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Tiffany CHOYER

QUEEN ELIZABETH II, BETWEEN MODERNITY AND TRADITION, 1952–1969

LA REINE ELIZABETH II, ENTRE MODERNITÉ ET TRADITION, 1952-1969

Directeur du Mémoire : M. Christophe GILLISSEN

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Introduction

This dissertation is entitled 'Queen Elizabeth II: between modernity and tradition, 1952-1969'. Thus, the current British Monarch is at the centre of this work, and especially how she dealt with modernity and tradition during the first two decades of her reign. But first, one should concentrate on the question: 'what is the role of the Monarch?', and, by extension, on 'what is the Monarchy?'. In order to answer those questions, the work entitled *The English Constitution,* written by Walter Bagehot and published in 1867 is going to be under study. Even though this book is not the only one dealing with those topics, it can be seen as a reference on the subject. In an introduction to this book, Miles Taylor starts by stating that 'Walter Bagehot's *The English Constitution* (1867) was not the first word on the subject written in the 1860s. Nor has it proved the last, or even the most enduring. But it remains the best'.[1] Consequently, this book is a relevant source of information and Taylor also argues that it had a great influence at that time, even on future Monarchs.[2]

Nevertheless, Taylor writes that 'Bagehot nowadays is more noted for what he got wrong than what he got right' and adds that 'some historians simply think Bagehot got it all wrong, whilst other have implied that it does not really matter anyway, since few Victorians were interested in the thoughts [of Bagehot]'.[3] Therefore, one can see that there are ambivalent feelings among historians concerning Bagehot's book. Taylor also declares that 'Above all, *The English Constitution,* for all its levity, is a deft and penetrating account of an age-old set of institutions beset by modernity'.[4] This description of the book is completely linked to this dissertation as the post-war period, during which Elizabeth II became Queen,

1 Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, ed. by Miles Taylor, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. vii.
2 *Ibid.*, p. vii.
3 *Ibid.*, p. viii.
4 *Ibid.*, p. vii.

was a period marked by a lot of changes and a process of modernisation. Even though Bagehot's book does not deal with the post-war period, one can see similarities between the post-war era and the parliamentary reform that happened in Great Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century. Thus, this book remained relevant even decades later. Taylor adds that 'The economic prosperity of the mid-Victorian boom also brought new challenges'.[5] One can draw a parallel between those challenges and those brought by the two World Wars. Indeed, Taylor writes that '*The English Constitution* is above all a contribution to that debate reflecting on what had been achieved since the 1830s under the reformed political system, that required alteration and what demanded retention'.[6] One can thus wonder if this reflection can be seen as an example, that is to say, a reference about what to do or what not to do to have a successful Monarchy. First, Bagehot states that 'the best reason why monarchy is a strong government is, that it is an intelligible government'.[7] Moreover, he acknowledges the importance of the Church of England by arguing that 'The English monarchy strengthens our government with the strength of religion'.[8]

Bagehot also compares the system of the Monarchy with the republic. According to him, 'to state the matter shortly, royalty is a government in which the attention of the nation is concentrated on one person doing interesting actions. A republic is a government in which that attention is divided between many, who are all doing uninteresting actions'.[9] Thus, for Bagehot, the British Monarch is the centre of attention in the British State, and people are fascinated by the Monarch. The fact that there is a Monarch is important, even though it is only a symbol because the British Monarchy is a constitutional Monarchy. Bagehot summarises the role of the Monarch in a constitutional Monarchy in three rights: 'The right to

5 *Ibid.*, p. x.
6 *Ibid.*, pp. ix-x.
7 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
8 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
9 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn'.[10] There are a lot of people and institutions behind the Monarch. Nevertheless, according to Bagehot, what is behind the image of the Queen is actually unknown to most people because he declares that 'we have whole classes unable to comprehend the idea of a constitution – unable to feel the least attachment to impersonal laws. Most do indeed vaguely know that there are some other institutions besides the Queen, and some rules by which she governs'.[11] Consequently, as the Monarch is the centre of attention, some rules must be respected in order to remain in that position. For Bagehot, 'If a king is a useful public functionary who may be changed, and in whose place you may make another, you cannot regard him with mystic awe and wonder; and if you are bound to worship him, of course you cannot change him'.[12] Thus, one can understand that the Monarch should remain in what can be called a 'sacred position' in order to remain respected and worshiped by the people. This idea is reinforced by Bagehot a few pages later when he argues that 'Its mystery is its life. We must not let in daylight upon magic'.[13] The Queen and royalty in general are thus surrounded by magic and mystery, which should not be broken in order to keep the Queen in a divine position. Consequently, one should then study the social context of the beginning of Queen Elizabeth II's reign. Indeed, it is interesting to focus on the social and political context in order to see if what is acknowledged by Bagehot in this book is applicable to the context or if, on the contrary, it was threatened by the social changes occurring during the post-war period.

It is also essential to present the context around the topic of this dissertation, in order to understand the challenges of the time, their origins and the relation between modernity and tradition. Elizabeth II became Queen on February 6th, 1952, at the age of 25, that is to say

10 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
11 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
12 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
13 *Ibid.*, p. 54.

during the post-war era. The post-war period was a period marked by a lot of social changes. In *Understanding Post-War British Society,* Edward Royle states that the post-war period, and more particularly the 1950s, can be described as a period during which 'most significant developments occurred to create our own period of rapid social change'.[14] Royle explains that those social changes happened in different fields, such as 'the family, household structure, consumerism and its associated technologies, the position of women, class, race, religion and education'.[15] There were, thus, a lot a changes happening during the period under study.

Nevertheless, in *Britain in the Century of Total War : War, Peace and Social Change, 1900 – 1967,* Arthur Marwick argues that 'In the Fifties and Sixties the British Constitution was orchestrated upon the same five themes which stand out in the constitutional history of the previous 150 years'.[16] Marwick describes those themes a few pages later when he mentions a 'system of Monarch, Prime Minister and Cabinet, Parliament, Opposition and Party'.[17] Consequently, it was more related to tradition, even in a time of change. Yet, Marwick adds that the Monarchy was 'the feature least under attack' and explains this attitude by using Bagehot's words: 'Not so odd if one agrees that they must attach to the Head of State what Bagehot so rightly described as the *dignified* part of the government. A sense of history, a love of pageantry, an essential conservatism lies deep in the heart of British people'.[18] Concerning religion, Royle quotes Gilbert's *The Making of Post-Christian Britain: a History of the Secularisation of Modern Society*, published in 1980, which describes the post-war era as a period of 'de-Christianisation'.[19] Royle mentions 'the prolonged and steep decline in

14 Edward Royle, 'Trends In post-war British social history', in *Understanding Post-War British* Society, edited by Peter Catterall and James Obelkevich, Routledge, 1994, p. 9.
15 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
16 Arthur Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War : War, Peace and Social Change, 1900 – 1967,* Bodley Head, London – Sydney- Toronto, 1968, p. 391.
17 *Ibid.*, p. 396.
18 *Ibid.*, p. 391.
19 A.D. Gilbert, *The Making of Post-Christian Britain: a History of the Secularisation of Modern Society*, quoted in *Understanding Post-War British Society,* p. 15.

religious practices that has taken place in most Christian churches since the late 1950s' and advises that 'in the quarter century between the start of the 1960s and the mid-1980s, the number of baptisms in the Church of England fell by nearly half'.[20] Therefore, one can ask oneself what impact this decline of religion had on the Queen because it must be remembered that the Queen of England is also the Head of the Church of England. The beginning of her reign was seen as a new era. Royle argues that this new reign was considered as 'the new Elizabethan age'.[21] Nonetheless, one can wonder if this enthusiasm lasted and how those social changes impacted the British Monarchy on a longer-time basis. Furthermore, new media had appeared over the previous decades, already influencing the Monarchy. For instance, the first Christmas Broadcast in 1932 marked the beginning of a new tradition, which still continues today.

Finally, one can see that all those social changes could possibly threaten the ideal of a Monarchy based on the writings of Bagehot. Indeed, Monarchy will remain an intelligible government but when taking into consideration the de-Christianisation of the post-war period one can wonder if the government would remain strong, when facing all the social changes. In addition, one can argue that new technologies such as radio or television make the Monarch more accessible for the people. Thus, is it a threat to the Monarchy? Will it remove the 'mystic awe and wonder' with which, according to Bagehot, the people should consider their Monarch? It is thus interesting to study how the young Queen tackled this issue. Furthermore, modernity can be defined as 'an intellectual tendency or social perspective characterized by departure from or repudiation of traditional ideas, doctrines, and cultural values in favour of contemporary or radical values and beliefs'.[22] Consequently, one can see that the notion of modernity does not only refer to technological progress but to values and mindsets as well. In

20 Royle, *op.cit.*, p. 15.
21 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
22 *Oxford English Dictionary Online* https://www-oed-com [accessed May 19th, 2019].

addition, what is interesting is the fact that, by definition, modernity is opposed to 'traditional ideas, doctrines and cultural values'.[23] Throughout the research, one can see that there has been an evolution in the way tradition and modernity are dealt with. Depending on the event, the Queen decided to stick to the Monarchy's tradition or, on the contrary, decided to try to modernise this old and traditional institution. Nevertheless, one can wonder what the results of these choices were. Indeed, when considering Bagehot's arguments, it seemed that sticking to the traditions was a means to maintain the Monarchy's strength and doing otherwise would be harmful for the royalty.

Therefore, this reflection leads to three main questions that will frame this research paper. First, did the Monarchy's traditions persist during the first two decades of the Queen's reign, that is to say during a time of modernisation? Then, can modernity and modernisation be put at the service of tradition? Eventually, are modernity and tradition antagonistic notions? In order to explore and try to answer those three questions, this dissertation is divided chronologically into three main parts, according to the main stages of the evolution of the relation between modernity and tradition. The first part focuses on the earliest years of Elizabeth II's reign, during which tradition was conveyed through modernity, as one can see in the two sub-parts focusing, on the one hand, on the year 1952 with the Queen's accession to the throne and her first Christmas Broadcast, and, on the other hand, on her Coronation in 1953. The second part of this research paper deals with the rest of the 1950s, from Coronation year, during which there was a shift of attitude because modernity started to challenge tradition. The first sub-part analyses the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend between 1953 and 1955, which challenged the Monarchy's attitude towards divorce. The second sub-part focuses on the year 1957, which witnessed a push towards

23 *Ibid.*

modernity as one can see through the study of Lord Altrincham's article 'The Monarchy Today' and the Queen's first televised Christmas Broadcast. Finally, the last part examines the 1960s and especially the decline of tradition and the need to modernise the Monarchy. The first sub-part is about the first half of the 1960s with the decline in the Queen's popularity, studied through newspaper articles. Then, the other sub-part discusses the second half of the 1960s and how the Monarchy turned to popular media to modernise itself and fight unpopularity. Those different parts and sub-parts deal with the evolution of the relation between the Monarchy, associated with tradition, and modernity from 1952 to 1969. This is less than two decades but there are a lot of things to say about this relation, which experienced of lot of changes, reflecting the speed at which the society changed at that time.

I - The earliest years of Elizabeth II's reign: tradition through modernity.

a) 1952: The Queen's accession to the throne and her first Christmas Broadcast

- **The Queen's accession to the throne.**

Elizabeth II became Queen at the age of 25, on February 6th, 1952, after her father's death. King George VI's death was feared but it was still unexpected because he was only 56. Consequently, the feeling upon the King's death and Elizabeth II's accession to the throne is described by Ben Pimlott in *The Queen, A Biography of Elizabeth II* as 'a mixture of concern and excited, expectant curiosity towards his elder daughter, who had been so closely watched since childhood, who had recently become an almost mythic being, but about whom very little was yet known'.[24] Robert Hardman, in *Our Queen*, reinforces this idea that the feelings were ambivalent as people had to deal with the death of their King and the accession to the throne of the new Queen. Hardman argues that 'No change of monarch in recent history had been accompanied by such a combined sense of loss, goodwill and optimism'.[25] George VI only became King in December 1936 when his older brother Edward VIII decided to abdicate after less than a year as King, because he wanted to marry a divorced woman. Thus, until she was ten, she was not supposed to become Queen.

24 Ben Pimlott, *The Queen, A Biography of Elizabeth II*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1996, p. 178.
25 Robert Hardman, *Our Queen*, Hutchinson, London, 2011, p. 19.

When Elizabeth II became Queen, people were talking about a 'New Elizabethan Age'. This notion was introduced by Churchill in a broadcast on the evening of the new Queen's return from Kenya.[26] When analysing this phrase, one can see that it illustrates the Queen's accession to the throne and the first part of this dissertation: tradition mixed with modernity. Indeed the 'Elizabethan Age' originally refers to the reign of Queen Elizabeth I from the House of Tudors, otherwise known as the Virgin Queen. Elizabeth I reigned from November 1558 to March 1603. In his book *Monarch, The Life and Reign of Elizabeth II,* Robert Lacey argues that this notion of a 'New Elizabethan Age' comes from a 'potent mixture of history and fairy tale [which] was summed up in the catchphrase of the day: the New Elizabethan Age'.[27] Consequently, the fact that in this phrase Elizabeth II's reign is associated with Elizabeth I's shows the influence of tradition because several centuries separate the two Queens.

Nevertheless, modernity is acknowledged by the use of the word 'new' that introduces novelty and thus, changes, as it seems unlikely that Elizabeth II's reign is going to be similar to Elizabeth I's. The role of the Monarch changed a lot throughout the centuries. They, thus, choose to use the fame of a previous Queen, hoping that the new Queen, in her times, would know a similar kind of fame. Lacey explains this comparison by saying that the notion of the 'New Elizabethan Age' 'linked the well-justified comparison between 1940 and 1588, when Elizabethan England had stood alone against the Spanish Armada, to the more speculative hope that twentieth-century Britain could imitate the enterprise and achievement of Shakespeare's England'.[28]

26 Sarah Bradford, *Queen Elizabeth II, Her Life in Our Times,* Penguin books, London, 2012, p. 81.
27 Robert Lacey, *Monarch, The Life and Reign of Elizabeth II,* The Free Press, New York, 2002, p. 180.
28 *Ibid.,* p. 180.

Yet, it is not surprising to have the use of such a phrase and description to talk about a Monarch's reign. Pimlott argues that 'A link is made between the supposed character of the titular ruler, and some facet of the age. Even in the mid-twentieth century, after the abandonment of this kind of epochal labelling, monarchs still give a flavour to the attitudes and outlook of the episode over which they formally preside'.[29] Indeed, it is not atypical to talk about the 'Victorian' or 'Edwardian' periods. This new era is described by Robert Hardman in *Our Queen* as the 'fourth phase of the monarchy – the post-imperial media age', because 'at the very moment that Britain was adjusting to a lesser role in the new world order, with its Empire evolving into the new Commonwealth, George VI died'.[30] Consequently, at that time the society was changing and had to cope with a lot of changes, one of them being the new Queen's accession to the throne. Nevertheless, according to Hardman 'there were no outstanding issues, no whispered doubts about the accession of Elizabeth II […] To see the throne pass from an avuncular symbol of dogged wartime resistance to a glamorous young mother married to a man of action was richly symbolic'.[31]

However, one must not forget that Elizabeth II became Queen at the age of 25, in a patriarchal society. Pimlott explains that 'the thrill at placing a young woman on a pedestal normally reserved for men was a complex one'.[32] As a consequence, 'some spoke or wrote about her with barely concealed sexuality'.[33] Thus, one can argue that the fact that the Queen was a woman in a patriarchal society made her accession to the throne more difficult. Furthermore, not only was the Queen a woman but she was also a mother of two children in 1952. In the patriarchal society of the 1950s, women were expected to stay at home and to take care of the house and the children. Consequently, it raised some questions when this

29 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 177.
30 Hardman, *op.cit.*, p. 13.
31 *Ibid.*, p. 19.
32 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 180.
33 *Ibid.*, p. 180.

mother of two became Queen. Pimlott claims that 'The question of whether the Queen was under too much pressure became a matter of comment in the press, where the idea of a mother of small children – even if she did not have to look after them – working at all, was regarded with ambivalence'.[34] Pimlott also explains that there were reactions and advice from different sources that the Queen should be 'remembering that she has her duty also as wife and mother', that 'she should be allowed to withdraw from public view' because 'she should put her family first, and protect her "health and vitality"', but 'The Queen showed no inclination to take such advice'.[35] As a consequence, one can say that this behaviour from the Queen was linked to modernity. She did not let gender roles and the expectations of the society prevent her from being the Monarch and performing her duties. Thus, she turned to modern mindsets in order to fulfil her role as the British Monarch, even though she was both a woman and a mother.

The fact that she was not supposed to become Queen at first but that she eventually became the British Monarch at the age of 25 made her quite popular because she decided to proudly face her fate. The Queen herself, decades later, declared that 'My father died much too young and so it was all very sudden […] it was a matter of making the best job you can … and accepting the fact that it's your fate'.[36] The fact that she did not have any choice about her fate made people look at her with empathy as well as fascination. Pimlott writes that 'Subjects were fascinated by the idea that, like a caged bird, she too was a subject – the prisoner of her circumstances, and willing slave to her people'.[37] Thus, even though she should not have been Queen and was only 25 when her father died, she accepted her fate and showed her people her determination. Even nowadays her attitude as a new young Queen is admired. Her grandson,

34 *Ibid.*, p. 188.
35 *Ibid.*, p. 188.
36 From the 1992 BBC television programme *Elizabeth R*, 6.2.92, *Guardian*, quoted in Pimlott's *The Queen, A Biography of Elizabeth II*, p. 188.
37 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 190

who is now the heir to the throne, declared in 2011 that ‘Back then, there was a very different attitude to women. Being a young lady at twenty-five – and stepping in to a job which many men thought they could do better – it must have been very daunting. And I think there was extra pressure for her to perform’.[38] Therefore, as the Queen decided to embrace her destiny, she became a symbol of strength, even in a patriarchal society. Her will not to act according to gender roles and assuming her role as a Monarch at the age of 25 can be seen as being in harmony with the changes of her time, especially about the position of women, even though her role as a constitutional monarch is limited. Thus, this first point gives an overview of the attitude and reaction to the Queen’s accession to the throne.

38 Hardman, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

• **<u>The 1952 Christmas Broadcast</u>**

During the 1950s, communicating was not as easy as it is today. Consequently, most of the times it was through official public speeches that the Queen was able to directly address her people. With new technologies such as radio and later television, a tradition was created and every Christmas the British Monarch delivers a speech addressed to the people. As those speeches were almost the only way available for the Queen to speak directly to her subjects, one can understand, then, that they were very important because they enabled the British people to hear or see the Queen by themselves. The message conveyed through those speeches and how they werere delivered was, thus, something to be really attentive to, because it was the means through which the people could make their own opinion about their Monarch. In December 1952, the Queen delivered her first Christmas speech on the radio. For this occasion, the Queen did not want this broadcast to be televised, as she was nervous of cameras.[39] Thus, at first, the Queen did not want to perform for the television. She was rejecting this technology, according to Pimlott she was 'perhaps afraid that they would catch her when the mask dropped'.[40] Here, one can see the influence of Bagehot's writing, because television was seen as a threat that may 'let in daylight upon the magic'.[41] Furthermore, the presence of the Queen and her family in the media was to become more and more regular. Philip Ziegler declares that 'In early 1952, however, the Monarchy was comparatively unobtrusive. For the next two or three years it was to be relentlessly publicised, almost worshipped'.[42]

39 Pimlott, *op.cit.,* p. 190.
40 *Ibid.,* p. 190.
41 Bagehot, *op.cit.,* p. 12.
42 Philip Ziegler, *Elizabeth's Britain – 1926 to 1986*, Country Life Books, 1986, p. 156.

One main feature of the 1952 Christmas speech was the emphasis put on the importance of the Commonwealth. As it was stated previously, the Queen was no longer at the head of the British Empire and had become Head of the Commonwealth. Her accession to the throne made her head of state of six self-governing nations: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan and Ceylon.[43] Lacey claims that 'in this ambivalence, the country took great comfort from the recently minted concept of the Commonwealth, and this empire substitute was woven strongly into the imagery of the Coronation'.[44] Thus, the Commonwealth and its importance were at the centre of the Queen's Speech. The emphasis was put on her people's unity. Indeed, paragraph five she said 'We belong, all of us, to the British Commonwealth and Empire, that immense union of nations' and later, paragraph twelve, she talked about her coronation and declared 'I shall do so in the presence of a great congregation, drawn from every part of the Commonwealth and Empire'.[45]

When analysing this speech, one can find the presence of the relation between tradition and modernity. More precisely, this was tradition through modernity. Thus, tradition remained the major element. Indeed, in the first paragraph the Queen started her speech by mentioning her father and the tradition of the Christmas speech, broadcast every year. A few sentences later, in paragraph six, the Queen argued that she wanted to carry on the work of her father and of her grandfather which consisted in uniting their peoples together. Thus, Elizabeth II referred to this as a tradition that had to be kept, but her way to carry on was through the new Commonwealth. Here, both the importance of the Commonwealth and tradition through modernity are visible. The notion of tradition through modernity was reinforced by the eighth paragraph, as it can be seen especially when she mentioned 'a new faith in the old and beliefs given us by our forefathers, and the strength to venture beyond the

43 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 182.
44 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 180.
45 See Appendix 1.

safeties of the past'. Thus, she encouraged people to stick to the traditional beliefs as well as to move towards the future. Tradition is highlighted once more in the twelfth paragraph dealing with the Queen's Coronation. She expressed her entire devotion to her subjects and explained that the ceremony, that millions of people will be able to witness, will be a very traditional one. Indeed, the Queen talked about 'the ancient ceremony in which Kings and Queens before me have taken part through century upon century'. These last words deeply emphasised the long-lasting character of this tradition. Finally, if someone had to summarise this speech, the main notions would be the Commonwealth, tradition through modernity, unity and the Queen's dedication.

Nevertheless, the reactions to the Queen's 1952 Christmas Speech were ambivalent. Pimlott writes that after the 1952 Christmas broadcast 'there was also the feeling that she was not a natural or spontaneous speaker like her mother […] some found her stiff'.[46] Moreover, Pimlott explains that in February 1953 the writer Harold Nicolson wrote that the Queen 'was a well trained young woman manufacturing grace and dignity' and he also observed that 'her face lost all vivacity and lapsed into a bored, even a sulky, mask'.[47] Thus, one may think that these remarks give a childish portrayal of the Queen, even though one has to remember that she was only 25 when she became Queen of England.

46 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 190.
47 *Ibid.*, p. 190.

• **<u>The preparations of the Coronation.</u>**

After the Queen's 1952 Christmas Broadcast, the next step appeared to be the Coronation. The prospect of the Queen's Coronation created a lot of positivity among her people. Her accession to the throne associated with the context of the time resulted in people's enthusiasm. Pimlott writes that 'Changes in the economy also contributed to the gathering excitement […] the run-up to June 1953 was a time of relaxing controls, rising prosperity and rising expectations – and of a brittle optimism that nurtured the 'new Elizabethan' myth, as though the appearance of a young woman on the throne had opened a chapter in the nation's history'.[48] Nevertheless, the young Queen's Crowning did not only attract her people's attention but the attention of the whole world as well. Lacey argues that 'In 1953, the whole world took Britain's Coronation very seriously indeed. While newspapers did start referring to "Coronation fever," the overheated atmosphere was almost universally accepted as a perfectly natural thing'.[49] Furthermore, Pimlott explains that 'As a social and national phenomenon, the Coronation was not a single event, but a rolling programme that began with the Accession and did not subside until months after the ceremony itself'.[50] Thus, the earliest years of the Queen's reign were influenced by the Coronation which remained one of the main subjects of interest.

The Queen authorised her Coronation to be televised contrary to her first Christmas Broadcast. According to Lacey, the Queen did not happily authorise the cameras into the ceremony. Indeed, he declares that 'at the time, and until quite recently, strenuous efforts were made to hide the fact that the initial decision that the Coronation of 1953 should not be

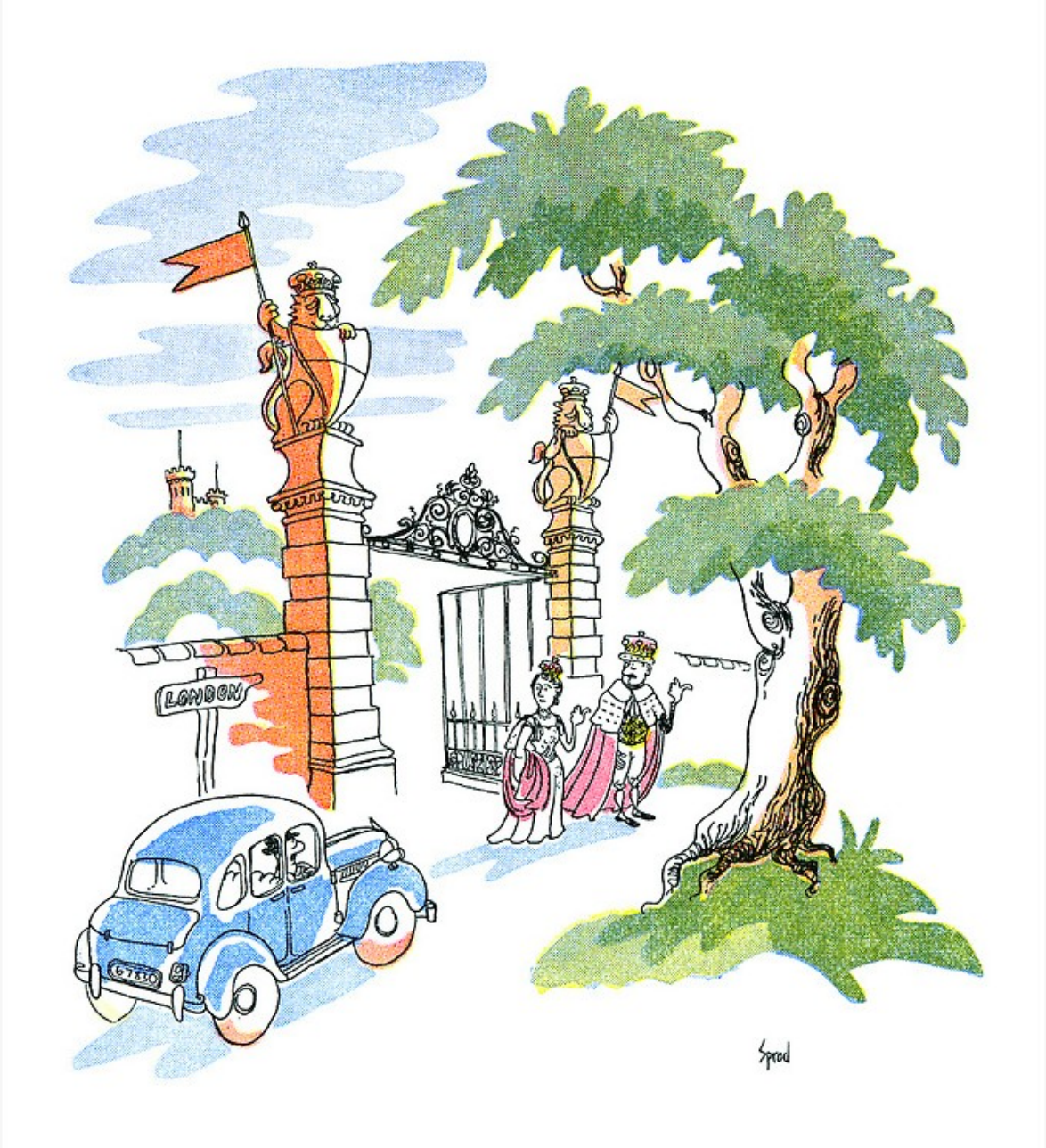
48 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 189.
49 Lacey, *op.cit.*, p. 181.
50 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 204.

televised came directly and personally from Elizabeth II herself'.[51] Pimlott supports this idea and writes that 'it nearly did not happen. At the outset, a distinction was drawn between the procession, which would be televised as it had been in 1947 [for the Queen's wedding], and the Coronation service, seen as a sacred and even as a privileged occasion'.[52] Nevertheless, the Queen's people expressed their disagreement. Indeed, 'the press stoked up public interest and the television industry, eager to expand, campaigned to allow cameras into the Abbey'.[53] The resistance of Buckingham Palace to allow the cameras into the ceremony was due to the fact that it would be live. Consequently, any mistake would be seen by millions of people, without the possibility to cut the bad parts out, as it may be possible with a movie. Consequently, the Cabinet declared that they were refusing live television because of 'the importance of avoiding unnecessary strain for Her Majesty and upholding the sanctity of the ceremony' and it resulted in 'an avalanche of letters to the press and protests from MPs' and so people succeeded to reverse the situation, as they decided to allow television following the 'serious public disappointment'.[54]

The fact that the Coronation was to be televised was also a means to highlight the dichotomy between television and this very traditional ceremony. Even though the Monarchy seemed to modernise itself, the ceremony was meant to be similar to the previous ones, according to the tradition. Pimlott argues that 'rituals are taken from the record of what happened before, amended to fit what is currently felt to be suitable and acceptable'.[55] Consequently, the Coronation was to keep its traditions while adding thing from its context, hence the television. The satirical British magazine *Punch*, also known as *The London Charivari*, published cartoons linked to the Coronation. One cartoon in particular illustrates

51 Lacey, *op.cit.*, p. 181.
52 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 204.
53 *Ibid.*, p. 204.
54 *Ibid.*, *op.cit.*, p. 205.
55 *Ibid.*, *op.cit.*, p. 202.

very well the dichotomy that was felt between television and the very traditional ceremony. This cartoon was published on May 18th, 1953, that is to say a few days before the Coronation that was to happen on June 2nd.



'Aristocrats hitching a lift to the Coronation' drawn by Spred, *Punch*, May 18th, 1953.

© Punch Limited https://punch.photoshelter.com/

This cartoon is entitled ‘Aristocrats hitching a lift to the Coronation’.[56] It can be divided into three parts. The first one is the background, where one can see the towers of what seems to be a castle through the trees. Then, in the middle of the illustration there is a big gate with a massive pillar on each side, mounted by crowned lions. Under the gate stands a couple of aristocrats dressed in their robes and coronets. If analysis is stopped there, it seems impossible to guess that the cartoon was drawn in 1953, as it would seem that the cartoon only represents members of the aristocracy with their traditional clothes. Nevertheless, what stands out of the rest is the fact that they are hitching while a blue car is approaching, heading to London. One would have expected a horse-drawn carriage, because even though they are members of the aristocracy this is not how aristocrats usually dress in 1953. Having those aristocrats with their traditional clothes and the car in the same illustration depicts the mixing of tradition and modernity and the strange effect that is eventually created. Indeed, one could wonder if both elements belong to the same time period. The date of the publication as well as the title of the cartoon help understand the context. These aristocrats are going to the Queen’s Coronation. This illustration also depicts the Coronation on a broader level, because the aristocrats can be compared to the Queen, following all the traditional steps during her Coronation, and the car to the television. Thus, one can see that the presence of a modern device such as television at the Queen’s Coronation was seen by some as a peculiar pairing. So, what was the effect of this televised Coronation?

56 ‘Aristocrats hitching a lift to the Coronation’, drawn by Spred, *Punch*, May 18th, 1953, https://punch.photoshelter.com/ [accessed October 9th, 2019].

b) 1953: The Queen's Coronation.

• The ceremony

The Queen's coronation took place on June 2nd 1953 in Westminster Abbey, and was an event of great importance. A British Monarch's coronation is a religious ceremony performed by the Church of England represented by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation was the first of its kind because it was broadcast both on television and radio, giving the opportunity to the whole world to witness the new Queen being crowned. Thus, Elizabeth II's Coronation showed that tradition was used through modernity. The Coronation ceremony has always been very traditional, and the 1953 ceremony followed the tradition but it was made accessible through modern devices such as radio or television. Even though only few people in the country followed the Church of England, it did not prevent this event from being very popular all around the world.[57] In their article 'The Meaning of the Coronation', Edward Shils and Michael Young study the ceremony and its implications on a broader level. Shils and Young explain that the Coronation service can be divided into six parts: the Recognition, the Oath, Presenting the Holy Bible, the Anointing, Presenting the Sword and the Orb, and eventually the Benediction.[58] During the Oath, there are two main promises solemnly made by the Queen. The first one concerned her people, and the second one concerned religion. First, the Archbishop of Canterbury asked the Queen:

> 'Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the peoples of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Pakistan and Ceylon and of your possessions and the other territories to any of them belonging or pertaining according to their respective laws and customs?'

57 E. Shils and M.Young, "The Meaning of the Coronation", *The Sociological Review,* Vol. 1, No. 2, December 1953, pp. 68-69.
58 *Ibid.,* pp. 68-70.

And the Queen answered: 'I solemnly promise so to do'.[59] This Oath was an important part because even though she was head of state she acknowledged that her Dominions had their own laws and customs and she swore to respect them. Therefore during this religious ceremony the Queen represented the whole Commonwealth and not only the United Kingdom. It can be considered that all the nations form a big nation altogether, because they all are represented by Her Majesty. This idea is supported by Shils and Young who declare that 'On sacred occasions, the whole society is felt to be one large family, and even the nations of the Commonwealth […] are conceived of as a "family of nations"'.[60] It is essential to notice that they use the word 'sacred' because it involves religion. Once more there seemed to be the idea that the nation was united, here as a comparison with a family, through a religious event. It was linked to the second part of the Oath which dealt with religion and more specifically with the Church of England.

After the Queen swore to govern all the nations according to their laws and customs, the Archbishop of Canterbury asked:

> 'Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed religion established by law ? Will you maintain and preserve inviolable the settlement of the Church of England and the doctrine, worship, discipline and government thereof as by law established in England? […]'

And the Queen replied: 'All this I promise to do'.[61] The British Monarch was also the head of the Church of England. It was and remains the established Church in England even though, as it was mentioned previously, only few people adhere to it. Consequently the Coronation can be seen as a means to show the Church of England's authority to a wide audience. Pimlott writes that 'From the Church of England's point of view, it was an important moment. The

59 Archive of Recorded Church Music 'BBC TV Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II: Westminster Abbey 1953 (William McKie)' https://www.youtube.com/ from 37min 50s [accessed 25 November 2018].
60 Shils and Young, *op.cit.*, pp. 78-79.
61 Archive of Recorded Church Music https://www.youtube.com/, *op.cit.*, from 38min 50s.

service offered a rare example of an ecclesiastical event – other than a wedding or a funeral – that aroused intense public interests'.[62] A Coronation was an unusual ceremony as compared to a marriage or a funeral and thus, people got interested in this religious service, even though they did not necessarily follow the Church of England. One can thus say that people tended to be more interested in the ceremony in itself rather than in its religious nature. Nevertheless, as religion was central during the Coronation, it reached a lot of people through this event. And through the Oath, it reaffirmed its superiority and authority as the established Church in England.

Even if every coronation has always been composed of the same steps, the meaning of each coronation was different from the previous one because every generation had to face different issues and the society kept evolving. In their article, Shils and Young focus on the meaning of Queen Elizabeth II's crowning. Again, the concept of the nation being united through the religious ceremony is mentioned. For them, this coronation was an 'act of communion' as they explain that 'The Coronation is exactly this kind of ceremonial in which the society reaffirms the moral values which constitute it as a society and renews its devotion to those values by an act of communion'.[63] Moreover, as most people in Britain celebrated it, they later add that it was 'a great nation-wide communion' because 'not only the principals and the spectators inside the Abbey, but the people outside also, participated in the sacred rite'.[64] Once again, the religious aspect of the coronation was emphasised by the use of the word 'sacred' which reaffirmed the fact that all the nations were bonding through their Monarch during this religious ceremony to become a wide nation. Consequently, modern devices enabled the tradition and also religion to regain some popularity through this ceremony. Shils and Young also examine this link made through the Monarch. They claim that 'In a great

62 Pimlott, *op.cit.,* p. 209.
63 Shils and Young, *op.cit.,* p. 68.
64 *Ibid.,* p. 71.

national communion like the Coronation, people became more aware of their dependence upon each other, and they sensed some connection between this and their relationship to the Queen. Thereby they became more sensitive to the values which bound them all together'.[65] This feeling of belonging to a wider group was also influenced by the fact that the ceremony was broadcast on television and on the radio so that not only the people who were on British soil would be able to witness the Queen being crowned. Pimlott supports that idea because he states that 'the sense of everybody seeing the same event, itself a novelty, added to the community spirit'.[66] That leads to the second point of this sub-part because the fact that the Queen's Coronation was broadcast was one of the reasons why one can say that it was modernised.

65 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
66 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 207.

• **<u>The effect of the Coronation</u>**

As it was stated previously, every coronation service has been composed of the same parts, but the context and how it was performed made each coronation unique. The singularity of every coronation is examined by David Cannadine in *The Invention of Tradition.*[67] He states that 'even if the text of a repeated ritual like a coronation remains unaltered over time, its 'meaning' may change profoundly depending on the nature of the context'.[68] Elizabeth II's Coronation happened during the post-war period. After having lived a hard time and survived, it was now time for revival and people were hopeful even though the future of the British Empire was unsure.[69] Therefore it seemed that the role of this specific coronation was to reassure people and make them trust their Monarch and their nation. Cannadine claims that 'under certain circumstances, a coronation might be seen by participants and contemporaries as a symbolic reaffirmation of national greatness'.[70] Thus knowing the context of Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation one can also say that reaffirming national greatness was a key aspect. The nation was threatened during the war and the coronation can appear as a turning point, encouraging people to focus on the future and showing them that the time of a threatened nation was over. This idea was reinforced by the fact that Queen Elizabeth II herself declared that: 'I am sure that this, my Coronation, is not a symbol of a power and a splendour that are gone, but a declaration of our hopes in the future'.[71]

Furthermore the fact that the service was broadcast enabled the British people to share this ceremony with the Monarch as well as with the whole nation. It tightened the link

67 David Cannadine, “The Context Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition c. 1820-1977”, *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by E. Hobsbawn and T. Ranger, Cambridge University Press, 1983.
68 *Ibid.*, p. 105.
69 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 193.
70 Cannadine, *op.cit.*, p. 105.
71 Conrad Frost, *Coronation, June 2, 1953,* London, Arthur Baker, 1978, p. 136.

between people and the Queen, and between all her subjects. This modernisation can thus be described as a means to strengthen nationalism. While studying the broadcast of the coronation, Cannadine argues that 'Here, as in other ways, the coronation of Elizabeth was a bridge between an older era and a new phase of development'.[72] Consequently, as the broadcast of her coronation was a symbol of modernisation, it was thought that her crowning marked the beginning of a new and modern reign. This idea is shared by Pimlott who states that 'From now on, the expectation that royal events would be televised became automatic, […] and television became the means by which the public would perceive the Royal Family and – with ever more fascinated intimacy – relate to it'.[73] Usually, there was a gap between royalty and the people, as if there were two different worlds. Nevertheless, thanks to media like radio and more specifically television, the gap between those two worlds was reduced and the whole nation was able to celebrate the Queen's crowning. The image of a bridge used by Cannadine can be taken again to refer to a bridge between the people and royalty, made possible by the media and enabling people to feel closer to the Royal Family which tended to be considered as sacred, so unreachable. Consequently, the broadcast of the Coronation is summed up by Lacey when he argues that ‘It transcended the old rules and created a new rule of its own. Keep close. Get intimate. Television had no boundaries but the power of its picture’.[74]

In *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History,* Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz state that through television: 'Often the audience is given an active role in the celebration' and also that 'broadcasts integrate societies in a collective heartbeat and evoke a renewal of loyalty to the society and its legitimate authority'.[75] Thus people were seen as one entity: a united nation

72 Cannadine, *op.cit.*, p. 158.
73 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 207.
74 Lacey, *op.cit.*, p. 185.
75 Daniel Dayan, and Elihu Katz, *Media Events : The Live Broadcasting of History*, Harvard University Press, 1994, p. 9.

whose eyes are all turned towards their Monarch. This is once again supported by Shils and Young who state that 'The Coronation was throughout a collective, not an individual experience'.[76] Despite the differences between people, on Coronation Day people all concentrated on the crowning which contributed to show their nation's power worldwide thanks to television. In addition, people in Great Britain had the opportunity to see the Coronation happening live. It really aroused people's enthusiasm and interest because before the Coronation the number of TV sets holders doubled so that people would be able to watch it.[77] Usually people gathered with their families in order to see the crowning as it happened. When talking about the family, it can be seen on two different levels. On one level people gathered with their nuclear family, but on a broader level most of the population did the same thing hence the extension of the notion of family to all the people who watched the coronation. This idea is supported by Young and Shils who state that: 'On this occasion one family was knit together with another in one great national family through identification with the Monarchy. A general warmth and congeniality permeated relations even with strangers.'[78] The notion of family was thus extended even to strangers because of their shared Monarch and nation, demonstrating how the coronation strengthened nationalism. Shils and Young also draw a parallel between the family and the society explaining how it can fortify nationalism. For them 'The Coronation [...] was a time for drawing closer the bonds of the family, for re-asserting its solidarity and for re-emphasizing the values of the family - generosity, loyalty, love – which are *at the same time* the fundamental values necessary for the well being of the larger society'.[79]

76 Shils and Young, *op.cit.*, p. 72.
77 Mandy Meck, *The British Monarchy on Screen*, Manchester University Press, 2016, p. 4.
78 Shils and Young, *op.cit.*, p. 73.
79 Shils and Young, *op.cit.*, p. 73.

In addition, the fact that it was live enabled people who were in front of their TV to witness the ceremony the same way as people who were at Westminster Abbey. They did not only witness the same event, they also lived it all at the same time. As it was stated previously, the British Royal Family seemed less distant from the people thanks to the media. Consequently, it led some people to consider the British Royal Family as a brand, whose consumers are the people. This conception offers benefits for the people because it provides a 'respected and shared symbol of nationalism, helping them engage in national “togetherness” and fostering a sense of identity based on shared history, culture, and traditions among consumers'.[80] Sharing the same event, the same Monarch and also the same pride contributed in enhancing nationalism among the British people. The effect would probably have been different if the coronation was not televised, or at least this feeling of nationalism would not have been spread as much as it was. Shils and Young argue that 'Once there is a common vital object of attention, and a common sentiment about it, the feelings apt for the occasion spread by a kind of contagion' and this can be applied to what happened with the feelings of nationalism on coronation day.[81]

80 Cele C Otnes and Pauline Maclaran, ‘The consumption of cultural heritage among a British royal family brand tribe’, in *Consumer Tribes* ed. by B.Cova, R.V.Kozinets and A.Shankar, Oxford, Butterworth-Heinemann/Elsevier, 2007.

81 Shils and Young, *op.cit.*, p. 74.

• **Post-Coronation period:**

The fascination linked to the Coronation did not only last coronation day and the last point of this part examines this phenomenon. Pimlott states that 'Excitement related to the Coronation lasted many weeks'.[82] The Coronation was an impressive event whose impact lasted during the post-coronation period because it brought hope and pride to people. One might consider that Elizabeth II's Coronation marked the end of the post-war period and the beginning of a new era. Cannadine argues that 'At the time, it seemed as though the threats and challenges of the war and austerity period had been surmounted […] Britain had once more asserted her place as a great power; there was a new Elizabethan age around the corner'.[83]

People were able to watch the Coronation live on television, but for those who missed it or those who wanted to watch it again a movie was produced: *A Queen is crowned.*[84] Thereby being able to witness the Queen's Coronation was available even after the event. The movie was well received because it was 'the most popular film at box-offices in 1953'.[85] The success of the movie can be seen as a reflection of people's attachment to the event and it confirms Pimlott's statement that enthusiasm lasted even after Coronation Day. Moreover, the film was in Technicolour whereas the live broadcast of the Coronation on television was in black and white.[86] One may argue that the fact that the film was coloured made the spectacle even more impressive, emphasising the beauty of the clothes and decorations. It can also be seen as another means to prove modernity. As well as reinforcing the modern character of the coronation, the popularity of the film also demonstrated that the feeling of nationalism lasted. This idea is supported by Wendy Webster in *Englishness and Empire 1939-1960* because she

82 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 217.
83 Cannadine, *op.cit.*, pp. 153-154.
84 *A Queen is Crowned* (Christopher Fry, United Kingdom, 1953).
85 Wendy Webster, *Englishness and Empire 1939-1960*, Oxford University Press USA-OSO, 2005, p. 94.
86 *Ibid.*, p. 98.

mentions that 'the procession and ceremony on Coronation Day, and the aftermath of the ceremony, including viewings of *A Queen is Crowned*, all mobilized a wide variety of symbols and images of nationhood'.[87] Therefore, the success of this movie showed that the enthusiasm and the values of modernity and nationalism associated with the Coronation lasted during the following months.

Nevertheless, the reactions seemed more ambivalent with some hindsight. In December 1953, Shils and Young provided what was for them the 'meaning' of the coronation, and one can argue that they provided elements focusing on the unifying role of the Coronation. Their viewpoint was challenged two years later in 1955 by another sociologist; Norman Birnbaum who argued that instead of merely exposing objective facts Shils and Young distorted those facts 'by their subjective preferences'.[88] Throughout this article Birnbaum pointed out that Shils and Young made assertions without providing evidence and that they focused on unity while overlooking conflict. Birnbaum stated that 'The authors at times write as if conflict, and especially class conflict, were in Great Britain a thing presently unknown.'[89] As a consequence one may argue that Shils and Young provided an idealised interpretation of the coronation. This may be linked to the fact that they wrote their article in December 1953, so only a few months after the coronation. It can be assumed that the authors were still influenced by the enthusiasm related to the event, hence the idealisation of the event. Furthermore, Birnbaum disagreed with Shils and Young when they referred to a 'family of nations' to talk about all the nations that have the Queen as head of state. For him, the Queen did not unify the nations together and was not a means to reinforce nationalism because he compared the people's fascination for the Queen to the 'adulation built up around

87 *Ibid.*, p. 95.
88 Norman Birnbaum, 'Monarchs and Sociologists: A Reply to Professor Shils and Mr Young', *Toward a Critical Sociology*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 59.
89 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

certain film stars'.[90] Therefore Birnbaum removed her political role and reduced her to a mere celebrity which deeply minimised her influence on people. Furthermore, while Bagehot acknowledged the importance for the Monarch to be regarded with awe and wonder, A. N. Wilson, in *The Rise and Fall of the House of Windsor,* published in 1993, qualified this reverence around the Queen as an ‘atmosphere of stultifying sycophancy’.[91] Eventually according to Birnbaum, Shils and Young's article should not be considered as an accurate study of the Coronation. Their viewpoints diverged probably because of the fact that Birnbaum was more distant to the event when he wrote his article. However Pimlott tends to support Shils and Young's article. He acknowledges that it is a 'period piece' and argues that it is 'one which accurately perceived, […] that the Coronation was more than mere flummery; and that it helped to define, not just royalty, but the British identity for the next generation'.[92]

90 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
91 A.N. Wilson, *The Rise and Fall of the House of Windsor*, Sinclair – Stevenson, 1993, p. 93.
92 Pimlott, *op.cit.*, p. 217.

II - Modernity challenging tradition: the rest of the 1950s, from Coronation year

While the Queen's Coronation seemed to have been a successful demonstration of national greatness and of the unity of the British people, some events following the crowning cast a shadow over the British Monarchy and the Royal Family. Indeed, even though the earliest years of the Queen's reign showed a use of modernity in favour of tradition as a means to make people involved in the Monarchy's tradition, there seemed to have been a reversal of the situation in the following years as the Monarchy's tradition were challenged by modernity. The first part of this paper mostly demonstrated the use of modern devices in the service of tradition, but this second part studies how the changes of the society affected the British Monarchy and the Royal Family. Social traditions evolved and thus challenged the Monarchy's. In order to illustrate this second part, the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend as well as the question of divorce will be discussed. Then, Lord Altrincham's article 'The Monarchy Today' and the 1957 Christmas Broadcast will be under study, both points demonstrating how tradition was challenged by modernity.

a) 1953 – 1955: The polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend challenging the Monarchy's attitude towards divorce.

Soon after the Queen's Coronation, some rumours started about a romance between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, a former assistant of her father. However, a problem arose because Townsend was a divorced man. It made the situation quite complicated as there were a lot of rules concerning marriages within the Royal Family, and also because divorce was deeply controversial at the time. Pimlott explains that this problem was actually known before the Coronation but it was contained and had not publicly arisen.[93] In order to study what happened during the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, this second part starts by a historical approach about the Monarchy's attitude towards divorce. Then, this part studies the romance between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, and finally it focuses on the Royal Family and the Press.

93 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

• **<u>The Monarchy's attitude towards divorce</u>**

Marriages in the Royal Family have to follow some rules, as it was stated in the Royal Marriages Act of 1772. Even 180 years later, the Royal Family must respect what was told in this act. These are the first two sections of this act:

> 1 - No descendant of his late Majesty King George the Second (other than the issue of princesses married, or who may marry into foreign families) shall be capable of contracting matrimony without the previous consent of His Majesty, His heirs, etc, signified under the Great Seal, declared in Council, and entered in the Privy Council books. Marriage of any such descendant, without such consent, shall be null and void
>
> 2 – In case any descendant of King George the Second, being above 25 years old, shall persist to contract a marriage disapproved of by his Majesty, such descendant, after giving 12 months' notice to the Privy Council, may contract such marriage; and the same may be duly solemnized, without the previous consent of his Majesty; and shall be good; except both Houses of Parliament shall declare their disapproval thereof.

Nevertheless, the Queen's decision did not only depend on this act. Indeed, one has to remember that the Queen is the head of the Church of England. As a consequence, she must also obey and enforce the Church's teachings. In addition, marriages were often arranged at the time, as it was not merely about love but it was rather an association of two different families. Therefore, the argument of the love between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend would not be strong enough to make their union possible. In her book *The Church of England and Divorce in the Twentieth Century – Legalism and Grace,* Ann Sumner Holmes agrees and explains that the question of marriage was actually not about love. Indeed, she quotes the art critic and journalist Harry Quilter who wrote in 1889 that:

> 'The purpose of happiness is really no part of the purpose of marriage. . . . Marriage is what it is through the necessities of society. . . . So long as society has the same necessities, and finds them fulfilled by marriage, the institution must be considered to be a success, though every married man and woman in the world were unhappy'.[94]

94 Ann Sumner Holmes, *The Church of England and Divorce in the Twentieth Century – Legalism and Grace,* Routledge : New York and London, 2017, p. 2.

Thus, even though progress had already been made about divorce, this aspect seemed to remain in people's mind. A marriage had to follow a set of rules and love was not enough. Tradition and the rules of the Monarchy and of the Church of England were stronger and truly more important than love. It was a complicated situation for the Queen who must follow the rules of the Church and of the British Monarchy, and thus, put them before her sister's happiness

For a very long time, divorce and remarriage were very controversial matters in the Church of England. Indeed, based on the Gospel of Mark, people belonging to the Church of England thought that 'What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder' (Mark 10:9). Thus, as a consequence, 'the post-Reformation Anglican Church, through the ecclesiastical courts, enforced the view that marriage was indissoluble'.[95] Nevertheless, from the second half of the nineteenth century, the possibility of divorce in English secular courts was made possible thanks to the Divorce Act of 1857. Later, through the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1937, there was the Divorce Reform Act. The bill was introduced by the M.P. Herbert, and it presented an extension of the grounds for divorce. In *Road to Divorce: England, 1530-1987*, Lawrence Stone explains that 'His bill followed the recommendations of the Majority Report of the Royal Commission of 1912 to expand the causes for divorce beyond mere adultery. The main additions were desertion for three years and cruelty, but Herbert also threw in habitual drunkenness and incurable insanity'.[96] Therefore, after the Abdication Crisis, it had become possible to divorce based on various grounds in addition to adultery. Furthermore, it seemed that the bill was positively received as Stone adds that 'in 1937 the Herbert divorce law reform bill won the warm endorsement of the law lords, the press, and the House of Commons, apparently reflecting the general support of public opinion'.[97] Consequently,

95 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
96 Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce : England, 1530-1987*, OUP Oxford, 1990, p. 462.
97 *Ibid.*, p. 465.

during the year following the Abdication Crisis people tended to be in favour of divorce instead of condemning it.

Nevertheless, remarriage appeared to be something that was more complicated to deal with. Even in the 1950s, remarriage in the Church of England was still not a common practice. Indeed, Bruce S. Bennet published an article in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* providing figures about remarriage in England, only a year before the romance between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend became public. Bennet writes that

> 'Although the 1937 act left clergymen with a legal right to remarry divorcees in church, the hierarchy exerted heavy pressure on dissident clergy not to do so, and only a very few were prepared to break ranks. In 1952 there were 40,205 marriages of divorced persons in England and Wales, of which only fifty-eight were in churches of the Church of England or the Church in Wales'.[98]

Pimlott argues that 'the Church of England, with the ardent approval of the Primate, refused to re-marry people who had been through divorce courts'.[99] This reluctance for remarriage inside the Church of England is also mentioned by Holmes, as she claims that 'With the extension of the grounds for divorce in 1937, the laws of the State clearly diverged from the doctrines of the Church. The Church responded by seeking to maintain its definition of marriage by a strict discipline that prohibited remarriage in church after divorce'.[100] Therefore, as soon as the first half of the twentieth century, especially after the Abdication Crisis, a shift of attitude can be seen as people seemed to leave the Church's instructions about divorce behind. Nevertheless, it was from the second half of the twentieth century that the situation appeared to move the most, as it is argued by Holmes who writes that: 'by the second half of the twentieth century, however, the increasingly dominant view that marriage is a personal relationship and not a social institution challenged the insistence on the indissolubility of

98 Bruce S. Bennett, 'The Church of England and the Law of Divorce since 1837: Marriage Discipline, Ecclesiastical Law and the Establishment.' *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 1994, Vol 45, pp 625-641, p. 633.
99 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 201.
100 Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

marriage'[101]. Thus, there seemed to have a shift of mentality from the second half of the twentieth century which gave love an important place in marriage. Consequently, this viewpoint was in favour of the marriage between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend but was probably not heavy enough to counterbalance the Church and tradition.

Another one of the reasons why the romance between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend was complicated to handle was the fact that Elizabeth II's Uncle David, known as King Edward VIII abdicated in 1936, in order to be able to marry a divorced woman. Consequently, this romance was a delicate matter because, as Lacey argues, 'the new reign was instantly shadowed by the spectres of divorce and scandal that had marked the abdication – and all the embarrassing, newspaper-stirred turmoil that went with it'.[102] The abdication of Edward VIII had a huge impact on the British Monarchy and its people. A.N. Wilson argues that 'the Abdication crisis could easily have destroyed the monarchy itself. Carrying forward the monarchy into an unknown future was an immense responsibility'.[103] He also declares that 'the Abdication loomed over Lilibet's life and reign like a threatened curse. Her own parents had been such dutiful and successful monarchs. But the Abdication had shown what happened when a monarch broke the rules'.[104] And thus, the relationship between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend appeared as a reminder of this difficult period. Pimlott writes that 'the much bigger stumbling block was Townsend's marital status. That he required a divorce to marry Princess, albeit as the innocent party, revived the still recent memory of 1936'.[105] Thus, the impact of the Abdication crisis continued to impact the Royal Family, even almost twenty years later. It seemed impossible for a member of the Royal Family to marry a divorced person while less than two decades earlier the King had to abdicate to be able to marry the

101 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
102 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 187.
103 A.N. Wilson, *The Queen*, Atlantic Books, London, 2016, p. 21.
104 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
105 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

divorced Wallis Simpson. In *On Royalty,* Jeremy Paxman argues that 'it was Princess Margaret's misfortune to fall in love at a time when the coterie of people at the heart of the state were still shuddering over the Abdication Crisis'.[106] And yet, what can be argued is that the situation was actually different, even though it did not seem to have been taken into account. Princess Margaret was part of the Royal Family but she was not the one who would succeed to Queen Elizabeth. About this aspect, Bradford claims that 'on the surface and in the press, it seemed a re-run of 1936, but there was one vital difference that everyone seems to have overlooked. Edward VIII had been King; his niece was neither the Queen nor, since the birth of Prince Charles and Princess Anne, heir to the throne'.[107] Nevertheless, even though Princess Margaret was not next in line to be on the throne, she found herself submitted to the same rules as her uncle.

106 Jeremy Paxman, *On Royalty: A Very Polite Inquiry into Some Strangely Related Families*, Penguin Books, London, 2008. p. 102.
107 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

• **<u>The story of the romance between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend</u>**

Concerning the romance between Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, Pimlott argues that it was when they were in South Africa in 1947 that Princess Margaret, who was seventeen years old at that time, and Peter Townsend 'the equerry approaching middle-age began to develop a friendship […] that was more than fraternal'.[108] Pimlott adds that a few years later 'the death of Margaret's father, and the break-up of Townsend's marriage helped to bring them closer together'.[109] Even though Townsend was sixteen years older than Princess Margaret, the age difference was not the main obstacle in their relationship. It was indeed Townsend's marital status as a divorced man that was the major impediment between them. When it was first discussed, it seemed that the couple was supported by the Prime Minister and that their marriage might be possible. Paxman explains that 'Winston Churchill – who had previously shown his colours (and his touch for popular politics) by supporting Edward in his wish to marry Mrs Simpson – had been enthusiastic'.[110] Nonetheless, once the Princess reached the age of twenty-five in 1955, Anthony Eden succeeded Winston Churchill as Prime Minister. As a consequence 'It fell to Churchill's successor as prime minister, Anthony Eden, to give the princess a cold choice: she could either remain a princess, or she could become plain Mrs Peter Townsend, stripped of royal status, privileges and income. The princess capitulated'.[111] Yet, Sarah Bradford disputes this fact as she argues in her biography *Queen Elizabeth II, Her Life in Our Times*, that 'contrary to what has been claimed, the Government did not threaten the Princess with loss of her title and income if she married Townsend, only

108 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 200.
109 *Ibid.*, p. 200.
110 Paxman, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
111 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

that she should renounce her right to the succession of herself and any children she might have'.[112]

While waiting for Princess Margaret to reach the age of 25 on August 21st, 1955, and consequently, to be released from the Queen's authority according to the Royal Marriage Act, Townsend was posted in Belgium. This was a decision made by the Government and it was seen as a kind of exile, as Pimlott claims as he writes that it was the Government 'that did the exiling'.[113] In addition, posting Townsend in a foreign country was also a way of avoiding making noise about the story in the press, as it is expressed by Ziegler who argues that 'Townsend was hurriedly shipped abroad and the story rumbled quietly for two years'.[114] Nevertheless, this exile did not separate Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend as Pimlott explains that 'He wrote to Princess Margaret daily' and that he got the sympathy of the press that described him as 'the loneliest man in Brussels'.[115] This exile would end once the Princess reached the age of 25. Even though reaching 25 would not enable her to marry Townsend, the Princess would no longer be under her sister's authority. However, she would still need the approval of the Parliament, as stated in the Royal Marriages Act.

One can wonder about the Queen's personal point of view of the matter. As it was explained, she was not able to authorise her sister's marriage as it went against the Church's teachings and the tradition of the British Monarchy. Due to this, it was said that the Queen kept a neutral position. Indeed, Pimlott argues that from the Queen 'there was no pressure to renounce, but no encouragement to marry either'.[116]

112 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
113 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p 219.
114 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.*, p. 164.
115 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 220.
116 *Ibid.*, p. 235.

On October 31st, Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend had taken a decision and the Princess issued a statement :

> « I would like it to be known [she read] that I have decided not to marry Group Captain Townsend. I have been aware that, subject to my renouncing my rights to the succession, it might have been possible for me to contract a civil marriage. But mindful of the Church's teaching that Christian marriage is indissoluble, and conscious of my duty to the Commonwealth, I have resolved to put these considerations before others. I have reached this decision entirely alone, and in doing so I have been strengthened by the unfailing support and devotion of Group Captain Townsend. I am deeply grateful for the concern of all those who have constantly prayed for my happiness. »[117]

Finally, even though it took them a few years to decide, they decided to follow tradition and the teachings of the Church. Nevertheless, it can be understood that this decision was taken quite reluctantly. Pimlott writes that from Townsend's autobiography, it was clear that 'afterwards, both Margaret and Townsend blamed Palace officials for misleading them – and giving the impression, when the matter was first raised in 1953, that if they waited, the marriage would be acceptable'.[118] This situation was closely studied by the press. Indeed, numerous newspapers articles were published on the subject. The press was involved in this debate and contributed to convey the public opinion.

117 Anne Edwards, *Royal Sisters, Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Margaret*, The Lyons Press, 2017, pp. 747-748.
118 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

• **<u>The Royal Family and the Press.</u>**

This can lead to the following question: How was this situation handled by the press? Pimlott explains that 'while nobody in the early 1950s expected to hear anything bad about the Royal Family, press and public together looked out, with the keenest interest, for any unusual variation'.[119] And thus, this 'unusual variation' was given to them through Princess Margaret's romance with Peter Townsend. One of the reasons why the press and the people got deeply involved in this romance was the fact that people felt involved in the Royal Family's life. Bradford insists on the idea that 'The private life of the Royal Family was no longer private: the Abdication had lifted the corner of the curtain'.[120] Throughout the years, the curtain was able to fall again, until the new Queen's Coronation. Undoubtedly, the use of modern devices such as television enabled the British people to feel closer to their Queen, and by extension, to the Royal Family. Bradford agrees with this idea as she states that 'with the huge public, indeed worldwide interest aroused by the Coronation, when the people had been invited to join the party, "their story" was becoming "our story"'.[121] The attitude chosen by the Monarchy about this polemic was a traditional one, respecting the rules of royalty set by the Royal Marriages Act of 1772. In *Crown and People*, Philip Ziegler describes the romance as 'the first event of importance' of the Queen's reign, and that it 'seemed to reinforce the traditional attitudes of the royal family'.[122]

Nevertheless, what was interesting was the British people's reaction to this affair. Indeed, Pimlott argues that 'the *Daily Mirror* ran a poll, which produced more than 70 000 responses, of which 67 907 thought the couple should be allowed to marry'.[123] In this article

119 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 198.
120 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
121 *Ibid.*, pp. 95-6.
122 Ziegler, *Crown and People*, Collins, St James's Place, London, 1978, p. 128.
123 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

from the *Daily Mirror* published on July 17th, 1953, to the question: 'Should Princess Margaret be allowed to wed Peter Townsend ?', the answer was thus: yes.[124] This article was the cover of the *Daily Mirror* that day, and this poll was described as 'the greatest poll in newspaper history'. The voting form was actually more explicit that this simple question and there were details about the situation.

> 'This is what the "Mirror's" voting form said: Group-Captain Peter Townsend, thirty-eight-year-old Battle of Britain pilot, was the innocent party in a divorce. He was given the custody of his two children and his former wife has recently remarried. If Princess Margaret, now twenty-two, so desires, should she be allowed to marry him ? The result of the voting was: Yes: 67,907. No: 2,235. The proportions were: Yes: 96.81 per cent. No: 3.19 per cent. The "Daily Mirror" launched the poll in the belief that the views and feelings of the British people on the problem confronting a beloved Princess should be given expression. […] She will have to wait while Church and State dignitaries discuss what, in their opinion, she may do or may not do. The "Daily Mirror" poll gives a clear guide to the feelings of the PEOPLE of Britain'.

Consequently, one can see the great involvement of the British people in this romance, even from the beginning, as this article was published in 1953. Furthermore, the result of the poll showed that the feeling of the voters was almost unanimous as only 3 per cent of the voters were against Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend's marriage. Thus, popular opinion tended to support the Princess and to reject the Monarchy's rules. The involvement of the British people truly illustrates the idea mentioned by Bradford that the story of the Royal Family had become the British people's story as well. Nonetheless, on the other hand, more Conservative newspapers such as *The Times* showed their support to the Establishment. Bradford quotes Sir William Haley, one of the leaders of *The Times*, as he stated:

> 'Now in the twentieth-century conception of the monarchy the Queen has come to be the symbol of every side of life in this society, its universal representative in whom people see their better selves ideally reflected; and since part of their ideal is family life, the Queen's family has its own part in the reflection. If the marriage, which is now being discussed comes to pass, it is inevitable that this reflection becomes distorted.'[125]

Therefore, in that case, the reference to the ideal reflection of the Royal family serves as a reminder of Bagehot's words that 'we must not let in daylight upon magic'. Just as well, it

124 *Daily Mirror,* July 17th, 1953.
125 Quoted in Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

seems that for the sake of the Monarchy, the reflection must not be distorted. Indeed, according to Pimlott, '*The Times* regarded the issue of the proposed Margaret-Townsend marriage as fundamental to the institution of Monarchy itself'.[126] With this in mind, the marriage appeared as a great threat to the Monarchy and the Establishment. Therefore, it can be seen that the public opinion as well as the press were divided upon this matter. In his autobiography *Time and Chance*, Peter Townsend writes that:

> 'The painful facts of the situation were only too clear: the country, the Commonwealth, the entire world, was in an uproar over us. The laity was divided among itself, and from the Church, over the Church's stand on divorce. There were loud cries from the public for the disestablishment of the Church, for the abolition of the Royal Marriages Act. The press was in a turmoil : while the Daily Sketch and the Daily Mirror spat abuse at each other, the Daily Mirror had savagely attacked The Times and the Press Council had censured the Daily Mirror, concluding that the British press had disgraced itself before the world. Buckingham Palace, the government and the Church all caught the blast. Everyone was by now impatient, and critical of a situation which was fast becoming ridiculous.'. [127]

It was true that the press was truly attentive to the evolution of their relationship. An article about the Princess Margaret – Peter Townsend love affair was more likely to be on the front page. Indeed, two days before Princess Margaret's birthday, an article was published in the *Daily Mirror*, showing their impatience as it was entitled 'Come on Margaret! Please make up your mind!'.[128] In addition, reporters were truly obsessed with this relationship and were trying to find clues about the Princess Margaret – Peter Townsend affair as it can be seen in another article published by the *Daily Mirror* a few days before the Princess and Townsend issued their statement. The article in question was published on October 18th, 1955. It was entitled 'Is she sad?' and featured several pictures of Princess Margaret.[129] In this article, one can read speculations about their relationship, and about how 'The world was talking about a SAD-LOOKING Princess Margaret yesterday'.

126 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 237.
127 Peter Townsend, *Time and Chance, an Autobiography*, Methuen : New York, Toronto, London, Sidney, 1978, p. 234.
128 *Daily Mirror*, August 19th, 1955.
129 *Daily Mirror*, October 18th, 1955.

Daily Mirror
FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE
No. 10,077

VOUCHER

• The Princess is 25 on Sunday.
• Will she wed? When will she announce her decision?

COME ON MARGARET!

FOR two years the world has buzzed with this question:

Will Princess Margaret marry 40-year-old Group Captain Peter Townsend?—OR Won't she?

Five months ago, Group Captain Townsend told the Daily Mirror: '. . . the word cannot come from me. You will appreciate it must come from other people . . .'

On Sunday the Princess will be 25. She could then, if she wished, notify Parliament direct of her desire to marry without first seeking the consent of her sister the Queen.

She could end the hubbub.

Will she please make up her mind?

Please make up your mind!

Your favourite centre!
14 milk chocolate caramels! 6d
CARAMETS
NOW ON SALE EVERYWHERE

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Daily Mirror
FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE

IS SHE SAD?

SEVEN HOURS APART —THEN DINNER WITH PETER . . .

DAILY MIRROR REPORTER

THE world was talking about a SAD-LOOKING Princess Margaret yesterday.

Her idyllic week-end with Group Captain Peter Townsend ended at Binfield, Berks, at midday.

She said goodbye to the group captain—and had no smiles for the cameramen afterwards.

'I Know How the Affair Will End'

Speculation grew in the world's newspapers. The Copenhagen paper Information quoted King Frederik of Denmark as saying:

"I know how the Princess Margaret-Peter Townsend affair will end.

"It will not end in the way you think."

LAST NIGHT, six hours fifty minutes after they parted, the Princess and the group captain met again for dinner in London.

This is how the day

Continued on Back Page

● All these pictures of Princess Margaret were taken when she returned to London YESTERDAY.

Advertiser's Announcement
Tri-ti is here
72 GNS
KB Tri-ti Gram
YOUR K.B. AUTHORIZED DEALER WILL GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION
KOLSTER-BRANDES LTD., PORTSMOUT, HANTS
AND ASSOCIATE

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'Come On Margaret', *Daily Mirror,* August 19th, 1955. The British Newspaper Archive.

'Is She Sad ?' *Daily Mirror,* October 18th, 1955. The British Newspaper Archive.

Thus, it can be understood that every tiny detail was under the press' scrutiny. In her book, *The Monarchy on Screen,* Mandy Meck explains that 'In 1955 the New Statesman published an article by the pundit Malcolm Muggeridge with a headline that would become a cliché of British political commentary. [...]'The Royal Soap Opera' compared newspaper coverage of Princess Margaret's romance with Royal Air Force Group Captain Peter Townsend to that bestowed on Rita Hayworth'.[130] Thus, members of the Royal Family were compared to celebrities such as actors. Just like the Queen had been compared to a celebrity by Norman Birnbaum when he responded to Shils and Young's article about the coronation.

Publishing an article about the Royal Family would guarantee its large visibility, as this topic was a very popular one. This idea is also corroborated by Ziegler in *Elizabeth's*

130 Meck, *op.cit.*, p. 363.

Britain – 1926 to 1986, as he writes 'A feature about the royal family usually adds 25-30,000 to the circulation of any magazine'.[131] Once it was known that Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend had decided not to be married, in order to be 'mindful of the Church's teaching' and for the Princess to fulfil her 'duty to the Commonwealth', the press kept showing support towards them. Paxman argues that 'for weeks afterwards the press dripped with expressions of sympathy for the woman who had put her duty first'.[132] In his book, Pimlott explains that some loyalist and religious newspapers reacted very positively to the announcement, and emphasised the fact that they had taken the good decision.[133] On the other hand, more moderate newspapers tended to emphasise the sad end of the affair. For instance, the day after the announcement, the *Daily Mirror* published an article entitled 'Peter, the man she had to give up', therefore showing sympathy towards the Princess.[134] Ziegler adds that 'When the story finally ended in 1955 the newspaper felt that they had been deprived of part of their birthright'.[135] Nevertheless, people's reaction as well as the press', and their interest concerning the romance was not pure curiosity. Indeed, it can be argued that there was a political dimension behind all this. Bradford claims that 'The fuss, emotion and hysteria which raged in October 1955 was symbolic of divisions in the country between progressives and Establishmentarians, religious and non-religious, at a time when belief in the monarchy had itself become almost a kind of religion'.[136] Therefore, issues among the British society impacted royalty and how the British people reacted to the Princess Margaret – Peter Townsend polemic.

131 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.,* p. 156.
132 Paxman, *op. cit.,* p. 102.
133 Pimlott, *op. cit.,* p. 238.
134 *Daily Mirror,* November 1st, 1955.
135 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.,* p.168.
136 Bradford, *op. cit.,* p. 97.

In order to conclude this subpart, it can be argued that the Monarchy's traditional attitude towards divorce was challenged by more modern views about marriage. Therefore, the relationship between tradition and modernity knew a shift with the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend. Indeed, modernity was no longer at the service of the Monarchy's tradition, and on the contrary, it tended to challenge the Monarchy's attitude. Even though the possibility for people to divorce had been made more accessible through various reforms, the Church of England's teachings still prevented remarriage. One can think that this may be quite surprising and also contradictory, as Henry VIII separated from Rome and created the Church of England partly in order to be able to divorce his first wife Catherine of Aragon. What he was able to do thanks to the English Reformation. Finally, even though Princess Margaret decided to renounce to the union, people did not really embrace the tradition as it could have been the case during the Coronation period. On the contrary, tradition was being re-assessed and challenged by modern mores, demonstrating the changes in the society's customs and values.

b) 1957: a push towards modernity. Lord Altrincham's article 'The Monarchy Today' and the first televised Christmas Broadcast.

Then, in the following years of the decade, the Monarchy would be challenged again. In 1956, the Suez Crisis impacted Britain. On July 26th, the Suez Canal was nationalised by Egypt, and it led to 'three months of diplomatic turmoil'.[137] The French, British and Israeli governments allied themselves and decided to attack Egypt. The first attack was launched on October 29th, 1956. Pimlott explains that a few days later, on November 6th, 'international pressure and the threat of financial collapse forced the London and Paris governments to order a cease-fire'.[138] It was thus a very complicated situation that had not been very well handled. The event led to Anthony Eden's resignation. He had been Prime Minister since 1955. Moreover, this crisis created division and Pimlott argues that 'The resignation occurred against a background of deep national crisis and uncertainty, following the Suez *débâcle*, with the Conservative Party and the Government bitterly divided'.[139]

Furthermore, the British people wondered about the Queen's involvement. Britain was seen as a powerful country, victorious in the Second World War. Consequently, in this context, the Government as well as the Monarch were subject to criticisms. This failure altered the national pride, and the image of greatness linked to Britain and the Second World War. Bradford declares that 'The monarchy had become the symbol of the nation; in traumatized post-Suez Britain the question was bound to be raised whether that symbol was the right one'.[140] Therefore, it can be understood that the image of the government and of the Monarchy suffered from the Suez crisis, and that there were consequences. Bradford also talks about

137 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 253.
138 *Ibid.*, p. 255.
139 *Ibid.*, p. 256.
140 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

Britain's 'national decline that became so evident after Suez' and, alongside with Macmillan's appointment as the new Prime Minister and the Princess Margaret/Peter Townsend affair, she states that it 'reinforced the impression of a nation ruled by a traditional class in its own interests, for which the monarchy was a gilded front'.[141] Tradition started to be seen in a less favourable way than it used to. Thus, it led to open criticisms, such as for instance from Lord Altrincham and his article. Tradition was about to become even more challenged that it already had been through the debate about divorce and Princess Margaret's marriage.

141 *Ibid.,* p. 107.

• **<u>Lord Altrincham's article.</u>**

In August 1957, Lord Altrincham, a politician, writer and historian attacked the Queen on several grounds in his article 'The Monarchy Today', published in the *National and English Review.* He was involved in politics and belonged to the younger generation of Tories, 'who were campaigning to make the Conservative Party more meritocratic and less class-bound, and he was anxious to do the same for the monarchy', as he is described by Lacey.[142] His political opinions are visible in his article. Indeed, Lord Altrincham highlights the fact that the Queen should represent all her people, and that, if she wants to keep their loyalty, she should work on the impression she gives during her speeches. Lord Altrincham explains that '[…] the Crown must not seem to be identified with any particular social group'.[143] For the Queen's whole people to identify with her, she must not give the impression that she belongs to a specific social class. But for Lord Altrincham, the Queen, as well as her sister, failed to do so because he later writes that 'The relatively "classless" character of George V has been mentioned; unfortunately it is not to be seen in his grand daughters. The Queen and Princess Margaret still bear the debutante stamp. Why is this? The most likely reason is that they were given a conventional upper-class education'.[144] It may not have been an issue before the war, and it was compliant with Bagehot's role of the Monarch, but all the social changes engendered by the war made it problematical. The Queen and her family were now expected to be classless, and close to all their people, regardless of their social class. It thus demonstrated the scope of the changes that occurred in the post-war era. This is acknowledged by Wilson who declared that 'Certainly, what neither her mother nor father, who lived cocooned in a very limited social sphere, could possibly have foreseen was the

142 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 203.
143 Lord Altrincham, 'The Monarchy Today', August 1957, *National and English review,* p. 63. See appendix 2.
144 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

extent of social change which would come to Britain during and after the Second World War'.[145] Therefore, the Queen's upbringing did not prepare her for such changes.

The fact that the Queen and her sister were perceived as members of the aristocracy can be seen as dangerous because she could lose the loyalty of some of her subjects. This remark can also be applied to the Queen's Court because Altrincham adds that '[…] the Queen personal staff represents almost exclusively a single social type […] Worse still, courtiers are nearly always citizens of one Commonwealth country – the United Kingdom'.[146] Therefore, people who did not belong to the upper social class and who did not live in the United Kingdom could have felt that they were excluded because there was a lack of representation of those people at Court. Altrincham also makes the suggestion that 'A truly classless and Commonwealth Court would not only bear eloquent witness to the transformed nature of the Monarchy, but would also give the Queen and her Family the advantage of daily contact with an interesting variety of personalities and points of view'.[147] By doing so, it would indeed enable them to understand various social classes and Commonwealth countries. Otherwise, the Royal Family was only surrounded by upper class people from the United Kingdom. It would also enable the Queen to become more knowledgeable of her people. It can be understood that she should not take her people's loyalty for granted and change things in order to satisfy most of them.

Then, Lord Altrincham severely criticises the Royal Speeches by stating '[…] in fact the Queen's Christmas broadcast will this year, for the first time, be televised. She will not, however, achieve good results with her present style of speaking, which is frankly "a pain in the neck"[…] But even if the Queen feels compelled to read all her speeches, great and small,

145 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.,* p. 27.
146 Altrincham, *op. cit.,* p. 64.
147 *Ibid.,* p. 64.

she must at least improve her method of reading them'.[148] Thus, five years after the Queen's first Christmas Broadcast, there was still a criticism of the fact that she read all her speeches which consequently made them rather boring, probably due to the lack of spontaneity. But then, Altrincham explains that the Queen's speeches give a negative image of her because 'The personality conveyed by the utterances which are put into her mouth is that of a priggish schoolgirl […]'.[149] The Queen is thus compared to a child. Using the word 'priggish' means that through her speeches, the Queen was seen as someone vain or self-righteous, because of words that were not her own. Wilson argues that Altrincham's article was 'an attempt to puncture some of the sycophancy and idolatry which the young Queen Elizabeth II was larded by the press'.[150] However, Lacey argues that a 'close reading of his article made clear that these comments were technically directed at the words the queen was given to speak rather than at Elizabeth II herself'.[151]

Nevertheless, what can be asked after the reading of this article is the following question: were the Queen and the Monarchy criticised or was it actually traditionalism? According to Ziegler, this article was 'another indication of the extent to which the royal family was identified by some with the stuffier forms of traditionalism'.[152] If one focuses only on the virulent parts, it may be thought that the target was the Queen and more generally, the Monarchy. And yet, at the beginning of this article, in the section entitled 'A New Pattern' it is mentioned that 'What was a change is now becoming a revolution'.[153] After a comparison with the Queen's grandfather and father, it is acknowledged that a process of modernisation was on the way. Altrincham portrays the Royal couple as normal people who were 'framed in

148 *Ibid.*, p. 65.
149 *Ibid.*, p. 65.
150 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.*, p. 27.
151 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
152 Ziegler (1978), *op. cit.*, p. 130.
153 Altrincham, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

splendour and set in perspective of tradition and mystery', which can be linked to Bagehot's arguments in *The English Constitution.*[154] According to Altrincham, this process of change started with the reign of George V, described as 'the decisive reign' because it led to the Commonwealth taking shape and moreover, he was popular but not only among members of the aristocracy because 'the Monarchy was winning the affection of many who before could have thought of it only with a mixture of awe and resignation'.[155] Consequently, what can be understood is that Altrincham was in favour of change, and acknowledged that traditions had to evolve. The British people could have identified with George V, as he 'typified the virtues and limitations of millions of his subjects' and thus, Altrincham, through this laudatory description of George V, advised the Queen to follow this example.[156]

Therefore, one may think that Altrincham's vision of the Monarchy was opposed to Bagehot's. While for Bagehot mystery was a central feature for the Monarchy to survive, this contrasts with Altrincham's viewpoint as he stated about the Royal Family and the Monarchs in general that 'Their "ordinariness" is one of the secrets of their popularity'.[157] Furthermore, Altrincham gave an explanation to this shift of attitude. Even though he did not talk about Bagehot, his arguments can be applied to him as well. Indeed, when Bagehot wrote his book, the political context was different. Altrincham writes that before, and at the end of the 19th century, 'monarchies were the rules, republics the exception', while in the 1950s, 'republics are the rule, and monarchies very much the exception'.[158] As a consequence, it is understood that adjustments needed to be made in order for the British Monarchy to remain a relevant form of government for its people. In addition, Altrincham gave a justification to his remarks at the end of his article. He wrote this article because he wanted the Monarchy to survive and

154 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
155 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
156 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
157 *Ibid.*, p. 62.
158 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

to strive. Nonetheless, supporting the Monarchy did not mean agreeing with everything. As he clearly states, he wanted the Monarchy to correct the mistakes needlessly made and it was thus important for its supporters to do something in this respect.[159] Thus, after reading thoroughly this article, it seems evident that Lord Altrincham wrote it in order to make the Monarchy evolve and not to condemn it. For him, it was his duty to point at the errors and to give his advice on what might be improved. Therefore, it can be argued that Altrincham challenged traditionalism and wanted to modernise the Monarchy. Later the same year, Muggeridge, who talked about the 'Royal Soap Opera' when referring to the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, also wrote an article about the Queen. Bradford explains that 'The Queen, Muggeridge wrote, was the apex of a social pyramid of snobbishness which was not only out of date in the contemporary world but actively harmful'.[160] Therefore, it can be understood that Muggeridge agreed with Altrincham. He was also convinced that things had to be changed.

What is also highlighted by this article is actually the importance of the image sent by Queen Elizabeth II. The arrival of new technologies made the Queen more visible and maybe more involved in her people's lives. On the other hand, people were able to judge her and her image in the media, another consequence of all the changes that occurred in the post-war period. Wilson declared that 'No one, when Elizabeth was a young child, could have foreseen quite how much "image" and "presentation" would mean in the unfolding decades'.[161] Nevertheless, the Queen seemed to have been conscious of this aspect, especially since the Abdication Crisis and her father being crowned, making her the heiress of the throne. Pimlott argues that 'Being looked at and remarked on had been part of her expectation of the world for almost as long as she could remember: her Accession emphasised; but did not

159 *Ibid.*, p. 65.
160 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
161 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.*, p. 26.

fundamentally alter, this consequence of her position in the direct line'.[162] Being in the spotlight most of the time, the Queen had to appear blameless in front of the people that admired her. Pimlott then adds that 'As Monarch, she was always on call, seldom not on show, ever conscious of being observed and of having to set an example'.[163] Being at the centre of the British people's attention, and also of her Commonwealth's people, it seemed unavoidable for her to be the target of criticisms. Using Ziegler's words, it can be stated that the Queen 'was not immune to criticism'.[164] Nonetheless, Lord Altrincham's article was more constructive than debasing.

162 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 240.
163 *Ibid.*, p. 240.
164 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.*, p. 189.

• **Reactions to the article.**

And yet, even though the analysis of the article showed that Altrincham was not against the Monarchy, the reactions to his article were intense. It was unusual at that time to read such articles. Even though it was published to make people and the Monarchy aware of dangers and of mistakes being made, many people viewed it as an insult to the Crown. Ziegler explains that 'Many therefore still felt such ardent devotion to the Crown that well-intentioned if mildly offensive criticism seemed the blackest treason'.[165] It was unusual for the Queen to be openly criticised like it was through Lord Altrincham's article. Even if Altrincham intended to give advice, some remarks were about the Queen as a person. Hardman writes that 'What offended people across the social spectrum, however, was the sneering tone of his attack on the Queen herself – her voice, her way of speaking, her "priggish" demeanour'.[166] One may think that without this passage, the article may have been received more positively. The reactions to this article were even literally violent, as Lord Altrincham was physically assaulted by a loyalist. This attitude gave the impression that 'the Royal Family were inviolable, and as if criticisms, however reasonable, were simply not allowed', to use Wilson's words.[167] Ziegler uses the expression 'explosion of indignation' to characterise the reactions to this article; and for him this 'was proof, if proof were needed, of the love in which the British people held their monarch'.[168] Thus, even though this was the beginning of the Queen being publicly criticised, it can be seen that her people admired her and that she was a revered Monarch.

165 Ziegler (1978), *op. cit.*, p. 131.
166 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
167 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.*, p. 70.
168 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.*, p. 190.

Even influential people reacted strongly against Altrincham, for instance, 'The Archbishop of Canterbury, crowner of the Monarch, denouncer of divorce, identified Altrincham with irreligion, blasphemy and even, implicitly, indecency'.[169] Altrincham insisted on the fact that he was not anti-monarchist. Lacey quotes him as he justified himself by saying: 'That is like saying that an art critic is anti-art? […] I love the monarchy. Constitutional monarchy is Britain's greatest invention'.[170] In addition, another explanation to the brutal responses to the article is suggested by Pimlott, who explains that the context was ill-chosen as it was a year after the Suez crisis, which had deteriorated the image of the country and of the Monarchy. Indeed, he states that 'The immediate aftermath of Suez was a time when reassessment was urgently needed: hence it was also one of hyper sensitivity and even paranoia'.[171] Consequently, this context made it hard for Altrincham's article to be received positively as well as seriously by the British people. Altrincham intended to defuse the situation and did an interview on TV on August 6th, 1957.[172] During this interview, Altrincham declared that his article was not a criticism of the Queen, but a criticism of the way the things were organised. Moreover, he explained that the Queen may be described as 'the boss'. Thus, for him, only the boss can make changes, it was her responsibility, and that was the reason why he addressed the Queen.

Reactions to the article were also visible in the press. There were a lot of newspapers articles about it. The same phenomenon can be observed. Indeed, people were shocked by the article. The issue of August 8th, 1957 by the *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail* published an article dealing with Altrincham, and it was entitled 'Outburst by peer is hard to understand'.[173] In this article, it is written that 'It is hard to understand why Lord Altrincham decided to treat

169 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
170 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
171 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 277.
172 'Lord Altrincham interviewed about his controversial article', August 6th, 1957, https://www.gettyimages.fr/
173 *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, August 8th, 1957.

the British Press to a “silly season” story by criticizing the Queen’. Furthermore, the publication of ‘The Monarchy Today’ is qualified as a ‘political suicide’, as it is a direct attack to the British Monarchy. Therefore, in this article, Lord Altrincham is criticised and it is easily understood that the writer of the article does not share Altrincham’s view point. It is actually not surprising to find such an article, because the *Daily Mail* is a Conservative newspaper.

Nevertheless, a rather similar phenomenon can be seen in more moderate newspapers even though it was not as blatant. For instance, in the issue of August 3rd, 1957, the *Daily Mirror* published an article entitled ‘The Queen – By A Peer’ in which one can read about the ‘astonishing criticism’ made by Altrincham.[174] There is also an emphasis on the words ‘attack’ and ‘criticism’. Indeed, the first lines of the article summarised ‘The Monarchy Today’. For the *Daily Mirror,* in this article, Altrincham

> ‘ATTACKS the “class character of the Queen and Princess Margaret; ATTACKS the Queen’s “tweedy” entourage; CRITICISES the Queen’s style of speaking as “a pain in the neck”; DESCRIBES her broadcast personality as “that of a priggish schoolgirl”; CRITICISES the Court for “failing to move with the times”’.

Therefore, even moderate newspapers seemed to be shocked and offended by Altrincham’s article. This was a popular topic in the British press of the time. The popular opinion seemed to be against Altrincham at that time. Furthermore, Altrincham’s being assaulted would also make the headlines. This type of news was quite unusual at the time and people wanted to know more about what happened.

Daily Mirror

THE QUEEN —BY A PEER

Island in the sun? Looks like US!

AN EASY START ON THE ROADS

‘Priggish speeches’

Talking to Women

Daily Mirror, August 3rd, 1957. The British Newspaper Archive.

Westminster Commentary

Outburst by peer is hard to understand

BRITISH Royalty is quite used to being insulted. Indeed King George V had the “starting experience of seeing a banner “Twenty-five years of war and misery” flaunted before him while he was driving to St Paul’s to celebrate his Silver Jubilee.

Long argument

Campaigner

Labelled

Strong reaction

Japanese are drinking more beer

Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail, August 8th, 1957. The British Newspaper Archive.

Daily Mirror

SMACK!

LORD A. GETS HIS FACE SLAPPED

Daily Mirror, August 7th, 1957. The British Newspaper Archive.

Nonetheless, the remarks made by Lord Altrincham in 'The Monarchy Today' were actually taken seriously by the Crown. Indeed, some of his advice were followed as it will be seen with the first televised Christmas Broadcast later this year. Even though there were reactions of indignation, people at the Palace did not take it lightly and understood that this article had to be taken seriously. Indeed, Ziegler writes that 'The royal family was as aware as anyone that criticism from those who were well-disposed deserved careful consideration'.[175] It is important to bear in mind that Lord Altrincham was a politician and that his point of view was well thought out and not baseless. Moreover, his arguments were actually supported by Prince Philip, as he 'was resolved to bring efficiency and modern business method to court circles'.[176] Consequently, what can be understood is that the British people was offended while the people actually targeted by this article decided to pay attention to the advice that were given. Lacey states that 'Inside the palace, some people realised there was truth in what Altrincham said'.[177] Likewise, Hardman argues that 'his broader complaints about a detached and complacent Court struck a chord. Many years later he would even be congratulated in public by a former Private Secretary to the Queen for performing a useful service to the Crown'.[178]

175 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.*, p. 190
176 *Ibid.*, p. 190.
177 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 205.
178 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

Therefore, it can be argued that this article played a major role in the process of modernisation which was on its way at that time. Nevertheless, it was important for the Crown not to alter their image. They did not want to be seen as doing exactly what they were told through Altrincham's remarks. For instance, the cancelling of the debutante presentation parties was actually delayed because the Queen, 'did not want to be seen jumping to Lord Altrincham's command'.[179] But this was only the first step towards many changes. Bradford argues, when talking about Muggeridge and Altrincham, that they 'represented the revolt of the intellectuals against the status quo; they were harbingers of the future but in no way the representatives of the present'.[180] Yet, even though the British people did not understand the value of the advice given in the article, they had an impact on the society of the time. Changes occurred at that time, and not only in the future. For Pimlott, what he calls the 'Altrincham-Muggeridge storm' had 'reverberations [that] continued to be felt for many years to come. It was a moment of cultural shift'.[181] Therefore, it can be concluded that Altrincham's implication in the process of modernisation of the British Monarch was undeniable.

179 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 206.
180 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p 109.
181 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

• **The first televised Christmas Broadcast**

One of the first visible impacts of Altrincham's article would be the Queen's 1957 Christmas Broadcast, which was the first to be televised. One can see that the speeches given by the Monarch were truly important for the people. They needed to feel represented and understood by the Queen. However, according to Lord Altrincham, the Queen should be careful not to lose the loyalty of her subjects and, to do so, she should make some changes in the way she addresses them. The depiction given by Lord Altrincham gave the impression that the Queen lived in her own little world, letting her ministers decide what was going to be said during her speeches and consequently it gave a negative image to her subjects, without letting people see her own personality. Nonetheless, the 1957 Christmas Broadcast was used in an attempt to change the situation. Pimlott explains that the idea of a televised Christmas Broadcast that year was not unanimously received as he writes that 'The Queen had resisted television on Christmas Day ever since the Accession'.[182] Furthermore, he argues that the reason 'was a mixture of traditionalism and the Queen's reluctance to allow the strain, and paraphernalia, of television […] to interrupt her family celebration'.[183] Thus, the Queen was not in favour of the Christmas Broadcast being televised, as she had already rejected the idea of using television in the previous years.

Nevertheless, it was decided that the 1957 Christmas Broadcast would be the first to be televised, and consequently another obstacle arose. Indeed, after the publication of 'The Monarchy Today' by Lord Altrincham, it was expected from the Queen to change her behaviour during her speeches, as it was suggested in the article. However, the fact that it was televised made this task more difficult. As it is acknowledged by Pimlott, 'there was concern

182 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 289.
183 *Ibid.*, p. 290.

about making the Queen seem “natural” - harder with TV than radio’.[184] And yet, in the post-Suez era, in addition to Altrincham’s article, it seemed essential for the Crown to evolve and not to fall in a state of ‘complacency’ as it had been reproached to them. But eventually, even though the Queen was not in favour of television at first, she was actually very involved in the broadcast. She wanted to give her people what was expected of her: being more natural and spontaneous. Indeed, Lacey writes that ‘The Queen had finally agreed that she would allow her 1957 Christmas Broadcast to be televised – though she refused the assistance of the recently devised teleprompter. She considered this to be in some way acting. In her eyes it was almost dishonest.’[185] Even if it would have been easier to use this device, the Queen chose the difficulty in order to appear more natural. It can thus be understood that this change and the fact that she refused to use the teleprompter were a way for her speech not to be ‘a pain in the neck’, to use Altrincham’s words. Lacey then explains that ‘Elizabeth II’s first ever televised Christmas Broadcast was presented as if she were performing her radio message – with monarch, manuscript, and microphone all in the picture’.[186] The way the Queen delivered the speech proved that she worked on the remarks made by Altrincham, even if traditionalism can be found in the way it was presented. Yet, she had her manuscript in front of her, but she was not reading her speech. It was probably learnt by heart but it certainly seemed more natural than it was in 1952. Therefore, her involvement cannot be denied, even though it seemed not to have been easy for the Queen to accept those changes because Bradford writes that ‘In private she suffered almost as much from nerves as her father had, writing to a friend that the broadcast had ruined the family Christmas’.[187]

184 *Ibid.*, p. 291.
185 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
186 *Ibid.*, p. 209.
187 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

In order to analyse the message conveyed by the speech, the 1957 Christmas Broadcast will be studied from a sociolinguistic point of view.[188] It was interesting to see how the choice of words could be linked to the remarks made by Altrincham. Thus, this analysis is based on one of Pierre Bourdieu's books entitled *Langage et pouvoir symbolique*. It was useful to understand the choice of the words from a sociolinguistic point of view. Bourdieu explains that '[…] la science sociale doit prendre en compte le fait de l'efficacité symbolique des rites d'institution; c'est à dire le pouvoir qui leur appartient d'agir sur le réel en agissant sur la représentation du réel'.[189] For instance, through her 1957 Christmas speech, the Queen emphasises her link with the nation. She uses “We”, “Our” and “Us” more than twenty times.

Moreover, she makes links between the Royal Family and families of commoners, as it can be seen though the sentence: ‘My own family often gather round to watch television, as they are at this moment, and that is how I imagine you now.’[190] This choice can be a means to counter Lord Altrincham’s remark about her being a member of the aristocracy. Indeed, comparing the Royal Family and families of commoners and emphasising their similarities, was actually a way for the Royal Family to seem less aristocratic. One can consider that it was only an illusion, because there always has been a great discrepancy between the Royal Family’s lifestyle or standard of living, and those of commoners. Nevertheless, as Bourdieu explained, through this speech, Queen Elizabeth II tried to represent reality in a certain way, in order to please the subjects and to keep their loyalty and trust. In fact, this emphasis on family in this speech may be linked to Bagehot, once again. Indeed, he declared that ‘A *family* on the throne is an interesting idea also. It brings down the pride of sovereignty to the level of

188 See Appendix 3.
189 Pierre Bourdieu, and John B. Thompson, *Langage et pouvoir symbolique / Pierre Bourdieu*, Points. Série Essais (Éd. du Seuil. Paris, 2001), p.178
190 ‘Christmas Broadcast 1957’, *The Royal Family*, 1957 <https://www.royal.uk/christmas-broadcast-1957> [accessed 20 March 2019].

petty life'.[191] The notion of family would be the link between the Monarch and her subject. And yet, this goes against Bagehot's own theory, as this connection may lead to the demystification of the British Monarchy, which, for him, was a threat. Even though he argues that a royal family 'introduces irrelevant facts into the business of government', in that speech using the image of the family can be considered as a political strategy to lessen the gap between the Queen and her subjects, which was needed at that time.[192] The image of a Royal Family thus seemed to be a useful and actually effective political tool, which was something that was not foreshadowed by Bagehot. The Queen even went further by extending the notion of family when she says 'But we belong, you and I, to a far larger family'.

Then, Bourdieu mentions political representation. He argues that :

> 'Le travail politique de représentation […] porte à l'objectivité d'un discours public ou d'une pratique exemplaire une manière de voir et de vivre le monde social jusque-là reléguée à l'état de disposition pratique ou d'expérience tacite et souvent confuse (malaise, révolte, etc.); il permet ainsi aux agents de se découvrir des propriétés communes par-delà la diversité des situations particulières qui isolent, divisent, démobilisent, et de construire leur identité sociale sur la base de traits ou d'expériences qui semblaient incomparables aussi longtemps que faisait défaut le principe de pertinence propre à les constituer en indices de l'appartenance à une même classe'.[193]

Here, that notion can be seen when the Queen refers to her people. She mentions a common history, she involves her people in the building of the Commonwealth, and she mentions twice the idea of a brotherhood. Therefore, she emphasises the fact that they lall are her subjects, that was what they all share, regardless of their social class, religion or nationality if they were not in the United Kingdom. She creates a unity among her people. To link this to what Bourdieu wrote, in order to create a social cohesion and avoid revolts or social crisis, the Queen once again emphasises the similarities but in that case, the similarities among all her subjects. She suggests that their social identity or 'identité social' should be about being a subject of the Crown and a member of the Commonwealth. She mentions the idea of being an

191 Bagehot, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
192 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
193 Bourdieu, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

example for other countries, idealising and pleasing the people so that they have to be proud to belong to her people, and that is the common class the Queen focuses on. Pride should not be overlooked as it was important at that time when the position of their country was being challenged internationally, as it was seen with the Suez crisis. Thus, while Lord Altrincham warned the Queen about losing her subjects' loyalty and having a negative image in their eyes, in this speech she counters those remarks, and describes herself as being proud and also as being a part of her united people.

Nonetheless, she also defends traditionalism in that speech. This is clearly visible with the sentence: 'The trouble is caused by unthinking people who carelessly throw away ageless ideals as if they were old and outworn machinery'. The Queen actually recognises the importance of modernity but also emphasises the value of tradition. In the next lines she declares: 'At this critical moment in our history we will certainly lose the trust and respect of the world if we just abandon those fundamental principles which guided the men and women who built the greatness of this country and Commonwealth'. Therefore, for her, it is important to move forward but at the same time, it is also essential to keep in mind the past glories and achievements. Even though change was needed, people should not neglect the past and thus, traditions and traditionalism. Traditions provide a solid foundation, and thus it is suggested that they should be taken into consideration. This does not reject modernity, so the traditions may evolve but they cannot be thrown away. This emphasis can be seen as a response to everything that happened in the previous years, which challenged tradition.

Finally, the 1957 Christmas Broadcast may be described as a successful change because Pimlott explains that it 'was seen by sixteen and a half million people' and moreover, it 'produced the largest number of press cuttings for any single television broadcast since the

Coronation'.[194] One may say that it reached its goal because it was received positively. Furthermore, it added an aspect that should not be overlooked. Indeed, the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, associated with the Suez crisis and Altrincham's article were factors that divided the British people about the Crown. And yet, the 1957 Broadcast was very popular and may be considered as a way to lessen the division. For Pimlott, 'The novelty of seeing the Queen performing the annual electronic ritual, instead of just hearing her, united the nation on Christmas afternoon'.[195] This uniting aspect was truly important and may be linked to the Queen's Coronation, that had a similar impact. Nevertheless, even though there was the modernisation of this ritual, traditionalism was still emphasised in the speech and its importance was highlighted. Thus, at that time, tradition was challenged by modernity but the Queen seemed resolved to defend traditionalism.

To conclude this part, the words of Ziegler may be used as he declares that

> 'It would be extravagant to maintain that Lord Altrincham's article and the widespread support for his point of view were more than precipitating factors in a process which was already under way, but it is from about this time that the court seemed to be making a real effort to refurbish its image is not radically reform its way of life'.[196]

This can be seen through the novelty which was the 1957 televised Christmas Broadcast. Even though Lord Altrincham, in addition to the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, or even the Suez crisis, impacted the functioning of the Monarchy, there had been a process of modernisation developing since the Queen's Accession to the throne. Nevertheless, Altrincham's article had a strong influence on the Queen herself, which was seen through the Christmas Broadcast that year, and also because Harold Nicolson wrote about the Queen that she came across 'with a vigour unknown in the pre-Altrincham days'.[197] Therefore, the year 1957, because of Altrincham's article and of the televised Christmas

194 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 292.
195 *Ibid.*, p. 292.
196 Ziegler (1978), *op. cit.*, p. 132
197 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

Broadcast, may be seen as a push towards modernity, accelerating the process of modernisation already on the way. Yet, it is important to notice that traditionalism was still depicted as a major aspect, and as something worth considering, that should not be put aside.

III - The decline of tradition and the need to modernise the Monarchy in the 1960s.

While the 1950s were a period when the Queen was popular among her subjects even though there were challenges, the 1960s were more difficult. Indeed, society continued to evolve and to modernise, and the need for greater change within the British Monarchy was felt. Modernity was first used to convey tradition but in the second half of the 1950s, modernity challenged tradition. Then, in the 1960s, there was a visible decline of tradition, and modernity was thus needed to fight unpopularity. Traditions eventually evolved. Therefore, the third part will be divided into two subparts. Firstly, the first half of the 1960s will be studied. It was a period when there was a decline in the Queen's popularity. This aspect is going to be illustrated through various events and newspaper articles. Secondly, the focus will be on the second half of the 1960s, when the British Monarchy turned to modernity and popular media to modernise itself and fight unpopularity.

a) The first half of the 1960s: a decline in the Queen's popularity.

• The end of the 1950s and the very beginning of the 1960s

At the end of the 1950s and at the very beginning of the 1960s, there were some events related to what happened the previous decade. First, in 1959, the Queen became pregnant with her third child, thus extending the Royal Family on the throne. This announcement aroused people's curiosity as Princess Anne was nearly ten years old and Prince Charles eleven.[198] The Queen gave birth to Prince Andrew on February 19th, 1960.

Around the same time, another announcement from the Royal Family became a talking point. Indeed, Princess Margaret became engaged to the photographer Anthony Armstrong Jones, putting behind her the polemic around her and Peter Townsend. According to Bradford, 'The engagement of a controversial but undeniably royal princess to a photographer presaged the social upheaval of the 1960s; it was the perfect beginning to a decade when talent mixed with aristocracy, and rock stars, fashion designers and photographers outshone earls'.[199] The wedding took place in Westminster Abbey in May. Pimlott writes that there was a 'carnival atmosphere' and also that the large crowd present at the event demonstrated that there was 'a newly established tradition, which helped to ensure that all future royal weddings would be big national events'.[200] This kind of events was actually very popular and people enjoyed it. Pimlott quotes a *New Statesman* critic who said that 'The Monarchy in Britain is established and safe, […] indeed, the age of mass communication has brought it a degree of popularity which would have seemed inconceivable

198 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 296.
199 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
200 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

even to the Victoria of the Jubilee. But for this reason, it cannot afford to make mistakes'.[201] Once again, setting an example proved to be a major aspect of the role of the Monarch, and more generally, of the Royal Family. Pimlott continues by saying that 'The wedding had been an uncomplicated affair – a happy echo of the Coronation, but without the same earnestness, a festival more than a sacrament, which seemed to show that the public-royal relationship was in good repair'.[202]

Therefore, it seemed that the end of the 1950s and the very beginning of the 1960s did not foresee the crisis that was to come. Even though those events were happy ones, troubles were coming, as it was implied by Bradford when she mentions 'the social upheaval of the 1960s'.[203] Hardman describes this period and writes that 'The early sixties brought great happiness for the Queen and Prince Philip with the birth of Prince Andrew, in 1960, and Prince Edward, in 1964. But all the time there was the uncomfortable sense of old certainties being chipped away'.[204]

201 *Ibid.*, p. 309.
202 *Ibid.*, p. 309.
203 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
204 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

• **Problems with the Commonwealth**

During the first half of the 1960s, the popularity of the Commonwealth was challenged. As it was explained previously, the Commonwealth was a pride and a hope for the British people, and it was considered to be the remaining of the British Empire. Pimlott argues that 'By 1960, however, two developments had put this hopeful vision under strain. One was the accelerated process of colonial divestment, […] and the creation of new states which became, […] Commonwealth republic. The other was the alternative magnetic force and alarming rivalry of the Common Market'.[205] The Common Market was also known as the EEC (European Economic Community). At first, Britain did not want to join the EEC, as Harrison writes that 'Once created, the EEC at first aroused very little interest in Britain'.[206] Nonetheless, this attitude did not last. Indeed, Pimlott then explains that 'the rapid expansion of European economies soon changed the minds of many people, including that of the Prime Minister'.[207] The Common Market became attractive for many people that would be called the pro-Marketeers. All the changes that occurred during that period in the Commonwealth countries but also in the neighbouring countries challenged the relevance of the Commonwealth as well as its unity. For Pimlott 'A yawning gap was opening up between the Commonwealth as it was still supposed to be, and the reality'.[208] The Commonwealth could still be considered a novelty at that time, therefore creating a lot of challenges. The situation did not seem stable at that time, and it also seemed unpredictable. The Commonwealth suffered from many changes at that time. Ghana and Malaya became independent in 1957 and Nigeria in 1960, and as Pimlott writes, 'other colonies were following their paths', while a

205 Pimlott, *op. cit.,* p. 301.
206 Brian Harrison, *Seeking A Role, The United Kingdom, 1951-1970,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2009, p. 116.
207 Pimlott, *op. cit.,* p. 301.
208 *Ibid.,* p. 310.

year late, in 1961, South Africa decided to leave the Commonwealth and became a republic.[209] Nevertheless it was important to maintain a positive image. The deteriorating image of the Commonwealth did not help in its favour in the debate about the EEC. Indeed, Brian Harrison argues that:

> In failing to unite behind Britain during the Suez crisis, the Commonwealth revealed itself as a shrunken asset for the UK, and it was now defined vaguely enough to stave off for even longer any clear choice between Commonwealth and Europe; indeed, the UK's bid to join the EEC seemed in itself a declaration of UK independence within the Commonwealth.[210]

Another difficulty arose with Ghana as its leader moved towards 'a single-party rule and dictatorship'.[211] Pimlott raises the question: 'What was the role of the Queen to be, as far as countries like Ghana were concerned'.[212] The Commonwealth became composed of very different nations, becoming more and more independent. It was difficult for most of them to identify with the Queen or the British Monarchy more generally, having very different cultures or background. Pimlott argues that 'Thus the problem in the 1960s was how to reconcile the 'unity' myth […] with the reality of growing diversity'.[213] The situation seemed difficult to handle and challenging. Pimlott mentions Altrincham who thought that 'The Monarchy had a part to play in the Commonwealth which, so far from becoming less important, ought to be extended' and who declared in 1958 'I am more concerned with the Queen's new and revolutionary function as Head of the Commonwealth, […] than with her traditional function as a national sovereign'.[214] Indeed, at the very beginning of the 1960s the Queen was still very popular and even though there were tensions in the 1950s, her position as Monarch had not been threatened. But as Head of the Commonwealth, her role and her place were still fragile.

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209 *Ibid.*, p. 303.
210 Harrison, *op.cit.*, p. 116.
211 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 305.
212 *Ibid.*, p. 310.
213 *Ibid.*, p. 311.
214 *Ibid.*, p. 312.

Debates about the Common Market continued but the British application was eventually denied in January 1963 by the French President de Gaulle. The Commonwealth appeared as an issue. Bradford writes that 'De Gaulle feared that Britain's close links with the United States and the Commonwealth would make her a half-hearted member of any European association and he had the power to veto her membership.[215] In addition, this application was not favourably received among Commonwealth countries either. Consequently, the Commonwealth seemed to have been one of the reasons why the British application to the EEC was denied, and at the same time, this application would be the source of problems within the Commonwealth. Indeed, as Pimlott argues, 'Notice had been served to the Commonwealth of Britain's ambitions, and member states looked for an alternative destiny, forging non-British links and alliances'.[216] Therefore, the dealings with the Common Market cast a shadow on the attempt to forge unity among the Commonwealth.

The Queen's popularity would be the one who paid the price. Hardman argues that 'As Britain edged closer to the future European Union at the expense of old Commonwealth allegiances, so royalist affection was dwindling overseas'.[217] The same month that the application was denied, the Queen embarked on a royal tour of Australasia and the Pacific which followed the same itinerary of the tour she went to after her Coronation. The situation however, was very different, demonstrating the impact that the British application to the Common Market had on Commonwealth countries. Indeed, 'Crowds were warm and respectful, but notably smaller. In both Australia and New Zealand, the affection was qualified by a circumspect attitude towards Britain, because of the European bid'.[218]

215 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
216 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 318.
217 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
218 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

• **Complicated relationship with the press.**

The Queen had been challenged in the second-half of the 1950s by the Press as it was demonstrated by Lord Altrincham's article. And yet, in the first years of 1960s, the situation did not actually improve, and there was a complicated relationship with the press even though the marriage of Princess Margaret and Anthony Armstrong Jones was popular. Pimlott argues that 'Yet if criticism – which briefly appeared in the late 1950s – slid from view in the next decade, there was a significant change in the tone of the praise'.[219] What happened in the 1950s, even though it was sometimes criticism, showed a lively interest in the Queen and in the Monarchy in general.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the next decade, there was a shift of attitude. The Queen's as well as the Monarchy's popularity became less and less visible. For Pimlott, 'excitement about the Monarchy, and about the Monarch, had quietened'.[220] The British Crown seemed not to be the centre of the press' attention anymore. Pimlott explains that '*The Guardian* called the Queen dull, with insufficient interest in intellectual, cultural or social affairs'.[221] It can thus be seen that in addition to not being the centre of attention anymore, there was also a diminishing respect when referring to royalty. Such reactions were caused by a lack of news from the Crown, and only brief royal reports and it was probably done in an attempt to escape criticism.[222] It can thus be understood that the Palace and the press did not have a good relationship at that time. This may have been a consequence of the criticisms tha the Queen received a few years earlier, for instance with the articles of Lord Altrincham and Muggeridge. Furthermore, it seemed that Britain in general also suffered from a negative

219 *Ibid.*, p. 314.
220 *Ibid.*, p. 314.
221 *Ibid.*, p. 315.
222 *Ibid.*, p. 315.

image. Bradford mentions Anthony Sampson and his writing *Anatomy of Britain* published in the *Observer* in 1962, and she writes that 'Britain, he said, had become "astonishingly uncommercial", its people had lost their dynamic, were sunk in complacency, were far too snobbish'.[223] Therefore, Britain in general could have been considered uninteresting at that time. Yet, it was interesting to notice that what was reproached to the British people was really similar to what had been reproached to royalty a few years earlier.

Another reason which would explain this attitude would be the Press Secretary Commander Colville. He was very radical and it seemed that for him, Bagehot's theory was something he had to carry out to the letter. Indeed, he would try to maintain as much mystery as possible around the Royal Family and the Monarchy. Consequently, it seemed obvious that with that state of mind, it would make the relationship with the press more complicated. Hardman argues that 'In Colville's eyes, all publicity was bad publicity'.[224] Colville's attachment to traditionalism was complete and he was not ready to turn to modernity. He had always been opposed to the use of television and did not get how important modernity and the new technologies were. It may be thought that he did not realise how the popular media could have been beneficial for the Crown. Hardman insists on this aspect as he writes that 'As far as the Palace was concerned, if the Press were unhappy about the level of access and information they were getting, tough luck. If the monarchy was failing to keep up with the times, so be it. There were no great royal crises'.[225] Actually, it was important to listen to the press' complaints as it could also represent the people's complaints. The attitude adopted by Colville may be seen as complacency, which was actually one of the threats to the Monarchy that Altrincham warned the Crown about. Therefore, it can be understood that Colville would not

223 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
224 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 206.
225 *Ibid.*, p. 209.

play a part in the Monarchy's process of modernisation but that, on the contrary, he would try to keep it as traditional as possible.

Early in 1963, there was also a new kind of attitude towards the British Monarchy which emerged. Indeed, 'A "satire boom" […] widened the range of social criticism'.[226] The Monarchy was obviously not spared. Pimlott explains that 'The satirists' weapon was laughter, its enemy was pomposity – and there was much about the Court, and those who took obsequious delight in its performances, that was both pompous and funny'.[227] In March 1963, there was a sketch named 'The Queen's Departure', by David Frost in the BBC satirical programme *That was The Week That Was*, presented by Ned Sherrin. It may have been surprising for people to see a satirical sketch about the Queen on the BBC, as it usually was covering the royal events. This sketch actually 'signalled the changing mood at the BBC'.[228] This change became evident when compared with what happened a few years earlier with Lord Altrincham and Muggeridge. Indeed, Hardman declares that 'When the writer Lord Altrincham and the broadcaster Malcolm Muggeridge both made disparaging remarks about the Queen in print, the BBC banned them from discussing royal matters on air'.[229] Therefore, the fact that this sketch was done in a BBC programme was revealing of the diminishing reverence granted to the royalty.

Pimlott summarises this sketch by saying 'the royal barge sank while the band of the Royal Marines played the National Anthem'.[230] The Queen and the Monarchy were not actually the target of the sketch, but still, it was the first satirical sketch about them. Bradford explains that 'It was not in itself an attack on the monarchy, but rather on the sycophantic

226 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 320.
227 *Ibid.*, p. 320.
228 *Ibid.*, p. 321.
229 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 208.
230 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

attitudes it inspired'.[231] And this would mean the BBC coverage of royal events. Nevertheless, this might have been seen as an open door to more satirical sketches about the Queen and the Monarchy. William Shawcross argues that 'Although the sketch in no way ridiculed the royal family personally, it did mark a turning point for future satirists and comedians'.[232] Thus, it can be understood that it was no longer impossible to mention the Queen and the Monarchy in such sketches. Even though this one seemed harmless, one can wonder if the others that would follow would also be so. Yet, some people felt that it was going further than usual. Indeed, a West End theatre wanted to use this sketch in a larger show but eventually cancelling the sketch as people were afraid it would be banned.[233] Therefore, some people were aware of the decrease of reverence about royalty in such sketches and knew that changes were on the way.

A few months later, an unprecedented event happened. Indeed, in July 1963, King Paul and Queen Frederika of Greece visited Britain in order to 'strengthen the relationship of the two NATO countries' but Queen Frederika was associated with right-wing involvements from the Hitler Youth and thus, people reacted strongly.[234] When the two Royal couples arrived, there were 'jeers and catcalls [that] greeted the arrival of both indiscriminately'.[235] Thus, even though one may suggest that they were not especially targeting the Queen but the visitors, people did not decide to stay quiet out of respect for her. As Bradford writes, 'the Queen was the inadvertent target of the left-wing hostility to the State visit'.[236] It was something that could not have been foreseen as it seemed unlikely for the Monarch to face this kind of reactions. Pimlott explains that 'The Government expressed outrage. "The Queen of England

231 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 133
232 William Shawcross, *Queen and Country, The Fifty-Year Reign of Elizabeth II*, Simon and Schuster, 2002, p. 77.
233 Lacey, *op. cit., p.* 218.
234 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 322.
235 *Ibid.*, p. 322.
236 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

was booed tonight and I am furious" declared the Home Secretary, Henry Brooke'.[237] The reactions were strong, and the event was present in newspapers. For instance, the *Daily Express* of July 11th, 1963, talked about this event in the front page. There was the headline 'Anger over boos' and people could read 'I never though such a thing would happen in Britain. I don't know when it last happened in this country that a reigning monarch was given such treatment'.[238]

Even though people were shocked to see how the Queen was greeted and treated, it actually demonstrated the shift of the attitude towards the Monarch and the Monarchy. Only a minority of people were involved, but yet it showed that a line had been crossed. The Queen was no longer safe from such demonstrations. It was actually another threat to the Monarchy, as according to Bagehot, 'Above all things our royalty is to be reverenced'.[239] Can it be linked to the process of modernisation that had been on its way since her accession to the throne? If someone applies Bagehot's theory, this event may be seen as a direct consequence of the Crown's attempt to be looking more accessible. Leaving behind the mystery to appear more 'ordinary' may have led some people to think that they would be allowed to treat the Queen with less respect than usual. For the Home Secretary Brooke, this event would never have occurred ten years before, but in the meantime, a lot of social changes occurred and the society 'had lost some of its rigidities' but it is also important to highlight the fact that 'the Monarchy had ceased to be revered in the same way'.[240] Thus, it may be suggested that the modernisation of the Monarchy associated with the fact that people did not have many news of their Monarch at the time, contributed to a shift of attitude. The Queen's popularity seemed to be in decline.

237 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 322.
238 *Daily Express*, July 11th, 1963.
239 Bagehot, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
240 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

Another indicator of the diminishing popularity of the Queen was the audience of the Christmas Broadcast. Even though the 1957 televised Christmas Broadcast was a success, it seemed that a few years later in 1963, people were less and less interested in the Queen's annual message. Pimlott states that 'There was also the beginning of an alarming slippage in the ratings of the Queen's Christmas Broadcast. […] There were complaints about its blandness, and even about the Queen's delivery'.[241] It can thus be understood that it became more and more difficult to keep the people's attention and admiration. The Queen was more easily criticised and it seemed that the more accessible she was, the more demanding her people was. It was obvious at that time that her people's fascination for the Monarchy that had been witnessed at her Coronation and on various occasions in the 1950s had faded. Bradford states that 'The widespread adulation she had enjoyed in the 50s was no longer there; when she had celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Coronation, the occasion had barely been noticed'.[242] This was during this complicated context that the Queen became pregnant with her fourth child.

After giving birth to her last child, Edward, on March 10th, 1964. The same year she went to Canada, and that tour reflects both the problems with the Commonwealth countries, and the decline in her popularity. Pimlott explains that the context was tense as there was an upsurge of French separatism in Quebec and that the trip happened only a few months after the assassination of President Kennedy, which raised concern about death threats against the British Monarch, and he thus describes the Canadian tour 'one of the most difficult the Queen had ever undertaken'.[243] Nevertheless, the tensions did not decrease, and on the contrary the situation got even more complicated once the Queen was there. Indeed, 'the Canadian authorities over-reacted. When the Queen arrived in Quebec City, the police charged a

241 *Ibid.*, p. 323.
242 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
243 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

peaceful crowd, beating up and arresting people indiscriminately'.[244] Consequently, the Queen's visit would be, for her Commonwealth people in Canada, associated with violence. And yet, once again, it only contributed to a decline of the Queen's, as well as the Monarchy's popularity. In addition, what had been described as an unprecedented event during the summer of 1963 became unfortunately something more familiar for the Queen. Indeed, Pimlott quotes the *Guardian* of October 12th, 1964, in which it was reported that 'The Royal visit has won virtually no popular acclaim, […] and unless the Queen's car was sound proof as well as bullet-proof, her ears must still be reverberating to the unaccustomed sound of booing'.[245]

Therefore, a pattern was clearly visible in the first half of the 1960s. The Queen was less and less popular at home as well as in the Commonwealth countries. The popularity she acquired with her accession to the throne and the Coronation seemed to be now behind her. At that time, the British Monarchy seemed to have reached an impasse. More change were thus needed to fight the lack of interest related to the Queen and in order to keep the Monarchy relevant for the people. Pimlott's words accurately define the situation of this period: 'The Queen was not unpopular. But the double negative was becoming appropriate: she was ceasing to be a person, or a topic, about whom most people became excited'.[246] More than ever, viewing the Queen as a symbol seemed to be the dominant attitude. Yet the 'awe and wonder' with which she should be regarded seemed absent. She was not as special as she used to be for her people. This was confirmed by a Mass Observation Poll of 3 000 people conducted in 1964, in which the Queen was painted as 'somebody people believed they could relate to, but about whom they had no very strong emotions, one way or another'.[247] It seemed

244 *Ibid.*, p. 339.
245 *Ibid.*, p. 339.
246 *Ibid.*, pp. 369-370.
247 *Ibid.*, p. 370.

that the fact that the Queen was distant, made her people distant from the Monarchy. Bradford declares that 'Few people disliked or disapproved of the Queen, but their enthusiasm, like her image, was passive rather than enthusiastic'.[248]

Therefore, it was undeniable that the attitude shared by most of the British people in the first half of the 1960s was a threat for the Monarchy. Muggeridge, who criticised the Monarchy along with Altrincham a few years earlier, declared in a show in 1964 that 'The English are getting bored with their monarchy'.[249] The fact that people were no longer as involved as they used to might be seen as dangerous, as it could lead to a loss of their loyalty. The analysis of this period led to a couple of questions. Was this phenomenon actually provoked by a lack modernisation during those years? Indeed, one must bear in mind that the 1950s witnessed various events which demonstrated the use of modernity and showed the people that a process of modernisation was on the way, while the beginning of the 1960s was lacking this aspect. Would modernity be the solution to fight unpopularity? Solution had to be found in order to regain interest and popularity. As a consequence, the situation had to evolve in the next years, and a new attitude appeared in the second half of the 1960s.

248 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
249 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

b) The second half of the 1960s: the Monarchy turns to popular media to modernise itself and fight unpopularity.

The Queen's decreasing popularity was a major issue that had to be dealt with. A huge contrast is visible between the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s. Hardman insists on the fact that 'short of a revolution, the greatest threat to the throne has always been indifference'.[250] And yet, this was the precise issue that the Monarchy had to face during the first year of the new decade. Indeed, Pimlott states that 'There was no antagonism, and almost no republicanism. But the popularity was passive'.[251] Change, then, seemed to be unavoidable, or otherwise it would be dangerous for the Monarchy. Wilson argues that 'as the 1960s went by and Britain changed, it was inevitable that some embarrassment should be felt about the stuffy, old-fashioned image presented by the Royal Family, with their arcane, upper-class voices, and their apparently rarefied life of privilege. […] they needed to "move with the times"'.[252] The second half of the 1960s will thus witness attempts to arouse the British people's interest in the Monarch and the Monarchy. Still, modernity seemed to be the key answer and various things accelerated the process of modernisation in the following years.

250 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
251 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 370.
252 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.*, p. 72.

• **Time for change**

In 1966, a tragedy occurred and the Queen's reaction did not meet her people's expectations. Indeed, on October 21st, there was a mining accident in South Wales, in the village of Aberfan, and a hundred and forty-six people were killed, but mostly children. And yet, the Queen did not visit the village right after the accident, but only six days later. Pimlott writes that 'The Queen held back. It was the moment for a spontaneous gesture: she did not make one'.[253] He insists on the fact that this was a disappointment as he adds 'there was a feeling that her presence was needed, and an opportunity missed'.[254] The explanation given was that the Queen did not want to be the centre of attention there, as it would disrupt the search.[255] It seemed that the Queen did not realise that people were expected her support, as her parents were known to visit people during World War Two. This event contributed to forging the Queen's image in her people's eye. Yet, according to Bradford, her reaction was disappointing but it was at the same predictable, as the author writes that 'The reaction was characteristic of the Queen: passive, self-controlled, reluctant to confront emotional situations'.[256] Therefore, this tragedy, in addition to the blatant indifference of the people proved that it was time for things to change.

It may be seen as the starting point of the new strategy that would be adopted by Buckingham Palace. Indeed, in an article in *The Telegraph* in 2011 it was argued that following what happened in Aberfan, the Queen 'was criticised because she didn't go to Aberfan immediately and there was a sense that she wasn't sufficiently in touch with her people. Her advisers felt this and knew something had to be done. It led to a new way of

253 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 371.
254 *Ibid.*, p. 371.
255 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
256 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

portraying the Queen as approachable'.[257] The image given by the Queen needed to be more positive. Her 'ordinariness' needed to be emphasised. It went even further as not only her 'ordinariness' had to be shown but also, as Wilson says, 'By the end of the 1960s, it was felt that she who was paraded on state occasions in a gold coach and wearing a crown should be made to reveal a more "human" side to the public'.[258] This was thus the beginning of many changes.

Traditions did not seem as relevant as it used to be. They should not be suppressed but their evolution and change seemed to be required at that time. As it is argued by Pimlott, 'it was becoming increasingly hard for the Monarchy to maintain traditions which had a future, as well as a past'.[259] It was thus necessary to move forward. As it was studied through the polemic around Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend, divorce was a major issue for the British people, as it was also for the Crown. But during the second half of the 1960s, a new attitude towards divorce will be witnessed. Indeed, 'Reform of the divorce laws became an important part of the "permissive" revolution of the 1960s'.[260] And there were then the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1967, and the Divorce Reform Act in 1969. As a consequence, there would be an increasing number of divorces in the following years. Divorce had been possible for several years but the reforms made it more accessible. There was also a new attitude emerging at that time. Indeed, Harrison explains that 'Whereas in earlier years decrees were granted more often to husbands than wives, by the 1960s divorce petitions were more than twice as likely to come from wives than from husbands'.[261] Yet, how would it impact the Monarchy? Princess Margaret's forbidden relationship with Peter Townsend

257 Anita Singh, 'Royal family documentary revived four decades on', *The Telegraph*, January 13th, 2011.
258 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.*, p. 75.
259 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 372.
260 *Ibid.*, p. 372.
261 Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

provided evidence of the Crown's position about divorce. Even though there had been several changes in favour of modernity, the Monarchy had been inflexible on that matter.

And yet, in 1967, the British Crown would have to face the divorce issue once again. Indeed, a cousin of the Queen was sued for divorce and questions about his re-marriage were raised.[262] It echoed what Harrison said earlier, as in that case the wife asked for divorce. It was a delicate question, since it would remind people of the Abdication crisis, but also of the forbidden union of Princess Margaret with Peter Townsend, which had had the support of the British people. Eventually, the Queen was asked permission by her cousin but the Cabinet advised her 'to avoid compromising the traditional royal position on divorce'.[263] Once again tradition prevailed but it can be asked if this had been the good choice. Indeed, this event would only emphasise the gap between the society and the Monarchy. While divorce was a common thing for the British people, it was still taboo within the Monarchy. Nevertheless, Pimlott argues that 'As it was, divorce became of the forces of the modern world which crept up on the Royal Family – until it had to be accepted because there was no other choice'.[264] Divorce would remain an issue that had to face the Monarchy in the following decades. Yet, it seems relevant to notice that Pimlott associates divorce with the 'modern world', and it can be opposed to the Monarchy which seemed to represent the 'traditional world'.

The Monarchy's attitude towards divorce, and its reject of modernity only led to even less popularity, as it would be demonstrated through the portrayal of the Queen. There were 'rules forbidding the portrayal of royalty on the stage', and they were challenged during this period.[265] These rules represent the control of the Crown over public representations of royalty. Nonetheless, at that time, with new media, it was difficult for the people to support

262 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, pp 372-373.
263 *Ibid.*, p. 374.
264 *Ibid.*, p. 374.
265 *Ibid.*, p. 374.

such laws. The law was eventually abolished in 1968, only to reveal and emphasise the growing lack of popularity of the Monarchy. Pimlott writes about ‘increasingly irreverent times, as the satirical underground press embraced notoriety and wove the Royal Family into its fantasies in a way that was inconceivable at the time of the Altrincham-Muggeridge critique’.[266] The freedom that had been granted through the abolition of that law was thus followed by a lack a respect for royalty. Members of the Royal Family were no longer untouchable. Pimlott explains that ‘While writers and directors experimented in the name of art, popular press editors discovered that in the new atmosphere which the arts had helped to create, the mass public had shed its inhibitions about material previously considered unprintable’.[267] The social changes that continued to occur in the 1960s showed that people’s behaviour towards the Crown changed. While most of them were outraged and shocked by Altrincham article, they became more tolerant towards publications dealing with the Royal Family. It may suggest that the growing indifference of the British people towards the Monarchy that had been evolving since the beginning of the 1960s led to indifference, even when unusual things were published, things that would have caused outrage a decade earlier. All the elements that had occurred since 1960 and especially since 1966 left the Monarchy with no other solution than making adjustments.

266 *Ibid.*, p. 376.
267 *Ibid.*, p. 376.

• **<u>The use of television for a new project: *Royal Family*</u>**

In order to reverse the trend, the Monarchy will actually turn to popular media. It would be a means to fight unpopularity, and in the meantime, to modernise itself. Pimlott asserts that 'by the late 1960s it was clear that the Royal Family, no longer the automatic focus of admiration and reverence as in the past, needed the media as much as the other way round. The problem was taming the beast, without getting bitten in the process'.[268] Therefore, there was a visible shift of attitude from the Monarchy. This change was partly caused by the retirement of Commander Colville in 1967. He had always been against popular media and could have been described as the perfect follower of Bagehot's advice as he did everything he could never to 'let in daylight upon magic'. His replacement, William Heseltine would be the starting point of the new attitude adopted by the Royal Family regarding popular media, which is described by Pimlott as 'something of a revolution'.[269] Once Heseltine arrived, the change of attitude was made very quickly, and without a clear transition. Hardman supports this idea as he states that 'And then, it seemed, everything changed – if not quite overnight then over a matter of months' and then argues that 'A new generation was embarking on what might be called active service'.[270]

The medium used would be television, as it had already been successful for the Royal Family since the Queen's accession, with the televised Coronation and Christmas broadcasts. Even though the BBC allowed sketches such as the satirical one named 'The Queen's Departure', it would still be the channel working with the Crown. It can be considered as another piece of evidence that more changes were on the way within the Monarchy. Indeed, Pimlott argues that 'While the BBC relaxed its rules on jokes and comments about royalty,

268 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 377.
269 *Ibid.*, p. 377.
270 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

Buckingham Palace unbent a little in its relationship with the Corporation'.[271] As it had been noticed previously, the Christmas broadcast became less and less interesting. Consequently, in an attempt to revive the British people's interest in the Queen's annual message, the 1967 Christmas Broadcast would be televised in colour for the first time, ten years after the first televised Christmas Broadcast.

Yet, the major elements of the end of the 1960s would not be the 1967 Christmas Broadcast but would start in the following months. A new project had been undertaken: the making of the film *Royal Family.* It is described by Pimlott as 'a film for television which provided a behind-the-scenes portrayal of what Commander Colville had dedicated his career to keeping hidden – the Queen's off duty family life'.[272] Cameras followed the Royal Family for a year. This project would be a means to fight the growing unpopularity and indifference that the Monarchy had been facing for a few years. They wanted to show people more about the Royal Family in order to make a good impression and to portray the Monarchy in a more favourable way that it had in the previous years. It was indeed time for them to react to the situation, as a Court correspondent named Ronald Allison declared that 'In the late 1960s the Monarchy was falling behind the times'.[273] Thus, everybody was aware of the difficulties facing the Monarchy at that time. Yet, the idea of showing the intimacy of the Royal Family goes completely against Bagehot's advice. Indeed, such a movie would remove most of the mystery around the Monarch; whereas 'its mystery is its life' according to Bagehot.[274] Therefore, while it was proposed as a solution to fight unpopularity, it can be asked if it would not actually be a double-edged solution when Bagehot's advice would be taken into account. Even though the images shown were obviously controlled, the movie showed things that had

271 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 378.
272 *Ibid.*, p. 379.
273 *Ibid.*, p. 380.
274 Bagehot, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

never been showed before. Some people tried to warn the Palace about potential harmful side effects that such a movie could have on Monarchy, having in mind Bagehot's words. For instance, Wilson quotes David Attenborough who told Richard Cawston, the director:

> 'You're killing the monarchy, you know, with this film you're making. The whole institution depends on mystique and the tribal chief in his hut. If any member of the tribe ever sees inside the hut, then the whole system of the tribal chiefdom is damaged the tribe eventually disintegrates'.[275]

Yet, this kind of warnings was not taken seriously and the Palace went on with this project.

Furthermore, some sides of the Queen's personality were emphasised. Indeed, 'The 1960s saw a sea change in the way that the Queen was portrayed, with Buckingham Palace keen to emphasise that she was a wife and mother in touch with the lives of her subjects'.[276] Therefore, the personal aspect of the Queen's life and her family were highlighted. For Pimlott, 'The former mysterious Royal Family became as visible as the family next door'.[277] This aspect may be linked to the 1957 Christmas Broadcast, which could have been seen as a response to Lord Altrincham's article 'The Monarchy Today', as there was also a link made between the Royal Family and families of commoners. Nevertheless, while it was emphasised in the article that the Monarch and other members of the Royal Family should at the same time be extraordinary and ordinary, the latter is the aspect exploited in the movie. The making of *Royal Family* brings to mind a certain aspect of propaganda, not in a sense that they were lying, but they manipulated the images and chose what to show or not in order to give a positive impression to the audience.

The movie was then shown on the BBC, on June 21st, 1969. It seemed that the aim of the movie was achieved. Indeed, Pimlott argues that 'It certainly bought public attention and interest. After a huge, orchestrated, press build-up – again, with the unusual feature of the

275 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.*, p. 78.
276 Singh, *op. cit.*
277 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

Palace taking the initiative – only the very infirm, the very young, and the very indifferent, failed to see it'.[278] It thus succeeded in rousing people's interest. The movie featured several images of the Royal Family's intimacy, with sometimes a focus on Prince Charles who was to be invested a few months later, or on a barbecue with the whole family which was actually the most famous scene in the film.[279] This idea was reinforced by Hardman who declared in 2011 in an article entitled 'Yes, Ma'am' for *The Spectator* that 'To many viewers (certainly British ones), the sight of a royal family barbecue remains more vivid than the other broadcasting sensation of that summer — the moon landings'.[280] This truly highlighted the scope of the impact this movie had. There were also scenes showing the Queen's performing her duties as the Head of State. For instance, it depicted meetings with guests or the usual meeting with the Prime Minister of the time, Harold Wilson. The novelty was actually to meet the members of the Royal Family and being able to see what they were like and their character. Pimlott mentions the 'dramatic emergence of members of the Royal Family as personalities'.[281] Yet, even from extracts it is possible to notice that everything was staged and it does not seem natural. But this is the viewpoint of a 2020 viewer. Thus, what were the reactions to the movie after it was shown on June 21st 1969? Its concept did actually make people want to see it, but did it fulfil their expectations?

278 *Ibid.*, p. 382.
279 *Ibid.*, p. 383.
280 Robert Hardman, *The Spectator,* 'Yes, Ma'am', October 22nd, 2011.
281 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 385.

• **Reactions to the movie**

When it was shown, in June 1969, the movie seemed to have been a success. Indeed, Ziegler writes that 'According to the BBC Audience Research Report, 68% of the population saw the film on one or other occasion'.[282] Nevertheless, it was also a success worldwide as the movie was shown in more than 125 different countries.[283] Those numbers thus revealed that the project managed to arouse people's curiosity and interest about the movie. Yet, what is interesting is Pimlott's use of the word 'propaganda', which was mentioned earlier, when he talks about the movie: 'the propaganda seemed to work'.[284] It is important to bear in mind that everything was orchestrated in order to regain the British people's interest and to regain popularity. Pimlott insists on this aspect as he later writes that 'the imagery of pulling back the curtains was false in the case of a film which, tough given exceptional licence, still presented the Monarchy as it wished to be seen'.[285] This idea is also mentioned by Ziegler as he quotes William Hamilton, 'arch-critic of the monarchy' who described the movie as 'a larger-scale commercial'.[286] Moreover, as it was a complicated period when popularity was not automatic anymore for the Monarchy, it was important to appear in a very favourable way. But still, Pimlott saw the movie many years later, and the audience of the time may not have seen it that way. Yet, he acknowledges that it was a success as he argues 'The film received ecstatic notices. It heralded as a milestone, which it undoubtedly was'.[287]

In the press, there were multiple articles following the screening of the article. For a lot of people it had been a means to discover the Queen in a new light. It made her people

282 Ziegler (1978), *op. cit.*, p. 134.
283 Lacey. *op. cit.*, p. 227.
284 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 386.
285 *Ibid.*, p. 387.
286 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.*, p. 238.
287 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 386.

looking forward to seeing her next television appearance, that was to say, that year's Christmas Broadcast. Indeed, in an article published in the Daily Mirror on June 23rd, 1969, entitled '"New image" Queen for Xmas TV', people were told about the 'tremendous reception' given to the movie and that 'The film captured the Queen's real personality for TV for the first time – warm, relaxed and friendly'.[288] Ziegler agrees with the idea that people saw the Queen in a new light as he argues that 'The film was remarkably successful in changing the popular view on royalty; and, what is more, in changing it in those fields in which the Queen, in particular, had previously been thought to be weak'.[289]

A few days later, a similar article published on June 27th, dealt with the soon-to-be-invested Prince of Wales. The same phenomenon can be observed. The success of the movie is emphasised as the audience could read about the 'cataclysmic revelation on television that the Royals are human beings', and that consequently 'there can be an increasing amount of identification and their image glows and strength is added to the survival of a monarchy'.[290] While reading those words it seems obvious that the movie reached its objective. Just as the Queen appeared in a new light, Prince Charles was also a 'discovery' that made people excited about the future of the Monarchy. He seemed to represent modernity as in the same article it was then told about him that 'The effect on history and the nation of the first television king could be one of the most fascinating era of the next century'. The impact the movie had on the British people when it was shown should not be underestimated. Indeed, in another article published on June 21st, 1969, in the *Aberdeen Evening Express*, it was argued that 'In the relationship between the Queen and her people, "Royal Family" is probably the

288 *Daily Mirror*, June 23rd, 1969.
289 Ziegler (1978), *op. cit.*, p. 135.
290 *Daily Mirror*, June 27th, 1969.

most important event since the Coronation'.[291] Comparing this movie with the Coronation shows how important this concept was for the British people.

Another article published in the *Birmingham Daily Post* on June 23rd, 1969, showed the positive impact the movie had at the time. Indeed, the viewing of the film was described as 'a unique opportunity to make up their own minds about the institution of monarchy in the last third of the twentieth century and about the Royal family itself'.[292] This article was particularly interesting as it decided to debunk Bagehot's theory. Indeed, it is argued that 'Those having a somewhat precious, mystical concept of monarchy believe that if it is exposed to the full gaze of the vulgar herd, it will lose the mystery and the remoteness in which they suppose, its efficacy lies'. Even though Bagehot was not mentioned, his theory was easily recognizable. Nevertheless, the writer of this article strongly disagreed with this theory since, according to him, 'the monarchial system has been most in danger precisely when the occupant of the Throne had held high notions about "the divinity that doth hedge a king" or has held himself or herself, aloof'. As examples he mentioned Charles the First during whose reign it had almost been the end of this institution, or more recently, Queen Victoria's reign during which there was the rise of republicanism when she 'shut herself away'. Thus, based on this article, it would seem that following Bagehot advice was not the solution and that, on the contrary, it was important to increase the link with the people by allowing them to share some parts of the Royal Family's privacy.

Nonetheless, as it had been seen, the press had become more and more irreverent throughout the years. It is thus important to think about the impact that such a movie would have on the press. Pimlott asks a very relevant question which is: 'If royal "privacy" was no

291 *Aberdeen Evening Express*, June 21st, 1969.
292 *Birmingham Daily Post*, June 23rd, 1969.

longer sacrosanct, why should its exposure be strictly on royalty's own terms?'.[293] Indeed, the press but also the British people were more likely to know even more about the Monarch's and the Royal Family's privacy. Bradford argues that 'The film innocently whetted the public's appetite for what Muggeridge had called "the royal soap opera" […]. Having been invited into the drawing room, they were soon going to want to peer into the bedroom'.[294] Yet, this side effect would not be noticed immediately, as the focus was now on Prince Charles, who was about to be invested.

293 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 388.
294 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

• **<u>The Prince of Wales' Investiture</u>**

Another landmark happened in 1969: Prince Charles' Investiture. It would, of course, also be televised. It can thus be understood why *Royal Family* had put him in the spotlight. For Pimlott, 'The Prince of Wales's Investiture was another, grander in scale and conception: the first ever major royal ceremonial specifically tailored for the cameras'.[295] While television had been an addition to the Coronation in 1953, for the Prince's Investiture, the fact that it would be televised was a major aspect. It seemed that it was no longer a means to convey the tradition to a larger group of people, and that on the contrary, at that time, television was no longer an option but it was needed by the Monarchy. Moreover, as the Coronation had been very successful, Pimlott explains that 'An attempt was made to revive the atmosphere of the Coronation'.[296] It was also important for the Investiture to be successful as there were also tensions at the time. It was important for the future Monarch to be accepted and to represent all his people.

Yet, Pimlott argues that 'There was also, more worryingly for the Monarchy, a linkage in the minds of many people in Wales, between royalty and Englishness'.[297] The worry was even bigger as Lacey mentions 'the real prospect of danger', as 'Welsh Nationalists had threatened to disrupt the ceremony'.[298] It was thus crucial for Prince Charles to be accepted by Welsh people. He actually got deeply involved in order to demonstrate that he represented Welsh people as well. As Lacey writes, 'Charles had broken off his studies at Cambridge to spend a term at Aberystwyth University, where he had learned sufficient Welsh to deliver a creditable speech'.[299]

295 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 388.
296 *Ibid.*, p. 390.
297 *Ibid.*, p. 389.
298 Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 229.
299 *Ibid.*, p. 229.

The Investiture took place on July 1st, 1969, at Caernarvon Castle, very soon after the showing of *Royal Family.* It was actually considered as a success. Indeed, Pimlott argues that 'Afterwards, there was a sigh of relief. The Investiture was not a disaster or even a failure. In many ways it was a success. The television audience was colossal'.[300] Thus it may be suggested that *Royal Family*, by portraying the Prince and by putting him in the spotlight contributed to the success of the Investiture. Nevertheless, a question might be raised concerning the success of the event. Indeed, as it had been mentioned, the Prince of Wales was associated with Englishness and it was thus important for the Investiture to be successful especially in Wales. And yet, despite the Prince's involvement and his time in Wales the reactions were not all favourable. 'According to a poll conducted by Opinion Research Centre, about half the population in Wales thought the Investiture was a waste of time. Viewers in England were more appreciative'.[301] Thus, one could say that the success of the event was actually relative.

It was even more relative as it had to be taken into account that the Investiture happened only a few days after people had watched *Royal Family*, taking advantage from the success the movie had. People who liked the movie were more likely to watch the Investiture, whereas it would probably have been different if the Investiture had happened before the movie was released. Furthermore, the Queen as a mother was emphasised in the movie, and this aspect could also be found during the Investiture. Bradford argues that 'In the event, the ceremony was moving because of the obvious deep feeling of the principal participants, the Queen and the Prince'.[302] Yet, Ziegler offers another explanation as he writes that 'Here was the royal family deployed in its most formal and hierarchical array […], there was still a mystery about the Crown, a religious and spiritual significance that transcended the

300 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 391.
301 *Ibid.*, p. 391.
302 Bradford, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

constitutional or social sphere'.[303] Therefore, it may also be thought that the Investiture, being so soon after people saw the movie, was a reminder of tradition after depicting the Monarchy and royalty from a modern point of view, and not only another means to arouse people's interest. Ziegler's words are particularly interesting as he talks about the 'television-traditional style' of the Investiture.[304] One can thus think that modernity and tradition were brought together once again.

Furthermore, what can be understood from this situation was that at that time, the Monarchy built its own popularity. It was something that did not seem needed before, but the situation had changed. The revival of the Monarchy's popularity at the end of the 1960s was not spontaneous but was actually provoked by the Monarchy itself, for instance through the movie and the Investiture. As Pimlott writes 'much of it was generated from within – the product of an intelligent exploitation of the opportunities the media provided'.[305] Thus, popular media had become important tools, used by the British Crown. It was a great change as one can remember Colville's traditionalism and attitude towards the media which went completely against what happened after his resignation. Nevertheless, once again the relationship with the public changed. As it was mentioned, after *Royal Family*, the press thought that they were now allowed to access the intimacy of the members of royalty. People were able to share more things with the Monarch. She was even more accessible than she appeared to be after the Coronation or the first televised Christmas Broadcast.

Finally, in order to conclude this last part, it may be argued that at the end of the 1960s, Royalty became associated with popular media as the Monarchy decided to exploit them, and especially television. While the first half of the 1960s witnessed a decline in the

303 Ziegler (1978), *op. cit.*, p. 136.
304 Ziegler (1986), *op. cit.*, p. 236.
305 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

Queen's popularity and a growing lack of interest in the Monarchy, the use of popular media seemed to have been the solution. It was a big change in the Monarchy's attitude, conveyed by the movie *Royal Family* and by the Prince of Wales' Investiture, both in 1969. Consequently, it can be argued that 'In the past, royalty had been a barely questioned part of the natural order. Now, it appeared to be seeking a new social contract', according to Pimlott.[306] Such changes altered the relationship between the Queen and her people and it was now time to redefine. It seemed obvious that what happened in 1969 was the starting point of the new social contract mentioned by Pimlott, and which will shape the 1970s. Yet, this new attitude seemed to have been efficient as at the end of 1969, 'an opinion poll conducted a special survey on the position of the Queen. The overall statistics were not surprising; 84% felt Britain needed a Queen, 16% that she did not'.[307] At the end of the 1960s, one could come to the conclusion that the British Monarchy had changed a lot since Elizabeth II's Accession to the throne. In Hardman's words, it could be said that 'The Royal Family not only seemed to offer reassurance and stability, they also seemed to have undergone a transformation. They were no longer aloof, "tweedy" and out of touch. Suddenly they were human and dynamic. Dare one say it, in fact, they were what you might call modern'.[308] Modernity thus seemed to be prevailing at the end of the 1960s.

306 *Ibid.*, p. 392.
307 Ziegler (1978), *op. cit.*, p. 137.
308 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, it can be argued that the first two decades of Elizabeth II's reign were full of change, especially in the attitude towards modernity and tradition. While in the earliest years of the Queen's reign modernity was put at the service of tradition, through her first Christmas Broadcast and her Coronation, the situation changed only a few years later. Indeed, right after the Coronation, and for the rest of the 1950s, a new attitude appeared: the Monarchy's traditions were challenged by modernity. The two major challenges came from Princess Margaret's wish to marry a divorced man, Peter Townsend, and later from Lord Altrincham's article 'The Monarchy Today'. Therefore, the Monarchy's attitude towards divorce was challenged at that time, as well as its functioning, as Lord Altrincham criticised some aspects and gave his own advice. The situation continued to evolve and in the 1960s there was another shift of attitude. Tradition was becoming less and less relevant and was declining, demonstrating the need for the Monarchy to turn to modernity. The first half of the 1960s was full of warnings that people were not as interested in the Monarchy as they used to. Likewise, the Queen's popularity was suffering and she was no longer as revered as before. Difficulties arose within the Commonwealth and with the press. Then, in the second half of the 1960s, it was clear that the situation needed to change to regain the British people's interest and to make the Monarchy popular again. The solution that was found was to modernise the Monarchy. It was done through popular media such as TV with two major events: the movie *Royal Family* and Prince Charles' televised Investiture. Both were a success and seemed to have revived the British people interest in Monarchy. Therefore, at the end of the 1960s, it seemed obvious that modernity, either associated with tradition or outshining it, was needed. Yet, it seemed to be prevailing over tradition at the end of the decade.

Three questions have been raised in the introduction of this paper: first, did the Monarchy's traditions persist during the first two decades of the Queen's reign, that is to say during a time of modernisation? Then, can modernity and modernisation be put at the service of tradition? Eventually, are modernity and tradition antagonistic notions?

The first and the second questions could be answered together. Indeed, it was seen that tradition persisted at the beginning of the Queen's reign through modernity with her televised Coronation for instance, or later with Prince Charles' Investiture, another traditional ceremony which was televised. Modernity was also put at the service of tradition throughout the evolution of the Christmas Broadcast which was first on radio, then televised, and eventually televised in colour. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight the fact that tradition evolved, and it may be considered as a modernisation in itself. The movie *Royal Family* shows this evolution. Modernity seemed to prevail over tradition but the result was successful. Yet, warnings were made about the threat of putting tradition aside. Were those warnings relevant?

When *Royal Family* was released, it was a success even though some people mentioned possible side effects of showing the royalty's intimacy. Actually, this level of modernisation shown through the movie seemed to have been a mistake. *Royal Family* was later banned. It overstepped the mark by doing something that had never been done before: sharing the Royal Family's privacy with the British people. Even though it was a means to modernise the Monarchy, it did not seem to have been the right solution when considered with some hindsight. Hardman explains that it was shown in 1969 but that then, 'The film has since become a broadcasting yeti, world-famous yet unseen on television screens since a repeat during the 1970s. It is in no video libraries'.[309]

309 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

Was it because they concluded that it was a mistake? Yet, it is important to bear in mind that it was successful at the time and that it contributed to the revival of the Monarchy's as well as the Queen's popularity. Hardman adds that 'The official reason is that this was a programme of its time for its time'.[310] But still, it may be difficult to understand why there has been such a strict censorship around the movie for several decades. In an article published in *The Independent*, on June 19th, 1994, the writer Richard Tomlinson argues that 'Elizabeth's tight control of the copyright is a sign that she now regards *Royal Family* as a mistake'.[311] Hardman adds that 'In later years, when "lack of deference" became a major issue, then a lot of people were prepared to point the finger and say this was "all Heseltine's fault" and that we shouldn't have shown *Royal Family*'.[312] In addition, Attenborough was the one warning about the threat of showing the royalty's intimacy, as it would remove the mystique. According to Wilson 'We can see now that Attenborough's words were true'.[313] It may thus be considered that afterwards people were aware of the importance of maintaining some traditionalism. It can thus be understood that after *Royal Family*, it was difficult to find the middle ground between tradition and modernity.

Nonetheless, it was undeniable that *Royal Family* was a landmark. Pimlott explains that around the time of the twentieth anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne, reports were made, and he states that

> 'Newspaper profiles, though routinely congratulatory, also showed how perceptions of the Monarchy had moved on, with a decline in emphasis on grandeur and remoteness, and an increased stress on domesticity and accessibility. Grigg [Lord Altrincham] gave the Monarch a good mid-term report, noting a shift from the flat public image of the 1950s, to the human and pleasant one of the 1970s, with *Royal Family* as the turning point'.[314]

310 *Ibid.*, p. 213.
311 Richard Tomlinson, 'Trying to be useful: Twenty-five years ago, the Windsors attempted to re-create their public image, using a television film to portray the royal family as ordinary, hard-working people. As this final extract from a new book on the dynasty shows, it was a ploy that went terribly wrong', *The Independent*, June 19th, 1994.
312 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 213.
313 Wilson (2016), *op. cit.*, p. 78.
314 Pimlott, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

Thus, it can finally be argued that tradition can persist in a time of modernisation but might be put aside, and at the end of the 1960s, modernity was prevailing over tradition. Yet, it is possible to put modernity at the service of tradition, and it was successfully done at the Queen's Coronation for instance. Nonetheless, after studying the Queen's reign from 1952 to 1969 it can be seen that it was not always easy to find the middle ground between traditionalism and modernisation.

Then, to answer the last question, it seemed that modernity and tradition were not antagonistic notions but that on certain aspects, they could not work together. Once again the example of *Royal Family* can be taken. When it came to the Royal Family's intimacy, it seemed that the process of modernisation went too far by showing the film. It seemed that a traditional attitude towards their privacy would have been better. There was thus a complicated relationship between those two notions. Yet, the Monarchy changed a lot and this was visible when it changed radically, as it was seen with the movie. But on the other hand, there were progressive changes that were unnoticed. Tradition evolved, but remained. Hardman writes that

> 'Certainly, when we see the famous East Front of Buckingham Palace or the Round Tower of Windsor Castle or a corgi or a sentry box or a Christmas broadcast, we sense continuity, permanence, dependability. That's the whole idea. What we don't see is an institution which has had to adapt just as much as the world beyond. It has managed to do so without us noticing – ever changing yet never changing. And that is all down to the shrewd leadership of an innately conservative woman who has also proved to be the very model of a modern Monarch'.[315]

Therefore, this quotation of Hardman seems to be a fitting answer to the question 'are modernity and tradition antagonistic notions?'. It is important to highlight that the Monarchy has always been, since the Queen's Accession to the throne, 'ever changing yet never changing'. It is thus unavoidable that the Monarchy has evolved a lot since then, and yet, it remains traditional.

315 Hardman, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

Finally, it can be argued that after 1969, modernity was obviously needed, and that it was important that the process of modernisation continued. Yet, at the same time, the situation showed that traditionalism and, by extension, Bagehot's arguments, were still partly relevant. What can be understood eventually, is that tradition can persist in a time of modernisation, but that it is important to find a balance. Modernity should not prevail over tradition or the other way round. This balance seems to have been found as the British Monarchy continues to be popular in 2020 and Queen Elizabeth II is still the reigning Monarch as she has been Queen for 68 years now. Therefore, the relationship between tradition and modernity continued to evolve in the following decades. To conclude this paper, it can be argued that 'this sovereign has steered the monarchy through more transition than any in modern times'.[316]

316 *Ibid.,* p. 196.

Appendices.

a) APPENDIX 1

- **1952 CHRISTMAS BROADCAST**

After her Accession on 6 February 1952, The Queen broadcast her first Christmas Message live on the radio from her study at Sandringham, Norfolk. In her message, she paid tribute to her late father, and asked people to remember her at the time of her Coronation the following June.

Each Christmas, at this time, my beloved father broadcast a message to his people in all parts of the world. Today I am doing this to you, who are now my people.

As he used to do, I am speaking to you from my own home, where I am spending Christmas with my family; and let me say at once how I hope that your children are enjoying themselves as much as mine are on a day which is especially the children's festival, kept in honour of the Child born at Bethlehem nearly two thousand years ago.

Most of you to whom I am speaking will be in your own homes, but I have a special thought for those who are serving their country in distant lands far from their families. Wherever you are, either at home or away, in snow or in sunshine, I give you my affectionate greetings, with every good wish for Christmas and the New Year.

At Christmas our thoughts are always full of our homes and our families. This is the day when members of the same family try to come together, or if separated by distance or events meet in spirit and affection by exchanging greetings.

But we belong, you and I, to a far larger family. We belong, all of us, to the British Commonwealth and Empire, that immense union of nations, with their homes set in all the four corners of the earth. Like our own families, it can be a great power for good - a force which I believe can be of immeasurable benefit to all humanity.

My father, and my grandfather before him, worked all their lives to unite our peoples ever more closely, and to maintain its ideals which were so near to their hearts. I shall strive to carry on their work.

Already you have given me strength to do so. For, since my accession ten months ago, your loyalty and affection have been an immense support and encouragement. I want to take this Christmas Day, my first opportunity, to thank you with all my heart.

Many grave problems and difficulties confront us all, but with a new faith in the old and splendid beliefs given us by our forefathers, and the strength to venture beyond the safeties of the past, I know we shall be worthy of our duty.

Above all, we must keep alive that courageous spirit of adventure that is the finest quality of youth; and by youth I do not just mean those who are young in years; I mean too all those who are young in heart, no matter how old they may be. That spirit still flourishes in this old country and in all the younger countries of our Commonwealth.

On this broad foundation let us set out to build a truer knowledge of ourselves and our fellowmen, to work for tolerance and understanding among the nations and to use the tremendous forces of science and learning for the betterment of man's lot upon this earth.

If we can do these three things with courage, with generosity and with humility, then surely we shall achieve that "Peace on earth, Goodwill toward men" which is the eternal message of Christmas, and the desire of us all.

At my Coronation next June, I shall dedicate myself anew to your service. I shall do so in the presence of a great congregation, drawn from every part of the Commonwealth and Empire, while millions outside Westminster Abbey will hear the promises and the prayers being offered up within its walls, and see much of the ancient ceremony in which Kings and Queens before me have taken part through century upon century.

You will be keeping it as a holiday; but I want to ask you all, whatever your religion may be, to pray for me on that day - to pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you, all the days of my life.

May God bless and guide you all through the coming year.

b) APPENDIX 2

• **Lord Altrincham's article 'The Monarchy Today'.**

THE MONARCHY TODAY

By LORD ALTRINCHAM

A New Pattern

WHEN the Queen entertained the Commonwealth Ministers at Windsor during the recent Conference the new pattern of our Monarchy was exhibited more vividly than ever before. It was a meeting not of vassals, but of friends. The hostess and her husband, though framed in splendour and set in a perspective of tradition and mystery, could be seen notwithstanding as people very much of their own age, leading in some respects a normal modern life and by no means remote from its vicissitudes. That very afternoon the Duke of Edinburgh had driven the Queen down from London (having earlier in the day addressed a homily to the Automobile Association), and on the way had collided with another car. Fortunately the accident was not serious and the Royal couple arrived at Windsor with clear consciences and in time to change for dinner. Queen Victoria would not have exposed herself thus to comparison with mere mortals; indeed, for a large part of her reign she did not expose herself at all, remaining immured in her castle—the "widow at Windsor." Nor, it must be admitted, would King George VI and the Queen Mother have been likely to find themselves in a similar position, though they belong to the "popular" rather than to the "hierarchical" phase of the Monarchy. What was a change is now becoming a revolution.

How has it happened and what does it portend? The decisive reign was that of George V. When he came to the Throne the Royal Family was still more German than British, and its instinctive attachment was to the Continent of Europe. The Kaiser's war put an end to this. Not only did it lead to the downfall of most of those European monarchs and princelings with whom the House of Hanover had close ties; it also gave a dramatic impetus to social and political change in this country. George V was not a clever man and his constitutional sense was sometimes defective, yet his services to the Monarchy are beyond price, since he managed to adjust it, in essentials, to the new conditions. When H. G. Wells wrote to *The Times* that Britain could not be expected to fight a war under the aegis of "an alien and uninspiring Court," King George is said to have commented that he might be uninspiring but he was damned if he was alien. This (if correctly reported) was not a statement of fact; it was a profession of faith. In the same spirit he chose, at Lord Stamfordham's suggestion, the name of Windsor for his family.

By the end of his reign two remarkable phenomena could be discerned. The Commonwealth was taking shape, and in the free and equal partnership which was thus superseding what Disraeli called "the Empire of England" the Crown was still a necessary feature; it had not lost its magic. Secondly, while the aristocracy was losing ground at home, the Monarchy was winning the affection of many who before could have thought of it only with a mixture of awe and resignation. The reasons for this strange development are complex, but the significance of the King's own character can hardly be exaggerated. Unlike his father, he was not fashionable or a pleasure-seeker; he was never regarded as belonging to what is loosely called "society." He typified the virtues and limitations of millions of his subjects, and there was thus a natural sympathy between him and them, which his mastery of the new technique of sound broadcasting helped to confirm. What Baldwin did for Parliamentary Government, George V did for the Monarchy.

His second son inherited some of his homely qualities and restored confidence after the *affaire* Simpson. He also showed exactly the right demeanour in 1940. By his marriage he brought native British blood into the Royal Family and his children thus belong to the British com-

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Photo: The Times.

COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS AND MINISTERS WITH THE QUEEN AT WINDSOR. (N.B. THE U.K. PRIME MINISTER—PROBABLY FOR THE FIRST TIME—NOT IN THE FRONT ROW.)

munity in a sense that their Hanoverian ancestors did not. But this is a point not to be laboured, because the Monarchy must not now be exclusively British; it must transcend race. The Duke of Edinburgh, whose merits are almost universally extolled, is British only by adoption. He gives the impression of being a citizen of the Commonwealth, at home wherever he goes. In this he shows his awareness of the new pattern within which the Monarchy must work—and "work" is the word—in the difficult years ahead.

Danger of Complacency

There is much to admire in the Royal Family as we see them today, and they are indeed very widely admired. But it would be a disastrous mistake to feel anything like complacency about their hold upon the allegiance of the mass public, especially in those parts of the Commonwealth which are not British. The Coronation induced a mood compounded of religiosity, vaingloriousness and bobby-soxing, which of its very nature was superficial and impermanent. Those who care for the Monarchy as an institution should look beyond the hideous coloured photographs of a glamorous young woman in sparkling attire to the more testing realities of twenty years hence. The Monarchy will not survive, let alone thrive, unless its leading figures exert themselves to the full and with all the imagination they and their advisers can command.

They have to perform the seemingly impossible task of being at once ordinary and extraordinary. Their "ordinariness" is one of the secrets of their popularity. Richard Hoggart writes thus of the Monarchy in *The Uses of Literacy* (Chatto and Windus, 25*s*.): ". . . as an institution it is scarcely thought of by the working classes; they are not royalists by principle.

Nor do most harbour resentment against it, they have little heat. They either ignore it or, if they are interested, the interest is for what can be translated into the personal. Since they are 'personalists' and dramatists, they are more interested in a few individual members of the Royal Family than in the less colourful figures of Parliamentary Government." The loyalty of these people—even allowing for changes of taste and mental habit due to education, social reform and other modern factors—would be shaken if the Monarchy were to depart too far from the accepted norm. Intelligence and eccentricity are permissible, but only in moderation.

At the same time the Monarchy cannot now rely, as it once could, upon the unquestioning support of those who effectively govern the country. The Whig magnates ignored or despised the Royal Family, but exalted the institution of monarchy. Nowadays the position is reversed. Many influential people, of varying political opinions, are able to combine a high regard for the Royal Family with a fundamental scepticism as to the viability of the institution. This is not the militant republicanism of the young Joseph Chamberlain, but as a state of mind it is more dangerous, because it is so mild and elusive. In Chamberlain's day monarchies were the rule, republics the exception; it was therefore safe to flirt with republican theory. Today republics are the rule, and monarchies very much the exception. When someone now asserts his belief that the British Monarchy will endure he is not asserting a proposition which is self-evident and unassailable; he is almost saying *credo quia impossibile*.

When she has lost the bloom of youth the Queen's reputation will depend, far more than it does now, upon her personality. It will not then be enough for her to go through the motions; she will have to say things which people can remember, and do things on her own initiative which will make people sit up and take notice. As yet there is little sign that such a personality is emerging. But time, though no longer clearly on her side, is not yet her enemy.

Crown and "Class"

If it is vital that the Monarchy should transcend race, it is hardly less necessary that it should transcend "class." Social distinctions are bound to exist in any large community. To pretend that they do not exist is naïve or hypocritical, and to seek to eliminate them by State action may become a dire threat to liberty and to other civilized values which must at all costs be protected. Yet the Crown must not seem to be identified with any particular social group. The relatively "classless" character of George V has been mentioned; unfortunately it is not to be seen in his grand-daughters. The Queen and Princess Margaret still bear the debutante stamp.

Why is this? The most likely reason is that they were given a conventional upper-class education. This is, perhaps, the price which had to be paid for the Queen Mother's many services, and for the matchless charm which she has brought to her high position. "Crawfie," Sir Henry Marten, the London season, the race-course, the grouse-moor, Canasta, and the occasional Royal tour—all this would not have been good enough for Queen Elizabeth I! It says much for the Queen that she has not been incapacitated for her job by this woefully inadequate training. She has dignity, a sense of duty and (so far as one can judge) goodness of heart—all precious assets. But will she have the wisdom to give her children an education very different from her own? Will she, above all, see to it that Prince Charles is equipped with all the knowledge he can absorb without injury to his health, and that he mixes during his formative years with children who will one day be bus-drivers, dockers, engineers, etc.—not merely with future land-owners or stock-brokers? These are crucial questions.

The Queen's private choice of friends may or not be inspiring, but in any case it is not a legitimate matter for public comment. On the other hand, it is quite in order to criticize public functions, such as the Presentation Parties, which are a grotesque survival from the Monarchy's "hierarchical" past. These Parties should certainly have been quietly discontinued in

Photo: Keystone Press

GUESTS ARRIVING AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE FOR A PRESENTATION PARTY.

1945. They pander to snobbishness and give the Queen the appearance of standing at the apex of an aristocratic and plutocratic pyramid. People have a right to "bring out" their daughters in whatever way they please, but the Crown's benison should be reserved for those who have qualified for it by public service.

The Entourage

The present composition of the Court emphasizes the social lopsidedness to which the Monarchy is still prone. The Queen's entourage—those who serve her from day to day, who accompany her when she travels and sit with her when she eats—are almost without exception people of the "tweedy" sort. Such people may be shrewd, broad-minded and thoroughly suitable for positions at Court, but the same is true of many who are not "tweedy"; and the fact that the Queen's personal staff represents almost exclusively a single social type creates an unfortunate impression. Worse still, courtiers are nearly always citizens of one Commonwealth country—the United Kingdom. In other words, the Court has lamentably failed to move with the times; while the Monarchy has become "popular" and multi-racial, the Court has remained a tight little enclave of British "ladies and gentlemen." This cannot be right.

The Queen should surely now be surrounded by advisers and companions with as many different backgrounds as possible. A truly classless and Commonwealth Court would not only bear eloquent witness to the transformed nature of the Monarchy, but would also give the Queen and her Family the advantage of daily contact with an interesting variety of personalities and points of view. It would not, of course, be desirable to appoint courtiers on any strict rationing principle—so many Canadians, so many Africans, so many

trade unionists, so many aesthetes, so many Socialists, so many Tories, and so on. This would be an absurdity. But granted the fitness of someone for a post at Court, political and social considerations should also be taken into account before an appointment is made. Thus there would be no sudden or artificial change, but over a period of time the composition of the Court would gradually become more catholic and more representative.

The word "catholic" suggests a significant analogy—the College of Cardinals in the Roman Catholic Church. In this the Italian element is still disproportionate, but the trend in recent years has been towards increasing the non-Italian membership. What is possible for the Papacy should be very much more feasible for the British Monarchy, since there is no language difficulty; English is virtually a *lingua franca* in the Commonwealth. Latin being an imperfect vehicle for the transaction of business in the modern world, it is almost inevitable that the Vatican bureaucracy should be largely Italian. But no such difficulty need obstruct the evolution of the Court of St. James's.

Royal Speeches

The advent of broadcasting gave a new importance to the spoken word, and George V, as has been said, made excellent use of the opportunity so provided. George VI did his best, but was handicapped by an impediment in his speech and by being a rather less imposing version of his father. The Duke of Edinburgh, who is a first-rate speaker, has recently moved, not without success, into the domain of television. To this the Royal Family, like all others who are engaged in public life, will have to pay increasing attention, and in fact the Queen's Christmas broadcast will this year, for the first time, be televised.

She will not, however, achieve good results with her present style of speaking, which is frankly "a pain in the neck." Like her mother, she appears to be unable to string even a few sentences together without a written text—a defect which is particularly regrettable when she can be seen by her audience. Courtiers are apt to justify this failure to speak spontaneously with the argument that she must first and foremost guard against the danger of indiscretion or misunderstanding. But this is humbug. The occasional lapse—even if it were to occur—would do very little harm by comparison with the immense good which would be done if the Queen appeared to speak from the heart. Phrases such as "I am deeply moved" sound very hollow when they are read from a typescript. But even if the Queen feels compelled to read all her speeches, great and small, she must at least improve her method of reading them. With practice even a prepared speech can be given an air of spontaneity.

The subject-matter must also be endowed with a more authentic quality. George V, for instance, did not write his own speeches, yet they were always in character; they seemed to be a natural emanation from and expression of the man. Not so the present Queen's. The personality conveyed by the utterances which are put into her mouth is that of a priggish schoolgirl, captain of the hockey team, a prefect, and a recent candidate for Confirmation. It is not thus that she will be enabled to come into her own as an independent and distinctive character.

Summary and Introduction

The foregoing remarks may have struck some readers as intolerably disrespectful—a plain case of *lèse-majesté*. I am quite unrepentant, because I am convinced that even when it was hierarchical the British Monarchy rested more than any other upon a basis of reason and sturdy, not servile, loyalty; now that it has passed into a new phase this basis should be enlarged, not contracted. Those of us who believe that the Monarchy can survive and play an ever more beneficent part in the affairs of the Commonwealth are not content to remain silent while needless errors go uncorrected. The Monarchy cannot afford to miss any chances now, nor can its devotees afford to stand idly by while they honestly think it is missing chances.

There is no limit to what it can achieve if it perfects the change which George V inaugurated. If it can become popular in the fullest sense, without losing its romantic appeal and its numinous power; if it can extend its helpful and unifying influence to myriads who have hitherto regarded it with resentment, suspicion or indifference—then indeed it will deserve a place among the wonders of the world. To be popular it need not descend to the petty bicycle-riding showmanship which some monarchs consider necessary to keep themselves in business; its gestures must not be superficial, they must be outward signs of inner sincerity and grace. Nor need the Royal Family become a tribe of nomads in order to fulfil their mission in the Commonwealth. They must indeed reside more in countries other than the United Kingdom, but residence need not be confused with perambulation. When they arrive somewhere it must not always be to the accompaniment of flags and fireworks and addresses of welcome, but rather like the moon and stars in Coleridge's incomparable description: " . . . that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival." It must be thus when they arrive in a country, and when they visit any individual home within it. They are, it is true, living symbols of a majestic whole; but they are also simple, friendly people, whose light is the pure light of disinterested goodness, not the harsh glare of partisanship or ambition.

In the articles which follow certain aspects of the Monarchy are given separate attention, but not in accordance with any concerted plan. Each author has naturally written as he thinks fit, and there may as a result be some overlapping and contradiction. The series is not intended to deliver a composite message, but merely to provide information and stimulate thought. There is, however, one connecting link. All the articles are written by people who think that the Queen—either as national Sovereign or as Head of the Commonwealth, or both—is a worthwhile institution; and who, in addition, and more important still, feel for her personally and wish her well in her infinitely responsible and exciting task.

ALTRINCHAM.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

By DERMOT MORRAH

THE social Monarchy of the British Commonwealth, which in the person of George V began to absorb the constitutional Monarchy of the United Kingdom, draws its virtue from the capacity of one man or woman to represent simultaneously, and with equal satisfaction to the emotions, the whole and the part. In one aspect the King or Queen must be a symbol of all the vast historic abstractions that fill the heart of a nation with pride of ancestry and confidence of a glorious future; on the other, every subject must be able to see, at the heart of the abstractions and beyond the chill complexities of the machinery of State, a simple human being of like passions with himself. A people that has learned—or rather, has been bred—to keep these two concepts, the institutional and the personal, indissolubly fused is one able to practise the monarchical way of life.

There is no more important function of the Sovereign of to-day than this of holding in harmony and balance these two departments of life, the simple and the ceremonial, the individual and the community (not the State, which is only one aspect of the community); and the instrument specially fitted to her hand for the purpose is the Private Secretary. The conception of Monarchy to which the function belongs, though very ancient, has sometimes been overlaid; and it is significant that while the High Whig doctrine of constitutional kingship prevailed—say,

c) APPENDIX 3

• 1957 CHRISTMAS BROADCAST

The Queen's 1957 Christmas Broadcast was an historic event, as it was the first to be televised. It was also the 25th anniversary of the first Christmas Broadcast on the radio. The broadcast was made live from the Long Library at Sandringham, Norfolk.

Happy Christmas.

Twenty-five years ago my grandfather broadcast the first of these Christmas messages. Today is another landmark because television has made it possible for many of you to see me in your homes on Christmas Day. My own family often gather round to watch television as they are this moment, and that is how I imagine you now.

I very much hope that this new medium will make my Christmas message more personal and direct.

It is inevitable that I should seem a rather remote figure to many of you. A successor to the Kings and Queens of history; someone whose face may be familiar in newspapers and films but who never really touches your personal lives. But now at least for a few minutes I welcome you to the peace of my own home.

That it is possible for some of you to see me today is just another example of the speed at which things are changing all around us. Because of these changes I am not surprised that many people feel lost and unable to decide what to hold on to and what to discard. How to take advantage of the new life without losing the best of the old.

But it is not the new inventions which are the difficulty. The trouble is caused by unthinking people who carelessly throw away ageless ideals as if they were old and outworn machinery.

They would have religion thrown aside, morality in personal and public life made meaningless, honesty counted as foolishness and self-interest set up in place of self-restraint.

At this critical moment in our history we will certainly lose the trust and respect of the world if we just abandon those fundamental principles which guided the men and women who built the greatness of this country and Commonwealth.

Today we need a special kind of courage, not the kind needed in battle but a kind which makes us stand up for everything that we know is right, everything that is true and honest. We need the kind of courage that can withstand the subtle corruption of the cynics so that we can show the world that we are not afraid of the future.

It has always been easy to hate and destroy. To build and to cherish is much more difficult. That is why we can take a pride in the new Commonwealth we are building.

This year Ghana and Malaya joined our brotherhood. Both these countries are now entirely self-governing. Both achieved their new status amicably and peacefully.

This advance is a wonderful tribute to the efforts of men of goodwill who have worked together as friends, and I welcome these two countries with all my heart.

Last October I opened the new Canadian Parliament, and as you know this was the first time that any Sovereign had done so in Ottawa. Once again I was overwhelmed by the loyalty and enthusiasm of my Canadian people.

Also during 1957 my husband and I paid visits to Portugal, France, Denmark and the United States of America. In each case the arrangements and formalities were managed with great skill but no one could have 'managed' the welcome we received from the people.

In each country I was welcomed as Head of the Commonwealth and as your representative. These nations are our friends largely because we have always tried to do our best to be honest and kindly and because we have tried to stand up for what we believe to be right.

In the old days the monarch led his soldiers on the battlefield and his leadership at all times was close and personal.

Today things are very different. I cannot lead you into battle, I do not give you laws or administer justice but I can do something else, I can give you my heart and my devotion to these old islands and to all the peoples of our brotherhood of nations.

I believe in our qualities and in our strength, I believe that together we can set an example to the world which will encourage upright people everywhere.

I would like to read you a few lines from 'Pilgrim's Progress', because I am sure we can say with Mr Valiant for Truth, these words:

"Though with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought his battles who now will be my rewarder."

I hope that 1958 may bring you God's blessing and all the things you long for.

And so I wish you all, young and old, wherever you may be, all the fun and enjoyment, and the peace of a very happy Christmas.

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Abstract and keywords

Résumé en français :

Ce mémoire a pour thème les deux premières décennies du règne de la Reine d'Angleterre, Elizabeth II, soit de 1952 à 1969. Cette période d'après guerre est marquée par de nombreux changements et par la modernisation de la société. Ce mémoire étudie donc la relation entre la tradition et la modernité au sein de la Monarchie Britannique. Cette relation a évolué durant la période analysée, et différentes attitudes sont remarquées. En effet, lors des premières années du règne d'Elizabeth II, la tradition semble être transmise par le biais de la modernité. Cependant, quelques années plus tard et jusqu'à la fin des années 1950, la situation change et la modernité semble plutôt défier la tradition. Enfin, pendant les années 1960, il est constaté que la Monarchie Britannique souffre d'une baisse de popularité et d'intérêt de la part du peuple. Par conséquent, la solution trouvée est de se tourner vers les médias afin de moderniser la Monarchie, ce qui a mené un a regain de popularité et a ravivé l'intérêt du peuple porté à la Monarchie. La relation entre modernité et tradition a ensuite continué d'évoluer pendant les décennies suivantes du règne d'Elizabeth II.

Mots-clés :

La Reine Elizabeth II – Grande-Bretagne – Royaume-Uni - Monarchie Britannique – Années 1950 – Années 1960 – Tradition – Modernité – Histoire Brtitannique.

Abstract in English:

This master's dissertation deals with the Queen of England, Elizabeth II, and more particularly with the first two decades of her reign, that is to say, from 1952 to 1969. This was the post-war period, which was marked by a lot of changes and by the modernisation of society. Thus, this dissertation analyses the relationship between tradition and modernity within the British Monarchy. This relationship evolved during the period under study, and various attitudes can be noticed. Indeed, during the earliest years of the Queen's reign, tradition seemed to be conveyed through modernity. Yet, a few years later and until the end of the 1950s, there was a shift and modernity seemed to challenge tradition. Finally, during the 1960s, it was seen that the British Monarchy suffered from a decrease in its popularity and a lack of interest from its people. Consequently, the solution that was found was to turn to popular media in order to modernise the Monarchy, which led to the revival of its popularity and of its people's interest. The relationship between modernity and tradition has then continued to evolve during the following decades of the Queen's reign.

Keywords:

Queen Elizabeth II – Great Britain – United Kingdom – British Monarchy – 1950s – 1960s – Tradition – Modernity – British History.

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