Herrschaft, Gerichtsbarkeit, Bürokratie / Power, Jurisdiction, Bureaucracy

# How to Be King (Even If You Were a Woman). Intersectionality in the Security Discourse on Female Accession to the Throne in Tudor England

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## Abstract

When Mary Tudor made her bid for the English throne in 1553, all of the potential candidates to become England's ruling monarch were female. But these women who claimed the throne from 1553 to 1590 faced criticism and opposition on account of their gender. Being a woman was latently alleged to render them inferior, incapable, impressionable and therefore dangerous, and the possibility that they might one day marry a man of foreign origin bore the risk of England losing its sovereignty to a foreign dynasty. To illustrate the extent to which women in power were subjected to differentiating securitization in a highly insecure moment of decision-making — namely, the succession — this contribution analyses two examples: The first is Mary Tudor's struggle for the throne against the opposition of the ruling noble elite as well as of her predecessor and their counter-queen, Lady Jane Grey, and the second is Mary Queen of Scots' claim and attempt to take the English throne in the 1570s and '80s from the reigning queen, Elizabeth I. Examining the representations of these competing queens (mainly through proclamations, pamphlets, letters and parliamentary debates) provides insight into the challenges they faced and the security issues associated with their reigns and personalities. Their 'differences' were problematised as threatening by their contemporaries and thus sparked security discourses that assessed, discussed and negotiated the nature of rulership itself. Yet in spite of the 'deviance' of being female, other categories of difference were deemed more important to ensure the realm's security at the time.

## Introduction

When Queen Mary I succeeded to the English throne in 1553, her claim found wide support among the English people, especially among commoners and the gentry. Given that the society she was supposed to rule was dominated by men and the opposition she faced consisted mainly of the ruling (male) elite, her success may seem rather surprising. What is even more surprising is that female succession was never up for debate at the time. The alternative candidate, installed by Mary's predecessor and his

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Privy Council, was also a woman, her noble cousin Lady Jane Grey. Mary Tudor's accession, however, provides just a glimpse into one specific 'moment' in history — an impression furthered by the fact that she ruled for only five years. But she was succeeded by another woman. In 1558, Queen Elizabeth I ascended unto the English throne uncontested. Her own succession triggered an escalating, enduring and sometimes bloody debate on security[1] that most prominently involved Mary Queen of Scots — first as Elizabeth's potential successor but from the late 1560s on, increasingly as a potential (Catholic) alternative to the English queen. The unsettled succession and both religious denominations vying for dominance proved topics so polarising that a full-blown "pamphlet war" (Levine 1973, p. 109) erupted in which even the Elizabethan government joined. In the end, the conflict could only be settled by silencing one position very publicly and definitively: by executing the Scottish queen in 1587.

This interesting and hitherto unprecedented context of female accession to the English throne allows an examination of the role that gender[2] played in the discourses surrounding these events. In particular, I want to show how a (prospective) queen's gender was problematised with regard to England's security in the precarious transitional situations (cf. Stollberg-Rilinger 2017, p. 72) of succession and accession. I show that gender was perceived as a security issue: A woman on the throne was argued to present a threat to the security of England's political and social system, not least the gender order, as well as to the realm's independence because her

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1  The term "security" is understood as the absence of threat, and it is analysed following the framework of the Copenhagen School on the basis of discourse analysis. Thus, an existential threat to a referent object is marked, usually as a threat to the state, or in the case under examination here, to the early-modern princely state. By naming such an existential threat, i.e. by successfully constructing a threat in discourse that is then accepted as threat by a relevant audience, securitizing actors could justify exceptional measures to deal with that threat and thus render it manageable. The process of successfully "speaking security" to deal with threats is called *securitization* (Buzan et al. 1998, pp. 21–25).

2  In the context of monarchy, gender is of course a central yet ambiguous concept: Rulership has traditionally been studied as kingship, and perfect rulers were almost automatically male (Earenfight 2007, p. 11). But rulership did not only include important female gender roles, too, the whole concept depended on women's reproductive capacities to perpetuate the dynasty and thus, itself. Women served to uphold dynastic security. In that sense, the female sex was as important to rulership as the female gender, which underpins rather than disentangles the close connection and correlation between the categories of sex and gender – at least in the context of dynastic succession. Thus, "that monarchy is gendered may seem obvious" (Earenfight 2007, p. 6).

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gender was latently alleged to render her inferior, incapable and therefore dangerous. But there were other categories of difference (as we collectively call such social categories as gender, class, age, etc.) that qualified an individual as an ideal early-modern ruler or instead suggested that their rule posed a challenge to the country's security. And few early-modern kings of England embodied[3] the perfect combination of the right categories of difference, which often influenced how their title and rulership were perceived. Thus, most rulers struggled for legitimacy and found themselves at the centre of public discourse on what constituted proper rulership — a debate that regularly raised security issues. In this context, it is no wonder that the Tudor queens' reigns in the second half of the 16th century caused exceptional upheaval and sparked an intellectual security debate known today as the *Querelle des Femmes*[4]. As women, they posed a serious threat to the security of England and thus tested the stability of the English political system by deviating from the norm of the ideal monarch. But gender issues were clearly subsumed under other intersecting categories of difference that were deemed more important or used more successfully as targets of securitization (cf. Hansen 2000, p. 287). Stephen Orgel has found that "gender is subordinate to the purposes of royalty" (Orgel 1996, p. 138), particularly during Tudor times, which gives a first indication why essentially there was no debate on whether or not women should succeed after the male Tudor line had gone extinct. And "royalty" or social

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3  Early-modern rulers indeed were seen as physically embodying their realms and dominions in what Ernst Kantorowicz famously called "the body politic" of "The King's Two Bodies". The second, natural body of a ruler however often stood in stark contrast to the ideal kingly "superbody" – no more apparently than if a woman was the ruler. But the theory of the ruler's two bodies served essentially to provide security as the death of a ruler thus just meant the death of his or her natural body, while the body politic lived on in the person of the next heir to the throne. This explanatory model thus allowed the monarchy a smooth transition of power from one ruler to the next, arguing that monarchy "never die[d]" (Kantorowicz 2016, pp. 3–6).

4  From the 14th century, a lively European-wide discourse reflected on the role of women in early-modern Europe's societies, particularly on the relation of the sexes, and on female rulership. This debate, called *Querelle des Femmes* for the first time in 15th-century France (Bock/ Zimmermann 1997, pp. 11–12), was undoubtedly sparked among other factors by a perceived increase in the number of all sorts of female rulers throughout Europe during the time (Valerius 2002). In the 16th century, men and women participated in the debate that would last at least until the French revolution (Opitz-Belakhal 2010, pp. 199–200), or alternatively reignite time and again in the Feminist movements of the 19th and 20th centuries (Bock/ Zimmermann 1997, pp. 11–16).

rank surely was the category differentiating Tudor society most of all. Hierarchy, hierarchical thinking, formed the foundation of early-modern society and of people's lives. The social rank born into was certainly more significant than where a person was born. And from King Henry VIII's reformation of the English Church in the 1530s on, religion emerged as another issue that would connect or divide people and interests, and had increasing influence on English rulership. Examining England's Tudor queens' successions makes tangible how these categories of difference were being discussed, considered and weighed broadly in early-modern England and how discourses about an individual to sit on the English throne or a claimant to the throne were influenced by these intersectional security considerations.

Mary Tudor's struggle for the succession offers only a snapshot in the half-a-century-long history of Tudor queenship and thus produced much less source material than Mary Queen of Scots' claim to Queen Elizabeth's throne, which involved a conflict spanning nearly 30 years. Another difference is that the 1553 struggle had two clear counterparties, whereas the 1558–87 conflict was much less straightforward and shifted over time: In the 1560s, Mary Stuart was just one among a number of potential successors to Queen Elizabeth, whereas in the 1570s and 80s, positions polarised to an extent that increasingly forced a choice between Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary. Security considerations played the most significant part during both of these conflicts, and they were closely tied to categories of difference associated with these women. The year 1553 gives us insight into the categories of difference relevant to security at that point in time, whereas examination of the period from 1558–87 shows how in the context of the succession, intersecting categories of difference and security evolved further, and which impact that entire process had on England's political system.

The discourses surrounding these two succession incidents have left us with ample written (partly printed) source material, including royal proclamations, letters, chronicles and pamphlets. The analysis of these sources reveals what contemporaries and participants thought about a woman being their ruler, and how queens and claimants presented themselves to their people to inspire support. However, it would be misleading to think of an individual queen or claimant (e.g. Queen Mary or Jane Grey[5]) as

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5 It would be equally misleading to address those women merely as "Mary", "Jane Grey" or "Mary Stuart". During their lifetimes, they were addressed with the highest title they held, e.g., "the Queen of Scots". The focus was as much on rank as

an isolated actor, since every queen had her party, council, followers and household that also acted on her behalf. The queen was perceived not as an individual but as a representation involving many (cf. Sharpe 2009, pp. 20–22). As a result, it is mostly inconceivable who the author of a letter or proclamation 'really' was as there was always a group of people involved. The sources considered are therefore representations of these queens, no matter who the author was. What was 'officially' communicated by these queens shaped the way they were seen as much as what people thought and said about them. Accordingly in 1553, public opinion had already begun to affect the image of rulership and impact on conflict outcomes.

## The 1553 Succession Crisis

### Context, Discourse and the 'Public'[6]

For the ordinary English person, the succession crisis of 1553 came as a surprise. For almost ten years, everyone assumed that 'the Lady Mary' would succeed her brother King Edward VI if he died, as their father, King Henry VIII, and his parliament had decreed that, after Edward's childless death, his half-sister Mary should follow him to the throne. But the decree also bound her to King Edward's Regency Council for support, especially if she were to marry (cf. Lipscomb 2018, p. 175). Yet Henry had also declared Mary to be illegitimate by Act of Parliament upon divorcing her mother before eventually re-including her in the succession, which he had then again confirmed by parliamentary statute and his last will. Mary's legal position in the succession thus seemed rather ambiguous. But

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the popular characterization of the age as "rank-obsessed" suggests. In this article, the naming of the individuals under examination is especially tricky because the pool of royal names during the time was rather small — for women and men — and "Mary" surely is the first name most frequently given to girls during the time. I try to stick to the contemporary naming of individuals where possible and only resort to the modern use of clarifying last names (like "Tudor" or "Stuart") where that is unavoidable to prevent confusion. Additionally, I resort to the individuals' first names when focussing on them in general (and only when it is clear whom I am talking about).

6  The 'public' describes the amorphous and rather heterogeneous body of the audience and governed population of the kingdom of England, Ireland etc. of whose existence and growing importance there is sufficient evidence in contemporary sources. These reveal that much of this politicised public in 1553 consisted also of 'ordinary people' (cf. Wingfield et al. 1984, pp. 252–253).

Edward and his influential Lord President of the Council John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, were intent on disinheriting Catholic Mary in favour of their own Protestant candidate, who would preferably be male. So Edward drew up his own 'Devise for the Succession' to divert the crown to a Protestant junior branch of the Tudors, the Grey family. The (exclusively female) candidates of that family were married off, and Edward expected them to produce sons soon. When his health worsened rapidly in 1553, he realised that he neither had the time to wait for male heirs nor to have his 'Devise' ratified by parliament, as his father had done. The king changed his succession regulations again, naming the eldest Grey daughter, Lady Jane, as his heir, and commanded his judges to set up a letters patent to settle the succession by royal will (cf. Skidmore 2011, pp. 251–55). Presumably because he knew how thin the legal ground was, Edward commanded that "the major figures in the Council and of the nobility, judges and prominent London officials" (Skidmore 2011, p. 252) — over a hundred people — individually sign the letters patent. In it, he urged

> "all our nobles, Lords spiritual and temporal, and all Commoners of … our … realms and the marches of the same, […] to see this our said declaration and limitation concerning the same established, ratified, and confirmed, as well by authority of parliament as by all ways and means as they can, to the best of their powers […]" (Levine 1973, p. 168).

Yet his call for public support of his Protestant succession failed. Resistance to Edward's change of Henry VIII's succession regulations became evident not only in the judges of the King's bench initial refusal to enshrine his 'Devise for the Succession' in a letters patent (cf. Skidmore 2011, pp. 251–252) but also in the general boil-up of rumours concerning the nature of King Edward's illness and eventual death.[7] However, when Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed queen, all the odds seemed to be in her favour: Her claim was backed by the late king's council, and his most influential minister was her father-in-law, the Duke of Northumberland, who was also England's most renowned and feared military leader (cf. Nichols 1850, p. 5; Wingfield et al. 1984, p. 262). The Tower of London and the royal

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7 It was not just rumoured that the king was poisoned (cf. Machyn 1553, pp. 34–50) but that Northumberland had killed him in order to frame Lady Mary (cf. CSP Spain 11, 1916, pp. 69–80; Skidmore 2011, p. 259), or even to extinguish the royal house of Tudor altogether (cf. Skidmore 2011, p. 269).

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treasure were under her followers' control as well as the armed forces. And Edward's letters patent made clear what else spoke for Queen Jane and against Lady Mary:

> "And calling to our remembrance that the Lady Jane, […] being very nigh of our whole blood, of the part of our father's side, and being natural-born here within the realm, and ha[s] been also very honourably brought up and exercised in good and godly learning and other noble virtues, so as there is great trust and hope to be had in [her] that [she] be and shall be very well inclined to the advancement and setting forth of our commonwealth: We therefore...[declare the order of succession, in the event of our death without issue, to be […] Lady Jane and her heirs male]." (Levine 1973, p. 168)

According to King Edward, Jane's "very nigh [..] whole blood" relationship to him, her 'full' English origin, her honourable upbringing, and of course her Protestant faith ("good and godly learning") were the crucial arguments for her claim to the throne. This implied that Mary's Catholic faith was the limiting factor to Edward, as a Catholic successor threatened his own Protestant settlement. Moreover, Mary's half-Spanish parentage was hinted to be a problem; she was depicted as being un-English and therefore by implication as representing a potential threat to England's independence from Spain. The reasons explicitly named for Mary's exclusion were her legal illegitimacy and the threat resulting from her unmarried status and potential marriage in the future:

> "And forasmuch as the said limitation of the imperial crown of this realm, being limited by authority of Parliament as is aforesaid to the said Lady Mary [...], being illegitimate and not lawfully begotten, forasmuch as the marriage had between our said late father and the Lady Catherine, mother to the said Lady Mary, was clearly and lawfully undone, and separation between them had by sentence of divorce according to the ecclesiastical laws; [...] Whereby as well the said Lady Mary […] to all intents and purposes [is] and be clearly disabled to ask, claim, or challenge the said imperial crown...as heir or heirs to us or to any other person or persons whosoever, as well for the cause before rehearsed, as also for that the said Lady Mary [...] be unto us but of the half blood, and therefore by the ancient laws, statutes, and customs of this realm be not inheritable unto us, although [she] were legitimate, as [she] be not indeed. And forasmuch also as it is to be thought, or at least much to be doubted, that if the said Lady Mary [...] should hereafter have and enjoy the said imperial crown of this realm,

and should then happen to marry with any stranger born out of this realm, that then the same would rather adhere and practise to have the laws and customs of his or their own native country or countries to be practised or put in use within this realm, than the laws, statutes, and customs here of long time used, whereupon the title of inheritance of all and singular our loving subjects do depend, which would then tend to the utter subversion of the commonwealth of this our realm." (Levine 1973, pp. 167–168)

Were Mary to receive the crown and marry a "stranger", she could not and would not have the commonwealth of England as her primary interest, the letters patent argues. It paints the threat of marital subordination of a ruling queen, drawing on the common perception of women as inferior and therefore dangerous state actors, which would become even more threatening in the context of rulership. Thus, Mary is securitized using her 'inferior' gender as a template to construct a threat of her possible marriage, which would inevitably entail her subordination to her husband and lead to the rise of a (foreign) king unauthorised and unchecked by any male Tudor family member (for want thereof) and the inevitable demise of the House of Tudor and, with it, of English law, custom and right. The letters patent thus skilfully connects xenophobic and misogynist sentiment with the threat of a loss of English independence, tradition and right. By contrast, by not commenting on Jane's marital status, the letters patent suggests that Jane as queen would pose no such threat. Her marital status was presumably not perceived as a security issue because she had already been safely married off to an Englishman (Northumberland's son Guildford Dudley) (cf. Skidmore 2011, p. 249). With this match, King Edward and Northumberland had effectively chosen the next king *per iure uxorem*, and he would be checked and controlled by a male Dudley family member, the Duke of Northumberland.

Yet while Mary's potential marriage was a very speculative argument for exclusion, her legal illegitimacy was not; and indeed, the bastardy argument was used extensively by Queen Jane's party in the ensuing conflict[8] — probably because it was the only 'substantial' one that could really be held against Mary. Edward's letters patent argues the point from multiple angles, citing legal arguments (the divorce of Mary's parents — according to the ecclesiastical law —, the ratification and confirmation of her bastard status by Acts of Parliament) and her 'mere' half-sibling relation to King

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8  Northumberland, en route with his army to confront Mary's, proclaimed her to be a bastard in the towns he passed (cf. Skidmore 2011, p. 269).

Edward as excluding her from any rights of inheritance according to "ancient laws, statutes, and customs".

These same arguments for Mary's exclusion (her legal illegitimacy, the threats presented by her potential marriage as well as by her Catholic faith) were adopted almost literally in Jane's proclamation as queen, and read out by the heralds on 10 July 1553 in and around London (cf. Malfatti 1956, p. 8). Indeed, it is evident that Jane's queenship depended on Edward's 'Devise' and letters patent as its only legal insurance when it closes with the sentence: "thus the said Imperial Crown and all its dependencies is now and remains in our [Jane's] actual possession by virtue of the said letters patent" (Malfatti 1956, p. 12).

Although Queen Jane's party seemed to advance all the right arguments in support of her entitlement and Mary's exclusion, and did not shy away from communicating them loudly, the people of London remained silent and "discontent" (Malfatti 1956, p. 8; cf. Wingfield et al. 1984, p. 255), " [their] faces 'sorrowful and averted'" (Skidmore 2011, p. 265). There was even outright encouragement to resist the new regime — supported by a pamphlet with the same message (cf. Skidmore 2011, p. 266) — accompanied by mounting doubts about the nobility's and gentry's allegiance to Queen Jane's (cf. Nichols 1850, pp. 6–7).

Meanwhile, upon receiving reliable news of the king's death, Mary proclaimed herself queen and wrote to the late king's council to command their obedience on 9 July. These documents tell the story from a different angle. Compared with Jane's, Mary's proclamation is rather short, stating only that

> "the crown imperial of the realms of England and Ireland, with the title of France and all other things appertaining unto the same, do most rightfully and lawfully belong unto us: We do signify unto you that according to our said right and title we do take upon us and be in the just and lawful possession of the same." (Hughes 1969, p. 3)

Unlike Jane, Mary clearly did not need to explain on which specific right her entitlement depended. Everyone knew about King Henry's and his parliament's succession settlements. Besides her "right and title", Mary only stressed her lineal royal descent when she proclaimed to rule as benignly and graciously "as others our most noble progenitors have heretofore" (ibid.). Her gender did not play any role in her proclamation.

But naturally, Mary could not ignore Jane's counter-claim nor the fact that the council and most of the nobility stood behind it. Thus, in the *Letter from Mary to the Members of Edward VI's Privy Council, dated 9 July 1553 from Kenninghall*, she details that

> "what has been provided by act of Parliament and the testament and last will of our dear father — beside other circumstances advancing our right — the Realm know and all the world knoweth. The rolls and records appear by authority of the king our said father and the king our said brother and the subjects of this Realm, as we verily trust that there is no good true subject that is or can or will pretend to be ignorant thereof." (Tittler/Richards 2013, p. 97)

She makes clear that she is not ignorant of their doings before warning:

> "Wherefore, my lords, we require you and charge you, for that our allegiance which you owe to God and us, that, for your honour and the surety of your persons, you employ your selves and forthwith upon receipt hereof cause our right and title to the Crown and government of this realm to be proclaimed." (Tittler/Richards 2013, p. 98)

Mary based her claim on her father's succession settlements: He had included her in the succession, and parliament had confirmed that right. And "all the world" knew it. This shows that, despite all the advantages Jane enjoyed, it was Mary who really had the edge. With her claim so well established that she did not even have to mention Jane explicitly to justify her actions, King Edward's and Queen Jane's party had to convincingly rationalise Mary out of the succession — to their detriment. But it was not just Mary's rhetorical strategies that convinced the English. Her actions did too.

*Action, Gender and Bodily Performance*

Interestingly, Mary's biographer Robert Wingfield[9] (a contemporary and a panegyrist) characterised her as acting on her own behalf from the beginning and being the leader in the events that unfolded. This stood in complete contrast to counter-queen Jane.

> "With her usual wisdom the lady [Mary] now perfectly judged the peril of her situation, but nothing daunted by her limited resources,

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9  Wingfield's *A Short Treatise of the Deeds of Mary Queen of England by Robert Wingfield of Brantham* obviously is a rather partisan chronicle of Mary's reign: "[…] since these events [the most holy queen's first bid for or approach to her hereditary throne] were not only marvellous but worthy of note, I have resolved to bring them together in this little treatise, lest the famous deeds of such a godly Queen remain unknown to many"(Wingfield et al. 1984, p. 244).

she placed her hopes in God alone, […]. Having first taken counsel with her advisers, she caused her whole household to be summoned, and told them all of the death of her brother Edward VI; the right to the Crown of England had therefore descended to her by divine and by human law after her brother's death, […] and she was most anxious to inaugurate her reign with the aid of her most faithful servants, as partners in her fortunes." (Wingfield et al. 1984, pp. 251–252)

Following her proclamation as queen, she formed her council to formalise "her new role, incorporating into her new government followers who would dispense military advice and aid; additionally, her council provided English subjects an alternative governmental body, labouring on behalf of their rightful queen, to counterbalance the council that served the 'pretended queen' Jane" (Duncan 2012, p. 15). The same letter sent to the council in London was dispersed to the English nobility and to all parts of the realm: "Calling on the nobility and gentry of England to render fealty both announced and bolstered Mary's new monarchical status against Jane's claim. Furthermore, as her supporters arrived to acknowledge Mary as their sovereign, they provided her with a rudimentary army, one that grew in the following days into a real threat to Northumberland and his forces" (ibid.) Mary even actively took on the ceremonious role of military leader, presenting herself not as a woman but as the ruler, issuing an edict to her field commanders and, in an episode mentioned in every account ever since, mustering her daily growing troops in person.[10]

If Northumberland had been unprepared for Mary's counter-claim and the following succession crisis, Jane appears to have been completely unaware of her role to play in that crisis until after King Edward's death — just before she was shipped to the Tower and proclaimed queen (cf. Nichols 1850, p. 3, especially fn. a.). Although no reliable contemporary evidence exists, her father, the Duke of Suffolk, and her father-in-law, the Duke of Northumberland, were said to have had to beat her into accepting the crown. In *The Chronicle of Queen Jane* as well as in Wingfield's *Vita Mariae*, Jane is portrayed as passive, even shy, dependent on male support and altogether rather insecure about her position, indeed barely fulfilling the ceremonious function as the Council's 'puppet queen'. This is illustrated most impressively when it was decided that the Duke of Suffolk, her father, should go meet Mary, a decision soon abandoned "by the speciall

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10  In her introduction to Wingfield's *Vita Mariae*, MacCulloch calls it "the great Framlingham muster" (Wingfield et al. 1984, p. 192; cf. also Duncan 2012, p. 16; Loades 1989, p. 178).

meanes of the lady Jane his daughter, who, taking the matter heavily, with weeping teares made request to the whole councell that her father might tarry at home in her company […]” (Nichols 1850, p. 5). The decision of whom else to send (Northumberland) was made by the Council, and Queen Jane only appeared once more in public before the great showdown to send the duke off (cf. Ibid., pp. 5–7).

Comparing how the two queens, Mary and Jane, were described by contemporaries, it is conspicuous that Jane acts very ‘womanly’ (unambitious, afraid, hesitant, tearful and in need of protection and support), whereas Mary is described as overcoming her natural “womanly hesitancy” (Wingfield et al. 1984, p. 265) and as acting more “of Herculean rather than of womanly daring” (ibid., p. 252). Additionally, her ‘manly’ behaviour and masculine characteristics are highlighted, thus cutting a rather masculine figure. These differing depictions convey the message that Queen Mary was more than a woman. She was indeed a leader and ruler, demonstrated by the way in which she presented herself. Queen Jane, however, was merely a woman, hiding behind men, pushed into her position by them for their purposes.

It thus appears only logical that since 1553, the succession conflict would be described as being really between Queen Mary and the Duke of Northumberland rather than between the two female claimants. This impression is supported by the fact that Northumberland made the great speech to the council in *The Chronicle of Queen Jane*, in which he analysed the situation before going out to meet Mary on the battlefield. In this speech, he admits to Jane being “by your [the councillors] and our enticement [...] rather of force placed therin [the queenship] then by hir owne seking and request” (Nichols 1850, p. 6). He addressed the factional strife and rivalry in the council as the greatest danger to the success of Queen Jane’s claim and reminds his listeners that nothing less than the survival of their common faith is on the line, which had been “the oryginall grounde wherupo[n] ye even at the first motyon granted your goode willes and concentes therunto, as by your handes writinges evidentlie apperith” (ibid., p. 7). The security of the ‘true faith’ remained the main motive of Queen Jane’s (or arguably, King Edward’s) party until the end.

That end came swiftly. As Northumberland was leaving London, the rumours about the size of Queen Mary’s forces and followers grew. And although Suffolk even tried to lock the entire council into the Tower, very soon, one by one, the noble lords left. They reconvened at Baynard’s castle in London, summoned the Lord Mayor and aldermen and, on the 19 July, proclaimed Mary queen. Northumberland meanwhile had begun to be abandoned by his troops, and when he heard of the council’s procla-

mation, he surrendered and proclaimed Mary queen himself at Cambridge (Loades 1989, pp. 180–182). The whole conflict had lasted only nine days.

What had undoubtedly won Mary the struggle for England's throne was her strongest and most convincing argument: her widely known parliamentarily confirmed right to the succession, her direct descent from King Henry VIII, and her royal rank and blood. These factors promised security and appealed to a sense of tradition and the known, and could not be rationalised away by attempts to render her alien and threatening by stressing her legal illegitimacy, her un-Englishness, the potential risk of her marrying a foreigner or her Catholic faith. But her personal commitment was equally decisive. Her 'manly' conduct seems to have been perceived by the English people as befitting a ruler, and it probably reinforced her entitlement in their opinion. This in turn emphasises the importance of bodily performance in contexts of security. Mary's representation as a ruler, as a decision maker, as one who musters her troops in person seems to have assured people of her suitability to keep England safe and independent in spite of her gender. Altogether Queen Mary was obviously more appealing to most than the relatively unknown Queen Jane with her noble (semi-royal) but full English descent and upbringing, her Protestantism and her status of being married to an Englishman. Probably most damning was her perceived dependency on the noble elite, especially on her unpopular father-in-law, Northumberland.

Thus, even though both claimants were women, gender played a significant role as a security issue and argument in this succession conflict. King Edward could of course not cite womanhood as an official argument for exclusion, although he really did not want to leave his throne to a woman. He eventually was simply forced to. His 'Devise' had originally read "to the Lady Jane's heirs male". The clause was then altered to read "to the Lady Jane and her heirs male", presumably as Edward realised he would not live long enough to see a male heir born (cf. Skidmore 2011, p. 249), and this changed wording then found its way into his letters patent. Here, Edward carefully selected the women with a claim to the throne (the Suffolk daughters, Ladies Jane, Catherine and Mary Grey), but they were completely outweighed by the number of "sons of" and "heirs male" with a right to the throne transmitted by their mothers — eleven overall (cf. Edward VI's Letters Patent for the Limitation of the Crown [21 June 1553], in Levine 1973, p. 168), and all unborn at that point, of course. And one of the arguments for Mary's exclusion, the threat that her marrying a foreigner might pose to England's independence, was unfeasible when it came to a male claimant. But upon Mary's entry into London, her title was

unchallenged. In this way, a precedent was set for future queen regnants to follow.

## The Conflict over Queen Elizabeth's Succession and Throne

### Mary Queen of Scots' Claim

Thus, when Mary died childless just five years later, there was no debate in England on who should succeed her. According to King Henry's succession regulations, Queen Mary's half-sister Lady Elizabeth followed her to the throne peacefully and with the support, even enthusiasm, of the English people. However, with Elizabeth, the last surviving member of the Tudor dynasty took the crown. This fact alone almost instantly made her succession a matter of public debate, as a settled succession meant security in the form of certainty that the kingdom had a future, and what that future would bring. Elizabeth apparently did not want to settle her own succession though, but rather preferred to leave open all possibilities (cf. Levine 1973, pp. 99–100). Still, from her accession on, she faced considerable pressure from all sides to confront the issue,[11] and the arguments for or against claimants relied on categories of difference linked to different notions of security.

Hereditarily, the next place after Elizabeth and her potential children belonged to Mary Queen of Scots, a cousin descended from a female Tudor branch. But Mary was a foreign ruler in her own right, and in 1558, she was married to the French dauphin. After her return to Scotland in 1561, Mary sent her ambassador to talk to Elizabeth about the succession. He reported back that Elizabeth refused official recognition of Mary as her heir. She considered Mary worthy of being her heir on the basis of her descent from the royal House of Tudor and their close kinship and indicated that Mary would be her preferred successor should Elizabeth have no child of her own. But neither did she want an open debate on the worthiness and eligibility of her potential successor, nor did she want to give the power of official recognition to any person while she was alive and queen — to discourage any opposition to her rule and thereby ensure a lack of alternative to herself (cf. Levine 1973, p. 178). "That a declaration

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11  At the same time, she was pressed to marry to provide for her succession herself. Potential marital partners were presented and rejected on the basis of similar strategies and arguments as candidates to succeed her.

of the succession might give the English people some feeling of security about the future did not really matter to their queen; her own anxieties were all that counted" (ibid., p. 105). Not even her subjects' concerns that "letting the matter rest until the direct Tudor line was extinct would expose England to civil war and leave her an 'open prey' for conquest by a foreign prince" (ibid., p. 106) seemed to sway her to settle the matter.

In refusing to address the issue, she ignored public opinions that obviously yearned for certainty in this vital question. The English people's interest was apparent in the widespread discussions on the succession that were not just commonplace in Parliament, where the Commons petitioned the queen tirelessly either to marry and provide for the succession herself or resolve the issue in another way. A huge pamphlet campaign echoing and backing the parliamentary efforts developed, and the sheer volume of rumours and libels buzzing round the British Isles during the time, all concerned with the succession and the two queens (cf. Lake 2016, pp. 19f.; Levine 1973, pp. 109f.), showed just how much concern there was. The authors and/or their contractors, printers and other people involved in the publication of the pamphlets aimed to present the struggle for the succession from their point of view, control the unfolding events by explaining them to the people and convince the English people, Parliament, government and the queen of a certain course of action (cf. Lake 2016, p. 9). The controversy for and against Mary Queen of Scots being Elizabeth's successor went on for years, primarily drawing on the familiar arguments of royal blood descent and legal preconditions (namely, King Henry's settlement and the validity of his will, and the question of "whether the common-law rule against an alien inheriting ordinary property applied to the succession" (Levine 1973, p. 110).

The pamphlet *Mary Queen of Scots' Claim to the English Succession Attacked on National and Religious Grounds (7 December 1565)* presents the line of argumentation opposing Mary's place in the succession in a rather prejudicial manner (cf. Levine 1973, p. 113). As the title foreshadows, 'nationality' and religion were the key security arguments:

> "[W]hat should become of us and our country in effect but as bound and subject unto a foreign nation? […] Those shall be rulers and governors here and we in our country become and made strangers […]. And with what mind can we suffer these things of the Scot? [They are] a people by custom and almost nature our enemies […] And not to be communicators with reason, but as tyrannous commanders […] without good reason or good policy of this state […]." ('Mary Queen

of Scots' Claim to the English Succession Attacked on National and Religious Grounds (7 December 1565), in Levine 1973, p. 180)

The author introduced xenophobic, even "racial"[12] arguments against the Scottish queen, whose accession he claimed to be the end of England's independence. As a Scot, she would not uphold law, order and custom but rule England as a sheer tyrant and give government over to the Scots. The author furthermore stated that

> "(c)orrupt religion, blinded with the hate of the truth of the gospel, and those that doth profess the same hath induced so many to affect the Queen of Scots in this case of succession, without all consideration of any lawful title. (…) So that they might once turn unto their accustomed idolatry and wonted cruelty to wash their hands in the blood of the faithful (…)." (ibid.)

Catholicism — or rather, its restoration — and hatred of Protestantism were the only reasons for people to back Mary's claim, which was otherwise unlawful, he suggested. The author's attempt to securitize Queen Mary (her Catholic conviction, her Scottish origin, and the lawfulness of her title to the English throne) is obvious by the horrific scenarios he outlines in the case of her succession, or even her official acknowledgement, which would bring the literal Antichrist upon the English to root out the whole ideal as which he presents the Protestant 'liberal'[13] English kingdom.

Neither Elizabeth nor indeed Mary seem to have wanted to notice at first, but this pamphlet clearly shows that the debate about Elizabeth's succession rather quickly turned into a struggle for England's 'true' faith. And the pamphleteers, like the anonymous author here, particularly sought to convince the English that the counter-party (represented by Mary Queen of Scots) was basically an enemy bent on destroying the English political and religious system. Thus, the struggle for Queen Elizabeth's succession was also a struggle between two competing religious and political worldviews intent on legitimising themselves by othering, securitizing and

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12  As the usefulness of the category of "race" in contexts like these is highly debatable, and indeed hotly debated (cf. Howell/Richter-Montpetit 2020; Hansen 2020), it is only mentioned here in quotation marks as a category of difference that could be read into the context. However, a full study and classification of the category of "race" in this context would overstretch this study (and change the focus), and thus cannot be provided here.

13  What I mean by 'liberal' is a government under a queen open to counsel and advice and therefore a state of reason and 'good policy', which the anonymous author so obviously appreciates.

finally eradicating the other one. Mary Queen of Scots was identified accordingly as the representation of a Catholic, absolutist, illegitimate and suppressive system. Queen Elizabeth, or so the underlying message ran, had to exclude her from the line of succession to safeguard England's (Protestant) future (cf. Levine 1973, pp. 113f.).[14]

Another factor that had been aggravating the debate since 1567 was Mary Queen of Scots' physical presence in England as a result of her deposition as Scotland's ruling queen shortly prior. Through her indefinite bodily presence, she soon became more than just Elizabeth's potential successor. In the eyes not just of Catholics and Catholic sympathisers but of the nobility and gentry critically disposed towards Elizabeth and/or her government, Mary presented an increasingly credible alternative to Queen Elizabeth (cf. Levine 1973, p. 118). As such, Mary drew support from all sorts of opponents of the Elizabethan regime — Catholics, discontented noblemen, traditionalists and foreign supporters. And exactly these foreign supporters had unexpected influence on the debate.

*The Papal Bull and Its Backlash*

In early 1570, Pope Pius V issued a bull of excommunication "depriving Elizabeth I of her 'pretended title' to the English throne and releasing her subjects from their allegiance" (Levine 1973, p. 119). *The Papal Bull against Elizabeth, 1570* called Elizabeth "the pretended queen of England and servant of crime" (Elton 1960, p. 416), and declared to be "compelled by necessity to take up against her the weapons of justice, though we cannot forbear to regret that we should be forced to turn upon one whose ancestors have so well deserved of the Christian community" (Elton 1960, p. 417). The reasoning continues,

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14  The play *Gorboduc or the tradegy of Ferrex and Porrex*, written in 1561 by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, and performed before Queen Elizabeth as early as 1562, voiced the same prejudicial distrust against Mary's succession: In Act five, the villain, a Scot, attempted to seize the throne after the death of the last direct royal heir, subjecting the mythical Britain this play was set in to "the 'unnatural thraldom of stranger's reign'" (Levine 1973, p. 105; cf. Lake 2016, pp. 29f.). The play however rather focused on trumping up the alternative candidate to the throne, Lady Catherine Grey, than insisting on Queen Mary's exclusion from the line of succession (cf. Levine 1973, pp. 105f.), although exactly that intent was criticised by John Leslie in 1569 in his printed tract *A defence of the honour of the right high, mighty and noble princess Mary, queen of Scotland and dowager of France* (cf. Lake 2016, p. 30).

"out of the fullness of our apostolic power [we] declare the foresaid Elizabeth to be a heretic and favourer of heretics, and her adherents in the matters aforesaid to have incurred the sentence of excommunication and be cut off from the unity of the body of Christ. […] And moreover [we declare] her to be deprived of her pretended title to the aforesaid crown and of all lordship, dignity and privilege whatsoever." (ibid., pp. 417–18)

The bull securitizes Elizabeth as an illegal usurper of her crown, heretic and criminal, and by excommunicating her declared

"the nobles, subjects and people of the said realm, and all others who have in any way sworn oaths to her, to be forever absolved from such an oath and from any duty arising from lordship, fealty and obedience; […]. We charge and command all and singular the nobles, subjects, peoples and others aforesaid that they do not dare obey her orders, mandates and laws. Those who shall act to the contrary we include in the like sentence of excommunication." (ibid.)

The bull equipped Elizabeth's Catholic and other opponents with legal arguments against her rule and posed a direct threat not only to her person and rulership, but also raised issues of England's security. It was read as "an unmistakable declaration of war", for "it posed the fatal dilemma from which neither the Catholics nor the government could thereafter escape. Obedience to Rome now meant acceptance of the excommunication and deposition of Elizabeth, and therefore at least treason *in posse*" (ibid., p. 411). In employing the categories of difference that Elizabeth embodied to construct her rulership as a threat (Protestantism = heresy = criminal), the bull tried to underpin with legal substance the arguments that Queen Mary's party used to depict Elizabeth as a threat to their ideal of England as being a Catholic country.[15] However, using this reasoning to argue

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15  This line of reasoning is picked up and spun further in a number of pro-Marian tracts, most notably *The Treatise of Treason*, published anonymously in 1572. Its author suggested that the Elizabethan government itself, notably Elizabeth's councillors William Cecil and Nicolas Bacon, "were prepared to plunge the kingdom into morally enervating and politically divisive religious change, to induce the queen into greater and greater tyrannies and oppressions, to create turmoil in the neighbouring kingdoms, to muddy the waters of legitimate succession, thus provoking a range of foreign princes to intervene in English affairs, while themselves filling the country with all manner of low-born foreign refugees, and all so that, having created the necessary conditions of political instability, they could continue their rise to supreme power and authority. Throughout, they

Mary's case now meant to directly challenge the existing ruler, religious system and government, which only helped Elizabeth's party to cast Mary and her claim to the throne as posing a direct threat to the status quo and all her supporters being potential traitors.

This was of course exactly what Queen Elizabeth and her government tried to do. In the aftermath, two anti-Marian tracts were printed with official backing,[16] especially after the so-called Northern Rebellion against the Elizabethan regime and other smaller plots to depose or even kill Elizabeth, free Mary from the imprisonment to which she had been confined since her arrival in England and put her on the English throne. The papal bull, and especially the Ridolfi plot that it entailed, resulted in Mary being considered "the most dangerous enemy against the queen's majesty, our sovereign lady, that lived' and 'the greatest cause of the rebellion lately in the north" (Lake 2016, p. 42). With this, it appears as though Elizabeth's government (whether with or without her knowledge is impossible to determine) actively joined the pamphlet war and supported an increasingly 'Puritan' position claiming that Mary had to be excluded from the English line of succession in what can only be described as a smear campaign. Mary was ascribed an array of negative characteristics, depicting her as different, dangerous and altogether unsuitable for the mere thought of becoming an English ruler.

Interestingly, she was most damningly accused of her 'feminine weaknesses' as source of her perilousness. The anonymous translator of a Latin pamphlet originally written by George Buchanan, published in London in 1571 under the title *An detection of the doings of Mary Queen of Scots touching the murder of her husband and her conspiracy, adultery and pretensed marriage with the earl of Bothwell*, called her a "woman burning in hatred of her husband and in love of an adulterer and in both these diseases of corrupt affections unbridled, intemperable by her estate, raging by her power and indulgently following the wantoness of her wealth" (Lake 2016, p. 45). According to this reasoning, it was exactly her 'feminine weaknes-

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talked the language of the public interest and the commonweal, of the safety and security of queen and realm, but they intended the very opposite. […] Here lay the real treason of the day, […]" (Lake 2016, p. 82) – not in the treasonous activities Queen Mary was accused of (cf. Ibid., pp. 70f).

16  The pamphlet published *cum gratia et privilegio regiae maiestatis* was John Day's *The effect of the declaration made in the Guildhall by M. Recorder of London, concerning the late attempts of the Queen's Majesty's evil, seditious and disobedient subjects* (London, 1571); the second pamphlet was published by an unidentified R. G. and titled *Salutem in Christo* (London 1571) (cf. Lake 2016, p. 42).

ses' that led Mary to abuse the power she enjoyed due to her royal rank, resulting in crimes (especially her alleged complicity in the murder of her second husband) that were judged to be particularly severe because of her gender: "the fact, of itself, is odious; in a woman, it is monstrous; in a wife, (…) it is incredible" (Ibid.). This line of argumentation used Mary's 'inferior gender' as a template to render as threatening all the categories of difference she represented and thus securitize her so as to convince people of her unsuitability to rule England.

## *Juridical Securitization*

However, even the first completely Protestant parliament, in session from 1572, struggled to bring Mary to justice, as she still had support even among the Protestant Commons. These supporters presented themselves as "defender[s] of equity and the honour of England, of monarchical legitimacy and legal propriety" (Lake 2016, p. 62) while avoiding being seen as sympathisers of Mary. Additionally, to rationalise her being amenable to English law, parliament would have to admit to her claim to the throne at least by implication, which most members were bent on denying. And parliament even failed to exclude Mary from the succession because Queen Elizabeth still forbade debate on or the settlement of her succession. What can be observed, however, is that Catholicism, or even holding Catholic sympathies, became more and more suspicious: Catholicism and 'popery' were increasingly associated with rebellion and treason; some views became untenable and some things unspeakable, and support for Queen Mary and Catholicism was systematically marginalised (cf. Lake 2016, pp. 53–64).

Eventually, Parliament and Queen Elizabeth compromised and agreed on the *Treasons Act*, which made all future denial of the Queen's right and title and any presumption thereof during her lifetime an act of treason. Crucially, any person, regardless of "degree, condition, place, nation, or estate soever" (Levine 1973, p. 183), was accountable — that is to say, neither nationality nor social rank or gender could bar the offending person from being amenable to the law. If Mary Queen of Scots could now be convicted of plotting against Elizabeth, she could legally be tried for treason.

The *Treasons Act* could not prevent further support for Queen Mary, as the pro-Marian tract *The Treatise of Treasons*, published in 1572/73, shows. The tract was widely disseminated — even distributed at court, where several attempts were made to hand it to Queen Elizabeth herself —

and evoked a royal proclamation denouncing it and ordering everyone to destroy any copy in circulation (cf. Lake 2016, pp. 70–93). This attempt of silencing Marian sympathisers was one strategy of the government to slowly stifle any possible critique and particularly suppress any open support for the Queen of Scots and Catholicism by increasingly perfecting their practices of publicity and surveillance, and enacting law after law defining and outlawing the 'Catholic threat', whether from the inside or abroad, to ensure the combined security of Queen Elizabeth, her government, the Protestant settlement and English independence. In 1585, *An Act for provision to be made for the surety of the Queen's most royal person* (1585: 27 Eliz. I, c.1) made this connection clear by stating in its preface that

> "the good felicity and comfort of the whole estate of this realm consisteth […] in the surety and preservation of the Queen's most excellent Majesty; and for that it hath manifestly appeared that sundry wicked plots and means have of late been devised and laid, as well in foreign parts beyond the seas as also within this realm, to the great endangering of her Highness' most royal person and to the utter ruin of the whole common weal, […]." (Elton 1960, p. 76)

The act declared "any person that shall or may pretend any title to the crown of this realm" (ibid.) amenable to the English law if that person attempted to harm Elizabeth's royal person or the kingdom she stood for. Therewith, from a legal standpoint, protecting Elizabeth's royal body as a representation of the kingdom, as body politic of the realm, became the prime objective requiring these securitizing measures. And it was Mary Queen of Scots who became the ultimate symbol of the threat directly addressed by the act. For her opponents, she stood for international Catholicism threatening Protestant England; to her supporters, Mary embodied the prospect of a Catholic England, more just and secure than the England of Elizabeth. These women's natural bodies thus stood for very different political and religious bodies: Elizabeth's the endangered current body politic of the Protestant English kingdom, Mary's the dangerous potential future body politic of a Catholic England. Obviously, these competing representations of the kingdom could not stand side by side for long.

To silence any opposition to the Elizabethan government, that government ultimately had to kill the dangerous competing symbolic body — quite literally. Once Mary's involvement in what was probably a government-crafted plot could be proven, she was condemned in a show trial, executed and silenced once and for all (cf. Lake 2016, pp. 285f.) – her body natural being denied its symbolic potential. But although Elizabeth had signed her death warrant, she had hesitated because, as she wrote in a letter

to one of her councillors: "[D]uring my reign, [I have] seen and heard many opprobrious books and pamphlets against me, my realm and state, accusing me to be a tyrant [...] What will they not now say when it shall be spread that, for the safety of her life, a maiden queen could be content to spill the blood, even of her own kinswoman?" (ibid., p. 291) Regicide may well not have been the price she had been willing to pay for her triumph.

## Conclusion

With female claimants competing with each other for the throne and ruling queens succeeding one another, Tudor England offers an ideal context to examine gender as a security issue in early-modern rulership discourse. The 'inferior' gender of Queen Mary I of England, Lady Jane Grey, Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots was repeatedly used as a template to problematise and securitize their position as powerful women on many levels: First and foremost, the ruler being a woman was argued to weaken England's security and independence *per se.* Being female was even perceived to make the ruler susceptible to the abuse of power, as in the case of Mary Queen of Scots. Moreover, a (potential) queen's marital status could pose a threat either by making her dependent on (the wrong) men or by offering foreign princes an opportunity to undermine England's independence, the latter implying that a married woman — whether ruler or not — would (and had to) subordinate to her husband. In extreme cases, a ruler's female gender could serve to criminalise her, as in Mary Queen of Scots' case, in which it even provided the grounds for implicating her in her husband's murder — a crime that severely threatened the gender order and contradicted a husband's 'natural' superiority, with which any female ruler was still expected to comply.

Additionally, gender was used as a security argument in judging a ruler's or claimant's bodily performance and representation: 'Manly' conduct could further the chances of a woman to claim the English throne successfully, whereas 'womanly' conduct could be held against a claimant or even facilitate her securitization. As claimants, and more so as rulers, these women represented expectations of how they would rule and/or symbolised the kingdom with its political, social and religious systems. This embodiment made their bodies referent objects of security, which as such could be directly threatened (cf. Buzan et al 1998, p. 21); but their natural bodies were also perceived as symbols (or bodies politic) threatening the status quo. Thus, in situations when matters of security took centre stage, such as the succession, the women's bodily performance and the

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(female) body as a symbol were of vital importance – underlining the close interconnection of female sex and gender in this specific context. Another observation underlining this prominent symbolic role of the female body is the significance that the bodily presence of Mary Queen of Scots had in the discourse surrounding Elizabeth's succession. To any opponent of the Elizabethan government at the time and of Elizabeth herself, Mary's physical presence transformed her from a potential, albeit inconvenient, successor to a credible alternative.

Finally, and probably most importantly, gender-related security issues clearly were subsumed under other intersecting categories of difference deemed more important and/or used more successfully as targets of securitization. Royal social rank, and royal descent in particular, turned out to be the most important category of difference for any ruler during that period who sought to argue convincingly that he or she was a suitable candidate willing and capable of upholding England's security. Queen Mary I's success and Elizabeth's uncontested accession confirm the importance of that lineal royal descent, and Mary Queen of Scots' royal descent and rank were the deciding factors that upheld her legitimacy for so long and made her such a viable contestant.

But her being perceived as vital threat was decisively based on another category of difference that Mary embodied: her Catholic conviction that stood in opposition to the (more or less established) representation of England and its queen as Protestants. Subordinate only to royal rank, religion overshadowed all other categories of difference that were seen as threatening in this context, even though 'nationality' or rather, 'foreignness', also emerged as strong argument against Mary Queen of Scots' claim to the throne. Religious denomination had proved to be an unconvincing argument in 1553, as Queen Mary I could establish her claim against the Protestant elite despite being perceived as the beacon of Catholicism in England. However, from 1558 on, Mary Queen of Scots' Catholic conviction and her association with a growing international Catholic party opposed to England served as one of the templates not only for her securitization but also for increasingly marginalising, silencing and finally outlawing Catholic affiliation or sympathy with Catholicism.[17] The papal bull arguably expedited this process and parliament provided the legislation

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17 So far, the *Two Queens in One Isle*-incident (following a popular book title by Alison Plowden on the topic) has not been researched using the securitization concept of the Copenhagen School, as far as I know. But it is evident by the fantastic work of scholars on the topic that Catholics and Catholic opinion were securitized in almost exemplary Copenhagen fashion (Peter Lake's impressive

necessary. The development of this category of difference into a dominant one governing the English succession continued until, in 1689, a Protestant woman claiming the throne was given priority over her Catholic father.[18]

Mary Queen of Scots' case particularly highlights how much gender as a security argument was subsumed under other intersecting categories of difference that were perceived to be more important or more threatening to England's security, such as her royal descent and rank, or the question of the 'true' faith. But crucially, gender was a security argument used situationally, as Elizabeth's gender was argued to render her particularly vulnerable and in danger, whereas it was precisely Mary Queen of Scot's gender that allowed for all the other categories of difference to be bound up in her person as vital threats to England's security, as her criminalisation based on a 'gendered' crime demonstrates, and that served to securitize her further and further. As a result, the entire process of assessing and discussing categories of difference as fundamental features of security in the context of the English succession had helped make a ruler amenable to the English common law, a process that in 1649 enabled an English parliament to decapitate its king.

Yet regarding England's Tudor queens, I would argue it was exactly this situational availability of gender as a security argument that facilitated the subsumption of gender-related security issues under issues of royal rank and religion as being less threatening. Only thus could women be considered suitable as rulers in the first place and could actually become 'king'.

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work on *Bad Queen Bess? Libels, Secret Histories, and the Politics of Publicity in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I* is the one I have used most extensively).

18  The woman in question was yet another Mary Stuart (1662–1694), the Protestant Princess of Orange, wife of William of Orange and daughter to King James II of England, who is probably one of the most understudied rulers in English history. A notable exception is Hester W. Chapman's biography written in 1972 (Chapman 1972). Mary, or rather William of Orange's marriage to her, was probably the fundamental prerequisite for the prince to launch his 'Glorious Revolution' of England, thereby supplanting his father-in-law as ruler jointly together with Mary, who became Queen Mary II.

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