and the motto «the Lord's blessing enriches». The writing beneath the image celebrates Henrietta Maria's chastity and her position as sister of Louis XIII[40]. This focus on Henrietta Maria rather than Charles is unsurprising considering the engraving's French origin, but the imagery nevertheless clearly invokes contemporary religious considerations relating to the match. Whilst the Royal Collection Trust's online interpretation describes the man as an «allegorical figure», Griffey identifies him as Christ and states that «[e]ven if dispensation from Rome had not yet arrived, the union received a virtual blessing with this print»[41]. The Trust's exclusion of religion from its online interpretation can be seen to fit within a wider trend of heritage representations which omit discussions of early modern confessional identity and religious conflict especially as it pertains to the history of the monarchy. Regarding this image Griffey also highlights that the «rose ornament at the end of her bodice [is] this time over the most potent site of queenship – the womb», demonstrating that the wedding prints fundamentally promoted fertility, the expectation of an heir, and the continuation of the monarchy[42]. The style of dress Henrietta Maria is shown wearing within both engravings ties her visually to similar images of Marie de Medici and Anna of Denmark, with the fertility of these previous queens on display through the very presence of Henrietta Maria and Charles I[43]. Furthermore, the similarities between Henrietta Maria and her mother within the French print and other representations reinforce their familial bond. The production of an heir was a core aspect of a queen consorts' role, with Elena Woodacre arguing that an heir not only secured a queen's initial position but also often provided long

[40] Figure 4.

[41] Online Interpretation, "La Representation du Mariage accorde entre les Tres-puissans Roys de France et Angleterret pour Charles Prince de Walles Duc de Cornw, avec Madame Henriette Maria," Royal Collection Trust, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/5/collection/601886/la-representation-du-mariage-accorde-entre-les-tres-puissans-roys-de-france-et (accessed September 14, 2023). Griffey, *On Display,* 56.

[42] Griffey, *On Display,* 56.

[43] For similar images of Anna of Denmark see: John de Critz, *Anne of Denmark,* c.1606-1608, oil on canvas, 2016 x 1265 mm, National Portrait Gallery, NPG 6918, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw202589/Anne-of-Denmark?LinkID=mp00110&search=sas&sText=Anne+of+Denmark&role=sit&rNo=0 (accessed September 14, 2023). Renold Elstracke, *King James I of England and VI of Scotland and Anne of Denmark,* early 17th century, engraving, 155 x 119 mm, National Portrait Gallery, NPG D256686, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw128078/King-James-I-of-England-and-VI-of-Scotland-and-Anne-of-Denmark?LinkID=mp00110&search=sas&sText=Anne+of+Denmark&role=sit&rNo=8 (accessed September 14, 2023). For similar images of Marie de Medici see: Johannes Wierix, *Marie de Médicis,* 1600, engraving, 344 x 245 mm, British Museum, R,6.95, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_R-6-95 (accessed September 14, 2023). Giovanni Maggi, *Henri IV and Marie de Médicis,* 1610, etching, 356 x 270 mm, British Museum, 1848,0911.618, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1848-0911-618, (accessed September 14, 2023). *L'ALIANCE DV ROY DE FRANCE AVEC MARIE DE MEDICIS PRINCESSE DE FLORENCE,* 1600-10, engraving with hand-colouring, 34.5 x 24.0 cm, Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 616711, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/7/collection/616711/laliance-dv-roy-de-france-avec-marie-de-medicis-princesse-de-florence (accessed September 14, 2023).

term security due to her role as the mother of the monarch after her husband's death[44]. Whilst other avenues existed through which queen consorts could express their agency and exert influence, contemporaries widely recognised the position of mother as having the potential for influence. For this reason, fear of Henrietta Maria's religious influence on her potential children was widespread amongst English Protestants and this concern was not unfounded. Although the French print sought to celebrate the union, the visual reminder of Henrietta Maria's hoped for fertility, alongside the presence of Christ, may have elicited different responses from viewers depending on their own confessional identity.

NEGOTIATING HENRIETTA MARIA'S IDENTITY IN THE MODERN HERITAGE INDUSTRY

Those personally connected to the royal couple also sought to support and encourage a positive and harmonious image of Charles and Henrietta Maria's union. Louis XIII, King of France, and Henrietta Maria's brother, commemorated the marriage by commissioning a medal which was then «distributed at the wedding mass at Notre Dame»[45]. This depicted the royal couple facing one another on one side with a cupid holding lilies and roses on the reverse. Similarly to the de Passe print discussed above, Henrietta Maria and Charles were therefore represented through floral imagery which was tied to an important aspect of their individual national identities, without invoking religious imaginary and potentially creating conflict[46]. Though beyond the scope of this article, it is important to note here that medals and other small portable objects, such as portrait miniatures and jewellery, are often utilised within heritage reconstructions of the early modern past and can invoke a sense of intimacy for visitors, temporarily collapsing the barriers of time between the past and present. Furthermore, the extensive reproduction of the medal commissioned by Louis XIII means that examples exist within a range of heritage collections. Whilst their small size means that medals were often incorporated into the heritage reconstructions explored here, they are rarely accompanied by extensive written interpretation. In *Charles I: King and Collector,* the interpretation simply stated the medal's purpose and at the National Galleries of Scotland: Portrait this medal is included within a display of «defining moments in Charles I's life» which contains little further information[47].

As stated above, Henrietta Maria and Charles I celebrated their union, fertility, and children through the commissioning of individual and group portraits from artists including Mytens and van Dyck. Hearn has explored how changes in fashion in the

[44] Elena Woodacre, "Introduction," in *Royal Mothers and Their Ruling Children* ed. Elena Woodacre and Carey Fleiner (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2015), 1.

[45] Griffey, *On Display,* 59.

[46] Pierre Regnier, *Medal, Charles I and Henrietta Maria*, 1625, silver, 23.5 mm (diameter), British Museum. M.7078, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_M-7078 (accessed Septembe r 11, 2023).

[47] "Pierre Regnier (c.1577-1640)," *RA Large Print, Charles I King and Collector Gallery IX* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018), 15. Label Text, *Medals*, National Gallery of Scotland: Portrait (accessed November 2, 2022).

English court, influenced by French styles introduced by Henrietta Maria, make pregnancy difficult to recognise in some portraits of the period. However, she also argues that van Dyck sought to display pregnancy through a sitter's symbolic gestures instead[48]. Van Dyck's portrait of Henrietta Maria in a yellow dress reflects this and highlights pathways of artistic exchange between the Stuart Court and the Catholic church in Rome[49]. In the portrait Henrietta Maria's «distinctive 'cradling' gesture has been read as alluding to a forthcoming child» with Princess Anne born shortly after this painting is believed to have been completed. Through these gestures, a woman's pregnancy or «the *promise* of hoped-for fruitfulness» could be portrayed[50]. Portraits of the royal couple and their children were popular across European courts, reflecting the couples' familial and confessional connections. The portrait of Henrietta Maria in yellow, for example, was commissioned for Cardinal Barberini and arrangements for its creation and delivery were made through George Con, a papal agent based in London[51]. The National Portrait Gallery in London's copy of this portrait was displayed in the exhibition *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits* held at the National Maritime Museum in 2021. Here, the very last line of the interpretation recognised that the queen's «cradling [of] her stomach [...] probably suggests her pregnancy» but did not go into further detail, reconstruct Henrietta Maria's Catholicism, or examine how her confessional networks across Europe are connected to the original portrait[52].

In addition, the interpretation in *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits* only recognised «Henry IV of France» as Henrietta Maria's parent and did not mention Marie de Medici[53]. This is largely reflective of heritage interpretation found throughout England where a royal child is often only connected to their male parent. The exception to this rule is James VI & I who is often connected to his mother, possibly due to her position as Queen of Scots independent of any of her husbands, including James' father. At Carisbrooke Castle, Elizabeth, and Henry Stuart, two of Henrietta Maria's and Charles' children who were imprisoned at the site, are only referred to in relation to Charles I[54]. Similarly, even though it has recently been renovated, the National Portrait Gallery in London only refers to Henrietta Maria as «the youngest daughter of Henri IV» and describes Charles I's sister, Elizabeth Stuart, as «the only surviving daughter of King James I» entirely omitting early modern royal motherhood[55]. In contrast, interpretation accompanying a portrait of the future Charles II as an infant in the National Portrait Gallery does recognise international familial connections in relation to celebrating royal births and the commissioning of artworks. The interpretation states that the painting was «probably made for the

[48] Hearn, *Portraying Pregnancy,* 58.

[49] Figure 1.

[50] Hearn, *Portraying Pregnancy*, 58.

[51] Hearn, *Portraying Pregnancy,* 58-61. See Figure 2.

[52] Label Text, "Henrietta Maria," *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits,* National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (accessed July 26, 2021).

[53] Label Text, "Henrietta Maria," *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits.*

[54] Room Text, "Prison," Carisbrooke Castle, Newport, accessed 8 June 2021.

[55] Label Text, *Henrietta Maria, 1609-69*, National Portrait Gallery, London, accessed 16 July 2023. Label Text, *Princess Elizabeth, later Queen of Bohemia, 1596-1662*, National Portrait Gallery, London, accessed 16 July 2023.

prince's grandmother, Marie de Médicis, Queen Mother of France» demonstrating the international exchange of artworks between courts, especially within the context of marriage, pregnancy, and birth, but this is an anomaly[56]. The heritage examples given here largely privilege male, Protestant narratives of parenthood and the lived realities of women are omitted.

Mytens' double portrait of Charles I and Henrietta Maria celebrates their union and makes «a public statement of tenderness and intimacy»[57]. In van Dyck's later version of this portrait, Henrietta Maria wears a similar dress to that seen in the Mytens original, but it is more voluminous in appearance and Hearn argues that the addition of the plant «thought to be myrtle» which is held «against the lower part of [Henrietta Maria's] body» symbolises «conjugal fidelity»[58]. Griffey recently re-examined this portrait in *Floral Culture and the Tudor and Stuart Courts* exploring how plants were used both in royal portraiture to symbolise fertility and as part of the queen's medical care. The inclusion of what she describes as a «laurel crown…olive branch [and] verdant landscape» in the portrait highlight that this was a «union…blessed with children, even if the children are not depicted». Further, through the inclusion of these «hardy evergreen plants» Griffey argues that Henrietta Maria is presented as a «fertile plant who is essential to the crowning of the next generation and to maintaining peace»[59].

Figure 2: Daniel Mytens, *Charles I and Henrietta Maria*, c.1630-32, oil on canvas, 95.6 x 175.3 cm, Royal Collection Trust, Inventory Number: RCIN 405789. Royal Collection Trust © His Majesty King Charles III 2024.

[56] Label Text, *Prince Charles, later King Charles II, 1630-85,* National Portrait Gallery, London, accessed 16 July 2023.

[57] Online Interpretation, "Charles I and Henrietta Maria," Royal Collection Trust, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/5/collection/405789/charles-i-and-henrietta-maria (accessed September 14, 2023). Figure 2.

[58] Hearn, *Portraying Pregnancy,* 56.

[59] Griffey, "Blooming Fertility", 154.

These two portraits, which have been reproduced many times, are excellent examples for unpicking the reconstruction of Henrietta Maria's patronage within modern heritage sites, as well as how she is represented as a mother. The interpretation that accompanies Mytens' portrait on the Royal Collection Trust website suggests that «[g]iven its unusual format, this portrait was presumably originally produced to fill a particular space in the interior decoration of Somerset House, the Queen's London residence». Later however, under provenance, is states that the painting was «[p]resumably painted for Charles I, though not recorded until it appears in the King's Gallery at Hampton Court in 1666»[60]. This removes the possibility of Henrietta Maria being involved in the commissioning of this piece and places Charles at the centre of the Stuart royal patronage of the 1630s. It also reflects Griffey's arguments, suggesting that traditional attitudes towards patronage and gender have removed Henrietta Maria from the narrative. Supporting the queen's potential involvement in this commission, Griffey argues that considering the queen's face was reworked «rather than the king's [this] may indicate that the queen was involved in the presentation of the couple and/or the commission»[61]. By removing this possibility, the Royal Collection Trust fails to consider female agency and patronage and to explore the possibilities of the royal couple's joint artistic endeavours. Furthermore, if painted from life, then Henrietta Maria would still have been an active participant, engaging in the commission, regardless of who made the payment or originally suggested the composition. Instead, despite the lack of evidence and regardless of the painting's presumed location, the Trust creates a male-centred artistic narrative.

The van Dyck version of the double portrait was also on display at the temporary exhibition *Charles I: King and Collector* held at the Royal Academy of Arts in London from January to April 2018. Here, whilst the interpretation recognised that the portrait was «[d]isplayed at Somerset House», it did not mention Henrietta Maria's agency nor the painting's connection to pregnancy and birth[62]. This was reflected across the exhibition where the terms 'pregnancy' or 'pregnant' were never used, and 'birth' was only used twice, with only one of these referring to Henrietta Maria's experiences. This was despite «The Royal Portrait» taking up significant space within the exhibition. The paintings included within this theme were largely by van Dyck and it displayed some of the most recognisable portraits he created for the Stuart royal family, many of which are fundamentally tied to expressions of the couple's unity, love, and loyalty, which are often embodied through the possibility or presence of their children. None of the interpretation that accompanied these portraits within the exhibition included a discussion of early modern pregnancy, childbirth, or parenthood[63]. The omission of these themes, which is also seen across a wide variety of other heritage sites reconstructing early modern royal narratives, suggests that

[60] Online Interpretation, "Charles I and Henrietta Maria," Royal Collection Trust.

[61] Griffey, *On Display,* 13.

[62] "Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), Charles I and Henrietta Maria Holding a Laurel Wreath," *RA Large Print, Charles I King and Collector Gallery VI* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018), 6-7. See Figure 2.

[63] *RA Large Print Guide, Charles I King and Collector* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018).

pregnancy, birth, and the reality of women's lived experiences are treated as inappropriate and dismissed within these museum spaces.

This omission can be seen to reflect modern societal attitudes in the UK where «many areas of reproductive health, including abortion, miscarriages, infertility and menstrual issues, continue to be taboo topics»[64]. Few heritage reconstructions have directly engaged with themes of fertility, childbirth, baby loss, and parenthood with the most relevant example to this article being the 2020 exhibition *Portraying Pregnancy: From Holbein to Social Media*, curated by Hearn for the Foundling Museum. This «brought together, for the first time, rare examples of [pregnancy] portraits providing an exceptional opportunity to situate contemporary issues of women's identity, emotion, empowerment and autonomy in a 500-year context»[65]. Unfortunately, the exhibitions duration and impact were disrupted by COVID-19, and its interpretation is therefore unavailable for analysis within this discussion. In 2021 the Whitworth in Manchester responded to current societal discomfort around discussions of fertility and infant mortality by presenting the *Still Parents: Life after Baby Loss* exhibition which was «the first exhibition of its kind, creating a platform to share personal stories, open conversations and break the wall of silence that continues to surround baby loss»[66]. This pioneering exhibition and its related community programme subsequently won the Museums Association Best Museums Change Lives Project Award demonstrating its powerful impact and unique approach[67]. Drawing on a range of examples outside of these exhibitions, the author's doctoral work has shown that when these themes are addressed in heritage reconstructions of monarchical history, they privilege narratives that are traditionally deemed 'successful' therefore removing discussions of both historic and modern (in)fertility and child loss. This removal can lead to the oversimplification or omission women's narratives and experiences, as best exemplified by reconstructions of Catherine of Braganza. By omitting these narratives royal women who did not become pregnant or whose children did not survive to beyond infancy or childhood are sidelined in favour of those who did. This in turn reinforces the idea that these themes are inappropriate for reconstruction in public spaces and can be seen to fundamentally tie a women's worth and place in heritage reconstructions to their fertility. This has the potential to place historic figures and visitors in the position of other, where their lived experiences are not reflective of the desired heterosexual, monogamous, childbearing narratives of sexuality, fertility, and

[64] Rebecca French, "It's time we end the taboo and make women's health a priority," London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/newsevents/expert-opinion/its-high-time-we-end-taboo-and-make-womens-health-priority#:~:text=Unfortunately%2C%20many%20areas%20of%20reproductive,they%20have%20sought%20professional%20help (accessed 29 June, 2024).

[65] Foundling Museum, "Portraying Pregnancy: From Holbein to Social Media," https://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/event/portraying-pregnancy/, (accessed June 29, 2024).

[66] Whitworth, "Still Parents: Life after Baby Loss," https://www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/pastexhibitions/stillparents/, (accessed June 29, 2024).

[67] Museums Association, "Museums Chang Lives Awards 2022,"https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkRK9g2nI9E, (accessed June 29, 2024).

parenthood which are often the focus of reconstructed monarchical narratives in heritage sites[68].

THE QUEEN AS CONNOISSEUR

Charles I: King and Collector also arguably reduced Henrietta Maria's artistic agency and created a distinctly Catholic and foreign space for her, which separated the queen from her husband and children. The exhibition reconstructed Charles as a patron whose collection «changed the taste of the nation» and whilst Henrietta Maria's importance in helping form the early royal collection was recognised in the first room of the exhibition, her own artistic patronage was restricted to one gallery[69]. Within this space, labelled the «Queen's House», the paintings chosen implicitly suggested to the audience that Henrietta Maria had vastly different tastes to her husband and their English court. Whilst Henrietta Maria did have an interest in the Italian Baroque and devotional art, partially fostered through her familial and confessional connections in Italy, these paintings hung in stylistic opposition to the van Dyck portraits of the royal family in the previous room. The layout of the galleries and the objects chosen therefore assigned van Dyck, Protestantism, and the theme of the royal family to Charles I. In comparison, Henrietta Maria existed within a space of Italian Catholic artists, with the artworks themselves focusing on recounting religious stories, such as Orazio Gentileschi's 'The Finding of Moses'[70]. These biblical scenes were incredibly important to Henrietta Maria and were reflective of her confessional identity and lived experiences as a mother, however, the separation between the two rooms nevertheless distanced her from her own children. Whilst the presence of these artworks highlighted Henrietta Maria's confessional identity, the accompanying interpretation failed to fully convey to the audience how this was connected to her expressions of political power, agency, and patronage. Of the six paintings recorded in the large print guide for this space only two were accompanied by written interpretation that went beyond the basic catalogue information. The interpretation accompanying 'The Finding of Moses' briefly stated that «[t]he painting may have carried a dynastic meaning, celebrating the birth of the future Charles II in 1630» but otherwise focused on recounting the biblical story and highlighting that other works by Orazio Gentileschi could be found elsewhere in the room[71]. The other longer interpretation text accompanied Guido Reni's 'The Toilet of Venus' highlighting that Charles I had acquired it «as part of the

[68] See: Saunders, *Construction, Deconstruction, and Reconstruction*

[69] See: RA, "Charles I: King and Collector," Royal Academy of Arts, https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/charles-i-king-and-collector (accessed September 14, 2023). *RA Large Print, Charles I King and Collector Gallery VIII* (London: Royal Academy of the Arts, 2018), 1-10.

[70] Orazio Gentileschi, *The Finding of Moses,* early 1630s, oil on canvas, 257 x 301 cm, The National Gallery, NG6684, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/orazio-gentileschi-the-finding-of-moses#VideoPlayer95489 (accessed September 14, 2023).

[71] "Orazio Gentileschi (1563-1639) The Finding of Moses c.1630-1633," *RA Large Print, Charles I King and Collector Gallery VII* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018), 7-8.

Gonzaga Collection» but failing to discuss how this painting relates to Henrietta Maria or the royal couples joint efforts of display and shared interest in the arts[72].

This separation omitted Henrietta Maria's interest in family portraits and failed to recognise her own agency in commissioning and gifting portraits of her children. Within the conference that accompanied the exhibition, Griffey highlighted that Henrietta Maria had a portrait of the «three eldest children painted by van Dyck in 1635 and sent to her…sister, Christine of Savoy»[73]. Henrietta Maria's independent activity in relation to this portrait can be seen in Charles I's reaction to it, with Griffey stating that «he complained about the portrayal of the children [with Prince Charles] depicted still in his skirts»[74]. Furthermore, as Griffey has stated elsewhere «[v]an Dyck's works were prominently located [in the queen's chambers and palaces] and it is revealing that several hung alongside Italian masters»[75]. This demonstrates that artworks of different styles and themes were displayed alongside one another in royal spaces and highlights Henrietta Maria's interest in van Dyck's work. Similarly, in the catalogue accompanying the *Charles I: King and Collector* exhibition, Serres argues that whilst Charles' engagement in the Italian Baroque «was certainly somewhat haphazard and opportunistic in nature» the purchases he made were «highly influential…and stemmed from Queen Henrietta Maria's relationship with the papal court»[76]. In addition, Andrea Bacciolo states that gifts intended for Charles from the papal court were officially addressed to Henrietta Maria as it would be diplomatically difficult to send these to a Protestant monarch. Once the first gift giving had taken place further information was sought by papal agents regarding the artistic tastes of the royal couple, and Henrietta Maria requested, and received, various devotional artworks[77]. In this way Henrietta Maria represented both members of the royal couple and acted as a conduit through which Charles could engage in art appreciation, ownership, and gift exchange. This not only demonstrates the fluidity of the couple's collection but highlights that they could draw on one another's networks – some of which were only available through the queen's confessional identity – to grow their art collection and explore different styles. Although the conference papers were recorded and are available online the event nevertheless reached a more limited audience than the exhibition itself. Similarly, although the catalogue referenced above was available to purchase at the exhibition, it cost £40, and was thus less accessible. Despite the cutting-edge nature of the research presented at the *Charles I: King and Collector* conference, the exhibition itself placed Charles at the centre of networks of exchange. Although Henrietta Maria's confessional identity was present the interpretation failed to explore exactly what this

[72] "Guido Reni (1575-1642) and workshop," *RA Large Print, Charles I King and Collector Gallery VII* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018), 9.

[73] Griffey, "'Her Majesty's pictures'".

[74] Griffey, "'Her Majesty's pictures'".

[75] Griffey, "Van Dyck paintings," 55.

[76] Serres, "Henrietta Maria, Charles I and the Italian Baroque," 172.

[77] Andrea Bacciolo, "'Piaccia a Sua Maestà che ogni giorno vengano maggiori creazioni di mandare regali a questa volta': Paintings and Drawings from the Papal Curia of the Barberini," Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uOiPWDqAw4&feature=emb_title (accessed October 24, 2020).

meant to the royal couple in terms of their artistic activities. This difference may reflect the priorities of the curatorial team creating the exhibition but may also be influenced by the fact that the conference took place after the exhibition had opened and therefore the research presented there may not have been able to influence the written interpretation.

Furthermore, only one female artist was recognised within *Charles I: King and Collector*. Artemisia Gentileschi was present through the inclusion of her self-portrait 'La Pittura' in the «Queen's House» section of the exhibition[78]. This inclusion reinforced the sense of this room as a female space and subsequently presented it as being other and different to the rest of the exhibition. Furthermore, a close examination of the large print guides and the author's multiple experiences of visiting the exhibition suggests that 'La Pittura' was added to the space later, after the initial opening of the exhibition. It was not seen on an early visit to *Charles I: King and Collector* and nor is there any interpretation available in the guides, which were printed for the exhibition's opening. This may suggest that the painting was not originally intended to hang in the exhibition and may have been included in response to comments or concerns regarding the lack of female representation. Artemisia's presence at the royal court from 1638 highlights the fluid nature of the Stuart royal collection at this time and suggests that whilst Charles' name may appear within official documentation, Henrietta Maria and her familial connections were fundamental to bringing both Orazio Gentileschi and Artemisia to England. Mary D. Garrard states that «[t]hough formally invited by Charles I, Artemisia primarily served Queen Henrietta Maria» and that when Marie de Medici arrived at the Stuart court, she also worked for the queen mother, further arguing that «Artemisia's invitations to England were prompted by…Henrietta Maria, with input from Marie»[79]. This not only demonstrates the flexibility within the royal couple's artistic engagement and collecting but also highlights the involvement of other members of the royal family. Further, as with the van Dyck portraits that span both Charles and Henrietta Maria's interests but were represented only within spaces dedicated to Charles, Artemisia and Orazio worked for both members of the royal couple. The painting may have also been included due to ongoing research by Niko Munz at the time the exhibition opened. Munz and a team of researchers and art conservators worked for six years until in 2023 they were able to announce that another painting by Artemisia Gentileschi, a version of *Susanna and the Elders*, had been rediscovered and repaired in the modern Royal Collection. Munz's research places the painting as hanging in Henrietta Maria's chambers at Whitehall Palace in 1639 and suggests that she commissioned it directly from Artemisia in conjunction with the remodelling of this highly personal and privileged space. At the time of planning *Charles I: King and Collector* this attribution had not yet been recognised or confirmed but perhaps 'La Pittura' was selected after the exhibition was initially finalised as a nod towards the future publication of this research. When speaking about

[78] Artemisia Gentileschi, *Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting (La Pittura),* c.1638-9, oil on canvas, 98.6 x 75.2 cm, Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 405551, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/1/collection/405551/self-portrait-as-the-allegory-of-painting-la-pittura (accessed September 14, 2023).

[79] Mary D. Garrard, *Artemisia Gentileschi and Feminism in Early Modern Europe* (London: Reaktion Books, 2020), 57-59.

the rediscovery of the painting Letizia Treves, curator of the 2020-2021 exhibition *Artemisia,* also stated that Artemisia has «[only] became a household name in the last five years or so» which may have also resulted in her potential exclusion from *Charles I: King and Collector*[80]. Royal patronage and agency were therefore significantly oversim plified in *Charles I: King and Collector* and appear to reconstruct Henrietta Maria as someone set apart from her husband, their children, the Stuart royal court, and Protestant ideals, despite her importance in shaping the Royal Collection.

Figure 3: Hendrick Pot, *Charles I, Henrietta Maria and Charles, Prince of Wales (later Charles II)*,1632, oil on canvas, 47.3 x 59.7 cm, Royal Collection Trust, Inventory Number: RCIN 405541. Royal Collection Trust / ©His Majesty King Charles III 2024.

The lack of discussion around Henrietta Maria's agency as seen in the Royal Collection Trust interpretation of Mytens' portrait is also reflected in their interpretation of Hendrick Pot's family portrait of Charles I, Henrietta Maria, and Charles II, when Prince of Wales, painted in 1632. In this portrait Charles I stands at the right-hand side of the scene, in front of a large table covered in a red cloth, on which sits the crown jewels, some foliage (possibly laurel leaves), and the king's hat.

[80] Adelaide Izat, Niko Munz, and Letizia Treves, "A Royal Rediscovery: Artemisia Gentileschi's Susanna and the Elders painted for Henrietta Maria," London Art Week, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_MzlG8Rguc0 (accessed 30 June, 2024).

At the other end of the table Henrietta Maria sits on a chair, on a slightly raised dais, and holds the young Charles, who is placed on the table beside her[81]. As with other portraits discussed within this article, the exhibition *Masterpieces of Buckingham Palace*, held at the Queen's Gallery London from 2021-2022, and available as a 3D virtual walkthrough online, described the provenance of this painting as «presumably commissioned by Charles I, but there is no record of it in his collection»[82]. The earliest recorded owner provided by the Royal Collection Trust was Sir Francis Boring and the painting was not definitely incorporated into the Royal Collection until George IV bought it from Francis' son in 1814[83]. Despite Henrietta Maria's visual importance in the painting, she is nevertheless once again removed from the possible narrative of patronage and agency. Further, considering her centrality in this portrait and the importance of the birth of Charles in cementing her position as queen consort, the painting could equally have been commissioned or intended for a family member.

REINTERPRETING IDENTITY, PATRONAGE, AND THE MODERN MONARCHY

At times Henrietta Maria is almost entirely omitted from heritage reconstructions in England which examine the early modern monarchy. At the Victoria and Albert Museum, for example, she is mentioned only once in the permanent British Galleries which reconstruct English and British history chronologically from 1600 to 1900 and incorporate the monarchy throughout[84]. In contrast, despite the complexities of reconstructing the civil wars and his execution, Charles I is often upheld – at least within art heritage spaces – as «the greatest patron of the age». Henrietta Maria does not receive the same attention. In *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits* the interpretation stated that Charles I «was the greatest of all British royal art patrons and collectors» and whilst the interpretation discussed van Dyck in relation to the portrait of Henrietta Maria present in the exhibition it did not discuss her own agency or artistic interests[85].

The centrality of Charles' collecting can also be seen to reduce the activities of James VI & I and Anna of Denmark, assigning their artistic narratives to negative Anglo-centric perceptions of early modern Scotland and failing to recognise their influence on the interests and activities of their son Charles. Furthermore, the predominance of this narrative in heritage sites could lead to a neglect of other focuses, such as the civil wars which played a significant role in the fate of the royal art

[81] Figure 3.

[82] Royal Collection Trust, "Explore the Exhibition," https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/masterpieces-from-buckingham-palace/the-queens-gallery-buckingham/explore-the-exhibition (accessed September 18, 2023).

[83] Online Interpretation, "Charles I, Henrietta Maria and Charles, Prince of Wales (later Charles II)," Royal Collection Trust, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/2/collection/405541/charles-i-henrietta-maria-and-charles-prince-of-wales-later-charles-ii (accessed September 18, 2023).

[84] Saunders, *Construction, Deconstruction, and Reconstruction.*

[85] Label Text, "Charles I," *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits,* accessed 26 July 2021. Label Text, "Henrietta Maria," *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits,* accessed 26 July 2021.

collection. *Charles I: King and Collector* saw the theme of overcoming conflict embedded into Charles' narrative – despite his execution. This lack of a meaningful discussion around conflict can be seen to create positive links between the past and present monarchy, suggesting an unbroken line of legitimacy, and celebrating the continuation of the Royal Collection into the present day with a connection between it and the survival of the monarchy.

The exclusion of Henrietta Maria can be seen to be tied to her complex and previously unfavourable position in English historiography. Fundamentally connected to this latter point is her position as a Catholic women and queen consort in opposition to the Church of England and the official Protestant position of the English and British monarchies, especially after the Act of Union in 1707. Furthermore, the traditional perception that war and conflict are masculine and that queens held significantly less power than their male counterparts ensures that Henrietta Maria is removed from narratives of the civil wars in heritage spaces. For example, at the National Civil War Centre in Newark Henrietta Maria is recreated in a short film where she is presented in a domestic, peaceful setting despite the ongoing conflict and the queen recounting her active involvement in bringing reinforcements to Charles[86]. The continuation of a monarchy in Britain into the twenty-first century can also be seen to influence the royal narratives chosen to be reconstructed in heritage sites. Henrietta Maria does not directly lead to the current monarchy and her confessional identity, connections to conflict, and outdated (though often repeated) historiography that depicts her as an inadequate mother, have produced a set of undesirable traits that the modern royal family would not wish to be seen to embody. As a Catholic French queen Henrietta Maria does not reflect the current royal family's continued adherence to the Church of England and narratives of conflict and division juxtapose with their attempts to forge connections and present and encourage unity.

In recent years it can be argued that there has been an increase in Stuart-focused exhibitions and events, and that these spaces and the modern monarchy have sought to reconfigure the image of the Stuart monarchy to uphold and legitimise the royal family's continued position in the twenty-first century. The existence of the monarchy into modern day remains tied to ideas of hereditary rule and is reliant on public popular support, which is even more important during transitional moments such as the recent context of royal death and succession. Furthermore, the Stuarts hold significant positions in the history of the monarchy; James VI & I united Scotland, England, Ireland, and Wales under one monarch, and Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James and Anna, is the connection between the present monarchy and the early modern past through her grandson who became George I. This Scottish connection and a sense of unity can be seen to hold particular importance within the political context of the last decade which has seen both a Scottish Independence Referendum and the Brexit Referendum. A connection between Charles III and the past Stuart monarchs is reinforced through their shared names and was widely commented upon

[86] Saunders, *Construction, Deconstruction, and Reconstruction.*

during the media coverage surrounding recent events[87]. Likewise, in her official platinum jubilee portrait Elizabeth II sits in front of a blurry Windsor Castle and a statue of Charles II, who as the king of the restored Stuart monarchy could be seen as a symbol for the continuation of the royal family in and after politically divided times[88].

Heritage sites in England explored within this article and elsewhere can be seen to create an 'in-group' which conflates England/English with Britain/British and omits historic narratives from Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. This is reflected through the use of 'British' in the exhibition title *Tudors to Windsors: British Royal Portraits,* which is anachronistic considering that the exhibition began with a portrait of Henry VII (1457-1509) who was born 146 years before James VI & I united the crowns, and 250 years before the Act of Union. The formation of the Church of England and the later exclusion of Catholic monarchs or consorts from the British throne constructs a monarchical narrative that exists in direct opposition to Catholicism. Future research examining how reconstructions of Henrietta Maria differ in other places associated with her, such as France, may be particularly illuminating and would allow comparisons to be drawn between countries based on their individual histories of monarchy.

Henrietta Maria simply does not fit into the Protestant, English monarchical ideal. Fuller reconstructions of her narrative in heritage sites would require nuanced discussions of early modern religious conflict, which could be seen as undesirable as these would highlight the instability of the monarchy and of England in the past. Henrietta Maria, therefore, occupies a liminal position, one where she can be simultaneously celebrated for her artistic contribution whilst also being condemned for her confessional identity and othered through a combination of her religion, French origin, and gender. Depictions of royal motherhood celebrate Henrietta Maria for producing multiple heirs whilst also highlighting that conflict arose due to her confessional identity as embodied through the kingship and forced abdication of James VII & II in 1688. As shown through the discussion of royal parenthood within this article, the physical realities of pregnancy, birth, and motherhood are omitted, and therefore othered within heritage sites. To examine Henrietta Maria's artistic patronage in more detail within heritage spaces would allow for further discussion of female agency, confessional identity, and international exchange, but would also require greater context regarding religions divisions and conflict. Despite his execution, Charles I is often upheld as an admirable patron of the arts and this focus allows a line to be drawn between the interests of the Stuart monarchy and the present royal family. Whilst *Charles I: King and Collector* presented Charles' international networks as purely artistic and void of confessional conflicts of interest, many of Henrietta Maria's activities were fundamentally linked to her position as a Catholic, foreign queen and are therefore reduced and often entirely omitted.

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[87] For examples see: BBC News, "The Coronation of TM The King and Queen Camilla: The Preparation," May 6, 2023, https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m001lsyv/the-coronation-of-tm-the-king-and-queen-camilla-the-preparation. Gillian Brockell, "Charles III is the third King Charles. The first two had a pretty hard time," *The Washington Post,* September 9, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2022/09/09/king-charles-i-ii-iii-queen-elizabeth/.

[88] "Resources for the Platinum Jubilee," https://www.royal.uk/resources-platinum-jubilee, (accessed June 29, 2024).

Figure 4: Anon, *La Representation du Mariage accorde entre les Tres-puissans Roys de France et Angleterret pour Charles Prince de Walles Duc de Cornw, avec Madame Henriette Maria*, c.1624-25, 20.5 x 13.7 cm, Royal Collection Trust, Inventory Number: RCIN 601886. Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2024.

Figure 5: Willem de Passe, (attributed to), EPITHALAMIUM GALLO-BRITANNICVM or A Discourse of ye Mariage betwixt England, and France, c.1625. engraving on paper, 41.7 x 27.0 cm, Royal Collection Trust, Inventory Number: RCIN 601888. Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2024.

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