

Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau  
Quellen und Studien

Band 34

2017

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

# Frictions and Failures

Cultural Encounters in Crisis

Edited by  
Almut Bues

2017

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

This print was made possible thanks to the funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no. 291827 and is financially supported by the HERA Joint Research Programme ([www.heranet.info](http://www.heranet.info)) which is co-funded by AHRC, AKA, BMBF via PT-DLR, DASTI, ETAG, FCT, FNR, FNRS, FWF, FWO, HAZU, IRC, LMT, MHEST, NWO, NCN, RANNÍS, RCN, VR and The European Community FP7 2007-2013, under the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Programme.

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek  
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.dnb.de> abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek  
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

Informationen zum Verlagsprogramm finden Sie unter  
<http://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de>

© Otto Harrassowitz GmbH & Co. KG, Wiesbaden 2017  
Das Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt.  
Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Das gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen jeder Art, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und für die Einspeicherung in elektronische Systeme.  
Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem Papier.  
Druck und Verarbeitung: Memminger MedienCentrum AG  
Printed in Germany  
ISSN 0947-4226  
ISBN 978-3-447-10736-5

## Contents

ALMUT BUES	
Introduction .....	1

### *I Frictions and Failures*

CHIARA FRANCESCHINI	
<i>Le due parti della corte</i> : Female households, projects, and failures in and outside Italy (1450-1650).....	9
HELEN WATANABE-O'KELLY	
Predestined for conflict: The consort and her mother-in-law .....	25
ORSOLYA RÉTHELYI	
<i>muess hindurch Maister oder knecht zu werden</i> : Mary of Hungary (1505-58) and the reinvention of the queen's court in late medieval Buda .....	37

### *II Queens of Denmark and Sweden*

GRETHE JACOBSEN	
A room and a life of her own: Queen Christine (1461-1521) of Denmark during the last decade of her marriage (1503-13).....	51
SVANTE NORRHEM	
Ideological friction and political crisis: Queen Luise Ulrike of Sweden and a failed coup d'état .....	67
ELISE DERMINEUR	
Pride and prejudice: Luise Ulrike of Sweden, the Pomeranian War and the question of loyalty.....	77
MIIA IJÄS	
Katarzyna Jagiellonka and the keys to a new diplomacy .....	91

### *III Polish Princesses and Queens*

ALMUT BUES	
Frictions in the life of Polish princesses and queens consort 1500-1800.....	105
EWA KOCISZEWSKA	
Woman with a past: The adventures, reputation, and penitence of Marie Louise Gonzague de Nevers, Queen of Poland.....	133
MARIA SKIBA	
<i>La principessa è molto compita</i> : Anna Katarzyna Konstancja Vasa (1619-51) and failed dynastic networking .....	143
ANETA MARKUSZEWSKA	
And all this because of ‘the weakness of your sex’: The marital vicissitudes of Maria Klementyna Sobieska Stuart, wife of the Old Pretender to the English throne.....	163

### *IV East-West Frictions*

GIEDRĖ MICKŪNAITĖ	
United in blood, divided by faith: Elena Ivanovna and Aleksander Jagiellończyk ..	181
JILL BEPLER	
Marriage markets and risk assessment: The lure of the Russian Empire at the turn of the eighteenth century .....	201
Contributors .....	215
Index .....	219

# Introduction

Almut Bues

'Marrying Cultures. Queens Consort and European Identities 1500-1800' was a three-year research project (2013-2016) funded by HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area) focusing on the foreign consort as agent of cultural transfer. Two or more European cultures meet whenever a king or prince takes a bride from another country. She often speaks a different language to that of her new court, professes a different version of Christianity, and has been brought up in a different court culture. Transported as she is to her new capital city and court, rarely or never to return home, she can either integrate by changing her beliefs and learning the language and ways of her new territory or she can become a source of friction, retaining an aura of 'foreignness', arousing hostility and even becoming a focus for conspiracy theories.

The aim of the first International Marrying Cultures workshop 'Dynastic Networks as Vehicles for Cultural Transfer: Sources, Methods and Theoretical Approaches' (15-18 July 2014, Wolfenbüttel) brought together scholars from universities, museums and libraries who work on the material aspects of cultural exchange for an intense exchange of ideas. The second workshop 'Queens Consort and their Cultural Opportunities and Achievements' (15-18 April 2015, Oxford) considered whether the continuous engagement of Britain with European dynasties, not just through dynastic marriage but through the importation of the House of Orange in 1689 and of the House of Hanover from 1714 and examined the role that the Polish court played in international court culture throughout the period.

The third workshop 'Frictions and Failures – Cultural Encounters in Crisis' (21-23 April 2016, Warsaw) focused on those dynastic marriages which ran into difficulties of various kinds and examined a wide range of cases in order to determine what caused these frictions and failures. It also extended the geographical range of the territories discussed by the project hitherto by concerning itself not just with Poland but with Hungary, Lithuania, and Muscovy resp. Russia. This was particularly valuable in bringing Orthodox consorts into the discussion, as well as the elective monarchy of Poland, in which the role of the consort is by definition different from that of a consort in a system of dynastic succession. Points of conflicts could easily arise from the queen consort's presence in her new court. These might be religious (consorts were often of a different faith to that of their husband and new country); personal (rivalries with mistresses or favourites); diplomatic; or political. The case studies elucidated what these frictions tell us a) about the specific context in which they occurred; and b) about the problems, limitations and challenges of cultural transfer more broadly.

The workshop also considered (in a broader sense) whether ‘success’ and ‘failure’ are adequate and helpful terms in assessing the impact of queens consort.

The first part of the workshop highlighted different forms and formats of frictions and failures. CHIARA FRANCESCHINI provided a historical overview of the potential conflicts between female households and host courts in Europe between c. 1450-1650. She began with a brief discussion of the contemporary notion of a ‘female court’ and its often alleged ‘influence’ on the host court’s lifestyle (*mores vivendi*), as described and/or constructed by contemporary writers and humanists. She looked at the different motives for conflict which were often linked to the political and economic situation of the court in question and asked why Italian princesses still made grand marriages after 1539 when their dynasties were politically not so important. She speculated that this was because of the cultural capital they still brought into the marriage. To sketch a history of the successes and failures of these marriages over a long period it was helpful, she proposed, to revisit the classic threefold periodization proposed by Fernand Braudel in 1974 about Italian cultural history in general, adapting it to the history of the princely marriages: 1) a period of mostly balanced and happy marriages (1454-1494); 2) a period of mostly unbalanced and extremely conflictual marriages (1494-1559); 3) the unexpected prestige of Italian consorts in Europe in the *longue durée* (1559-1650 and beyond).

When considering power structures at court and how they might impact on the position of the consort, the mistress usually comes to mind. She was certainly an influential figure and someone with whom the consort had to contend. However, as HELEN WATANABE-O’KELLY showed in her paper, a far more influential, because permanent, presence in her husband’s life was his mother, the consort’s mother-in-law. This was a relationship predestined for conflict because both the consort and her mother-in-law had, for their own survival at court, to maintain their status and influence at all costs. In this power struggle the mother-in-law held three strong cards: 1) prior presence at court; 2) authority as mother and queen; 3) emotional hold over her son.

ORSOLYA RÉTHELYI analysed the efforts of Maria of Austria, Queen of Hungary (1505-1558), to establish a queen’s court in Buda after her arrival in 1521. She pointed out that from 1440 to 1526 there were only 26 years in which the Hungarian court had a queen. Mary had to gain control of the queen’s apartment, expelling from it the castellan János Bornemissza, organize a household of trusted Germans, manage her finances (in Hungary the Queen had her own independent property) and arrange for ordinances regulating behaviour at court.

Part II of the workshop concentrated on the Scandinavian countries. GRETHE JACOBSEN described a queen, Christine of Denmark (1461-1521), who, after twenty years of marriage, separated from her husband when he failed her as spouse and as lord and created a life of her own. Queen Christine settled with her youngest son in Odense, where she built a mansion and remained, showing up at court only irregularly. During the last decade of her marriage from 1503 to 1513, Christine built a residence for herself in the centre of the city of Odense and established a life of her own there. The reason for Christine’s separation was unlikely to have been her resentment

at the King's taking a mistress but rather his abandoning her in Stockholm Castle in 1501 where she was besieged for nine months, during which time 900 of her men died of hunger and disease. Even after she had surrendered, she was held captive for 18 months. After her separation she built strong networks among the noble elite and with the church and became an important patron of the arts.

SVANTE NORRHEM and ELISE DERMINEUR spoke about Luise Ulrike of Prussia, Queen of Sweden. The power of the Swedish realm lay within the diet and in stark contrast to the strong role of the Prussian monarchs, the Swedish king had very limited powers. Norrhem discussed the queen's failed coup d'état of 1756 and how this was reported by the Swedish political elite. He showed that there were no overt comments on her gender in the reports, but that her foreignness was mostly blamed for her behaviour. The elite then had to prevent the queen from interfering again without alienating her powerful brother Frederick the Great, King in Prussia. Dermineur discussed the queen's divided loyalties during the Pomeranian War (1757-1762), in which Sweden and Prussia were in conflict with one another. Luise Ulrike passed sensitive information to her brother during the war and secretly hoped that Sweden would be defeated. This was a classic example of the conflict often felt by consorts between their loyalty to their natal and their marital dynasties.

MIRA IJÄS discussed Katarzyna Jagiellonka (1526-1583) and the diplomatic repercussions of her marriage in 1562 to the Vasa Duke Johan of Finland, who subsequently became Johan III, King of Sweden. As a Catholic she could mediate between Sweden and the European powers but the interests of Sweden and Poland-Lithuania did not always coincide. This paper raised questions about the expectations placed on queens consort and the extent of their authority and agency in fulfilling these expectations.

Part III of the workshop focused on princesses and queens consort in Poland. ALMUT BUES examined the frictions in the life of Polish princesses and queens consort. A widowed Polish princess could live under good conditions outside her native country; but what choices were made by the widowed spouses of the Polish kings? Queens dowager experienced greater difficulties surviving within an elective monarchy than within an hereditary monarchy. Their lives were not regulated according to the fixed rules governing hereditary dynasties, they had to negotiate with a parliament and the new-elected king. Exploited by their native courts as political capital in the game of power, they were automatically, whether actively or passively, drawn into the struggle for the successor to the Polish throne. All queens dowager wanted to leave the Rzeczpospolita, but a fresh start was only successfully achieved by those who were still young. If older widows left the country, after forty or more years' absence from their native countries, they would also be viewed as 'foreign' there and kept away from political events.

EWA KOCISZEWSKA's paper was devoted to Marie Louise de Gonzague de Nevers, Queen of Poland (1611-1667). She showed what a colourful life Marie Louise had lived in France before she came to Poland, how her reputation was vilified in gossip and in publications, leading to tension with her husband Władysław IV. She discussed to what extent the reputation of the consort was a possible source of frictions, how



consorts dealt with conflicting expectations of chastity and sexual prowess, and, finally, how their past was exploited by their political opponents. She also showed the queen's repentance and her turn towards religion once she became involved with Port Royal and Jansenism.

MARIA SKIBA described the Polish princess Anna Katarzyna Konstancja (1619-1651), daughter of Zygmunt III and his second wife Konstanze of Austria. Anna Katarzyna Konstancja married Philipp Wilhelm I of Pfalz-Neuburg in 1642, bringing a huge dowry with her. It was due to Habsburg pressure aimed at strengthening their influence in the German states that she was forced to marry a prince so far beneath her in rank. She failed to produce an heir or to exert much influence in her marital territory and never became the ruling duchess, for her husband did not succeed to the title until two years after her death.

ANETA MARKUSZEWSKA discussed the separation of Maria Klementyna Stuart from her husband, James III Stuart, the Old Pretender. The marriage initially seemed happy, but in later years the relationship between the spouses gradually deteriorated. Finally, a separation took place. Klementyna left her husband and decided to take refuge in the monastery of Santa Cecilia in Rome. While it is indisputable that she was portrayed as unreasonable and capricious by hostile propaganda, one should ask whether this image was based on reality. Five hundred letters to her father, written in French, explain some of the reasons for the failure of her marriage after the birth of her second son and her subsequent separation from her husband. They reveal much about her state of mind and her emotions during this time.

Part IV of the workshop discussed the difficulties that aroused from Orthodox consorts in Europe and marriages of not-Orthodox princesses to Russia. GIEDRĖ MICKŪNAITĖ presented the marriage of the Orthodox Elena of Muscovy (1476-1513) and the Catholic Aleksander Jagiellończyk (1461-1506), with all the confessional and political difficulties that ensued. The marriage was celebrated in 1495 and Elena's Orthodox faith was guaranteed. However, the marriage neither saved Lithuania from Muscovite expansion nor resulted in closer cultural contacts between the two territories. Elena was treated badly by her in-laws and was denied a coronation after her husband was elected King of Poland. Her life became even more difficult after her husband's death in 1506. Mickūnaitė explored how Elena's identity was constructed and maintained as 'other', in spite of the cultural contiguity of Poland and Lithuania.

JILL BEPLER analysed the disastrous marriage of Charlotte Christine Sophie of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (1694-1715) with Tsarevitch Alexei Petrovich of Russia, the first such marriage of a German princess into the Romanov dynasty. Brokered by her grandfather Anton Ulrich of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, the marriage was a very unhappy one and Charlotte Christine Sophie died after the birth of her second child, the future Tsar Peter II. She remained a Lutheran and lived an isolated life with the members of her own court. Bepler analysed what this marriage tells us about the frictions and failures of dynastic ambition, how decisions were made about whether marrying a German Protestant princess to a tsarevich and sending her to Russia was viable, profitable or even ethical and asked whether the unhappy outcome of this first

Romanov marriage was the result of a failed cultural encounter or just a failure of the individuals concerned.

There were two over-arching questions that linked all the papers: 1) to what extent cultural transfer between individual natal and marital courts actually took place and had a lasting effect and 2) to what extent the consorts had real cultural, political or diplomatic agency. Other topics that came up again and again were confessional differences, the control or transmission of finance and property, and the influence of individual political structures in determining a consort's success or otherwise. Understanding women's networks and households was also shown to be crucial in several papers. Methodological issues such as how to read and properly assess documents and objects were also important. Finally, an unresolved question was whether the consort's role developed and changed over time either in individual territories or across Europe.

Last but not least I should like to thank the 'Marrying Cultures' team, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly (Oxford), Jill Bepler (Wolfenbüttel), and Svante Norrhem (Lund), without whom the project would not have existed. Very special thanks go to the authors of the articles, who contributed with their expertise to the success of the conference and this volume, and for her valuable editorial help to Madeleine Brook (Stuttgart).