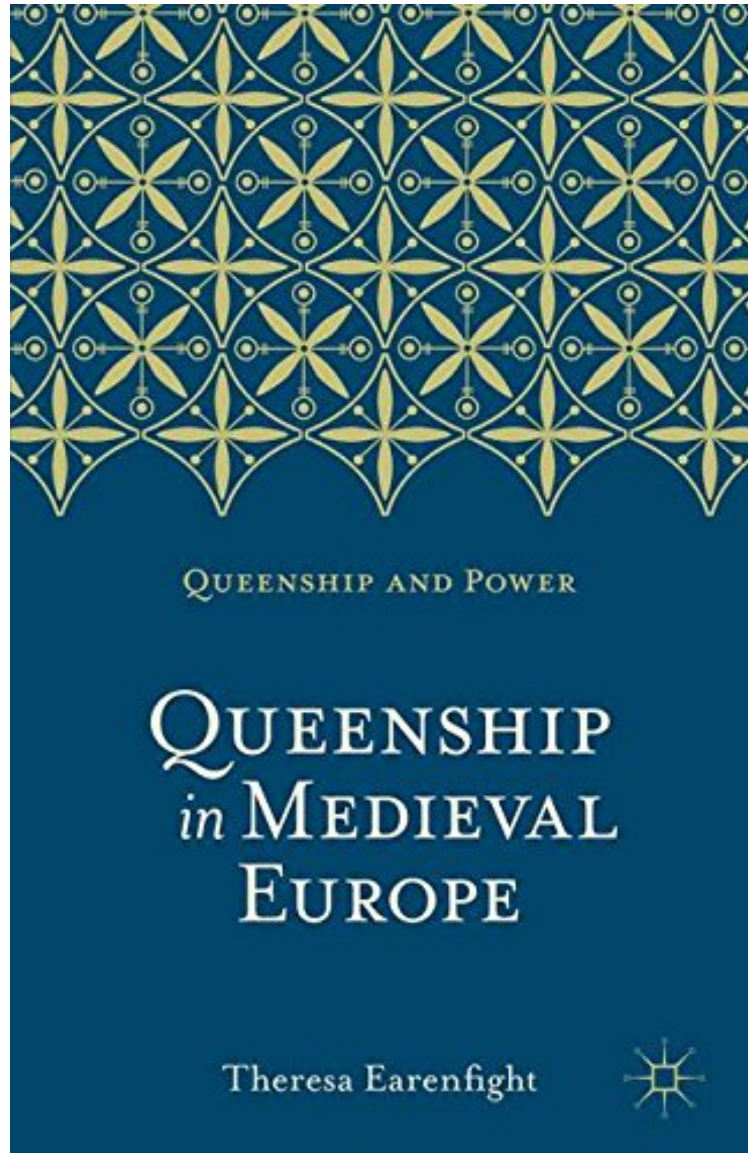


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## Queenship in Medieval Europe (Queenship and Power)

*Theresa Earenfight*

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**Theresa Earenfight : Queenship in Medieval Europe (Queenship and Power)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Queenship in Medieval Europe (Queenship and Power):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A wide-ranging survey of the essential role of queens and queenship in medieval European dynasties By D. Cloyce Smith This handy survey provides an up-to-date look at the current (if still fledgling) scholarship on the pivotal role of medieval queens, both within the workings of the court and, more

broadly, on state, society, and culture. To my knowledge, it's the first book of its kind, and it provides a valuable corrective to traditional political histories that chronicle governance, law, and dynastic succession almost entirely through the history of each nation's kings. Unsurprisingly, as the author acknowledges, "it may read at times like an old-style political history with queens instead of kings." Although "dynasty, marriage and motherhood were constants that shaped a queen's life" and although the primary duty of most queens was to produce an heir to the throne, a good number managed to serve as advisors to their husbands (or sons) or would directly hold the reins of power, either in the king's absence or in their own right. Earenfight divides her survey into three periods, corresponding roughly to the early, high, and late Middle Ages, and each chapter traverses geographically from England and France through Iberia and into Eastern Europe. Employing a surprising amount of droll wit, the book contains tons of fascinating "stories" and anecdotes about various dynasties, about the successes and failures of individual queens, and about the internal struggles that would alternately strengthen and weaken both queen-consorts and queen-regents. The book's encyclopedic qualities might occasionally make the "narrative" overwhelming to the casual lay reader, but its comprehensiveness will prove useful--indeed, essential--to both students and teachers. Each chapter also includes a summary of what scholarship remains untouched (and, needless to say, there's a lot yet to be done).

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Putting female monarchs and consorts back into history:By Elizabeth M McMahan

In this book, Dr. Earenfight makes her case for the study of queenship as a separate entity from kingship, with functions and responsibilities distinct from those of a male ruler's. Her other books present case studies, but this one offers her arguments in more depth, building on earlier publications. This attempt to write (and research) queens and empresses back into the European political arena is well researched and presented. Its argument extends our understanding of political systems during the middle ages, and the effects of gender relations upon these.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting study but, because the author chose to compare ...By Susan

Interesting study but, because the author chose to compare a wide breadth of regions, many receive rather superficial analysis.

Medieval queens led richly complex lives and were highly visible women active in a man's world. Linked to kings by marriage, family, and property, queens were vital to the institution of monarchy. In this comprehensive and accessible introduction to the study of queenship, Theresa Earenfight documents the lives and works of queens and empresses across Europe, Byzantium, and the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. The book:

- \* introduces pivotal research and sources in queenship studies, and includes exciting and innovative new archival research
- \* highlights four crucial moments across the full span of the Middle Ages ca. 300, 700, 1100, and 1350 when Christianity, education, lineage, and marriage law fundamentally altered the practice of queenship
- \* examines theories and practices of queenship in the context of wider issues of gender, authority, and power.

This is an invaluable and illuminating text for students, scholars and other readers interested in the role of royal women in medieval society.

"The author skilfully employs current research from such fields as history, literary analysis and art history to improve understanding of the subject. Perhaps the most salient feature of the study is its juxtaposition of specific examples of queens' lives and careers with theories, both modern and medieval, of medieval queenship. The result is a convincing argument that, regardless of where or when, queens' roles centered on family, religion, and culture, but political circumstances altered cases. Moreover, the bibliography, suggestions for further reading and research, and footnotes are extensive. Recommended." - Choice

"Pleasurable and stimulating to read. The book is very well-researched; the author has mastered the most recent bibliography of what constitutes queenship studies, and constructs a vivid and believable portrayal of its evolution. It has the potential to be adopted in different types of courses - including medieval European history survey classes and history seminars focusing on political power, gender, etc." - Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, University of Colorado at Boulder, USA

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From the Back Cover

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