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THE QUEEN'S WEALTH IN THE MIDDLE AGES

by
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This article takes a look at the income and properties of queens in the Middle Ages. It's aim is to better understand what it meant to be queen; to learn more about the public persons and real power of queens. Two examples from either end of the extremes demonstrate the connection between the wealth and the power of queens: the marriage contract between Otto II with his wife Theophanu on the one hand and the relationship between Maximilian I and Bianca Maria Sforza on the other. The example of Cunigunde, wife of Henry II, disproves the theory that only a queen whose wealth was great and secure could take an active part in politics. Finally, the conditions in England and France serve as an analogy for the conditions of queens in the Holy Roman Empire. Here the article emphasises the German queen's lack of a personal, regular income.

Zum Königtum im Mittelalter soll über die den Königinnen zur Verfügung stehenden Einkünfte und Vermögen ein Zugang geschaffen werden, um so ihre Rolle sowohl als öffentliche Personen als auch bzgl. ihrer realen Machtausübung zu erfassen. Die Interdependenz von materieller Ausstattung und tatsächlichem Herrschaftsvermögen von Königinnen werden zunächst an zwei Extrembeispielen veranschaulicht: einerseits dem Ehevertrag Ottos II. und seiner Gemahlin Theophanu, andererseits dem Verhältnis zwischen Maximilian I. und Bianca Maria Sforza. Am Beispiel Cunigundes, der Frau Heinrichs II., wird die Annahme, daß nur eine gesicherte wirtschaftliche Basis den Königinnen eine aktive politische Rolle erlaubte, widerlegt. Anschließend wird mittels Analogie von den englischen und französischen Verhältnissen auf die Lage der Königinnen im Deutschen Reich geschlossen; hier wird besonders auf das Fehlen eines eigenen und regelmäßigen Einkommens deutscher Königinnen eingegangen.

I. Introduction

Queens played a prominent role in European history. Therefore historical research has always paid attention to their lives. But since the interest in women's and gender studies has been growing in recent years, historians take a new and stronger look at the female royal celebrities, especially in the Middle Ages. A lot of monographs, biographies and essay collections have been published with new and fresh approaches in discussing and interpreting historical sources. This view on the women enjoying a position at the top of the realms is both detailed and complex, and based on a modern way of investigation. That means: we consider a higher degree of biographical facts. But apart from the individual details modern scholarship has focused its attention on the

status of medieval queens, their roles in public life and their participation in power and political affairs¹.

Actually historians like talking about "queenship". Constructed in the English-speaking academic sphere as "a status complementary to that of the male ruler, not powerless..., but not in itself the source of power"², this term was adapted and translated in other languages. I also speak about "Königinnentum" in my own book on the queens of the medieval German empire³.

But there are still problems when this term is used in a general manner. As this term is not found in historical texts, it is just a theoretical model, a concept and not to be taken at all for a historical fact. I am sure that the expression "queenship" could and should transport an idea of the queen, who is not only married to a king and mother of legitimate royal offspring, but who is above all a person holding an office and exercising authority. The most important thing is the last point, the status of royal women as "public" persons, who keep an influential and powerful position at court and in the realm and therefore being part of the royal administration and government. But there are still a lot of questions to answer what queenly power is about. We are still far from having a clear concept, in which monarchies, epochs and under which political circumstances "queenship" developed and which images of queenship existed⁴.

¹ This essay is based on a paper presented at the above mentioned Interdisciplinary Conference in Budapest; see the summary by Amalie FÖSSEL. In: *Das Mittelalter. Perspektiven mediävistischer Forschung* 9/1: Medialität im Mittelalter (2004, published 2005) 162–164.

² See the Introduction of Anne J. DUGGAN (Ed.), *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*. Proceedings of a Conference held at King's College, London 1995, Woodbridge 1997.

³ Amalie FÖSSEL, *Die Königin im mittelalterlichen Reich. Herrschaftsausübung, Herrschaftsrechte, Handlungsspielräume*, Stuttgart 2000.

⁴ It's impossible to give a complete bibliography of the most important publications of the last years. In addition to the volumes of A. J. DUGGAN (note 2) and A. FÖSSEL (note 3), see especially Marion F. FACINGER, *A study of medieval queenship: Capetian France 987–1237*. In: *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 5 (1968) 1–48; Pauline STAFFORD, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers. The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages*, London/Washington 1983, pbk. repr. 1998; Lois L. HUNEYCUTT, *Images of Queenship in the High Middle Ages*. In: *The Haskins Society Journal* 1 (1989) 61–71; Marjorie CHIBNALL,

A very important element of the exceptional rank of the queens' position and the model of "queenship" is without any doubt the topic of their income and wealth. Particularly the question of the queens' monetary situation could open a new way of discussing the specific character of her position. What we have to point out is this: In which way does a queen's wealth indicate her position as office-holder? Is there a link between the queen's finances and her authority? Are her resources of that kind that they show us that "queenship" was in a certain way an institution?

It's just ten years ago that John Carmi Parsons called attention to the "investigation of queenship's resources"⁵. With this he brought up a complex issue which has increasingly been brought into focus by medieval research in the last few years. So far only few exemplary studies have been published on this topic. Unless I am completely mistaken, English research is leading the way in this question, being able to rely on a vast amount of comprehensive source material. The reason for this is that we possess sources concerning the receipts and expenses of the English royal court and the means by which the royal administration in England worked⁶. As to the French court⁷, we do not have an equal

The empress Matilda. Queen consort, queen mother and Lady of the English, Oxford 1991; *Women and Sovereignty*, ed. by Louise Olga FRADENBURG, Edinburgh 1992; *Medieval Queenship*, ed. by John Carmi PARSONS, New York 1993; Franz Reiner ERKENS, "Sicut Esther regina". Die westfränkische Königin als consors regni. In: *Francia* 20/1 (1993) 15–38; *Letters of the Queens of England*, ed. by Anne CRAWFORD, Stroud 1994, pbk. repr. 2002; *Frauen des Mittelalters in Lebensbildern*, hrsg. von Karl SCHINITZ, Graz/Wien/Köln 1997; John M. KLASSEN, *Warring Maidens, Captive Wives and Hussite Queens*, New York 1999; Janet L. NELSON, *Medieval Queenship*. In: *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. by Linda MITCHELL, New York/London 1999, 179–207; Fanny COSANDEY, *La reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir. XVe–XVIIIe siècle*, Saint-Amand 2000; *Reines et Princesses au Moyen Âge. Actes du cinquième colloque international de Montpellier Université Paul-Valéry (24–27 novembre 1999)*, 2 vols., Montpellier 2001; Sharon L. JANSEN, *The Monstrous Regiment of Women. Female Rulers in Early Modern Europe*, New York 2002; *Regine e sovrane. Il potere, la politica, la vita privata*, ed. by Giovanna MOITA, Milano 2002; Carsten WOLL, *Die Königinnen des hochmittelalterlichen Frankreich 987–1237/38*, Stuttgart 2002; see also the below quoted biographies to some queens from J. C. PARSONS (note 44); P. STAFFORD (note 53); M. HOWELL (note 52) and L. L. HUNEYCUTT (note 53).

⁵ John Carmi PARSONS, Introduction: Family, Sex, and Power: The Rhythms of Medieval Queenship. In: J. C. PARSONS (note 4) 1.

⁶ Chris J. GIVEN-WILSON, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity. Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360–1413*, New Haven, Conn./London 1986. Next the below quoted study of I. L. JOHNSTONE (note 40) compares to the queen's households John Carmi

amount of sources and unfortunately there are hardly any German sources at all. Whereas there are many financial accounts and household books in England there are no comparable sources in German. So I must apologize that I can't give special information about the structure, the staff and the finances of the German royal court and also the daily life there⁸. Our knowledge about German queens' income remains rudimentary. So in most cases I can only state a lack of source material. From the viewpoint of European history, however, it is necessary to have an idea of the queen's wealth in the German Middle Ages. I want to undertake this in a comparative manner looking beyond Germany's borders to the English monarchy.

II. How wealthy were the Roman-German queens?

I would like to start with two women in German history, whose lives show the greatest difference about the queen's role and wealth that can be imagined.

In the tenth century we can see a famous and tough lady, coming from Byzantium as a girl of perhaps twelve or thirteen years. Her name was

PARSONS, *The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile in 1290. An Edition of British Library, Additional Manuscript 35 294 with Introduction and Notes*, Toronto 1977; and *The Household Book of Queen Isabella of England. For the Fifth Regnal Year of Edward II, 8th July 1311 to 7th July 1312*, ed. by Frank D. BLACKLEY/Gustav THERMANNSEN, Edmonton 1971; especially for the 15th century see the essays of Alec R. MYERS, 'The household of queen Margaret of Anjou, 1452–1453'. In: *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 40 (1957) 79–113; 'The household of queen Elizabeth Woodville, 1466–1467'. In: *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 50 (1967) 207–215. The costs and administration of the royal court on a journey are worked out by Elisabeth ANDRE, *Ein Königshof auf Reisen. Der Kontinentalaufenthalt Eduards III. von England 1338–1340*, Köln/Weimar/Wien 1996.

⁷ To the French queens actually see: Jean-Marc CAZILHAC, *Le douaire de la reine de France à la fin du Moyen Âge*. In: *Reines et Princesses* (note 4) 75–87.

⁸ An overview of the constitutional and social framework of the German royal courts, especially Frederick III and Maximilian I, was given by Peter MORAW, 'The Court of the German Kings and of the Emperor at the end of the Middle Ages, 1440–1519'. In: *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c. 1450–1650*, ed. by Ronald G. ASCH and Adolf M. BIRKE, Oxford 1991, 103–137; as far as the size of Frederick's court is concerned cf. Paul-Joachim HEINIG, 'How Large was the Court of Emperor Frederick III?', *ibid.*, 139–136.

Theophanu. For the Ottonians she wasn't the desired princess at first⁹. But nevertheless she was accepted by Otto I as a bride for his son and successor to the throne¹⁰. The couple married in Rome Easter 972¹¹. There Theophanu was crowned empress and she was the only person in the whole Middle Ages who had this singular title of a *coimperatrix*. No other empress ever held such a position¹².

The marriage treaty handed to her was also unique. It looked very artistic with its golden letters on purple coloured parchment and it may

⁹ The Ottonian family hoped for a marriage between Otto II and Anna, the daughter of the Byzantine emperor Nicephorus Phocas. This marriage should finish a long period of conflicts. But the negotiations proceeded extremely difficult for some years. Finally a delegation to Konstantinopel was sent by Otto I in 971 under the leadership of the archbishop Gero of Cologne, accompanied by bishop Liudprand of Cremona properly. They returned with Theophanu, the niece of the new emperor John Tsimisces, cf. Karl LEYSER, *Theophanu Divina Gratia Imperatrix Augusta: Western and Eastern Emperorship in the Later Tenth Century*. In: *Communications and power in medieval Europe. The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, ed. by Timothy REUTER, London 1994, 143–164. The experiences of his first journey to the Byzantine court in 968 Liudprand described in "Legatio ad imperatorem Constantinopolitanum Nicephorum Phocam". In: *Liudprandi Opera*, MGII 55 rer. Ger. [41], ed. by Joseph BECKER, Hannover 1915, 175–212. In the matter of the relationship between the Eastern and Western empire cf. the papers of the conference "Byzanz und das Abendland im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert", ed. by Evangelos KONSTANTINOU, Köln/Weimar/Wien 1997.

¹⁰ Since the 1 000th anniversary of Theophanu's death a lot of books and essays of her biography have been published. See the papers in: *Kaiserin Theophanu. Begegnung des Ostens und Westens um die Wende des ersten Jahrtausends. Gedenkschrift des Kölner Schnütgen-Museums zum 1 000. Todesjahr der Kaiserin*, hrsg. von Anton von EUW und Peter SCHREINER, 2 vols., Köln 1991; furthermore *Kaiserin Theophanu. Prinzessin aus der Fremde – des Westreichs große Kaiserin*, hrsg. von Gunther G. WOLF, Köln/Weimar/Wien 1991; *Odilo ENGELS, Theophanu – die westliche Kaiserin aus dem Osten. In: Die Begegnung des Westens mit dem Osten. Kongreßakten des 4. Symposiums des Mediävistenverbandes in Köln 1991 aus Anlaß des 1 000. Todesjahres der Kaiserin Theophanu*, hrsg. von Odilo ENGELS und Peter SCHREINER, Sigmaringen 1993, 13–36; *Johannes FRIED, Kaiserin Theophanu und das Reich*. In: *Köln – Stadt und Bistum in Kirche und Reich des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Odilo Engels zum 65. Geburtstag*, hrsg. von Hanna VOLLRATH und Stefan WEINFURTER, Köln/Weimar/Wien 1993, 139–185; *The empress Theophano. Byzantium and the West at the turn of the first millennium*, ed. by Adelbert DAVIDS, Cambridge 1995; *Ekkehard EICKHOFF, Theophanu und der König, Otto III. und seine Welt*, Stuttgart 1996; *Ludger KÖRNTGEN, Starke Frauen: Edgith – Adelheid – Theophanu*. In: *Otto der Große, Magdeburg und Europa*, ed. by Matthias PUHLE, 2 vols., Mainz 2001, vol. 1, 119 ff.

¹¹ Nikolaus GUSSONE, *Trauung und Krönung. Zur Hochzeit der byzantinischen Prinzessin Theophanu mit Kaiser Otto II*. In: *A. v. EUW und P. SCHREINER* (note 10) II, 161 ff.

¹² Cf. A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 51–56.

certainly be the most splendid marriage contract of all times¹³. But the content of the charter was in no way inferior to its beautiful outward appearance. The lands transferred to her were enormous and scattered over the whole Roman-German empire. The province Istrien with the county Pescara belonged to her Italian possessions¹⁴. In Germany she received big estates, royal courts and important abbeys, particularly the provinces Walcheren and Wichelen with the abbey Nivelles inclusively 14 000 hides as well as the royal courts Boppard and Thiel at the Middle and Lower Rhine, Herford in Westphalia, Tilleda and Nordhausen on the edge of the Harz Mountains, which formerly belonged to the lands of Queen Mathilda, her husband's grandmother¹⁵. During her marriage Otto II even widened this property around further gifts within the years 974¹⁶, 978¹⁷ and 979¹⁸ in Thuringia and Saxony.

¹³ See: Wolfgang GEORGI, *Ottonianum und Heiratsurkunde 962/972*. In: A. v. EUW und P. SCHREINER (note 10) II, 135–160; Anton von EUW, *Iconologie der Heiratsurkunde der Kaiserin Theophanu*, *ibid.*, 175–191; Vera TROST, *Chrysographie und Argyrographie in Handschriften und Urkunden*, *ibid.*, 335–343; Rainer KAHSNITZ, *Heiratsurkunde der Theophanu*. In: M. PUHLE (note 10) II, 127–129. The original of the document is part of the stock of the Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv in Wolfenbüttel. A facsimile edition by Dieter MATTIES, *Die Heiratsurkunde der Kaiserin Theophanu, 972 April 14, Faksimile-Ausgabe*, Stuttgart 1980.

¹⁴ The localization of the county Pescara is unclear; W. GEORGI (note 13) 149; note 33.

¹⁵ *Noverit igitur omnium sancte dei ecclesie nostrorumque fidelium presentium ac futurorum industria, qualiter eidem dilectissime sponse nostre dote legitima more maiorum nostrorum quedam iam infra Italicos fines quam et in transalpinis regnis nostris habenda et iure perpetuo concedimus possidenda: Istriam Italie provinciam cum comitatu Piscaria, trans Alpes provincias Uualacra, Uuigle cum abbata Niuelle, quattuordecim milibus eo pertinentibus mansis, imperatorias quoque curtes nostras propria maiestate dignas Bochbarda, Thiela, Heriuurde, Dullede, Nordhuse, eo quod avie nostre domne Mathildis semper semperque auguste quoad sibi divinitus vixisse dabatur fuisse dinoscitur*, D.O.II. 21 (972 April 14 Rom). In: *Die Urkunden Ottos II. und Ottos III.*, hrsg. von Theodor SICKEL, *MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae 2*, Hannover 1888–1893, 28–30. Perhaps in Nordhausen, where a nunnery was founded by Queen Mathilda, was written the *Vita Mathildis antiquior: Die Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde*, MGH 55 rer. Germ. [66], hrsg. von Bernd SCHÜTTE, Hannover 1992; and Bernd SCHÜTTE, *Untersuchungen zu den Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde*, Hannover 1994, 1–75, esp. 70–73. Concerning the lands of queen Mathilda cf. A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 67, and note 318; concerning the foundation of Nordhausen, *ibid.*, 231–237.

¹⁶ D.O.II. 76 (974 April 29 Mühlhausen): Otto gave his wife some villages and courts nominally the places Eschwege, Frieda, Mühlhausen, *Tutinsoda* und Schlotheim.

¹⁷ D.O.II. 171 (978 März 17 Sömmerringen): Gift of the royal court Pöhlde.

¹⁸ D.O.II. 202 (979 Sept. 27 Bothfeld): Gift of the royal place Beleck; cf. Hans GOETTING, *Zum Schenkungsdiplom Ottos II. für Theophanu über den Königshof Beleck*

It is impossible, however, to quantify the size of the estates and the revenues gained from them. Yet it can be assumed that Theophanu's property was perhaps the largest a queen ever obtained in the German *regnum*. Her large fortune is reflected in her political position, because the Empress exercised political authority and for some years acted as regent for her under-age son Otto III¹⁹. It was only through Theophanu and her mother-in-law Adelheid that "queenship" became distinct in the German Empire of the Middle Ages.

We find a very different situation at the end of the Middle Ages. Let us consider Bianca Maria Sforza, the second wife of Maximilian I, a woman from Milan, who had a special interest in fashion and jewels²⁰. The marriage was the result of a political deal between Ludovico il Moro, her uncle, and Maximilian. She was beneath his station. But the successor to the throne saw his political and financial advantages. Much money was involved. The dowry, urgently needed by Maximilian for his military expeditions, amounted to 300 000 Gulden, which is an equivalent of 45 000 pounds Sterling. The precious dowry given of the bride, 21 years old, was worth another 70 000 Gulden²¹.

But the king had no love for his wife. She wasn't a beauty and not very clever at all²². She was married for 16 years with no chance of becoming his consort and partner²³. She remained childless and without political

(D.O.II. 202 a und b). In: *Archiv für Diplomatik* 21 (1975) 231–248.

¹⁹ A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 319–332.

²⁰ An up-to-date biography of Bianca Maria is still missing. It is referred to the non-printed thesis of Heidemarie HOCHRINNER, *Bianca Maria Sforza. Versuch einer Biographie*, Graz 1966. See also Ernst BOCK, *Bianca Maria*. In: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 2 (1953) 214; Gerhard RILL, *Bianca Maria*. In: *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* 10 (1968) 24–26; Gigliola SOLDI RONDININI, *B. Maria Sforza*. In: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 2 (1983) 37.

²¹ In greater detail described by H. HOCHRINNER (note 20) 6–17, 26–32. The fundamental study to the reign of Maximilian is written by Hermann WIESFLECKER, *Kaiser Maximilian I.*, 5 vols., München 1971–1986; about the marriage negotiations and the political advantages of this union cf. vol. 1, 363–372.

²² Cf. H. HOCHRINNER (note 20) 154–158; and lately Katherine WALSH, *Verkaufte Töchter? Überlegungen zu Aufgabenstellung und Selbstwertgefühl von in die Ferne verheirateten Frauen anhand ihrer Korrespondenz*. In: *Jahrbuch des Vorarlberger Landesmuseumsvereins* 1991, Bregenz 1991, 129–144, esp. 138 f.

²³ I have discussed the queens' status as *consors regni* or *consors imperii* in greater detail

influence and never had enough money to cover the costs of her living. The sums paid to her were limited to an annual amount of between 4 000 and 9 000 Gulden. This is a very low budget. In English sterling this would have been only 600–1 400 pounds. She herself was not able to administrate her finances in a clever way. She got money and spent it quickly and without thinking²⁴.

She often found herself in various cities for several months as a pledge for the debts of the king, who was short of money all the time²⁵. The poor queen, however, always had to wait that she would be redeemed. When her expenses reached a degree above her financial possibilities she had to stay and to wait a little bit longer²⁶. During her lifetime Bianca Maria remained a recipient of her husband's orders. As far as he was concerned he didn't like seeing his wife²⁷. So he told her that she should be absent from the royal court in Innsbruck and also from any other political event²⁸. In most cases she did as she was told. When in January 1505 she arrived in Innsbruck a few days earlier, Maximilian demanded that she and her ladies should travel to Sterzing and stay

in my book: A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 56–66.

²⁴ H. HOCHRINNER (note 20) 149–153.

²⁵ The steward of her household Niklas of Firmian complains the financial predicament of the queen and her court in a letter to Maximilian in February 1497. Because the king left behind his wife in the city of Worms as a pledge of his debts and didn't take care of her bad situation. If we believe the information of the letter, the queen's court did not have food and money sufficiently and, furthermore, had to accept the debt claims of the king's creditors, who lost their patience more and more. The letter is published in: Quellen zur Geschichte Maximilians I. und seiner Zeit, hrsg. von Inge WIESFLECKER-FRIEDRICH with an introduction by Hermann WIESFLECKER, Darmstadt 1996, no. 20, 81 f.

²⁶ A lot of examples are quoted by H. HOCHRINNER (note 20) 57–94.

²⁷ According to Hermann WIESFLECKER, Maximilian I. Die Fundamente des habsburgischen Weltreiches, München 1991, 81, Bianca did not correspond to the expectations of the self-confident emperor. She was all the time sickly, nervous, capricious, sweet-toothed and from that roly-poly, like a child and naively. She herself became her role as the emperor's wife and a queen not conscious.

²⁸ From 1497 to her death on the 31th of December 1510, the court in Innsbruck was the major residence of the queen and her household, but of course the queen leaved Innsbruck for travelling; she was often going on a journey for several months, cf. the list of the queen's itinerary in the study of H. HOCHRINNER (note 20) 163–181. Concerning her household see *ibid.*, 106–148 and the non-printed thesis of Anneliese GATTI, Der Innsbrucker Hof zur Zeit Kaiser Maximilians I. 1493–1519, Innsbruck 1943, 38–46.

there until the day, when the French delegation, which was still at the royal court in Innsbruck, had returned to Paris. It was the steward of her household Niklas von Firmian who knew how to stop this plan. The argument he mentioned was pitiable: He replied to the king that the weather was too frosty and therefore nobody could expect the ladies to go on such a journey because they didn't have enough warm clothes²⁹.

In this direct comparison, Theophanu and Bianca Maria Sforza personify two biographies, who are as different they can be. Bianca Maria, whose personality and intelligence was not up to her position as a queen and not comparable to her husband's intelligence, could not develop a profile of her own. She was an example for powerlessness. She couldn't fill her role as queen. Maximilian and the great figures of the German *regnum* did not accept her as queen. By contrast, Theophanu got responsibilities in government and acted with wide authority. Together with empress Adelheid, her mother-in-law, they show for the first time what queenship meant in the German *regnum*. But when we consider the extent of estates given to her, we can assume that it was Theophanu, who held the top-position in the Middle Ages.

III. Is there a link between wealth and power?

Recently, Régine Le Jan raised the question whether or not there is a direct link between the endowment of the queen on the one side and the development of queenship on the other. She affirms this and comes to the conclusion: In the Carolingian epoch, it was normal that the queen held a small dower. An increase in prestige and authority was only possible by bearing children. Then in the Ottonian epoch there was a change especially in Germany, where the empresses Adelheid and Theophanu received large estates. According to Le Jan, this evidently shows that the queen's role now had a new rank and standing. From this she concludes that the wealth of the Ottonian empresses and her status as *consors regni* mark the zenith of power³⁰.

²⁹ See: H. HOCHRINNER (note 20) 85 f.

³⁰ Régine LE JAN, Douaires et pouvoirs des reines en France et en Germanie (VIe–Xe siècle). In: Dots et douaires dans le Haut Moyen Âge, ed. by François BOUGARD [u. a.], Ro-

Undoubtedly, research into the interdependence of endowment and queenship is both exciting and rewarding. But in my opinion the comparison of only the 9th and the 10th centuries seems to be too narrow a view of this subject, because after Adelheid and Theophanu large acquisition of lands by the queens was a thing of the past in the German Empire for the next few decades³¹. The following queens, Cunigunda and Gisela, had only a fraction of the possessions of their predecessors³². It was Cunigunda, who was forced to do without her possession so that the king could put his plan into effect to build up a new diocese in Bamberg³³. Several months passed by until Cunigunda was compensated with the assignment of the royal court of Kassel³⁴. The place Kau-

me 2002, 457–497. A short overview of queenship in Carolingian times was given by Janet L. NELSON, *Les Reines Carolingiennes*. In: *Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes à Byzance et en Occident (VIe–XIe siècles)*. Colloque international organisé les 28, 29 et 30 mars 1996 à Bruxelles et Villeneuve d'Ascq, ed. by Stéphane LEBECQ [u. a.], Lille 1999, 121–132.

³¹ Concerning the lands of Adelheid cf. A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 69 f.

³² Our knowledge of the possessions of Gisela, the wife of king Conrad II, is very small. We have information of two villages which were given to her by Conrad in 1035 and 1036, D.Ko.II. 215 (1035 Jan. 17 Tilleda) and D.Ko.II. 234 (1036 Okt. 26 Tilleda). In: *Die Urkunden Konrads II., MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae 4*, hrsg. von Harry BRESSLAU, Hannover/Leipzig 1909, 292–294, 319. Furthermore she possessed inherited lands and transferred Regenbach to the episcopal church of Würzburg, cf. Peter HILSCHE, *Regenbach und die Schenkung der Kaiserin Gisela*. In: *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte 41* (1983) 52–81. The question to the queen's wealth is still unexamined and not discussed in the biographical studies of Wolfgang HUSCHNER, *Kaiserin Gisela. Klügste Beraterin Konrads II.* In: *Herrscherinnen und Nonnen. Frauengestalten von der Ottonenzeit bis zu den Staufern*, hrsg. von Erika UHJ. [u. a.], Berlin 1990, 108–133; Kurt-Ulrich JÄSCHKE, *Notwendige Gefährtinnen. Königinnen der Salierzeit als Herrscherinnen und Ehefrauen im römisch-deutschen Reich des 11. und beginnenden 12. Jahrhunderts*, Saarbrücken 1991, 47–83; Hansjörg FROMMER, *Gisela. Gemahlin Konrads II.* In: *DERs., Spindel, Kreuz und Krone. Herrscherinnen des Mittelalters*, Karlsruhe 1993, 111–146; Gertrud THOMA, *Kaiserin Gisela*. In: *K. SCINITHI* (note 4) 90–120. See also Franz Reiner ERKENS, *Konrad II. (um 990–1039). Herrschaft und Reich des ersten Salierkaisers*, Regensburg 1998.

³³ Cf. A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 201–207; and Amalie FÖSSEL, *Eine Königin im politischen Aus? Zu den Auswirkungen der "Moselfehde" auf die Stellung Kunigundes*. In: *Festschrift Rudolf Endres zum 65. Geburtstag*, hrsg. von Charlotte BÜHL und Peter FLEISCHMANN, Neustadt (Aisch) 2000, 20–28; the circumstances of the foundation of the diocese Bamberg from the viewpoint of Henry II are outlined by Stefan WEINFURTER, *Heinrich II. (1002–1024). Herrscher am Ende der Zeiten*, Regensburg 1999, 250–268.

³⁴ D.H.III. 182 (1008 Mai 24 Ingelheim). In: *Die Urkunden Heinrichs III., MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae 5*, hrsg. von Harry BRESSLAU und Paul KEHR,

fungeren was included where some time later the queen founded a convent. After her husband's death she spent the last years of her life there³⁵.

The extent of the German queens' estate has quite different reasons which unfortunately I cannot discuss here. However, I would like to confine myself to some basic ideas.

When she got married, Adelheid was – unlike most of the Carolingian queens – not a non-descript person. She was the widowed Italian queen and opened her country for Otto I. It was her experiences and her contacts that made it possible for Otto to assume power in Italy. And it was Adelheid and her network that prepared the way for the renewal of the Occidental Empire. Finally, it was only after the imperial coronation of 962 that the term *consors regni* as title for the empress was used and that the standing and the authority of Adelheid became larger³⁶.

And Theophanu? – She also did not owe her endowment to a new concept of queenship, but rather to the fact that she was the niece of the Byzantine emperor. Being a newcomer on the political stage of Europe it was important for the Ottonians to impress the *basileus*, so the splendour and the dignity of the elder Roman-Byzantine Empire could shine on them as well. This could be achieved most impressively by giving a large dowry to the bride. Furthermore, in the course of her marriage she also got possessions so when she gave birth to a child³⁷.

Cunigunda and Gisela, however, were already married, when their husbands were elected kings. Their *dos* corresponded to one of a duch-

Berlin 1926–1931; cf. Karl HEINEMEYER, *Königshöfe und Königsgut im Raum Kassel, Göttingen 1971*.

³⁵ A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 245–249; Petra BRÖDNER, *Eck kan mek nycht toffrede geven, eck mot to Koffungen. Kloster und Damenstift Kaufungen im Mittelalter*. In: *Kunigunde – eine Kaiserin an der Jahrtausendwende*, ed. by Ingrid BAUMGÄRTNER, Kassel 1997, 77 ff.

³⁶ As regards the contribution of Adelheid for establishing a powerful queenship in the medieval German realm see actually Amalie FÖSSEL, *Frauen an der Spitze Europas. Lebensstrategien und Lebensentwürfe von Königinnen im 10. Jahrhundert*. In: *Kaiserin Adelheid und ihre Klostergründung in Selz*, hrsg. von Franz STAAB (†) und Thorsten UNGER, Speyer 2005 (under press), with further informations of the appropriate literature.

³⁷ The royal court Pöhlde was given to Theophanu by Otto II in 978 a short time before their daughter Mathilde was born; cf. A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 67.

ess. The possessions which they had formerly got weren't royal estates and courts, but rather came from the private property of their husbands' families³⁸.

There can be no doubt that in Ottonian times the Empress became a political figure. The standing of her person had risen and her participation in politics became widely accepted. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Empresses continued to be politically active within the German Empire and took part in the government. Their political participation, however, and that's very important to consider, did not have any immediate consequences concerning the extent of their possessions. This fact could be watched at the beginning of the eleventh century, when Cunigunda was queen. She didn't have so many estates as Theophanu, but it seems that her political power, her influence and authority was in no way at a smaller level³⁹. So, in most cases there is no direct link between the size of the queen's possessions and the extent of her political power in medieval Germany.

IV. Different categories of income of the English and the Roman-German queens

So, what can we say about the queen's property in the long period between Theophanu and Bianca Maria Sforza? How does the German development differ from the English?

In Germany, we don't find different categories of revenue of the kind we find in England⁴⁰. We don't have something like the queen-gold, which was an additional levy of 10 per cent paid to the queen on fines

³⁸ Cunigunda possessed some villages in South Bavaria, where Henry II was duke before his election to king, cf. Wilhelm STÖRMER, Kaiser Heinrich II., Kaiserin Kunigunde und das Herzogtum Bayern. In: *Zeitschrift für Bayerische Landesgeschichte* 60 (1997) 437–463.

³⁹ Amalie FÖSSEL, Heinrich II. und Kunigunde. Ein Herrscherpaar an der Jahrtausendwende. In: *Archiv für Geschichte von Oberfranken* 82 (2002) 23–34.

⁴⁰ Three categories of revenue – the queen-gold, supplementary grants by the king and the queen's endowment – were outlined in a pioneer study by Hilda JOHNSTONE, *The Queen's Household*. In: *The English Government at Work, 1327–1336*, vol. 1, Central and Prerogative Administration, ed. by James F. WILLARD and William A. MORRIS, Cambridge, Mass. 1940, 250–299.

paid to the king⁴¹. The queen-gold seems customary since the twelfth century⁴² and we know that Eleanor of Provence got it immediately after her marriage to Henry III⁴³. It was a fluctuating payment, high one year, low the next. But on the whole, there is good reason to state that queen-gold was a significant component of the queen's total resources in thirteenth and fourteenth century England⁴⁴.

In Germany however, in the time of Frederick Barbarossa we can find payments to the king, to the queen and sometimes to the royal court in singular charters settling a conflict. So the Polish ruler Boleslaw IV had to pay a sum of 20 marks of gold for not travelling to the German court and for not taking the oath of fealty to the empress Beatrice in September 1157⁴⁵. There are different opinions about the significance of these sums. Is the payment an indication, that the queen was involved in the negotiations of the agreements⁴⁶? This may be. Or – and this is my opinion – is it an attempt to levy something like queen-gold? In this case the amount was much less than in England. It was only one per cent. If I'm right we can see here an additional way of establishing the queen's

⁴¹ H. JOHNSTONE (note 40) 262–265.

⁴² The systematic collection of queen's gold seems to have begun with Eleanor of Aquitaine; see: Henry G. RICHARDSON, *The Letters and Charters of Eleanor of Aquitaine*. In: *English Historical Review* 74 (1959) 193–213, esp. 209–211. Recently the opinion that this custom originated in king Henry I's reign and that his wife, queen Matilda of Scotland, kept it is pointed out by Lois L. HUNEYCUTT, *Alianora Regina Anglorum: Eleanor of Aquitaine and Her Anglo-Norman Predecessors as Queens of England*. In: *Eleanor of Aquitaine. Lord and Lady*, ed. by Bonnie WHEELER and John Carmi PARSONS, New York 2002, 115–132, for this question 126 f. Sceptically on the other hand stays Heather J. TANNER, *Queenship: Office, Custom, or Ad Hoc? The Case of Queen Matilda III of England (1135–1152)*, *ibid.* 133–158, who stated, that after this time there is no information of Matilda of Boulogne, wife of Stephen of Blois, for receiving queen's gold.

⁴³ Margaret HOWELL, *The Resources of Eleanor of Provence as Queen-Consort*. In: *English Historical Review* 102 (1987) 372–392, concerning the queen's gold 373–379.

⁴⁴ See: John Carmi PARSONS, *Eleanor of Castile. Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England*, New York 1995, pbk. repr. 1998, 77 f.; A. CRAWFORD (note 4) 11 f.

⁴⁵ *Regesta Imperii IV, 2: Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Friedrich I. 1152 (1122)–1190*, Bd. 1: 1152 (1122)–1158, hrsg. von Ferdinand OPLL, Wien/Köln/Graz 1980, no. 482.

⁴⁶ A connection between the payments and the queen's activity to balance the problems was presumed by Knut GÖRICH, *Die Ehre Barbarossas. Kommunikation, Konflikt und politisches Handeln im 12. Jahrhundert*, Darmstadt 2001, 336 f.

income. But it remains a very short episode. There are not enough charters for drawing a clear conclusion⁴⁷.

A second category of the queen's income in England were the supplementary grants by the king. They could be grants of specific sums of money or grants of lands in wardship⁴⁸. Although they were individually different and depending upon the king's generosity, this was a fundamental element in securing the queen's income⁴⁹.

That was different in the German Middle Ages. Of course kings gave gifts to the queens, such as clothes, jewellery, crowns and money. For example, empress Elizabeth, the fourth wife of Charles IV, made an extensive shopping tour, buying fur in Pisa and 1 200 Gulden worth of pearls in Florence, when her husband marched towards Rome in 1368. He had to pay her bills⁵⁰. Presents like these contributed to an enlargement of the queen's property and helped to keep her own budget low. But it is only rather by chance and sporadically that we can find information about things like these. They cannot be stated as a regular source of income⁵¹. Moreover, in the German Empire there was no institution comparable to that of the English exchequer, who supervised the money transfers and kept records of them⁵².

⁴⁷ More examples of payments to Beatrix are discussed by A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 75 f.

⁴⁸ It was Eleanor of Provence, who provided with an independent income from a succession of wardships; cf. M. HOWELL (note 43) 385–387.

⁴⁹ H. JOHNSTONE (note 40) 260, 265 f.; M. HOWELL (note 43) 384–389; J. C. PARSONS (note 44) 78–80.

⁵⁰ Gisela WILBERTZ, Elisabeth von Pommern. Eine Kaiserin im späten Mittelalter. In: Bohemia 28 (1987) 45–68, and esp. 58 f.

⁵¹ The financial accounts of queen Margaret of Brabant, the wife of emperor Henry VII, are a special source for the German realm. Henry VII demanded for the queen a share of money and gifts, when he took payments from some Lombardian cities. The accounts were written by the queen's clerk Giles on the trip to Rome 1310/11: *Apocha rationis camerae reginae* (13th Oct. 1310–5th June 1311), MGH *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum* 5 (1313–1324), ed. by Jakob SCHWALM, Hannover 1909–1911, no. 1151; cf. Kurt-Ulrich JÄSCHKE, *From Famous Empresses to Unspectacular Queens: The Romano-German Empire to Margaret of Brabant, Countess of Luxemburg and Queen of the Romans* (d. 1311). In: A. J. DUGGAN (note 2) 75–108, esp. 100 f.

⁵² Cf. H. JOHNSTONE (note 40) 266–297. The close links between queen Eleanor of Provence, wife of the English king Henry III, and the great bastions of government – the chancery, exchequer and judiciary – were stressed by Margaret HOWELL, *Eleanor of*

So, when we talk about the queens' wealth in the German realm, then we must talk about her endowment. All the information we have got is taken from charters with lists of the estates or sometimes from literary writings. These sources do not allow for more than an outline of their possessions. It is not possible to ascertain exact numbers as to the extent and the return of the queen's endowment. This is a basic problem which we come across in all European kingdoms during the Early and the High Middle Ages⁵³.

As far as we can see, up to the twelfth century land endowments belonged to the property of the Crown. But then, in the time of the Staufens Kings, a complete change set in. The queen was increasingly endowed with property of the respective House of the reigning dynasty. It was probably for the last time that Rudolf of Habsburg was able to enforce that his wife Anna was granted 1 000 marks in gold coming from imperial revenues in 1273. Therefore the king needed the agreement of the electors, prelates and princes, and he also asked for the consent of the pope⁵⁴. When Louis the Bavarian got married to his second wife Margaret of Hainault in 1324, this was no longer possible. Margaret was only endowed with towns and estates belonging to her husband's Wittelsbach heritage⁵⁵.

This change, which had been in its full swing since the twelfth century, was directly connected with the changing structures of power in the German Empire, where – unlike in other European monarchies – no hereditary monarchy established itself, but where the Kings were

Provence. Queenship in Thirteenth-Century England, Oxford 1998, pbk. repr. 2001, 270; and M. HOWELL (note 43) 379 f. For Eleanor of Castile see: J. C. PARSONS (note 44) 94 f. For a general discussion of the queens' separate courts and their administration and managements see: Anne CRAWFORD, *The Queen's Council in the Middle Ages*. In: *English Historical Review* 116 (2001) 1193–1211.

⁵³ For the English queen in the High Middle Ages cf. Pauline STAFFORD, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith. Queenship and Womens Power in Eleventh-Century England*, Oxford 1997, 97–142; Lois L. HUNEYCUTT, *Matilda of Scotland. A Study in Medieval Queenship*, Woodbridge 2003, 55–72.

⁵⁴ *Regesta Imperii* V,1: *Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Rudolf von Habsburg 1273–1291*, hrsg. von Oswald REDLICH, Innsbruck 1898, repr. Hildesheim 1969, no. 301.

⁵⁵ Cf. A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 77 f.

elected rulers from changing dynasties. Thus the basis for the Kings' power increasingly established itself in their own territories.

This political development had far-reaching consequences for the position of the queen. On the one hand she was no longer materially protected by her rights to the royal property, but since the time of the Staufer kings by the rights to the property of the family she married into. On the other hand – unlike in the European hereditary monarchies – there was no specific set of properties reserved to the queen⁵⁶. This can only be seen in a very basic way when Emperor Charles IV allocated the same estates to his third and fourth wife. Both empresses, Anna of Schweidnitz-Jauer⁵⁷ and Elizabeth of Pommern⁵⁸, held the cities Hohenmauth and Königgrätz. But this is a special case, because these possessions were part of the emperor's inherited Bohemian kingdom.

After the manner of the English monarchy it became customary for the German Empire, too, to establish amounts of money. For example it was laid down in the marriage contract of the 16-year-old Margaret of Hainault, who the 35-year-old Louis the Bavarian took as his second wife in 1342, that her *dos* was to amount to 11 000 pounds Heller annually. This is why several castles with various rights and tax revenues were conferred to her. It was stipulated that if this sum could not be achieved by the revenues from the property already conferred to her, she was to get further property until the full sum would have been completed. Additionally she got another 5 000 pounds Heller annually which

⁵⁶ Only in the tenth and eleventh centuries we can observe the one or other royal court and abbey in the hand of two Roman-German queens. One example is Nordhausen, which was in the possession of queen Mathilda and empress Theophanu; cf. note 15. Another case concerned two royal courts in Italy which held the empresses Adelheid and Agnes, see: A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 71 f., with further discussion. A list of the lands of empress Agnes, second wife of Henry III and mother of Henry IV, who was also a rich lady, is found in the book of Mechthild BLACK-VELDTRUP, *Kaiserin Agnes (1043–1077)*. Quellenkritische Studien, Köln/Weimar/Wien 1995, 162–164.

⁵⁷ Joseph GOTTSCHALK, *Anna von Schweidnitz, die einzige Schlesierin mit der Kaiserinnenkrone (1353–1362)*. In: *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau* 17 (1972) 25–42, esp. 30.

⁵⁸ Dieter VELDTRUP, *Zwischen Eherecht und Familienpolitik. Studien zu den dynastischen Heiratsprojekten Karls IV.*, Warendorf 1988, 378–380.

were not connected to specific places or castles. This meant that Empress Margaret was entitled to an annual income of 16 000 pounds Heller⁵⁹.

Unlike in England, the German queens were all endowed differently. The amount varied enormously. Whereas Theophanu and also Agnes of Poitou, wife of Henry III, were endowed with large properties, other queens apparently only received a fraction of that. In the late Middle Ages, when amounts of money were negotiated, this becomes even clearer. As already said Empress Margaret was endowed with 16 000 pounds Heller annually. This is the equivalent of about 2 500 pounds Sterling. The wives of Charles IV got much more. His second wife, Anna of Palatinate, was endowed with 9 000 mark Silver annually, which is the equivalent of about 4 300 pounds Sterling⁶⁰. His third wife, Anna of Schweidnitz-Jauer, was promised a sum of about 7 400 pounds Sterling⁶¹.

No marriage contract of Barbara of Cilli, Sigmund's second wife, is available to us. But the customs and taxes assigned to her brought her an annual sum of 28 000 Hungarian Gulden, which is the equivalent of about 4 500 pounds Sterling⁶². She was 25 years younger than her husband, considered to be beautiful and eloquent, self-confident, ambitious and a capable business woman⁶³. So in the course of her marriage she succeeded in receiving more and vast areas of land in Hungary, Croatia, Moravia and Bohemia⁶⁴.

⁵⁹ *Pactum super matrimonio Ludewici regis (15th Aug. 1323)*. In: *Acta regni Ludewici IV. et Friderici III. (1325–1330)*, MGH *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum* 6, 1, ed. by Jakob SCHWALM, Hannover 1914–1927, no. 779; cf. Heinz THOMAS, *Kaiserin Margarete*. In: K. SCHNITH (note 4) 269–298, esp. 276 f.

⁶⁰ *Archivum Coronae Regni Bohemiae*, vol. II: 1346–1355, ed. by Venceslaus HIRUBÝ, Prag 1928, no. 100 (4th March 1349).

⁶¹ *Archivum Coronae* (note 60) no. 243 (3th July 1353); cf. J. GOTTSCHALK (note 57) 30.

⁶² See: Elemér MÁLYUSZ, *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn 1387–1437*. Aus dem Ungarischen übertragen von Anikó Szmodits, Budapest 1990, 91–93.

⁶³ Iately, I presented a new interpretation of the early years of Barbara as an Hungarian queen and powerful political figure of the reign of emperor Sigismund on the international conference "Sigismund de Luxembourg, Roi de Hongrie et Empereur", Luxembourg, 2005, 8–10 June: Amalie FÖSSEL, *Barbara von Cilli. Ihre frühen Jahre als Gemahlin Sigismunds und ungarische Königin*, will appear in the proceedings of the conference, ed. by Michel PAULY, Mainz 2006.

⁶⁴ In total, our knowledge of the queen's possessions and revenues is still on a small base.

Thus at least the Luxemburg queens received endowments which seem to be comparable to those of the English, because for England it had already been established since the late twelfth century that the queens were endowed with an amount between 4 000 marks and 4 500 pounds Sterling⁶⁵. But this is a poor comparison. When talking about the endowment of the German and the English queens in the late Middle Ages, we are obviously talking about totally different things. We have to ask ourselves: Is there evidence that the queen could enjoy the fruits of her dower during the king's lifetime? Or was it only at the death of the king that the royal widow could hope to profit from the dower lands?

Theoretically it seems to be clear: It was only at the death of her husband that the widow could expect to receive the revenue of her dower assignment⁶⁶. – And in practice? This is a difficult matter.

In her 1940 pioneering study Hilda Johnstone stated that the revenues of dower lands were not only an important source of income of the widowed queen, but also of the queen consort⁶⁷. But recent scholarship

The results of research are summarized by A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 78–80; some charters were published by Gusztav WENZEL, *Okmányi adalék. Borbála és Erzsébet magyar királynék birtokáról* (Urkundlicher Beitrag zu den Besitztümern der ungarischen Königinnen Barbara und Elisabeth). In: *Magyar Történelmi Társulat* 12 (1863) 268–287. On the above mentioned conference in Budapest two papers were given to this topic by István DRASKÓCZY, *Der Besitz der ungarischen Königinnen im 15. Jahrhundert*, with a special looking to Barbara's possession in Diósgyőr; and Martina KALÁBOVÁ, *Das Witwengut der ungarischen Königinnen in der Mittelslowakei*, who described the development of the "Institution des Witwengutes", which began with Sigismund's gifts to Barbara in 1424, cf. the essay of M. KALÁBOVÁ, *Venné majetky uhorských kráľovien v stredoslovenskej banskej oblasti do roku 1478* (Die Institution des Witwengutes der ungarischen Königinnen in der Slowakei bis 1478). In: *Historický časopis* 52 (2004) 3–30, with an English and German summary.

⁶⁵ See for example H. JOHNSTONE (note 40) 253, 259; J. C. PARSONS (note 44) 76; A. CRAWFORD (note 4) 9.

⁶⁶ Cf. the summary by Janet SENDEROWITZ LOENGARD, 'Of the Gift of her Husband': English Dower and its Consequences in the year 1200. In: *Women of the Medieval World. Essays in Honour of John H. Mundy*, ed. by Julius KIRSHNER and Suzanne F. WEMPLER, Oxford 1985, 215–255.

⁶⁷ H. JOHNSTONE (note 40) 253; compare A. CRAWFORD (note 53) 1194; and also the outline by A. CRAWFORD (note 4) 8: "As part of the marriage negotiations, a sum was agreed upon for the queen's dower; that is, the annual sum settled on her by the English Crown which would support her household during her husband's lifetime and provide her entire income in her widowhood. In the later part of our period, this sum was often largely secured upon dower lands which the queen administered during her husband's lifetime

has worked out that arrangements made at the time of the queen's marriage in thirteenth and fourteenth century England seemed to be fluid and the possibility of modification always high⁶⁸. Latest studies on Eleanor of Provence and on Eleanor of Castile came to the conclusion that those two queens couldn't enjoy any of these revenues during their husbands' lifetime⁶⁹. For these periods in England we are lucky to have financial records with receipts and expenditure of the royal household. During the reign of Henry III and Eleanor of Provence it is evident that the revenue from the queen's dower lands was paid into the Exchequer to the king, as was the case with the income from the rest of his demesnes. It was only after the death of Henry III that there was the change, when Edward I decided to hand over control of the various dower lands to his mother, the widowed queen⁷⁰.

As far as England of the twelfth century is concerned, it seems to be certain that neither Eleanor of Aquitaine⁷¹ nor her daughters-in-law received revenue from their dower lands before their husbands' death⁷². That queen dowagers sometimes had to fight a long battle for their rights is shown by the example of Berengaria of Navarre, the wife of Richard Lionheart. She was only married for a short time and she was an English queen who has never been to England and never held any English lands. Being a widow for more than thirty years she was forced to appeal to Pope Innocent III, but at last she received little of what was

using the income to support herself and her household; earlier, the lands remained in her husband's charge during his lifetime, while he supported her household with the cash equivalent".

⁶⁸ See: M. HOWELL (note 43) 382 f.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 380 f., 383, 390; M. HOWELL (note 52) 280; J. C. PARSONS (note 44) 75.

⁷⁰ M. HOWELL (note 43) 383 f.

⁷¹ It exists a long bibliography of Eleanor, who was certainly the most interesting queen in Europe of the 12th century. Besides the mentioned literature in note 41 cf. Jane MARTINDALE, *Eleanor of Aquitaine*. In: *Richard Coeur de Lion in History and Myth*, ed. by Janet L. NELSON, London 1992, 17–50; Marie HIVERGNEAUX, *Aliénor, Duchesse d'Aquitaine et deux fois Reine: Rôle et pouvoir d'une femme au XIIe siècle*. In: *Reines et Princesses* (note 4) 43–62.

⁷² The strict control of the queen's resources began, when Henry II became an English king; see: John Carmi PARSONS, *The Queen's Intercession in Thirteenth-Century England*. In: *Power of the Weak. Studies on Medieval Women*, ed. by Jennifer CARPENTER and Sally-Beth MACLEAN, Urbana/Chicago 1995, 147–177, esp. 149.

due to her⁷³. Only until the middle of the twelfth century in the time of the Anglo-Norman queens there was a very different situation. These queens were wealthy women, who controlled substantial demesnes not only during their widowhood but also during their husbands' lifetime. They exercised dominion over their lands and could alienate them⁷⁴.

And what can we say about the rights of using the dower lands by the German queens? According to documents dating from the High Middle Ages, the queens possessed far-reaching rights to the properties conferred to them: They had free disposal of them, they could own them, bequeath them, exchange them, confer them to somebody else or do with them whatever they pleased. In a document this was called *liberam [...] potestatem [...] obtinendi tradendi commutandi precariandi vel quicquid sibi placueret inde faciendi*⁷⁵.

Yet the legal stipulation had little in common with the actual situation. In practice the queen could not make much use of her right of ownership. Conferment and endowment was only possible for commemorative or dynastic purposes and only in agreement with the court⁷⁶. Conflicts were pre-programmed if queens showed too much monetary extravagance. It is not certain that the German queens could receive revenues from their dower lands during the lifetime of their husbands. We have no information about their income as queen-consort and the financing of their households. From the tenth century, all queens were provided with their servants, but we don't know anything about their remuneration⁷⁷.

⁷³ Ann TRINDADE, Berengaria. In *Search of Richard the Lionheart's Queen*, Dublin 1999, esp. 142–157.

⁷⁴ The right of free disposal of land by Anglo-Saxon queens was pointed out by Pauline STAFFORD, *The King's Wife in Wessex 800–1066*. In: *Past and Present* 91 (1981) 3–27; see also Marc Anthony MEYER, *The Queens "Demesne" in Later Anglo-Saxon England*. In: *The Culture of Christendom: Essays in Medieval History in Commemoration of Denis L. T. Bethell*, ed. by Marc A. MEYER, London 1993, 75–113.

⁷⁵ D.H.III. 116 and 117 (note 34).

⁷⁶ Gerd ALTHOFF, *Probleme um die dos der Königinnen im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*. In: *Veues et veuvage dans le haut moyen âge*, ed. by Michel PARISSÉ, Paris 1993, 123–133.

⁷⁷ For the German queens' own courts and households see the summary by A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 81–92.

In the late Middle Ages, documents were formulated more precisely and more closely to reality. The queen was clearly prohibited from alienating property of any kind. The only right to her endowed property was the right to cash in revenues. But unlike in England, where it was only possible for the queen to make use of her endowments after her husband's death, the queens in the German Empire could profit from their endowments immediately after marriage. This becomes obvious when we have a look at the few marriage contracts which have been handed down to us since the fourteenth century.

Thus we can assume that the household of the German queens was financed with the revenues from their endowments which – from the thirteenth century onward – were promised in the marriage negotiations. In Germany there has never been such a complex network of different sources of income like in England. Since an administrative structure and a fiscal institution like the English exchequer did not exist, this was not possible in the first place. In the German Empire nobody knew what amounts to expect, especially since the imperial property became smaller and smaller. Since the twelfth century a very important source of income used to be the revenue, which came from the lands the queens had inherited. So, empress Beatrice herself controlled her Burgundian county, her hereditary territory. There is an indication that she had her own *curia*, which administered the duties and fines⁷⁸.

But taxes and duties were levied directly and no records of them were kept. This is even more deplorable, because we cannot know for sure if the amounts mentioned in the endowment documents really made their way to the German Queen. In case they did, it is well possible that the Queen had larger financial resources at her disposal than the English queen. But we do not know anything about the amount of the payments she received. We cannot assess either how large the expenses of her household were.

Finally we have no concrete idea whether her officials levied and administered her revenues. On this we can only speculate. It can be, how-

⁷⁸ A. FÖSSEL (note 3) 356–358.

ever, assumed that queens managed their finances themselves together with their officials, because there was no central fiscal institution. This may have given the queen some financial independence. This is supported by the evidence that Barbara of Cilli made profits from the estates and the mines conferred to her and had to forward the surplus to the king⁷⁹. She was a clever businesswoman and in the course of her marriage knew how to acquire lucrative sources of income. So she was soon in the fortunate position to help the king out of his financial straits and to give him loans. I believe that this is strong evidence for the fact that she had free disposal of her finances and that she was capable of making use of them in a profitable way.

V. Conclusions

In the German Empire we can observe that queens received widely varying amounts of revenue. Not every empress who exercised power controlled big estates. Different factors made it possible for the queen to become a wealthy woman. Very important elements seem to be her reputation and descent, the political profit of the marriage, whether it was a reigning king who married, and after all the personality of the queen, her interest in business and her will to accumulate her worldly goods.

In the later Middle Ages, the dowry of the future queen played an increasing role. It is no surprise that the wives of Charles IV received bigger incomes than other queens in the fourteenth century. The marriage with Anna of Palatinate in 1349 opened him a way to strengthen his young kingdom. Through his third and fourth marriages with rich heiresses he gained territories which enlarged his own Bohemian kingdom.

The development of the queens' income in English monarchy was based on a very different structure. The situation was much more con-

stant, because roughly since the mid twelfth century the queens were given specific estates returning about 4 000 or 4 500 pounds Sterling annually. As far as the annual income of the queen-consort is concerned, the queen-gold and different grants of the kings, which secured the queens' finances. But also we have to state that this combination of privilege and resources was never formally laid down.

But there can be no doubt that in England as well as in Germany, the degree of the queen's wealth depended on the kings' generosity and the cleverness and ambition of the queens and their descent-families. What really mattered were the personal confidence between husband and wife and the personal interest in business and management of the queens which determined whether they became rich women and exercised "queenship".

⁷⁹ See: Pál ENGEL, Die Einkünfte Kaiser Sigismunds in Ungarn. In: Sigismund von Luxemburg, Kaiser und König in Mitteleuropa 1387–1437. Beiträge zur Herrschaft Kaiser Sigismunds und der europäischen Geschichte um 1400, hrsg. von Josef MACIEK [u. a.], Warendorf 1994, 179–182.