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## Queen Louise of Prussia: Gender, Power, and Queenship During the Sattelzeit Era

Samantha Sproviero  
ss0163@mix.wvu.edu

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Queen Louise of Prussia:  
Gender, Power, and Queenship During the *Sattelzeit* Era

Samantha Sproviero

Thesis submitted  
to the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences  
at West Virginia University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
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Katherine Aaslestad, Ph.D., Chair  
Robert Blobaum, Ph.D.  
Kate Kelsey Staples, Ph.D.

Department of History

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## ABSTRACT

### Queen Louise of Prussia: Gender, Power, and Queenship During the *Sattelzeit* Era

Samantha Sproviero

Louise of Meckelburg-Strelitz was born on March 10, 1776 and died just thirty-four years later. In her short time as the queen consort of Prussia, she would give birth to nine children, command her own dragoons, negotiate with Napoleon, and eventually become a complex and celebrated German historical figure. Immensely popular in life, her early death was considered a national tragedy, and commemorations of her life only solidified her role as a new type of Prussian queen. Using Louise as a case study, this work will examine how the role of queen changed, not only in Prussia, but also between the early modern and modern era in Europe. Following Joan W. Scott's framework for gender analysis, this work places Louise within societal conceptions of Prussian masculinity and femininity, as well as each gender's connection to power. This will require the use of secondary sources on Louise's life as well as an examination of primary sources such as Louise's personal correspondence, as well as an analysis of commemorations through the artifacts of material culture, memorial literature, and popular depictions. This assessment of Louise's role as a woman, a mother, and as a martial consort within a socio-cultural context, as well as its representations both during and after her life, will reveal the Louise's role as a transitional queen of the *Sattelzeit* period. This work will therefore contribute to the growing field of queenship studies and provide insight to of how periodization can impact historians' understanding of queenship, gender, and power.

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Although this page of acknowledgements is meant to focus on those who helped me complete my thesis, it has been difficult to separate these 120-pages from the two-year process of earning a master's degree. Those who know me know that it has been a challenging two years, with this work serving as the culminating project. That being said, there are many to thank for helping me complete not only this thesis, but also this degree.

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## Introduction

### **A Procession Along *Unter den Linden***

Traveling along *Unter den Linden* on December 22nd, 1793 may have been a difficult task. Despite the cold weather, crowds had gathered down the wide boulevard to catch a glimpse of the future Queen of Prussia who was arriving in Berlin for her wedding. The seventeen-year-old princess was hard to miss, riding in the center carriage of the wedding procession with her sister towards the *Stadtschloss*. The procession moved slowly, accompanied by military officers on foot, occasionally stopping. It is famously said that crowds cheered with excitement when during one of these stops she broke protocol to pick up a little girl, kissing her on the cheek. From that momentous arrival on, Louise of Meckelburg-Strelitz was immensely popular. This unprecedented and affectionate connection with her subjects grew during her short time as queen, eventually amassing a cult-like following. Louise was a complex figure—on the one hand she was celebrated as a symbol of motherhood, beauty and femininity, and on the other, she commanded respect as her husband's confidant and advisor during a period of war and defeat. Her death in 1810, at the age of thirty-four, was considered a national tragedy, and commemorations of her life only solidified her role as a new type of Prussian queen.

German historians frequently write about Louise's life. Luise Schorn-Schütte's short biography, *Königin Luise: Leben und Legende* she examines Louise's life in order to distinguish between the myths and the facts concerning her reign. In doing so, Schorn-Schütte argues that Louise played an important role in reforming the Prussian monarchy. Sibylle Wirsing's *Die Königin: Luise nach zweihundert Jahren*, can also serve as an example of a biographical account, but places Louise within the lexicon of popular German historical figures such as Frederick the Great. Daniel Schönflug, in his bestselling *Luise von Preussen: Königin der Herzen: eine*

*Biographie*, like Schorn-Schütte, addresses myths as he considers her role in Prussian history. Schönplflug critically examines Louise's political influence on the Prussian Reforms of 1807 and concludes that Louise's role as queen was more symbolically than politically significant.

Academic works on Louise often examine her legacy as a Prussian queen. Birte Förster, for example, considers various regional interpretations of the "Queen Louise Myth" as well as the myth's representations through the media in his book *Der Königin Luise-Mythos: Mediengeschichte des "Idealbilds deutscher Weiblichkeit", 1860-1960*. Förster argues that both gender and nationalism influenced the construction of the myth after Louise's death. Phillpp Demandt's *Luisenkult: die Unsterblichkeit der Königin von Preussen* also turns to Louise's legacy, focusing on Louise's cult following after her death in 1810. Demandt, an art historian, examines material culture to argue that Louise played an enduring symbolic role in the image of the Prussian monarchy.

There is a paucity of English language scholarship on Louise. Only three biographies, all of which are outdated and purely descriptive, are available. This includes *The Life and Times of Louise, Queen of Prussia* written in two volumes by Elizabeth Harriot Hudson in 1874 and *Queen Louise of Prussia* written in 1907 by Mary Maxwell Moffat, both of which focus on describing the events of her life rather than her legacy or prominence within German history. There have been no English language biographies written during the twenty-first century, with Constance Wright's 1976 biography *Beautiful Enemy*, a flowery and almost novel-like biography serving as the most recent work. It is important to note, however, that the framework for queenship studies have changed dramatically since Wright's 1976 biography. Inspired by Joan Scott's framework, recent queenship studies focus on examining the ways in which societal

understandings of gender influenced the way queens navigated power, as well as defining that power.

Christopher Clark, in his important study of Prussia, *Iron Kingdom*, briefly highlights Louise's role as queen. His history of the Prussian state from 1600-1947 explores the "forces that made and unmade Prussia," including that of the Prussian monarchy.<sup>1</sup> He characterizes Louise's role as an entirely new type of Hohenzollern queen, claiming, "The queen emerged—for the first time—as a celebrated public personality in her own right."<sup>2</sup> He directly compares her to her eighteenth-century predecessors, arguing that she "occupied a much more prominent and visible place in the life of the kingdom," and supports these claims by briefly exploring her roles as wife, mother, and advisor to the king.<sup>3</sup> He points to the way these roles "took place within the parameters of an increasingly polarized understanding of the two genders and their social calling."<sup>4</sup> Clark views this "re-feminization of Prussian royalty" as central to Louise's popularity and to the public's newfound connection with the Prussian monarchy.<sup>5</sup>

Although Clark has established that Louise is a new type of Prussian Queen, her contribution to the changing role of queenship in modern Europe is less frequently explored. Living from 1776-1810, Louise's role as queen is valuable, as it provides a perspective on queenship during a period of great transformation in Europe. Considering the impact of her gender, the extent of her power, and her representation in the media, this work argues that Louise can be understood as a transitional queen of the *Sattelzeit* era, connecting early modern and modern European models for queenship studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher M. Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 316.

<sup>3</sup> Clark, 316.

<sup>4</sup> Clark, 318.

<sup>5</sup> Clark, 318.



## Outline

This master's thesis will be divided into three chapters and include a brief conclusion. The first chapter will provide a historiographical overview of relevant works in gender history, queenship studies, and monarchy during the nineteenth century. The second chapter will then examine societal understandings of gender in nineteenth century Prussia, briefly describe Louise's life, and analyze the extent of her power as queen. The third chapter will examine how Louise is represented in the media, both during her life and after her death. Finally, the epilogue will briefly explore how Louise's role as queen has become a part of modern-day tourism in Berlin and how an analysis of her role contributes to queenship studies.

The first chapter surveys the scholarship and the treatment of several subjects, providing a historiographical assessment as well as a framework for chapters two and three. First, an examination of selected gender studies will provide the theoretical framework for assessing Louise's gender and power. This section will also consider the impact of gender history on queenship studies. This theoretical framework will then be applied to recent scholarship on early modern queenship. This section will focus on identifying varying definitions of power and considers how they are applied to queenship. An examination of these works is crucial to chapter two, as they provide the framework for assessing Louise's power as queen. Shifting to the modern era, an assessment of recent scholarship on the nineteenth century and Queen Victoria reveals the role of the media in shaping monarchical representation. This chapter concludes with a brief explanation of the *Sattelzeit der Moderne*. Although this chapter focuses on providing a historiographic assessment of recent works, it also provides an important framework for understanding Louise's role as *Sattelzeit* queen.

The second chapter, focusing on Louise's life, will begin with a brief biography of the Prussian Queen. This section will also serve to provide historical context including a description of Prussia's involvement in the Napoleonic Wars. This will be followed by an analysis of societal conceptions of masculinity and femininity in Prussia. Crucial to this analysis is the work of Karen Hagemann, who emphasizes the gendered roles within the dynastic family and society at large. These constructions will then be used to analyze Louise's power as queen. Although separate sections are devoted to her formal and informal power, this chapter concludes that Louise's formal and informal power were inseparable, and relied on her positive relationship with her husband. Her power will then be directly compared to the power of several early modern queens to establish their many similarities.

The third and final chapter will explore representations of Louise in the media. First, this chapter will analyze representations of Louise in German, French and British media during the era of anti-Napoleonic wars. These sections will focus on primary sources such as French war bulletins and illustrations, two formal portraits, and British newspapers. German representations of Louise celebrated her as a noble queen, wife, and mother whereas the French represent Louise as an unfeminine warmonger. This chapter then provides an analysis of representations of Louise after her death. This will include an analysis of German novels by Luise Mühlbach, a physical representation memorializing Louise in the Tiergarten, and commemorative literature. This chapter will serve to analyze Louise's legacy as a nineteenth-century queen and to argue that it was an overwhelmingly feminine legacy, shaped by the acceptable gender roles of the nineteenth century. A brief epilogue will examine Louise's legacy as a celebrated historic figure in modern-day Berlin, and the ways in which her roles as mother and martial consort have endured.

## Chapter 1

### **“To Dazzle the Eyes of the Conqueror:” Gender History, Queenship, and Power**

#### **Gender History and Queenship**

In 1969 Constance Wright wrote *Beautiful Enemy*, a biography of Queen Louise of Prussia. The title, referring to an expression of Napoleon’s, provides the framework for Wright’s account of Louise’s life.<sup>6</sup> In the prologue, Wright chronicles the changing rhetoric regarding the young queen. From Napoleon’s “beautiful enemy,” to the second Helen of Troy, Wright includes representations of Louise that are mostly centered on her physical beauty or her gender to illustrate the limitations placed on Louise as a woman in a position of power. She argues, that a true characterization of Louise lies between Louise “the saint” and Louise “the *femme fatale*.”<sup>7</sup> Wright, however, concludes this brief discussion of Louise’s limitations by stating: “Her scope was forever limited by the fact that she was a woman and was hampered by a woman’s cares and preoccupations.”<sup>8</sup> She acknowledges these feminized traits, but offers little explanation of how Louise’s gender impacted her role as queen.

Wright’s flowery prose highlights Louise’s physical beauty and outward appearance as her primary tools to save Prussia from Napoleon. This major theme of Wright’s work is demonstrated in the prologue alone. Here, Wright describes the contents of Louise’s luggage, which had been packed for her journey to Tilsit, where she had been summoned to meet with Napoleon:

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<sup>6</sup> Constance Wright, *Beautiful Enemy: A Biography of Queen Louise of Prussia*. (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1969), 3.

<sup>7</sup> Wright, 3.

<sup>8</sup> Wright, 3.

In her luggage were packed her most sparkling jewels, her most becoming dress, an oriental turban, the latest fashion in female headgear. All of this was intended to dazzle the eyes of the conqueror and to induce him to mitigate the terms proposed for Prussia in a forthcoming peace treaty.<sup>9</sup>

Wright sees these items as indicative of Louise's "faith in the personal touch." A skill, she writes, that is "impressed upon most woman kind."<sup>10</sup> This is a broad claim, with very little evidence to contextualize or support it. Wright's biography leaves her readers wondering: what exactly is a womanly touch? Do most women possess it? Is a womanly touch different for queens? Do queens possess a unique womanly truth? Wright never truly engages in a critical analysis that might answer these questions.

Despite this descriptive approach, Wright's work is well researched. She relies on primary sources such as the *Hohenzollern Jahrbuch*, letters written by Louise and Frederick William III, the memoirs of Madame Vigée Le Brun, the writings of Madame de Stäel, and periodicals such as the *Deutsche Rundschau* and the *Historische Zeitschrift*. These sources, however, are used by Wright to better describe the life and times of the Prussian Queen. Wright does not use them to provide historical context or an analysis of Louise's role as queen.

Biographies such as Wright's were typical depictions of queens before gender history developed a new framework in the 1980s. This could be, as Joan W. Scott suggests, because gender history lacked a coherent theoretical framework for analysis. Wright's work on Louise, like many other queenship studies, falls into what Scott calls the "descriptive," or traditional approach. She defines this category as including analysis that "refers to the existence of phenomena or realities without interpreting, explaining, or attributing causality."<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, a

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<sup>9</sup> Wright, 3.

<sup>10</sup> Wright, 3.

<sup>11</sup> Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053. doi:10.2307/1864376:1056.

descriptive work may include gender as “a concept associated with the study of things related to women” but because these works only refer to gender’s existence, it “says nothing about why these relationships are constructed as they are, how they work, or how they change.”<sup>12</sup> Wright’s biography can be seen as an example of this descriptive approach. As previously described, Wright acknowledges that Louise’s role as queen was limited by “womanly cares and preoccupations” without explaining what these occupations were how they impacted her power as queen. Throughout *Beautiful Enemy*, she chronicles Louise’s life and acknowledges her role as queen, but does not explain the significance of this role, provide any historical context, or analysis of Prussian society. In other words, Wright is providing a study of a woman, but it lacks any analysis of how Louise’s relationships between the king, her family, or her people were constructed, how they worked, or how they changed. Therefore, Wright’s work cannot contribute to a new understanding of the role of gender in Prussian queenship or the Prussian monarchy more generally. It merely provides a description of Louise’s life.

Most earlier works, from *The History of Queen Elizabeth, and Her Great Favorite the Earl of Essex*, written in 1800 to Amy R. Kelly’s *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings*, written later in 1978, also follow the descriptive trend described by Scott. *The History of Queen Elizabeth*, for example, mainly focuses on detailing the conversations between Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex without analyzing Elizabeth’s position as a female ruler. *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings* is a biography, describing the life of Eleanor without analyzing her role as queen. It is not until the 1980s that this approach changed. Scott’s work in particular, is often credited with creating a shift in the historiography of gender studies in general, as well as in queenship studies. Scott’s work is instrumental in transitioning away from a descriptive

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<sup>12</sup> Scott, 1057.

assessment of gender to providing historians with a clear theoretical framework for gender analysis.

Scott provided this theoretical framework in her 1986 article “Gender: a Useful Category of Historical Analysis.” She based her framework on a two-part definition of gender. First, Scott defined gender as “a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes.” It is important to note Scott’s use of the phrase “social relationships.”<sup>13</sup> This is significant, as it necessitates a consideration of perceived differences between masculinity and femininity as constructed by a given society. In Scott’s approach, it is only meaningful to study masculinity and femininity in relation to each other, rather than in isolation, because their construction is interrelated. This is where the word “perceived,” becomes important as well. Scott explained that these are “perceived differences,” because these differences are dependent on the views of a given society. A society’s understanding of masculinity directly impacts the understanding of femininity and visa-versa. To study gender, according to Scott, is to study the ways in which societies construct and understand these differences, as well as how these differences change over time.

Scott’s second definition considered gender as a “primary way of signifying relationships of power.”<sup>14</sup> She explained, “concepts of power, though they may be built on gender, are not always literally about gender itself,” but rather that gender “becomes implicated in the conception and construction of power itself.”<sup>15</sup> These definitions demonstrate how structures or institutions of power are often designed with societal understandings of masculinity and femininity built into their structures. To further illustrate this definition, Scott used gender as a

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<sup>13</sup> Scott, 1067.

<sup>14</sup> Scott, 1069.

<sup>15</sup> Scott, 1069.

way to historically analyze politics. Specifically, she pointed to political theorist Edmund Burke's criticism of the French Revolution's women. In *Reflections on the Revolution* he compares *sans-culottes*, described as "the vilest of women," to the "soft femininity" of the queen, Marie-Antoinette.<sup>16</sup> This comparison highlights how gender can be used to signify political power. Burke was arguing that the radical revolutionaries were vile women, and therefore, the French Revolution was wrong. The more feminine queen was soft and maternal, living up to societal expectations of femininity, and therefore, the monarchy was correct. In this example, gender was being used to signify the importance of traditional power in France—the power of the monarchy. Burke, in a position of political power, was also presenting his own perception of femininity to society. This idea is further illustrated through Louis de Bonald's analogy between divorce and democracy. Scott pointed to Bonald as an example of the ways in which the "changes in gender relationships can be set off by views of the state."<sup>17</sup> The state, in this example, viewed women as subordinate to men, and criticized divorce for allowing women to "rebel against martial authority."<sup>18</sup> In doing so, the state is asserting a particular understanding of gender relationships for society.

To illustrate her second definition, Scott directly addressed queenship and power. She noted, "Gender has been employed literally or analogically in political theory to justify or criticize the reign of monarchs and to express the relationship between ruler and ruled."<sup>19</sup> According to Scott, this political analysis does not simply include an analysis of "women's suitability for political rule," but rather a larger analysis of kinship and kingship as well.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Scott, 1071.

<sup>17</sup> Scott, 1071.

<sup>18</sup> Scott, 1071.

<sup>19</sup> Scott, 1070.

<sup>20</sup> Scott, 1071.

Monarchies can help make Scott's connection between power and gender clear, for they often rely upon an understanding of both masculinity and femininity. As Scott explained, "discussions about male kings were equally preoccupied with masculinity and femininity."<sup>21</sup> In this quote, Scott addressed how constructions of both masculinity and femininity are important, even when analyzing a particular king or queen. Considering both of Scott's definitions, therefore, is critical while analyzing queenship as a complex role. Scott's work will be employed throughout this project, but chapter one, in particular, will follow Scott's framework. Chapter two will explore societal understandings of gender in Prussia in order to better understand Louise's gendered role as queen.

### **Early Modern Queenship and Definitions of Formal Power**

It is important to note that Scott's article was published in 1986, and therefore, the historiographic shift from a mainly descriptive to an analytic framework occurred fairly recently. Historians are still working to apply Scott's definitions of gender to a variety of subjects; however, Scott's definitions of gender and power have become major components of recent historical analysis of queenship in particular. Although there is not yet a consensus on exactly how and when queens hold power, an analysis of recent works can provide several helpful definitions that will later be applied to an analysis of Louise's power. This section considers the wide array of definitions of power and breaks scholarship down into two major categories: formal power and informal power. Throughout this work the phrase formal power will refer to

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<sup>21</sup> Scott, 1071.



power “recognized and legitimated by prevailing norms”<sup>22</sup> while informal power will refer to power held because of “the Queen’s own personality or ambition, her dynastic capital, her social skills, her piety, her cultural abilities—the happenstance of whether an arranged marriage grew into a personal bond or not.”<sup>23</sup> Although this project analyzes both types of power held by Louise, this historiography will conclude with an analysis of recent scholarship, which criticizes the division between formal and informal power. It argues that formal and informal power are often inseparable. The connection between the two types of power will become clearer in chapter two, which uses specific examples to describe how Louise’s formal and informal power is connected.

Some scholars, such as Clarissa Orr and Peter H. Wilson, distinguish between political power and cultural power as formal power and informal power. Both of these categories of power are addressed in their edited volume, *Queenship in Europe 1660-1815*. This work contributes to queenship studies by providing a collection of case studies that focus on the queen’s relationship to the courts, rather than describing the lives of individual queens. As the court was an institution of power, this collection highlights the ways in which queens navigated political power through their connection to their courts. It argues that the court is crucial to understanding the queen’s power in the early modern period. This historiography will first focus on formal power. Although sometimes referred to as political power, formal power will be used throughout the project to remain clear; however, the definition of formal power is less clear—even within this collection; definitions of political power vary greatly. For example, Wilson

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<sup>22</sup> Peter H. Wilson, “Women and Imperial Politics: the Württemberg consorts 1674-1757” in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*. ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 224.

<sup>23</sup> Clarissa Campbell Orr, “Introduction,” in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*. ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9-10.

argues that queens hold formal power only when their power is legitimized by society, whereas Michael Bregnsbo's article "Danish Absolutism and Queenship: Louisa, Caroline Matilda, and Juliana Maria" addresses a queen's formal power in the absence of a king, and Marc Serge Rivière's article, "'The Pallas of Stockholm': Louisa Ulrica of Prussia and the Swedish Crown," illustrates how marriage was utilized as a political tool on an international stage. All of these works unite in their analysis of queens and their relation to political power.

Wilson's contribution, "Women and Imperial Politics" can serve as a particularly important analysis of a queen's formal power within the court because of his definition of power. Specifically, Wilson examines the political role of Johanna Elisabeth and Maria Auguste within the Baroque Court of the Holy Roman Empire. Before describing their roles, however, Wilson clearly defines his understanding of power and authority. He states that authority is "the ability to shape events" whereas power, or specifically formal power, is power "recognized and legitimated by prevailing norms."<sup>24</sup> By distinguishing between power and authority, Wilson's work provides a valuable definition of power that is consistent with Scott's definition of gender and highlights the importance of a society's construction of gender and power. This definition will be directly applied to Louise in the next chapter to demonstrate the effects of the nineteenth century constructions of gender on Louise's power. To demonstrate the prevailing norms of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Wilson begins his argument with an analysis of the Baroque Court.

Wilson argues that in the Baroque court, the consort held three feminized roles: that of a supportive wife, that of a mother and dynastic reproducer, and that as an active participator in court activities. Louise too, will hold the role of wife and mother. To be successful at these roles,

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<sup>24</sup> Wilson, "Women and Imperial Politics," 224.

he argues, a consort needed skills that were acceptable feminine skills. He lists these “feminine skills” of the time as “dissimulation, façade, flexibility, accommodation, and politesse.”<sup>25</sup> In Wilson’s case study, these prevailing norms of gender limit the queen consort’s roles to wife, mother, or a participant in the court. Through detailing the lives of Johanna Elisabeth and Maria Auguste specifically, these limits become clear. Maria Auguste, for example, is successful in wielding political power as her son’s co-regent. She is within her acceptable role of queen, acting as a mother; however, this power is limited once an affair with a captain becomes public knowledge, and once her son begins to disagree with her. In both of these cases, her role as mother is scrutinized and her failure to utilize feminine skills of dissimulation and façade, limits her formal power.

Wilson’s understanding of formal power can also be applied to Bregnsbo’s and Rivière’s work. Bregnsbo argues that Juliana Maria only holds political power when acting as a wife, a socially acceptable and feminized role, on behalf of her husband while he is ill.<sup>26</sup> Rivière argues that Louisa Ulrica is politically successful in her role as wife because her marriage secured Prussia’s peaceful relationship with the Swiss, or in her role as mother to Gustav III.<sup>27</sup> The formal power of queens, in all these cases, is determined by prevailing norms—specifically the role of wife. This will also be the case for Louise. Her position as wife will be a reoccurring theme throughout chapters two and three; As will be explained in chapter two, her position as wife often legitimized her formal power just as it did for Juliana Maria and Louisa Ulrica;

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<sup>25</sup> Wilson, 228.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Bregnsbo, “Danish Absolutism and Queenship: Louisa, Caroline Matilda, and Juliana Maria,” in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*. ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 344-367.

<sup>27</sup> Marc Serge Rivière, “‘The Pallas of Stockholm’: Louisa Ulrica of Prussia and the Swedish Crown,” in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*. ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 322- 243.

however, chapter three will analyze the way in which this role is used by the French to criticize her actions, delegitimizing her power.

The role of queens as mothers, one of the feminized roles highlighted by Wilson and Rivière, is also an important theme in early modern queenship studies. Carlyon Hariss' *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe* can serve as a valuable example of the different ways in which motherhood impacted a queen's power. In this book, Hariss directly compares Henrietta Maria of England and Marie Antoinette of France in order to use the role of queen consort as a lens to better understand the political and social changes during the early modern period. Harris devotes a chapter to examining both queens' roles as mothers, a role understood as socially acceptable, valuable, and necessary for a successful dynasty. Harris explains that often motherhood "successfully legitimized past queens consort," but in the case of Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette, it acts as a delegitimizing force.<sup>28</sup> She argues that the political environment each queen was living in changed the prevailing norms of the time, and therefore the way their role as mother was perceived and understood by the public. To support this argument, Harris compares the public's perception of the queen's duties as consort to the queen's actual actions. This work provides an important framework for chapter two, which analyzes how the political environment created by the Napoleonic Wars changed acceptable feminine roles in Prussia, just as the political environment changed the prevailing norms for Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette.

Through an analysis of Henrietta Maria's marriage contract and letters, Harris explains that Henrietta Maria intended for her sons to be baptized and educated as Catholics, and that she had a loving bond with her children; however, during the English Civil War, the public sees her

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<sup>28</sup> Carolyn Harris, *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette*. (Queenship and Power. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 123.

as corrupting the crown prince as a foreign influence. Harris compares this to Marie Antoinette's experience as mother and queen consort, and argues it is similar to that of Henrietta Maria. According to Harris, Marie Antoinette's close relationship with her sons backfired, and her foreignness led the public to perceive her as a "corrupting influence that would impede the development of a character suitable for a virtuous king of France."<sup>29</sup> In both cases, the public used the Queens' positions as foreigners to criticize their queenly duty to be a mother. The public denounced both queens as bad mothers and illegitimate queens. This study serves as an example for analyzing the importance of the queen's role as mother, as well as the importance of the public's perception of the queen in determining her political power. Furthermore, it shows the complexity of motherhood—it can serve as both a legitimizing and delegitimizing force in determining a queen's political power. In Louise's case, unlike Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette, motherhood will serve as a legitimizing force.

Harris' work can also point to the importance of examining the queen consort's role within Scott's theoretical framework. Harris focuses on the public's perception of the queen as a head of the household, as a wife to the sovereign, and as a mother in order to illustrate how the role was impacted by perceived differences between the sexes. In other words, she illustrates how these roles were impacted by societal expectations of gender roles. In doing this, Harris considers the societal expectations of both kings and queens to support her arguments. The examination of the political role of the queen consort, or rather how political events influenced the public's perception of the queen, is one of Harris' main goals. From analyzing this work, it becomes clear that an understanding of a society's political context is crucial in understanding a queen's formal power, just as it will be for Louise.

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<sup>29</sup> Harris, *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 123.

### **Early Modern Queenship and Definitions of Informal Power**

Although Wilson's definition of power is helpful in analyzing works dealing with formal or political power, scholarship focusing on cultural power further complicates by providing new and varied definitions power. Some works, such as the volume *Queenship in Europe*, refer to cultural power as informal power—something distinct from political or formal power. This project will consistently use informal power when referring to this type of power for the purpose of clarity.

In her introduction to *Queenship in Europe*, Orr defines informal power as power which is dependent on variables such as “the Queen's own personality or ambition, her dynastic capital, her social skills, her piety, her cultural abilities—the happenstance of whether an arranged marriage grew into a personal bond or not.”<sup>30</sup> The contributions in this volume reveal a very different definition of power than Wilson's work, which relies upon prevailing norms. Informal power often relies upon unique opportunities or abnormal situations. This is an important contribution, as informal power provides a framework for understanding additional types of power. For example, in his article “The hidden Queen: Elisabeth Christine of Prussia and Hohenzollern queenship in the eighteenth century,” Thomas Biskup provides an example of such an opportunity. Elisabeth Christine, the wife of Frederick II of Prussia, gained power because her husband went out of his way to avoid his Berlin Court. Biskup explains that in his absence, Elisabeth Christine's role in the court became exceedingly important, as she “not only received royal princes, ministers, generals, foreign ambassadors, and nobility, she also presided over birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, baptisms, thanksgiving services in war, and all other Court

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<sup>30</sup> Orr, “Introduction,” 9-10.

events taking place in the capital.”<sup>31</sup> According to Biskup, Frederick’s retreat from Berlin to Potsdam created a division of labor between the king and the queen: Elisabeth Christine performed courtly duties in Berlin, and Frederick received guests in Potsdam. The court in Berlin, however, was an important center of politics and this division of labor forced Frederick to rely upon his wife. Frederick’s preference for life in Potsdam created a unique opportunity where he was forced to rely on Elisabeth Christine’s court. This reliance is where Elisabeth Christine’s informal power lies. Biskup’s work exemplifies how variables, such as the king’s personality, actions or even absence could create a situation in which the queen gained power.

Other scholars, such as Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, Adam Morton, and Cassandra Auble blur the lines between informal and formal power—suggesting that informal power is linked, and even inseparable, to formal power. For example, the most recent work in this historiography of queenship, *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics*, a collection edited by Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly and Adam Morton, challenges the division of formal power and informal power. Its overall goal is to examine the role of queen consort in early modern politics through an analysis of their domestic and international influence. To do so, it offers a new vocabulary for defining power, which is very different from the previous scholarship. In his introduction, Morton notes that in earlier scholarship, there was a clear separation between informal and formal power, with queens either holding “high” political power, referred to as formal power in this project, or cultural power, referred to as informal power in this project. He notes that in this collection, the distinction between political power and cultural influence is blurred, as the works “argue that culture could be an agent of politics in a court context, with art,

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas Biskup, “The Hidden Queen: Elisabeth Christine of Prussia and Hohenzollern Queenship in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 307.

theatre, and literature often used as a language through which politics was conducted...<sup>32</sup> The use of the term “agent,” is significant. As Morton explains, the collection aims to provide a new framework by categorizing a queen’s position in politics and culture. Queens, according to this framework, can fall into one of three categories: an agent, an instrument, or a catalyst. Focusing on the category of agent first, Morton explains that a queen could “function as an agent of cultural/political influence, change or conflict who actively facilitated those exchanges.”<sup>33</sup> In other words, a queen can be considered an agent of change when they created a political or cultural change directly. This is very different from the role as “an instrument who was manipulated by others.”<sup>34</sup> Queens who were instruments did not directly facilitate change, but rather were used by others to accomplish a particular goal. Finally, according to this framework, a queen serving as a catalyst “allowed exchanges to happen around her.”<sup>35</sup> This role, again, indirectly facilitates change; however, unlike the role of an instrument, catalysts were not being used by others, but instead performed an action that allowed a particular event to occur.

Orr’s contribution to the volume, “Marriage in a global context,” can serve as an example of the role of catalyst. In this work, she examines the ways in which Charlotte acquired books and engaged in cultural exchanges. She argues that books were just “as central to their lives as the husbands they married and the children they bore.”<sup>36</sup> According to Orr, Charlotte’s experience can demonstrate a type of cultural transfer: in order to maintain her connection with

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<sup>32</sup> Adam Morton, “Introduction: Politics, culture and queens consort” in *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, C. 1500-1800*. ed. Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 1.

<sup>33</sup> Morton, “Introduction,” 3.

<sup>34</sup> Morton, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Morton, 3.

<sup>36</sup> Clarissa Campbell Orr, “Marriage in a global context: Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland,” in *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, C. 1500-1800*. ed. Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 127.



French and German culture, Charlotte engaged in a cultural transfer of Enlightenment ideas through the Republic of Letters. This transfer led her to “act as a confidante to her husband,”<sup>37</sup> just as Louise will become a confidant to Frederick William. Charlotte’s role here is that of the catalyst, as she facilitates the transfer of Enlightenment ideas. Through her active engagement in reading and the Republic of Letters, her role supported the spread of Enlightenment ideas between the Continent and Great Britain. This example will provide the framework for part of chapter two, which will analyze the ways in which Louise can be viewed as a catalyst.

In considering the role of the queen as an agent, instrument, or catalyst, this collection offers a new framework for assessing the power held by a queen consort. This framework is broader than the framework for formal power, as it addresses ways in which culture can affect politics rather than separating the two. Charlotte, in this example, is facilitating the movement of political, as well as scientific and creative ideas. It is important to note that this means she holds both Wilson’s definition of power, for Charlotte works within prevailing norms, and Orr’s previous definition of informal power, for her personal love of books created a situation which allowed her to reach a large audience, and broaden the spread of these ideas. Her power, however, operated within the realm of accepted activities for elite women: reading books. Categorizing the role of the queen as that of an agent, instrument, or catalyst in this way supports an analysis of both formal and informal power without separating the two. The volume *Queens Consort* is a significant collaborative contribution to queenship studies because it provides a framework for assessing both types of power. Although chapter two will address aspects of both formal and informal power, it will ultimately argue that Louise’s formal and informal power is inseparable.

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<sup>37</sup> Morton, 9.

## Early Modern Queen Regents and Representation

Although many of the works described in this historiography examine the lives of various types of queens—queen regents, queen consorts, and dowager queens—queen regents receive the most attention in both popular literature and scholarship. Early modern queen regents such as Elizabeth I of Britain, Maria Theresa of Austria, and Catherine II of Russia receive much attention. Generally, the literature on these queens mirrors the larger historiographic trends of queenship so it is not necessary to provide an analysis of each; however, a consideration of recent works on each of these queens reveals an important trend: much of recent scholarship on early modern queens focuses on the theme of representation.

In *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*, for example, Carole Levine focuses on the self-representation of Elizabeth I. Published in 2013, Levine analyzes connections between gender, politics, and culture to achieve a greater understanding how Elizabeth represented herself, and how others perceived Elizabeth. Levine states that she is mainly concerned with “how gender construction, role expectations, and beliefs about sexuality influenced both Elizabeth's self-presentation and other's perception of her.”<sup>38</sup> This work is consistent with Scott's, especially because of its consideration of gender construction and role expectations. In examining these representations, Levine highlights the role of queenly representation in her analysis of succession, religion, courtships, sexuality, legitimacy, and even in the works of Shakespeare. Although she highlights the connections between each of these topics and gender, she is careful to note, “The way these problems manifested themselves in Elizabeth's reign had to do with her sex, but the problems themselves

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<sup>38</sup> Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*. Second ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 3.

were more universal.”<sup>39</sup> It seems that although every early modern ruler faced challenges, Elizabeth’s gender changed the way these problems were perceived, and furthermore, how she represented herself in the face of challenge. Louise also faced challenges due to her gender and representation; however, Louise will face a modern complication—the media.

The role of material culture and representation is highlighted in another recent collaborative work, *The Emblematic Queen: Extra Literary Representations of Early Modern Queenship* edited by Debra Barrett-Graves. Focusing on a variable of informal power, this collection of essays highlights the importance of emblematics and extra-literary emblematics, which include the study “jewelry, miniature portraits, carvings, placards, masques, funerary monuments, and *imprese*.”<sup>40</sup> In her introduction, Barrett-Graves offers a definition of *imprese*, or rather emblems, as “a symbolic picture with accompanying text,” and defines extra-literary emblematics as “non-literary manifestations of the emblem mode.”<sup>41</sup> She argues that through studying material culture historians can better “contribute to an understanding of how queens negotiated the development and representation of their identities in arenas men typically exercised authority over—politics, religion, and culture—through their control, or lack thereof, of the various media available.”<sup>42</sup> In this argument, queens both inform material culture trends and create unique personas. Cassandra Auble’s contribution to this volume, “Bejeweled Majesty,” illustrates how the use of jewels helped Elizabeth cultivate a persona of youth and vitality, even as she aged, and underscored central aspect of courtly gift giving. Auble also includes a discussion of how the political role of king and queen was constructed through

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<sup>39</sup> Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King*, 9.

<sup>40</sup> Debra Barrett-Graves, “Extra-Literary Emblematics” in *The Emblematic Queen: Extra-Literary Representations of Early Modern Queenship*. ed. Debra Barrett-Graves (First ed. Queenship and Power. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1.

<sup>41</sup> Barrett-Graves, “Extra-Literary Emblematics” 3.

<sup>42</sup> Barrett-Graves, 1.

societal understandings of masculinity and femininity.<sup>43</sup> Material culture and gender constructions were also a challenge for Louise. Her feminized versions of military uniforms will be noticed by the French, and used to insinuate she was a warmonger. This will be analyzed in chapter three. Levin's work provides an important framework for this analysis, as it contributes to recent works that address Elizabeth and representation, but adds a consideration of material culture.

According to recent scholarship, representation was also a concern of Maria Theresa. Rebecca Gates demonstrates this in her examination of representation during the peasant unrest in Transdanubian Hungary from 1765-1767. Gates argues that the peasants "pictured Maria Theresa as an impassioned social reformer," and knowing this, "Maria Theresa and her advisors made a tentative, shortlived effort to woo peasant affections and to mold and exploit popular opinion."<sup>44</sup> In maintaining this image with the peasants of Transdanubian Hungary, the court was able to coax acceptance of the *Urbarium*, a document that linked landlords and their tenants and allowed the central government to collect a tax on urbarial land. This argument is significant, as it provides an example in which the court takes part in crafting a representation of the queen.

Other historians, such as Michael E. Yonan, have also addressed the role of representation during Maria Theresa's rule. Specifically, Yonan focuses on "the arrangement and occupation of Schönbrunn's imperial suite, the apartments that Maria Theresa and Francis I shared during their marriage and that she occupied alone after his death in 1765" in order to

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<sup>43</sup> Cassandra Auble, "Bejeweled Majesty: Queen Elizabeth I, Precious Stones and Statecraft," in *The Emblematic Queen: Extra-Literary Representations of Early Modern Queenship*. ed. Debra Barrett-Graves (First ed. Queenship and Power. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 34-52.

<sup>44</sup> Rebecca Gates "Court and Cottage: The Public Image of Maria Theresa's Government during the Transdanubian Unrest, 1765–1767." *Austrian History Yearbook* 21 (1985) doi:10.1017/S0067237800002162: 3, 20.

reassess Maria Theresa's artistic and architectural choices.<sup>45</sup> To do this, Yonan considers how gender impacted these choices. He explains that Maria Theresa's rooms in Schönbrunn were positioned further away from public spaces than her husband's. In doing this they were considered less public and therefore, more modest and feminine. Yonan writes "By occupying a secondary space, with all of its concomitant implications, Maria Theresa reenacted a scenario wherein power seemed to be in the hands of a male ruler while it actually remained in her control."<sup>46</sup> He ultimately argues, "Her rooms exemplify how this ruler could empower herself by designing spaces that allowed her multiple options within a court society within transition."<sup>47</sup> Yonan also emphasizes the influence of the court in Schönbrunn, explaining that Maria Theresa took the court, which moved to Schönbrunn from April to October, into consideration when renovating the palace. According to Yonan, she "redefined her environment to tailor its fit to changing political and personal needs."<sup>48</sup> Although representations of Louise through architecture will not be analyzed as a part of this project, Yonan's work is helpful for understanding the dynamics between the king and queen as well as the role of the court in assisting the power of the queen.

Catherine II also used art and architecture to influence representation. For example, in *The Empress of Art*, Susan Jaques argues Catherine was a passionate art collector and her interest in art and architecture led to a cultural renaissance in Russia. Perhaps even more importantly, Jaques argues that Catherine used art as a tool for achieving political goals. Although this occurs in a variety of ways, Jaques argues that portraits helped to shape Catherine's public image. She

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<sup>45</sup> Michael E. Yonan, "Modesty and Monarchy: Rethinking Empress Maria Theresa at Schönbrunn." *Austrian History Yearbook* 35 (2004): 25. doi:10.1017/S0067237800020932: 26.

<sup>46</sup> Yonan, "Modesty and Monarchy", 38.

<sup>47</sup> Yonan, 47.

<sup>48</sup> Yonan, 29.

writes “Catherine managed her image carefully, institution strict quality control,” and notes several occasions where Catherine reviewed her own portraits.<sup>49</sup> She notes that Vigilius Eriksen, who painted approximately thirty portraits of the Empress, was particularly instrumental in shaping representations of Catherine. She even goes so far as to call his *Portrait of Catherine in Mourning* “an effective propaganda tool,” in displaying Catherine’s respect for her predecessor, Empress Elizabeth.<sup>50</sup> The portrait depicts Catherine in an all black mourning dress against a sullen background. This type of dress was socially recognized as a symbol of respect and mourning, and therefore displayed her respect for the Romanov dynasty. According to Jaques, Catherine used artistic representations to reflect her “gravity and determination,” her “passion for history and antiquity,” and even “to advertise her devotion to Russian tradition and the Orthodox Church.”<sup>51</sup> She notes that Catherine favored Eriksen’s *Portrait of the Empress on Her Horse Brilliant* in particular. The portrait, which depicts Catherine on her horse in “the uniform of the elite Preobrazhensky regiment,” inspired several copies at Catherine’s orders.<sup>52</sup> Jaques directly connects this portrait to Catherine’s gender writing, “Like her predecessor Elizabeth, Catherine possessed both traditional male and female qualities.”<sup>53</sup> It seems Catherine, meticulous in controlling her public image, was not opposed to masculine representations. In fact, she seemed to encourage them.

Catherine’s masculine qualities, including her regard for the military, were also reflected in her fashion. Jaques argues “From dazzling jewelry and gold and silver embroidered gowns to silk uniform dresses that matched those of her regiments, Catherine used fashion to further her

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<sup>49</sup> Susan Jaques, *The Empress of Art: Catherine the Great and the Transformation of Russia*. (First Pegasus Books Cloth ed. New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2016), 17.

<sup>50</sup> Jaques, *The Empress of Art*, 14.

<sup>51</sup> Jaques, 15-17.

<sup>52</sup> Jaques, 15.

<sup>53</sup> Jaques, 15.

ambitions and strengthen alliances in the same way she used her art collecting and service commissions.”<sup>54</sup> To support this Jaques points to Catherine’s relationship with her Guard regiments. According to Jaques, “Catherine never forgot that the Guard regiments had helped bring her to power,” and therefore often wore dresses “made to complement the uniform of each regiment.”<sup>55</sup> These dresses, however, were not totally masculine. Jaques notes that they combined French fashion with Russian national costume. Considering this, Catherine used fashion to pronounce her loyalty to a particular regiment while simultaneously representing Russia as a part of Western elite society and her position as a female Empress. As will be discussed in chapter three, Louise also encouraged representations of herself in military uniforms. These uniforms reflected her interest in particular regiments, one of which will be named her own. Her interest in military affairs will spark controversy, as it disrupts acceptable gender roles in nineteenth century Prussia.

### **The Nineteenth Century: an Era of Adaptation**

Although scholarship focusing on defining the role of early modern queens is growing, the roles of their modern counterparts remain neglected. Even when broadening the scope to include monarchy studies in general, it seems that modern monarchies are also less frequently researched in English than early modern monarchies. German scholarship is a bit more focused on the modern era. *Hanover—Coburg-Gotha—Windsor* edited by Frank-Lothar Kroll and Martin Munke, for example, focuses on the modern monarchy. Kroll’s chapter “Monarchische Modernisierung” in particular focuses on kingship and elite adaptation during the 19th and early

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<sup>54</sup> Jaques, 103.

<sup>55</sup> Jaques, 105.

20th century in Europe; however, a brief review the nineteenth century historiography reveals the dearth lack of modern queenship or monarchy studies is tied to the key trends of scholarship on the nineteenth century.<sup>56</sup>

As explained by historians such as Richard Price and Frank Lorenz Müller, early works on the nineteenth century focused on the theme of change—political, technological, social, and cultural. It is, after all, the century that gave birth to inventions such as steam powered engines, the light bulb, and early machine guns, all of which dramatically changed the lives of Europeans. This theme of change is only intensified when considering Eric Hobsbawm’s periodization of the long nineteenth century from 1789-1914, stretching from the beginning of the French Revolution to the beginning of World War I. There is no debating that the nineteenth century was a century of great change; however, recent scholarship such as Price and Müller’s, have challenged change as the central theme of the nineteenth century. These recent works have created a shift in the historiography from a focus on change to a focus on continuity and adaptation.

In his 1996 article Price problematized the traditional historiography of the nineteenth century. In doing so, Price first turned to works by Kitson Clark and Harold Perkin, both of which used the traditional framework of change, as examples. He noted that both of these works used change as a way to explain a progression from the past to the future. Price argued that this narrative of progression is problematic because “virtually all the criteria that are deployed to demonstrate that status may be replicated in the previous century.”<sup>57</sup> In other words, the origins of many of these changes do not exclusively belong to the nineteenth century, but rather can be

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<sup>56</sup> Frank-Lothar Kroll & Martin Munke, eds., *Hannover - Coburg-Gotha - Windsor: Probleme Und Perspektiven Einer Vergleichenden Deutsch-Britischen Dynastiegeschichte Vom 18. Bis in Das 20. Jahrhundert*. Prinz-Albert-Studien, Band 32. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2015.

<sup>57</sup> Richard Price, "Historiography, Narrative, and the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of British Studies* 35, no. 2 (1996): 226.



traced to the eighteenth century or earlier. Continuing to trace historiographic trends, he identified the next theme as continuity. To support this he cited works by Perry Anderson and J. C. D. Clark. He argued that these works were successful in “directing attention to the enormous resilience that overtly traditional structures of power possess” during the nineteenth century in Britain.<sup>58</sup> The survival of these structures can serve as proof that the nineteenth century was more complex than the traditional framework of change and modernization suggests. These traditional power structures do not change but adapt and continue on.

A recent collection *Sons and Heirs*, edited by Frank Lorenz Müller and Heidi Mehrkens, echoes Price’s analysis of nineteenth century historiography. In his introduction to the collection, Müller reiterates the emphasis placed on change in the early historiography of the nineteenth century. Like Price, he argues that this traditional narrative is problematic; however, Müller’s reasoning is different than that of Price. Müller is primarily concerned with the traditional narrative, as it “has...served to obscure what may appear to be a remarkable and counter-intuitive survival and persistence phenomenon: European Monarchy.”<sup>59</sup> He calls the nineteenth century not an age of change but “an age of monarchy.” He stresses that the changes of the nineteenth century did not destroy monarchies, but rather tested “monarchical durability.”<sup>60</sup> This collection, therefore, is a significant contribution to the historiographical shift as it challenges the traditional narrative of nineteenth-century change by pointing to a specific traditional institution of power that prevailed across time and major transformations.

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<sup>58</sup> Price, "Historiography, Narrative, and the Nineteenth Century," 228.

<sup>59</sup> Frank Lorenz Müller “Stabilizing a ‘Great Historic System’ in the Nineteenth Century? Royal Heirs and Succession in the Age of Monarchy,” in *Sons and Heirs: Succession and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Frank Lorenz Müller and Heidi Mehrkens (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 2.

<sup>60</sup> Müller, “Stabilizing a ‘Great Historic System’ in the Nineteenth Century?,” 2.

The collection is also a significant contribution to the historiography of monarchies as it provides specific case studies that illustrate how nineteenth century monarchies adapted to change in order to survive. For example, Daniel Schönplflug illustrates how royal Hohenzollern marriage ceremonies changed over the course of the nineteenth century in order to relay certain messages to the public. Generally, Schönplflug argues that the changes of the nineteenth century motivated monarchies to “find new forms of legitimacy, and look for ways of maintaining support in a rapidly changing society” and insists that “dynastic culture did not lose its importance.”<sup>61</sup> Applying this argument to marriage ceremonies, Schönplflug argues that they became increasingly private in order to relay a sense of personal and emotional bond between the king and queen to the public. In creating ceremonies that seemed to be about love rather than politics, Schönplflug argues that marriages “attracted, enthralled and charmed mass audiences,” and created “a collective bond between their families, courts, countries of origin and peoples.”<sup>62</sup> He is careful to note that in purposefully cultivating a private image, the Hohenzollerns’ love was not in reality, the sole purpose of marriage. Rather, they were acting politically, and playing the role of a loving couple for a large public audience. They were, in a sense, rebranding the tradition in order to appeal to their new nineteenth-century subjects.

Schönplflug looks at Louise’s marriage to Fredrick William as his first example. He argues that Louise and Frederick William’s courtship before their marriage was exceptional in the Hohenzollern dynasty, and marked “the beginning of a new emotional culture in which traditional forms of marriage arrangement went along with new expressions of inner life.”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Müller, 2.

<sup>62</sup> Daniel Schönplflug “Heirs Before the Altar: Hohenzollern Marriages in a Bourgeoisie Age,” in *Sons and Heirs: Succession and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Frank Lorenz Müller and Heidi Mehrkens (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 68.

<sup>63</sup> Schönplflug, “Heirs Before the Altar,” 56.

Schönpflug argues that public displays of love between Louise and Frederick William reassured the public of the dynasty's strength; He therefore argues that the public's perception of the royal couple's love and affection meant, "princely weddings could maintain a high level of political meaning."<sup>64</sup> The use of public ceremonies such as marriage to strengthen the public's view of the dynastic family is just one example of the many ways in which monarchies adapted to the changing nineteenth century. This most recent historiographic trend, that of the nineteenth century as a century of adaptation, will become critical in analyzing Louise's power and explored in more detail in the following chapters.

### **The Nineteenth-Century Queen: Victoria**

Although *Sons and Heirs* provides a significant contribution to scholarship on nineteenth century monarchies, it is important to note that the collection's primary focus is on kings and their sons, and not on queens or their daughters. Although there is less work on modern queenship, it would be incorrect to argue that analyses of modern queens are nonexistent. As in the early modern period, it seems the most work on nineteenth century queenship revolves around a queen regent, Queen Victoria. The historiography of Victoria, however, leaves much to be desired. Although the British queen is frequently a topic of popular histories, biographies, feature films and television series, she is less often the subject of academic work. Recently, she has been the subject of fictional works such as Daisy Goodwin's *Victoria: the Novel*, the *New York Times* best seller that inspired PBS' recent Masterpiece series *Victoria*. Popular histories

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<sup>64</sup> Schönpflug, "Heirs Before the Altar," 60.

such as Julia Baird's *Victoria: The Queen* or Gillian Gill's *We Two* have also achieved the status of best-sellers, but do not necessarily provide analysis on Victoria's role as queen or analyze the extent of her power. They may be well researched, but Baird aims to search "through the mass of legend and hyperbole to reach the real Victoria," while Gill focuses on Victoria's marriage to Prince Albert.<sup>65</sup> In both cases, the authors are focused on providing biographic information describing Victoria as an individual.

Recent academic works on Victoria, however, have mirrored the historiographic trend of early modern queenship, turning their focus to the role of Victoria as queen. Works such as Susan Kingsley Kent's *Queen Victoria: Gender and Empire* offer some insight into Victoria's role as queen. Kent, for example, explores the ways Victoria's gender and her empire influenced her position of power. She argues that Victoria's role was full of contradictions as "The royal family served as the most viable symbol of domesticity, while at the same time Victoria's very position as queen defied the ideology of separate spheres upon which domesticity rested."<sup>66</sup> In exploring this contradiction, Kent argues that Victoria reinforced the domestic role of women in Britain while simultaneously being directly involved in the growth and management of the British Empire—the political sphere. Kent devotes a chapter to discussing Victoria's role as queen, wife, and mother. She begins by addressing the historical context of nineteenth-century Britain, a tumultuous time full of political, social, and economic change. She also considers societal perceptions of gender, as Scott's framework suggests, and describing the construction of separate spheres for each gender. She then explains how this ideology impacted the monarchy as an institution. According to Kent, during the nineteenth century "Monarchs still played an

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<sup>65</sup> Julia Baird, *Victoria the Queen: An Intimate Biography of the Woman Who Ruled an Empire*. First ed. (New York: Random House, 2016.)

<sup>66</sup> Susan Kingsley Kent, *Queen Victoria: Gender and Empire*. (The World in a Life. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1.

important role in governance” but had been limited significantly by the role of Parliament. Kent refers to this as “the feminization of the monarchy.”<sup>67</sup> She argues that Victoria’s gender symbolically solidified the declining power of the monarchy in the nineteenth century as “a female monarch now embodied the loss of power relative to parliament that had been taking place for almost fifty years.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, in this argument, perceptions of gender influenced the monarchy’s adaptation to the changes of the nineteenth century.

Also focusing on the theme of adaptation, John Plunkett contributes to the historiographic trend of queenship and representation through an exploration of Victoria’s complex presence in the media. Although it is clear that representation was a concern of early modern queens regent such as Elizabeth I, Maria Theresa, and Catherine II, Plunkett argues that the nineteenth century brought about new challenges that queens need to adapt to. In his book, *Queen Victoria: First Media Monarch* and his article “Of Hype and Type” Plunkett claims that the media was crucial in shaping representations and perceptions of Victoria and the monarchy as a whole. Plunkett’s work is crucial for understanding Louise’s representation in the media, which will be discussed in chapter three. Like representations of Victoria, the media will also play a large role in shaping representations of Louise.<sup>69</sup>

In his article on the same topic Plunkett argues “the modernity of Victoria’s figure engendered an extraordinary contemporary discourse upon the media making of the monarchy.”<sup>70</sup> This discourse, according to Plunkett, caused the monarchy to become exceedingly aware of its own representation. Considering both the contemporary discourse and the

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<sup>67</sup> Kent, *Queen Victoria*, 40.

<sup>68</sup> Kent, 40.

<sup>69</sup> John Plunkett, *Queen Victoria: First Media Monarch*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); John Plunkett, "Of Hype and Type: The Media Making of Queen Victoria 1837-1845." *Critical Survey* 13, no. 2 (2001). doi:10.3167/001115701782483471.

<sup>70</sup> Plunkett, "Of Hype and Type," 8.

monarchy's self-awareness, Plunkett identifies several challenges: notably, the risk of Victoria becoming "a wholly fabricated figure," and the "contradictory pressures" of being simultaneously a celebrity media figure and personal and authentic.<sup>71</sup> Central to Plunkett's argument is the concept of modernity. He notes that a new level of media representation created a specifically nineteenth-century media phenomenon. He argues, "Queen Victoria was one of the most notable beneficiaries of the burgeoning print and graphic culture of the 1830s and 1840s."<sup>72</sup> This graphic culture included the increased trade of individual prints, illustrated periodicals, lithographs, and wood and steel engravings. He attributes this argument to not just increase in trade but also to the "changes in graphic reproduction...the rage for cheap literature, the battle over the unstamped press, and the subsequent reduction in Stamp Duty in 1836."<sup>73</sup> As will be discussed in chapter three, the Napoleonic Wars also spurred an increase in media production in Prussia.<sup>74</sup> Plunkett also notes that Victoria's celebrity status was "part of a much larger bloc of populist discourse that was intent on celebrating the changing character of the monarchy," which is consistent with nineteenth century historiography.<sup>75</sup> He is arguing that the monarchy has to adapt to this change in media production. He argues that these nineteenth century changes created an environment in which Victoria became a popular subject of print media and furthermore, that these changes set the precedent for the treatment of the British monarchy in the media today.<sup>76</sup> The media will also set the precedent for representations of Louise after her death, and even representations of her today.

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<sup>71</sup> Plunkett, 9,13.

<sup>72</sup> Plunkett, 8.

<sup>73</sup> Plunkett, 8.

<sup>74</sup> Karen Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon: History, Culture and Memory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 87.

<sup>75</sup> Plunkett, "Of Hype and Type," 12.

<sup>76</sup> Plunkett, 8, 23.

Although not central to Plunkett's argument, he does include a brief explanation of the impact of Victoria's gender. He argues, "Victoria's femininity is explicitly linked to the extent to which she is signified upon."<sup>77</sup> He explains this through an analysis of her role as mother. During the early years of her reign, she was neither married nor had children; therefore, she did not fill the gendered role of wife or mother. Both of these roles would have made her a member of a family, limiting the signification of Victoria as an individual actor. Plunkett argues that after becoming a wife and mother, Victoria "never again enjoyed the same frisson of prominence as she did in the period between her accession and her marriage."<sup>78</sup> This is significant, as it points to the impact of gendered roles on a queen regent's representation during the nineteenth century. Victoria, although a sovereign ruler, was still expected to uphold the womanly roles prescribed by societal norms. Plunkett is arguing that her gendered roles of wife and mother took precedence, even though she was queen—they lessened her formal power. As will be discussed in chapters two and three, Louise's role as wife and mother also impacts her power, but instead of limiting it, it was often used as a justification for her involvement in a non-traditional role. Plunkett's work on Victoria will provide the framework for the central argument of chapter three, which argues Louise's role as queen was also shaped by the media.

### ***Sattelzeit der Moderne: an Era of Transition***

Even a brief historiography of queenship reveals that scholarship on early modern queenship and modern queenship differs greatly. Although historians can certainly use theoretical tools, such as Scott's definitions of gender or Wilson's definition of political power, to analyze both early modern and modern queens, there is no doubt that Elizabeth I faced

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<sup>77</sup> Plunkett 15.

<sup>78</sup> Plunkett, 15.

different challenges than Victoria; A comparison of Elizabeth and Victoria, however, highlights two archetypical queens of their respected eras. The differences between early modern and modern queenship become less clear when considering Louise of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. It is impossible to neatly place the Prussian Queen in a particular period. Living from 1776-1810, Louise's life only briefly overlaps with Hobsbawm's "Long Nineteenth Century" but also seems too late to be considered part of the early modern era. Even if one were to ignore these dates, it would be difficult to periodize Louise's role as queen based solely on her similarities to other queens. Considering this, this project argues that Louise is a transitional queen, belonging to what is known in German historiography as the *Sattelzeit* period.

In the 1970s German historian Reinhart Koselleck conceptualized a new periodization to account for the transition from the early modern to the modern period. He called it the *Sattelzeit der Moderne*, which translates to the "Saddle Time of the Modern Age," but is better understood as a bridge or era of transition. Koselleck characterized the period this way in order to achieve a better understanding of the Enlightenment. Koselleck believed that this new modern period served as a transitional period as it was both *a part of* and *a product of* the Enlightenment.

Considering this transitional period from a theoretical perspective, this work aims to develop a better understanding of how the role of queen transitioned between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe. Focusing on Queen Louise of Prussia as a case study. To do so, it will explore the role of queenship during a period of war and great change. This will include an assessment of Louise's power, her role as a mother and wife, and how the media represented the Prussian Queen. An analysis of these factors will situate Louise within a transitional period, looking at her role within the larger context of queenship studies. This comparative approach differs from recent scholarship on Louise, which looks at her role as queen in Prussian isolation.



In doing so, this work will contribute to the growing field of queenship studies and provide a better understanding of how periodization can impact analysis of gender and power.

## Chapter 2

### **“Meddling in politics:” An Assessment of Louise’s Power as Queen**

In 1807, Karl August von Hardenberg was forcibly removed from his position as Prussian Foreign Minister by the Treaty of Tilsit. Queen Louise of Prussia was crushed by the departure of her favored cabinet member. In 1810 she wrote to him, eager to help him regain his position: “I would do anything in the world to thwart plans that could remove you from us.”<sup>79</sup> This offer leads one to wonder exactly how a relationship between a queen and a cabinet member developed, as well as the extent to which Louise could actually aid Hardenberg’s career. As this chapter will reveal, the Queen’s correspondence with Hardenberg throughout the Napoleonic Wars illustrates Louise’s power as queen consort.

This chapter aims to determine the extent and nature of this power. To do so, it will begin with a brief biography of Louise’s life. It will then describe gender constructions in Prussia during the anti-Napoleonic Wars. These constructions will be crucial for understanding the parameters and expectations of Louise’s role as queen consort and will be directly applied to an analysis of her power. The following two sections will focus on determining the extent and nature of Louise’s formal power and then her informal power. An analysis of both these types of power in isolation, however, is difficult. This chapter will argue that Louise’s formal and informal power was inseparable. Finally, this power will be directly compared to other early modern queens.

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<sup>79</sup> Luise, Queen Consort of Frederick William III, King of Prussia. *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, ed. Malve Rothkirch Gräfin. (München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1985), 532.

An assessment of this queenly power reveals several similarities between Louise and early modern queens. Like many early modern queens, Louise was limited by her gender and by societal expectations for women—regardless of their position as a member of the royal family—to fulfill their domestic duties as wives and mothers. These limitations were also placed on early modern queens such as Johanna Elisabeth and Maria Auguste of Württemberg, and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen Consort of England; however, this chapter explains the ways in which Louise capitalized upon her gendered role in order to justify her involvement. Outstanding circumstances such as the Napoleonic Wars and her close relationship with her husband, Frederick William III, placed Louise in a position in which these gender roles accounted for her non-traditional involvement in political and military affairs. Although similar to early modern queens in many ways, the circumstances created by the war as well as Louise's growing presence in the Prussian media as a symbol of the monarchy set her apart from queens of the early modern era. Both these similarities and differences make Louise a *Sattelzeit* queen.

### **Louise: the Beloved Prussian Queen**

Louise Auguste Wilhelmine Amalie was born on March 10, 1776 in Hanover. Although Louise would be praised for her maternal qualities in her adult life, her own mother did not raise her. Louise only knew her mother, Princess Frederica Caroline Louise of Hesse Darmstadt, for the first five years of her life; however, it is fair to say that she enjoyed a relatively happy childhood. In her mother's absence, she developed close bonds with her father, the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, her grandmother, and her siblings. Until her marriage to Frederick William III at the age of seventeen, Louise lived with her family in Darmstadt where she was

educated and socialized. It is often noted that even as queen, she spoke German with a heavy provincial accent, something that later became an endearing quality.<sup>80</sup>

Her courtship with Frederick William began in March 1793 and ended quickly—the two were married by Christmas Day of the same year. Recounting their first meeting, Frederick William reportedly said, “It is she—and if not she, no other creature in this world.”<sup>81</sup> Louise expressed similarly passionate feelings, assuring her fiancé before their marriage: “You love me, and I love you. With a little forbearance on either hand, all will be well.”<sup>82</sup> This early assessment of their relationship was seemingly accurate. Together, the two enjoyed a happy marriage of seventeen years, only to be interrupted by Louise’s premature death. The couple had seven children that lived to adulthood, notably the crown prince, Friedrich Wilhelm IV and the future emperor, Wilhelm I. Louise’s role as loving wife and mother were, and remained a central part of her role as the Prussian queen even after her death.<sup>83</sup>

When Frederick William became King of Prussia in 1797, Louise immediately took a direct and rather non-traditional role as his consort. Unlike any Prussian queen before her, Louise joined the king on his inaugural tour through the provincial estates. Her subjects, who were impressed “with her warmth and charm,” received their new queen positively and thus began her unprecedented celebrity status.<sup>84</sup> Her journey to the provincial estates, therefore, was crucial in spreading her popularity throughout the kingdom—never before had the provinces seen the Queen of Prussia so early after taking the throne. Revered and beloved by her subjects from the

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<sup>80</sup> Constance Wright, *Beautiful Enemy: A Biography of Queen Louise of Prussia*. (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1969) 7-9.

<sup>81</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 18.

<sup>82</sup> Wright, 25.

<sup>83</sup> Wright, 18-26.

<sup>84</sup> Christopher M. Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 317.

start, many even sought to emulate her sense of fashion. Shortly after Frederick William's ascension to the throne, Louise experienced slight swelling around her neck and would often conceal the ailment with a scarf. It was not long before fashionable women all over Berlin began to wrap their necks in her likeness. Louise, with her scarves, had quickly become an unexpected fashion icon.<sup>85</sup>

Although making public appearances and inspiring fashion trends are typical, womanly roles of a queen consort, Louise's influence on official state affairs in Prussia was certainly less traditional and less feminine. As will be described in detail later in this chapter, women were expected to remain within the private domestic sphere, whereas men engaged in public life. Despite gendered conventions, there is no doubt Louise acted as her husband's advisor, providing not only political insight but also psychological and emotional support for a monarch often depicted as timid and indecisive.<sup>86</sup> She also cultivated a circle of her own favored cabinet members, staying well informed of political developments. This circle would eventually grow to include notable figures such as Baron vom Stein and Karl August von Hardenberg, central figures in this chapter and to the Napoleonic era in Prussia.<sup>87</sup>

In 1795, the Prussians signed a neutrality pact with the French following the French Revolutionary Wars. Although this treaty was signed two years before the accession of Louise's husband Frederick William III, neutrality in Northern Germany became a central policy of the king's reign. Frederick William fought to remain neutral even after the Napoleonic Wars began to threaten Prussia in 1803. In July of that year Napoleon ordered an invasion of Hanover, a state bordering Prussian territory. From 1803 through 1806, the French would continue to provoke the

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<sup>85</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 317; Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 41-42.

<sup>86</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 314-315. Clark describes him as such and even expresses Napoleon's boredom with the king.

<sup>87</sup> Clark, 316-318.

Prussians directly by kidnapping a British envoy to Prussia in 1804 and crossing through the Prussian provinces of Ansbach and Bayreuth in 1805. It became clear that Napoleon sought to expand his sphere of influence across the North German states at Prussia's expense. Despite immense tension within his cabinet to go to war with the French, Frederick William's insisted on upholding the neutrality pact of 1795; however, war with France began in 1806 at Napoleon's hand.<sup>88</sup>

In the face of war, Louise assumed a non-traditional role as queen. For example, although queens often served as symbolic heads of regiments, Louise occasionally dressed in a riding habit similar to her own dragoon regiment's uniforms. Her decision to publicly represent her interest in military affairs led to many controversial representations of the queen, which will be discussed in detail in chapter three. Despite the queen's patriotic enthusiasm war was a humiliating defeat for the Prussians. When the royal family fled to Königsberg in 1806, they were unsure that Prussia would survive the conflict.

Following the defeats at Jena and Auerstedt in 1806, Louise suffered through periods of illness, as well as the death of her youngest son. In the face of these hardships, Louise met with Napoleon in Tilsit, who by 1807 she personally and outwardly despised. This personal grievance stemmed from when Napoleon "defiled her private chambers in Charlottenburg by plucking souvenirs from them that implied an affair between Louise and Alexander," the Russian Tsar.<sup>89</sup> This, along with many remarks made by Napoleon about her, greatly disturbed Louise, but did not keep her from meeting with him to plead for mercy on behalf of Prussia in 1807. It is fair to say the period between 1806 and 1810 were horrible final years of the Queen's short life;

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<sup>88</sup> Clark, 294-308.

<sup>89</sup> Sam A. Mustafa, *The Long Ride of Major von Schill: A Journey through German History and Memory* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), 35.

however, they will be the primary focus of this chapter, as they are the years in which Louis held the most power as queen.

Louise died in 1810 from an unknown illness while visiting her father Strelitz. She did not live to see the end of Napoleon's occupation of Prussia, only adding to the grief felt within Prussian circles. Hagemann argues that her death was one of the rare public expressions of Prussian patriotism between 1806-1812, under French occupation. She explains that Louise's death spurred "elaborate obsequies, which were carefully staged by the state and churches and went on for two weeks."<sup>90</sup> Hagemann explains that these ceremonies were significant as "the entire country displayed its patriotism and loyalty to the royal family" and "reunited the royal family with the people for the first time since the defeat of 1806-07."<sup>91</sup> Louise's death also fueled disdain for the French Emperor, for it was popularly said that she was killed by Napoleon's mercilessness.<sup>92</sup> One commemoration of Louise from 1898, for example, describes her mausoleum in Charlottenberg: "Here repose the bones of Louise, who died of a broken heart before the reawakening of Prussia..."<sup>93</sup> Needless to say, Frederick William was also broken-hearted, but over the death of his companion and confidant. He continued to write to Louise in a diary, updating her on Prussian affairs for years after her death. Louise, it seems, never truly left her husband, nor did she leave Prussia. As Hagemann explains, the loss of the queen was felt throughout Prussia, for "When they mourned the loss of the much-loved queen, it was not just as the 'mother' of Prussian nation, but also as a symbol of hope for national renewal."<sup>94</sup> This

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<sup>90</sup> Karen Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon: History, Culture and Memory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 58.

<sup>91</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 58.

<sup>92</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 232.

<sup>93</sup> Herbert Tuttle, "Queen Louise," *The Open Court: a Monthly Magazine*, March 1898. <https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5111&context=ocj>

<sup>94</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 58.

symbol was evoked during the later Wars of Liberation as a motivation to fight Napoleon. Even years after her death, Louise remained a beloved figure and remains popular in Germany today.<sup>95</sup>

### **Gender in a “Monarchical Nation”**

Louise lived from 1776 to 1810 and her life only briefly overlapped with the conceptions of gender brought about by war; however, she grew to become an instrumental symbol of femininity in Prussia both during her lifetime and after her death. Before considering Louise as a queen and how she was represented during her life and after her death, it is crucial to consider the ways in which the war changed constructions of gender in Prussia. In turn, these constructions will shape Louise’s role as queen—she becomes a hopeful symbol of Prussia’s revival and of the monarchy’s prominence in Prussia.

In accordance with Scott’s framework, a gendered analysis of Louise’s position as a transitional queen requires a thorough assessment of the perceived differences between the sexes in Prussia. Relying mainly upon Karen Hagemann’s work detailing new gendered constructions for patriotic men, women, and the family during the German anti-Napoleonic wars, this section first explains the ways in which war shaped ideas of Prussian masculinity and femininity. These masculine and feminine constructions will then be applied to Louise in an analysis of her power as queen. According to Hagemann, concepts of patriotism, war, and gender were intimately connected in Prussia at the time and had a lasting effect on societal conceptions of masculinity and femininity. This was especially true during the *Sattelzeit* period, which enabled Louise to exert a considerable amount of both formal and informal power. Through an exploration of these three concepts, the Napoleonic Wars can be seen as a catalyst for change in Prussia, creating an

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<sup>95</sup> Wright, 83-85, 233.



environment in which Louise—even as a female queen—could become engaged in political and military affairs, conventionally considered a part of the masculine sphere.

As the war began, promoting Prussian patriotism became a central part of the dynasty's duties. Hagemann explains that during the anti-Napoleonic Wars in particular, Prussia “was also conceptualized as a ‘nation’ – a monarchical one.”<sup>96</sup> When referring to these nationalistic sentiments towards the state and the monarchy, scholars such as Clark and Hageman use the phrase “Prussian patriotism.” This distinction of Prussia as a monarchical nation will become particularly important in analyzing Louise's role, as she set the precedent as queen for societal understandings of femininity and encouraging dynastic loyalty and Prussian patriotism was one of her many maternal duties as a *Landesmutter*.

In order to understand Prussian patriotism during the Napoleonic Wars, it is crucial to consider the position of Prussia after 1806. In October of 1806, the Prussian army was destroyed by Napoleon during the retreat from Jena and Auerstedt.<sup>97</sup> Louise and her husband, King Frederick William III, were forced to flee from Prussia in December of 1806, as the French occupation began. This, however, was just the beginning of their problems. Clark categorizes 1806-1807 as being full of “defeats and humiliations” for the Prussians in their battle against Napoleon, who occupied Prussia from August of 1807 through December of 1808. The Treaty of Tilsit, signed in 1807, can certainly be counted among those humiliations. Although Prussia remained a state under the treaty, it lost a considerable amount of its western territories including newly acquired Polish territory from 1795. The treaty also diminished Prussia's army and burdened the state with feeding French troops. Placing this humiliation within historical context,

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<sup>96</sup> Karen Hagemann, "Female Patriots: Women, War and the Nation in the Period of the Prussian-German Anti-Napoleonic Wars," *Gender & History* 16, no. 2 (2004), 398.

<sup>97</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 298.

Clark argues, “There have been many worse defeats than the Prussian disasters of 1806-7, but for a political culture so centered on military prowess the defeats at Jena and Auerstedt and the surrenders that followed were definitive none the less.”<sup>98</sup> In fact, Frederick William would not return to Berlin until 1809, still questioning “whether and when to strike against the French.” This hesitation will be telling of the King’s ability to make decisions, and even later, of his masculinity.<sup>99</sup>

Frederick William and his advisors unable to act against Napoleon, and by 1808 the Prussian people became exceedingly distressed with the French occupation. Many felt it was time to take matters into their own hands, with sentiments of Prussian patriotism and anti-French sentiments fueling insurrections. It is important to note, however, that this Prussian patriotism existed far before the *Befreiungskrieg* or War of Liberation. Clark traces patriotic sentiments back to the Seven Years War, describing it as “more than just a willingness to defend one’s fatherland,” but a combination of “emotional commitments with political aspirations.”<sup>100</sup> This combination was only exasperated after 1806. It was within this period of the king’s uncertainty that what Hagemann calls “a brand of regional state patriotism” was born.<sup>101</sup> She explains that this Prussian patriotism “emphasized religious piety, loyalty to sovereign and homeland and tradition-consciousness still dominated.”<sup>102</sup> It became a major factor in motivating both men and women on the home front, and in some cases, they took matters into their own hands.

The way in which war was fought during the Napoleonic era is also significant to understanding gender roles in Prussian society. During this time, war mobilized all of society.

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<sup>98</sup> Clark, 310.

<sup>99</sup> Clark, 350.

<sup>100</sup> Clark, 386.

<sup>101</sup> Hagemann, “Female Patriots,” 398.

<sup>102</sup> Hagemann, “Female Patriots,” 398.

Focusing specifically on “the relationship between the military and civil society,” Hagemann argues that the difference between the home front and the battlefield had diminished during the Napoleonic era as civilians also mobilized for war.<sup>103</sup> Hagemann explains that these wars “aimed for the first time at a complete annihilation of the enemy,” adding to a larger historical debate on the definition and application of the term total war.<sup>104</sup> Although Hagemann acknowledges the contributions of historians who argue that the Napoleonic Wars are the first total wars, she calls for a broader approach. Her work aims to address “the far-reaching structural consequences” of the Napoleonic Wars and address their “significance far beyond the military and the conduct of war.”<sup>105</sup> This includes an examination of war’s effect on the population of Prussia—especially those at home. She writes, “Warfare on this scale necessitated the support of large segments of the population.”<sup>106</sup> This could manifest itself in military support, or support from the home front. She explains: “The war as a situation of declared ‘national emergency’ thus opened up opportunities especially for noble and middle class women to become active in arenas of public life that had been previously closed to them.”<sup>107</sup> Combining this involvement of all parts of Prussian society with the patriotic nature of the wars, and the Prussian state’s encouragement to enlist, Hagemann argues Prussians, especially members of the upper and middle classes, became highly motivated to fight the French. These motivated, patriotic citizens of Prussia began to aid the war effort; however, although women became more involved under this ‘national emergency,’ gender still played an important role in determining exactly *how* they could contribute.

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<sup>103</sup> Hagemann, “Female Patriots,” 399.

<sup>104</sup> Hagemann, “Female Patriots,” 399.

<sup>105</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon*, 11-13.

<sup>106</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon*, 13.

<sup>107</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon*, 13.

The Prussian patriotism of the Anti-Napoleonic Wars was instrumental in the conceptualization of new gendered roles within the family. Hagemann refers to this as the conceptualization as the *Volk* family, which “organized the participation of men and women of different generations, familial statuses and regional and social backgrounds in the nation in a seemingly ‘natural fashion, while serving to contain certain demands for increased political participation in the state.”<sup>108</sup> It is important to note that the dynastic family set the example for the *Volk* family, with Frederick William III and Louise serving as “key figures in this image.”<sup>109</sup> Generally, as parents of Prussia their role “promoted the liberation of the Prussian nation with their readiness to act and make sacrifices,” inspiring their subjects—their metaphoric children—to do the same.<sup>110</sup>

Although bound together by this duty and to each other, the King and Queen each had their own individual roles in the *Volk* family. Beginning as early as the sixteenth century in Germany, kings such as Frederick William III took on the masculine role of the *Landesvater* or Father of the People. This term was often used to foster the paternal authority of the king over subjects. During the Napoleonic Wars, this role took on new meanings. Hagemann places this role within the confines of the *Volk* Family, writing: “at the head of the Prussian *Volk* family was the monarch as the ‘father’” and, although he was expected to exude “love and solitude,” he was also “supreme military commander” who simultaneously “led the fraternal community of valorous male ‘citizens of his state.’” It was still very important to Frederick William, however, that he remain a pious figure who “represented enlightened middle-class family virtues.”<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon*, 155.

<sup>109</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon*, 156.

<sup>110</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon*, 156; Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon*, 155- 170.

<sup>111</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 159.

Domesticity, it seems, was central to the metaphor of the *Volk* family. Although the role of a caring father was important to Frederick William, the King's role as a military leader intensified as the war progressed. Hagemann describes that from 1813 to 1815 "The official war propaganda now increasingly emphasized his role as a courageous military leader alongside that of a caring father."<sup>112</sup> This emphasis would be transferred to his subjects as well, changing Prussian constructions of masculinity.<sup>113</sup>

As the king's gendered role as a paternal figure was shifting to incorporate the war effort, so too was the role of the average Prussian man. The king's courage as a military leader was used to inspire many upper and middle class men to also act courageously and serve in the *Landwehr*. By 1813, all men between the ages of seventeen and forty were conscripted to serve in the militia and standing army.<sup>114</sup> According to Hagemann, mobilization for this Anti-Napoleonic War was a highly masculinized process, with conscription necessitating the creation of a "new model of patriotic valorous manliness."<sup>115</sup> Hagemann attributes this new valorous man with qualities of "honor, fraternity, love of freedom, piety, trust in God, strength, military discipline, courage, glory, loyalty, and above all patriotism and valor," and explains three major reasons why this valorous masculinity is different from other previous conceptions of masculinity.<sup>116</sup>

It is important to note that each of Hagemann's explanations center around war. Firstly, she argues, new conceptions of valorous masculinity connected military service to political

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<sup>112</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 163.

<sup>113</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 155-156.

<sup>114</sup> Hagemann, "Female Patriots," 401.

<sup>115</sup> Karen Hagemann, "Of 'Manly Valor' and 'German Honor': Nation, War, and Masculinity in the Age of the Prussian Uprising against Napoleon," *Central European History* 30, no. 2 (1997), 219.

<sup>116</sup> Hagemann, "Of 'Manly Valor' and 'German Honor,'" 219-220.

power. Hagemann explains, “When the Prussian government introduced universal conscription in March of 1813 for the duration of the war, it also promised all men who willingly fulfilled their military duties a constitution and increased political rights, at least at the municipal level.”<sup>117</sup> By introducing conscription, true masculinity—and furthermore true patriotism—was linked to men’s ability to protect the home. Finally, Hagemann argues that a “freely chosen hero’s death for the fatherland” became a more universalized experience.<sup>118</sup> Simply put, by implementing conscription, masculine experience became more universalized, meaning any man could be called upon to be a new “valorous” man and die for their country. Furthermore, any man could become a hero. In each of these instances, the male’s dominant position in the Prussian gender hierarchy is reinforced and legitimized by heroic deeds or the reward of political power.

The implementation of universal conscription could, and often did, spur resentment. Although many Prussians were ready and willing to fight, Frederick William and the Prussian state still had to encourage and legitimize the war, often evoking patriotism in order to keep conscripts motivated to serve.<sup>119</sup> Many men needed to be convinced that their compulsory service would not be in vain. In order to assure and mobilize the Prussian people, Frederick William made an appeal in 1813, titled “To My People.”<sup>120</sup> This appeal employed patriotic rhetoric in order to justify not just the implementation of universal conscription throughout the Prussian provinces, but also the impending war with France. In this appeal, Frederick William justified that “Whatever sacrifices may be required of us as individuals, they will be outweighed

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<sup>117</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 158.

<sup>118</sup> Hagemann, "Of 'Manly Valor' and 'German Honor,'" 219.

<sup>119</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 354- 363.

<sup>120</sup> Frederick William III, King of Prussia, “To My People,” (German History in Documents and Images, German Historical Institute, 2003-2012), [http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=3556](http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=3556).

by the sacred rights for which we make them, and for which we must fight to a victorious end unless we are willing to cease to be Prussians or Germans.”<sup>121</sup> In this quote he calls upon all Prussians to fight, threatening the end of both Prussia and its territories without the proper support from soldiers. His position as *Landesvater* legitimized this call to arms—he was calling his children to do their duty. It is important to note, however, that this appeal applied only to men. Women would not be allowed to take part in this kind of military defense, but instead, would be called upon by the dynasty to play a different role in the war effort.

As *Landesmutter*, or the Mother of the People, Louise played a specific patriotic role that was different from her husband’s. According Quataert, a *Landesmutter* was a nineteenth-century symbol created to construct “new relationships...between institution building and state identity as well as individual behavior and social capital” during the turmoil of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>122</sup> Quataert characterizes the *Landesmutter* as being concerned with “community well-being, obligation, and care” as well as patriotism.<sup>123</sup> This role promoted patriotism through a direct engagement with women’s charitable associations, such as the Women’s Association for the Benefit of the Fatherland, as well as promoting service to the military, whether that is serving at the front, or by caring for those who did. Louise, the *Landesmutter* of Prussia, was instrumental in redefining this role, and would come to embody all of the positions’ ascribed female characteristics.

Hagemann describes Louise’s role as *Landesmutter* within the construct of the *Volk* Family. Louise, she writes, served as “a model and teacher for the fatherland’s daughters, who,

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<sup>121</sup> Fredrick William III, “To My People.”

<sup>122</sup> Jean Helen Quataert, *Staging Philanthropy: Patriotic Women and the National Imagination in Dynastic Germany, 1813-1916*, (University of Michigan Press, 2010), 21.

<sup>123</sup> Quataert, *Staging Philanthropy*, 21.

like her, performed their patriotic duties in the domestic and familial sphere.”<sup>124</sup> As *Landesmutter*, Louise became a symbol of domesticity and motherhood—both literally and figuratively. Literally, she was the mother of seven children including the crown prince Frederick William IV and future emperor William I; figuratively, she was the mother of her Prussian subjects. Motherhood and other domestic roles centered on the family were considered to be a vitally important role in 19<sup>th</sup> century Prussian society. As explained by Hagemann, “There was a broad consensus... that they were the foundation, the ‘nursery’ of the state and nation...” and furthermore, that “‘domestic life’ was the foundation and source of ‘public life.’”<sup>125</sup> Hagemann acknowledges the domestic sphere’s inherent connection to the political sphere, but explains that a woman’s task “was to perform their duties as spouses, housewives and mothers in a manner consistent with the honor, manners and culture of the German nation. Domesticity was henceforth elevated to the foremost ‘patriotic duty’ of German women.”<sup>126</sup> As *Landesmutter*, Louise was the standing example this patriotic duty and was often represented as such. These representations, which continued after Louise’s death, will be discussed in the following chapter.

After the Queen’s death, the women of the Hohenzollern dynasty would play a major role in continuing Louise’s model for the fatherland’s daughters. Considering the size of the newly conscripted army, Hagemann explains that Prussia was in desperate need of volunteers to outfit and equip the army. The twelve Hohenzollern princesses mirrored the king’s appeal with their “Appeal to the Women of the Prussian State.”<sup>127</sup> According to Hagemann, the princesses’ appeal was successful in attracting the attention of many women of the middle and upper classes and by

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<sup>124</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 156.

<sup>125</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 111.

<sup>126</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 111.

<sup>127</sup> Hagemann, “Female Patriots,” 402-403.



connecting their duties to domesticity. In fact, Hagemann argues that it is during the anti-Napoleonic Wars that “For the first time, even middle-class women –like the men of their class – became an important part of wartime” involvement.<sup>128</sup> Their involvement only became possible because of the link to the domestic sphere.

Prussian women, however motivated by patriotic sentiments during the Napoleonic Wars, were not able to serve at the front like the men who were conscripted into the Prussian army. As previously explained conscription came with some degree of political rights exclusively for men. Conscription, therefore, indirectly “intensified women’s exclusion for centres of political power and opinion,” and could even be interpreted to mean women had no political rights.<sup>129</sup> Female involvement in the anti-Napoleonic Wars would, therefore, have to stem from traditional constructions of femininity.

Hagemann argues that femininity was traditionally characterized by a sense of morality and a domestic role in the home. Women who wanted to fight disrupted traditional Prussian gender roles and generated resentment from Prussian men—particularly those involved with the military. Women who acted in a way that would “overstep the hierarchical and complementary gender order,” such as being armed, were not usually accepted by a patriarchal society.<sup>130</sup> Women’s involvement in wartime activities, therefore, needed to be connected to the home. The princesses’ appeal primarily aimed to collect money and supplies for the army—to encourage women to participate in what Hagemann calls “patriotic charity” which fell within the confines

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<sup>128</sup> Hagemann, “Female Patriots,” 400.

<sup>129</sup> Hagemann, 189.

<sup>130</sup> Karen Hagemann, “A Valorous Volk Family: The Nation, the Military, and the Gender Order in Prussia in the Time of the Anti-Napoleonic Wars, 1806–15,” in *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century*, (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 193.

of domestic work.<sup>131</sup> Other acceptable wartime work for women also included the creation of patriotic associations that, similarly to male associations, collected money, outfitted soldiers, created flags and banners, and even created hospital associations and assisted veterans.<sup>132</sup>

Although these roles were not so different from those of many men, women in Prussia were uniquely responsible for performing caring and compassionate—often maternal—deeds through nursing the sick and wounded. According to Hagemann, these practices were not that different from the domestic work of the early modern period, in which many wives would follow the armies to tend to the sick and wounded. Generally, Hagemann writes, “Women hoped that the mental and material support they offered militiamen and volunteers... would help them fight, preserve and return alive.”<sup>133</sup> These contributions were only acceptable, however, because they fell within the confines of the home, and because they were encouraged by the royal family.

War, it seems, was a catalyst for changing societal conceptions of gender. For men, the need for soldiers and eventual implementation of conscription linked soldiers to patriotic masculinity. As every Prussian man was required to serve, every man could be depicted as a courageous and patriotic protector of the fatherland—or even, in some cases, a hero. Conceptions of men as the protectors and defenders solidified their position over women in the social hierarchy. Women’s involvement in wartime activities was also justified and reinforced by using gendered language. This language prevented women’s wartime involvement from disrupting the accepted hierarchy of power—in which men were at the top; however, domestic work was highly valued. Women’s patriotic activities were therefore viewed as maternal or compassionate and were often connected to work associated with the home or the family. These gendered

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<sup>131</sup> Hagemann, “A Valorous Volk Family.”

<sup>132</sup> Hagemann, “Female Patriots,” 403.

<sup>133</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 201.

constructions of patriotism were even applied to the family as a whole—with each member having their own patriotic duty in the *Volk* family. The Prussian *Landesvater* and *Landesmutter* demonstrated these expectations for their subjects, not only inspiring them to do their part, but also connecting them to the Prussian dynasty. Considering these societal understandings it becomes clear that Louise’s power as queen was intimately connected to her role as a wife and *Landesmutter*.

### **Louise and Karl August von Hardenberg: Exercising Formal Power**

Wilson’s definition of formal power, as described in chapter one, can easily be applied to Louise’s role as queen consort. As indicated through an assessment of gender constructions after 1806, Louise’s role as a *Landesmutter* was certainly “recognized and legitimated by prevailing norms” in Prussia and set an example for many upper and middle class women’s involvement in wartime work.<sup>134</sup> Although Louise was queen, her formal power as *Landesmutter* was legitimated because it was feminine and connected to domestic life, just as upper and middle class women connected their contributions to the Prussian war effort with the duties of the home. As Clark writes, “Luise’s public role was not that of a female dynast with her own court, priorities and foreign policy, but that of a wife and mother.”<sup>135</sup> This is an important distinction to make—even as queen Louise was expected to perform the feminine duties of wife and mother. As will be discussed in this chapter, these roles justified and legitimized Louise’s involvement in everything from state affairs to military affairs, even when it went beyond the typical duties of a wife. Through her position as wife, therefore, Louise held a considerable amount of formal

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<sup>134</sup> Peter H. Wilson, “Women and Imperial Politics: the Württemberg consorts 1674-1757” in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*. ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 224.

<sup>135</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 318.

power. This power becomes particularly clear when analyzing her non-traditional involvement in state affairs.

It is certain that Louise was kept well informed by her husband and others such as favored cabinet members; her letters to her husband are full of requests for information, especially after the defeats of 1806. In October of 1806 she begs, “Please send me news, now that you know where I will be so I can hear from you” and later “Just do not leave me without news.”<sup>136</sup> Her letters are also full of little reminders and requests that are indicative of her role as the King’s advisor. Phrases like “I ask you again,” appear often in letters from 1806-1810 as Louise reminds her husband to remain strong.<sup>137</sup> However, Frederick William was not her only political connection. Louise remained in close contact with several favored statesmen, notably Stein and Hardenberg. In analyzing Louise’s influence on Hardenberg’s career in particular, it becomes clear that she exerted considerable formal power over state affairs.

Just as the war spurred changes in conceptions of gender, it also spurred political changes, often referred to as part of a nineteenth-century Prussian reform movement “which transformed much of the Prussian state and society in the decade between 1806 and 1817.”<sup>138</sup> Generally, these reforms were designed to modernize and strengthen Prussia after the 1806 defeat. For example, the introduction of conscription is considered part of this movement, strengthening the army. Both Hardenberg and Stein are considered instrumental in creating these changes, so much so that the reforms are sometimes referred to as the Stein-Hardenberg Reforms. As with most reforms, the nineteenth-century Prussian reforms inspired heated debate and contestation amongst statesmen, occasionally putting careers on the line. During this period

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<sup>136</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 292.

<sup>137</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>138</sup> Philip G. Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia, 1700-1830*, (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000), 35.

of reform, Hardenberg went from foreign minister, to being dismissed as part of Napoleon's demands, to working in Frederick William's cabinet, to becoming prime minister. Louise never seemed to lose faith in Hardenberg and pushed for his continued involvement in state affairs.<sup>139</sup>

In June of 1806, after Tilsit, Hardenberg asked Louise to arrange a meeting with the king. He hoped to discuss the possibility of a secret negotiation between the Prussians and the Russians. Louise made sure this meeting occurred, responding that the King would meet him but "in my room to avoid any suspicion."<sup>140</sup> This meeting, arranged by Louise, was successful. Negotiations between Hardenberg and the Russian ambassador, Maxim Maximovitch Alopeus began, but not without further assistance from Louise. Christian Graf von Haugwitz, Prussian foreign minister, was opposed to the negotiations as he "found Alopeus short-tempered and difficult to work with."<sup>141</sup> According to Wright, Louise wrote a memorandum defending Alopeus and continued to write to Frederick William about the matter. She relayed the words of the Duke of Brunswick, who felt "the king has to decide who he wants to support in this fight, otherwise he will be forcibly involved..."<sup>142</sup> in an effort to reassure Frederick William that it was the right time to pick a side and open negotiations with the Russians. Hardenberg and Alopeus ultimately did come to an agreement, and the relationship between the two monarchies was mended.<sup>143</sup>

In this example, Louise used her position as the king's wife to arrange a meeting. It is noteworthy that Hardenburg reached out the Louise instead of the king. This indicates that it was acceptable for a cabinet member to correspond with the Queen. It is also clear that Hardenberg and Louise had an established rapport. It is also noteworthy that the meeting with Louise was

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<sup>139</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom* 318.

<sup>140</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 265.

<sup>141</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 95.

<sup>142</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 266.

<sup>143</sup> Wright, 95-98.

held in her room and that this, according to Louise, would be *less* suspicious. This confirms that a meeting between the statesman and the queen was, again, an acceptable and perhaps even regular occurrence. Her correspondence with Hardenberg is evidence that as queen, Louise was open to and available for political engagement.

This example also illustrates how Louise evoked her position as a wife to arrange Frederick William's presence at the meeting. Here, Louise's gendered role of wife allowed her to act as her husband's advisor, and arrange a meeting with important political consequences. Without her intervention, the meeting may have seemed suspicious or may not have happened at all. In this sense, Louise was a source of access to the king for Hardenberg. This can be seen an instance where Louise exercised formal power because her role as wife was socially acknowledged and accepted. In arranging the meeting and mediating Hardenberg's relationship with the King, she used her position as wife to assist one of her favored cabinet members.

This was not the only instance where Louise would act as a mediator between the King and the members of his cabinet. The organization of the cabinet itself was in question during the Prussian reforms. According to Wright, Louise was approached about these reforms and was aware of a "strong movement for internal reform" before it became known to the king.<sup>144</sup> In April 1806, for example, Stein's petition for cabinet reorganization was brought to Louise for approval. She expressed that she thought the petition was too radical for the King, and let Stein know it would not be approved. Hardenberg would also seek Louise's approval on his own petition for cabinet reform, about which she made suggestions for improvement. A third petition was ultimately brought to the King in August, but this one reached his desk without the queen's help. It was harshly rejected.

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<sup>144</sup> Wright, 99.

The fact that Louise was consulted by both Stein and Hardenberg is significant, as it indicates that Louise's expert knowledge of the king was recognized by his cabinet members. This recognition gave her direct formal power, as she influenced which petitions were to be seen by the king. Louise's gender is also crucial, as it is her position as wife which, again, gives her this authority. As the king's wife, it was understood that she could accurately gauge her husband's inclinations and, furthermore, his general mood. To be clear, Louise's personal opinion on the petitions was not being sought by the cabinet members, but rather her opinion on the king's possible reaction to them. This distinction is important because it highlights her entrance into politics through her role as wife. Her power, therefore, lies in her role as wife. Of course, the cabinet members did not have to follow Louise's recommendations, but it is clear they sought and respected it. This power is further legitimized by the petition Louise did not approve, which was rejected by the king. The rejection affirms that the queen knew her husband well, and could be trusted to accurately predict the King's inclinations towards reform.<sup>145</sup>

Despite Louise's favoritism towards Hardenberg, his position was not secure after the defeats at Jena and Austerstadt. Louise had encouraged the King to keep his cabinet members despite pressure from Napoleon. It seems the King agreed, for Hardenberg did not officially resign after the defeats, but rather took a leave of absence. After the Peace of Tilsit, however, Hardenberg was officially forced to resign. Louise was disheartened by his forced dismissal. In August of 1807, she expressed her dismay to her brother Georg writing, "About the loss of Hardenberg, I howl day and night. The king had finally given him the trust he had earned for so long; Hardenberg was so attached to him as no one was here, for the honor, the good of the state,

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<sup>145</sup> Wright, 100-101.

was everything to him, his person, his ego.”<sup>146</sup> This clearly demonstrates that Louise took great personal interest in Hardenberg, state politics, but perhaps most importantly, her husband’s best interests. In advising her husband, Louise was fulfilling both her wifely and patriotic duties to the state.

Ultimately, however, Louise was successful in aiding Hardenberg’s career. In January of 1810, she wrote to him, eager to help him regain his position. “It is one of the most embarrassing conditions of our present existence that you have to stay away from the king and politics, and I, in particular, would be truly happy to know you with us...”<sup>147</sup> Note, Louise mentions that she regrets his distance from the king in particular. She asks him to tell her his plans, and confesses: “I would do anything in the world to thwart plans that could remove you from us.”<sup>148</sup> Louise did indeed do what she could to assure his return. According to Wright, this included publicly voicing her approval and, again, arranging another meeting between Hardenberg and the King.<sup>149</sup> On June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1810, shortly after that meeting, Hardenberg was reinstated. On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Louise invited her sister Therese to share her gratitude to the divine: “Thank Him with me, that Hardenberg is here.”<sup>150</sup> Reportedly, Louise would mention her faith in Hardenberg on her death bed just a few months later.<sup>151</sup>

It is clear that Louise had cultivated a personal friendship with Hardenberg. She signed off her 1810 letter assuring him, “I am your friend.”<sup>152</sup> Although the friendship seems genuine, it only had influence over state politics because of her position as Frederick William’s wife, and

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<sup>146</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 383.

<sup>147</sup> Luise, 531-532.

<sup>148</sup> Luise, 532.

<sup>149</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 222-224.

<sup>150</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 560.

<sup>151</sup> Wright, 230; Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 318.

<sup>152</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 532.



because she legitimized her involvement by claiming to act in her husband's best interests. Every instance that Louise exerted formal power to aid Hardenberg's career was legitimized through her position as a supportive wife, and as explained later in this chapter, as a patriotic *Landesmutter*. Her actions can be seen as helping her husband to cultivate a reliable cabinet, one that she saw as crucial to saving Prussia and to her husband's success, and to help Frederick William make the hard decisions necessary to reform Prussia and strengthen it. These actions were, nonetheless, instances of formal power, as she was able to make changes happen while acting as a supportive wife—a recognized and acceptable queenly role.

That's not to say that Louise was always associated with agreeing with her husband. Stein and Hardenberg's reforms were often met with hesitation from the cautious Prussian King, and Louise's actions and correspondences with the statesmen occasionally indicated her support of the reforms. It is evident that the cabinet recognized this. In 1807, for example, several members of Frederick William's cabinet met to deal with the aftermath of the Prussian defeats. Wright seems to imply that Louise was considered for the position of Chief of Protocol of this cabinet "to decide what matters should be considered by the king," or in other words, "a representative of the King" to serve on the cabinet.<sup>153</sup> It is important to note that this was a theoretical position, which never came to fruition. Frederick William was insulted by this proposal, and the affair resulted in both Stein and Hardenberg's unaccepted offers of resignation. Although there is no evidence to suggest that Louise was aware of, or even approved of her involvement in such a matter, it can serve as an indication that members of the king's cabinet

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<sup>153</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 143.

trusted Louise's counsel. After all, it is clear that Louise was already, although unofficially, deciding which matters the king should consider.<sup>154</sup>

Louise was also associated with patriotic uprisings. In 1809 Major Ferdinand von Schill led an insurrection against the French, an act of insubordination that greatly vexed Frederick William. Schill was a known member of the *Tugendbund*, or "League of Virtue," a network of Prussian aristocrats committed to defeating the French. Notable members of this network included Stein, Gerhard von Scharnhorst, and August Niedhardt von Gneisenau, all of who supported the idea of a popular revolt and were in communication with Schill. By May of 1809, Schill had managed to recruit enough men to launch a full-scale revolt in Westphalia. Although initially successful, Schill's ride came to an end at Stralsund, where the Danes outnumbered his forces and he was eventually shot and killed during an attempt to rally his men.<sup>155</sup>

Sam Mustafa implies that Louise may have encouraged Schill's insurrection.<sup>156</sup> In early 1808, Schill had a private meeting with Louise. During this meeting, she gave him a red leather portfolio. Although the contents of the portfolio remain a mystery, the gift is mentioned in several accounts of Schill's defense of his plans for insurrection. For example, in one account Wilhelm Neugebauer describes Schill's evocation of Louise while holding the portfolio, calling men to follow him into action despite a royal proclamation "reaffirming the need for quiet and obedience."<sup>157</sup> There are several accounts of this event and in many the location of Schill's rally cry differs; however, the portfolio is referenced in multiple accounts, regardless of the location. The meeting between Louise and Schill, as well as the presence of a red portfolio, serves as concrete evidence of Louise's communication with Schill and her engagement in political

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<sup>154</sup> Wright, 141-145.

<sup>155</sup> Mustafa, *The Long Ride of Major Von Schill*, 36, 94-112.

<sup>156</sup> Mustafa, 89-90.

<sup>157</sup> Mustafa, 76.

matters. Although the nature of this communication is unclear, there is no doubt the queen spoke with the future insurgent.<sup>158</sup>

Instances where Louise's actions were less loosely connected to her husband's interests and therefore fell outside the sphere of acceptable gender constructions—even if only as conjecture—caused Louise trouble. This would only be worsened by Louise's position as a martial consort and involvement with the war. This, combined with the notion that Louise was ruling behind Frederick William's back, provided the foundation for Napoleon's media campaign against the queen. These representations of the queen, and gender's role in their creation, will be discussed at length in the following chapter.

### **Louise's "Dear Friend," The King: Exercising Informal Power**

It is clear that Louise, with her recognized position of wife and as a *Landesmutter*, held considerable formal power; however, some of Louise's power was also indicative of informal power. In considering Orr's definition of informal power, which states that informal power is dependent on variables such as "the Queen's own personality or ambition, her dynastic capital, her social skills, her piety, her cultural abilities—the happenstance of whether an arranged marriage grew into a personal bond or not,"<sup>159</sup> it becomes clear that Louise's power was reliant on the happenstance nature of her marriage and character of her husband, King Frederick William III. Their strong personal bond and his shy and hesitant nature created circumstances in which Louise could influence the King and exert informal power as his advisor.

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<sup>158</sup> Mustafa, 36, 76.

<sup>159</sup> Clarissa Campbell Orr, "Introduction," in *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort*. ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9-10.

Scholars seem to agree that Louise and Fredrick William's marriage grew into a personal bond. Indeed, even just a brief survey of Louise's letters would support this analysis. Louise kept in constant contact with her husband and often referred to him as her "dear friend" or her "angel."<sup>160</sup> She was outspoken about her love early on in their marriage. In May of 1794, only five months after their wedding, she wrote to him, "O, beloved angel, be always so convinced of my tender love as I am of yours."<sup>161</sup> She continuously calls him angel, writing in the same letter, "You are my everything, angel of my soul, in you I find all my happiness, and without you everything is nothing and I am unhappy."<sup>162</sup> Seemingly self-aware of her passion and the newness of their marriage, she ends the letter by apologizing for her sentimentality: "Farewell, my dear, dear friend; I am afraid I have displeased you, as I have repeatedly called you angel, which may seem too sweet for you; forgive me, dear friend, I assure you, it is my heart which has let go and it feels so charitable when it describes to you how I feel."<sup>163</sup> These passionate expressions of love are typical of her letters. Even later on, after the Prussian defeats of 1806, Louise writes with passion about their love. Separated in October of 1806, she writes "Dear angel why can I not be with you and when will we see each other again?"<sup>164</sup> It seems her habit of calling him "angel," had not subsided after thirteen years. It is important to note that Louise's correspondence with her husband were far more than just love letters. The letters read more like diary entrees, with Louise recounting her days to her husband, asking for news, and advising him as well as reassuring him of her love .

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<sup>160</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*.

<sup>161</sup> Luise, 58.

<sup>162</sup> Luise, 58.

<sup>163</sup> Luise, 59.

<sup>164</sup> Luise, 294.

Many scholars also agree on Frederick William's character, which is overwhelmingly depicted as timid and unsure. Clark, for example, calls him a "hesitant, cautious individual" who "combined a sharp, if reticent intelligence with a profound lack of confidence in his own abilities."<sup>165</sup> This characterization is not confined to historians—many contemporaries emphasized Frederick William's preference for private events and the company of his family.<sup>166</sup> Louise played a crucial role in this family as the head of domestic life within the royal family. In 1845, just five years after the king's death, Rulemann Friedrich Eylert wrote *Characteristic traits and domestic life of Frederick William III, king of Prussia*. His work describes every aspect of the King, from his typical choice of clothing to his food preferences. Eylert describes Frederick William as having a certain "delicate-mindedness," as well as "pure love to mankind, and a lively sympathy, which often rose to strong emotion."<sup>167</sup> Even Frederick William acknowledged his preference for peace and his sentimentality towards mankind. In a conversation with his uncle, Frederick II, he admitted "Everybody knows that I abhor war and that I know of nothing greater on earth than the preservation of peace and tranquility as the only system suited to the happiness of mankind."<sup>168</sup> Frederick William III, despite his military training and upbringing, simply cannot be categorized as one of Prussia's more authoritarian or militaristic kings.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 298, 314.

<sup>166</sup> Clark, 315-316.

<sup>167</sup> Rulemann Friedrich Eylert, *Characteristic Traits and Domestic Life of Frederick William III, King of Prussia*, trans. J. Birch. (London: J. Hatchard, 1845) 55, 138.

<sup>168</sup> Philip G. Dwyer, "The Politics of Prussian Neutrality 1795-1805." *German History* 12, no. 3 (1994): 351-73. doi:10.1177/026635549401200305, 357.

<sup>169</sup> Sam A. Mustafa, *Germany in the Modern World: A New History*, (Rowman & Littlefield) 2016, 62. Indeed, there seems to be a pendulum in the history of the Hohenzollern dynasty. As noted by Mustafa, "a strict, authoritarian leader was followed by a more liberal and aesthetically and culturally minded ruler, followed by a strict authoritarian, and so on. This is admittedly a great generalization...but does present a general pattern of development in Prussia..."

Frederick William's docile nature is reflected not just in remarks on his personality, but also in his decisions as king. As previously mentioned, he was in favor of neutrality in France's war with its enemies, which frustrated some enough to attempt insurrection. Although the king was open to reform, he was often met by bureaucratic resistance and lacked the confidence to make firm decisions on his own. A major debate over the Prussian reforms would revolve around cabinet reform, which some saw as necessary in order to better control the king's indecisiveness. In each of these instances, the king hesitated to act. Louise seemed to be aware of this as well. In her letters, Louise is constantly reassuring him of his actions. In October of 1806, for example, she wrote to him "I ask you again, to please take more confidence in yourself and lead completely; it certainly looks better."<sup>170</sup> Following the death of Louise, matters only became worse. According to Clark, Frederick William was influenced by "a 'substitute family' of courtiers" in her absence.<sup>171</sup> The presence of these courtiers would coincide with a shift towards conservatism.<sup>172</sup>

Considering the established constructions of masculinity, Frederick William hardly fits the archetypal Prussian male, who was expected to love freedom, have courage and valor, and maintain a certain boldness. If one were to directly compare characterizations of Schill, the later embodiment of Prussian masculinity, to later characterizations of Frederick William, the King appears to be emasculated. In fact, his character is often placed in direct contrast with that of his wife. Where the king lacks conviction, Louise is seen as strong and bold. This reversal of gender roles caused Louise trouble, but also indicated a source of Louise's informal power. Here, Orr's definition of informal power can be applied to Louise's position as consort. The nature of Louise

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<sup>170</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 292.

<sup>171</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom* 402.

<sup>172</sup> Clark, 322-232, 402-403.

and Frederick William's marriage as well as the nature of Frederick William himself created an situation in which Louise could act as an advisor to her husband, and for that advice often to be taken into consideration. Had they less of a personal bond, or had Frederick William's character been more extroverted and bold, Louise would not have been so deeply involved in politics and would have held less informal power and influence over her husband as he faced the catastrophic consequences of war and defeat.

### **The Duties of the *Landesmutter*: a Vessel of Formal and Informal Power**

Louise's formal and informal powers were not always separable. Considering the recent historiographic challenge to such a division of power, it is worth noting that Louise's role as a *Landesmutter* can be seen as a vessel of both formal and informal power. As previously explained, the position of a *Landesmutter* was defined by its charitable, maternal, and patriotic qualities. Each of these qualities was acceptable for women during the war. Although Louise was extolled for her involvement in charity and her maternal nature, an analysis of her patriotism reveals the duality of Louise's power as a *Landesmutter* and supports Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Adam Morton's argument that the power of a queen often falls into both categories.

Louise was well informed of the military affairs of the war, and her letters demonstrate a personal interest in the military even before the defeats of 1806. Early after becoming queen consort, in May of 1798, Louise describes attending a military review in Pomerania in her diary. She describes how, despite the heat, she was present with all the generals and officers of the regiments during the review. "They paid me their respects, and after doing a little curtsy, I was very happy to rest on my sofa for a few moments," she wrote.<sup>173</sup> The next morning she attended

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<sup>173</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 135.

another review, what she called a “special” one for three infantry and five cavalry regiments. She is careful to list all the names of all those in charge of the regiments including, notably, General Leberecht von Blücher.

Before the defeat in 1806, Wright claims “Louise was the army’s *alma dea*, as truly a patriotic symbol as the brazen Goddess of Victory riding in her chariot atop the Brandenburg Gate.”<sup>174</sup> In March of the same year, the Dragoon-Regiment Nr. 5 was renamed “the Queen's Dragoons,” with Louise serving as the regiments *inhaber*, or symbolic leader. The regiment would remain the "Regiment of the Queen" even after her death. Although just a symbolic leader, Louise’s carriage would lead the regiment through the Brandenburg Gate wearing the regiment’s colors of red, blue, and gold in the fall of 1806. She would follow them until October 13<sup>th</sup> “just outside Auerstedt,”<sup>175</sup> according to a letter she wrote to her son, the crown prince Frederick William from the Naumburg Headquarters. It was here that Louise was seen by the Duke of Brunswick who exclaimed: ““What are you doing here, madam? For God's sake, what are you doing here?”<sup>176</sup> Although Louise explained that she was safer from the French traveling with the army than traveling without it, the Duke explained that the French were close: “...Tomorrow we have to fight a bloody and decisive battle. You cannot stay here, that's completely out of the question.”<sup>177</sup> Louise left, finally realizing the danger. Indeed, a bloody battle, which would radically alter the fate of Prussia, would ensue the very next day. This, however, was the closest Louise ever came to seeing action as the symbolic leader of the Queen’s Dragoons. Louise would not ever hold any formal military power.

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<sup>174</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 87.

<sup>175</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 290.

<sup>176</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 290.

<sup>177</sup> Luise, 290.



Louise would, however, legitimize her interest in the war through her role as a martial consort, one of her duties as *Landesmutter*. Louise's letters strongly demonstrate the *Landesmutter's* role as a patriotic supporter of the military leader—the King. Her letters from 1806 to 1810 are particularly significant to the development of this role, as it was the period when the Prussians went to war and dealt with the aftermath of defeat. Writing often to her husband during this time, Louise encouraged him to stay strong. It is in this encouragement and support that Louise gained influence over military affairs. Through supporting her husband, Louise's interest in the military becomes legitimized, and eventually put her in a position to meet with Napoleon during the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Tilsit.

Even in the face of defeat, Louise encouraged the king to be strong. The day before the disastrous defeat at Jena, when things were looking bleak for the Prussian army, Louise remained positive and tried to encourage her husband to stay positive as well. One way she did this was by sharing the encouraging reactions of those around her: “Everyone I met was delighted when they heard (the troops in particular) that the French were near and there certainly will be a strong affair tomorrow.”<sup>178</sup> Here, she also shared the morale of the Prussian people—reportedly excited for the upcoming battle with the French. Describing the troops' reactions specifically, she added, “I arrived here after 6 o'clock, all the regiments were shouting: Long live the king and the queen” to ensure the king of his troops' support.<sup>179</sup>

She continued to support his efforts through encouraging words: “God make you strong!” she writes, “And give you a fierce battle.”<sup>180</sup> She concluded with a similar sentiment,

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<sup>178</sup> Luise, *Briefe Und Aufzeichnungen 1786-1810*, 292.

<sup>179</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>180</sup> Luise, 292.

encouraging the king that he must remain confident in order to be an effective leader.<sup>181</sup> She also expressed how much the war meant to her, writing, “You understand how I care about it right now! I'm not talking about anything else that concerns us, it's not the moment to weaken in any way.”<sup>182</sup> She was true to her words—this particular letter mentions nothing besides the war effort.

Her letters to her husband remained positive even after she heard of the defeat. Louise continued to express the possibility of a future victory in her letters by writing, “By the way, I hope that not everything is lost yet and that God will help us. You still have troops, the people worship you and are ready to do anything.”<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, she reasoned that it was not his leadership that was at fault, but that of Duke Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand which caused the defeat: “The Duke is the only cause of our misfortune, he could not lead the army, as they say everywhere. May God enlighten you for the appointment of a general who would be worthy to lead this glorious army.”<sup>184</sup> It is also noteworthy that Louise was not interested in discussing peace. In one letter, she begged her husband: “Only for God's sake no shameful peace.”<sup>185</sup> Clearly, she was trying her best to focus the King's attention on the future and the possibility of recovering from the defeat.

Only a week before Napoleon arrived in Berlin, Louise wrote to the King reminding him of the support of his people. She was specific: “12,000 citizens want to arm themselves and 1,500 of the most distinguished people besides the 12,000 are also willing to follow you and

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<sup>181</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>182</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>183</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>184</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>185</sup> Luise, 292.

fight for you wherever you want.”<sup>186</sup> Although this was an impressive number, she also reminded him of what the people were willing to sacrifice. She wrote, “It is indescribable how much they love you, to sacrifice everything, their blood and good; Children and father, everyone is ready to protect you!”<sup>187</sup> Louise also displayed her patriotic hope in Prussia in writing to her son, Friedrich Wilhelm. She wrote to him before the Battle of Jena, “If it were possible to obtain peace, it would be great luck; but I am also convinced that if there is war, everyone will endeavor to preserve the old glory of Prussia with all their efforts.”<sup>188</sup> She, as the martial consort, still had hope that Prussia would prevail.

Louise’s role as a patriotic supporter during the war was later preserved in the creation of the *Luisenorden*. According to Hagemann, the award was created for Frederick William’s birthday in 1814 as a “female counterpart to the Iron Cross.”<sup>189</sup> Recipients were exclusively women, notably those “who had distinguished themselves in patriotic charity, especially in nursing soldiers.”<sup>190</sup> The creation of a medal honoring these specific achievements in Louise’s name not only “indicates the recognition of the importance of the support of the home front,”<sup>191</sup> but also indicates the importance of Louise’s role in inspiring support on the home front.

In each supportive line in her letters, Louise legitimizes her formal power as martial consort through her position as a supportive wife and mother of the crown prince. These same lines of support, however, could easily be analyzed as indicative of informal power as well. As previously argued, Louise’s involvement in military affairs was only possible because of her close relationship with Frederick William. This relationship meant that Louise remained in close

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<sup>186</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>187</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>188</sup> Luise, 292.

<sup>189</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 232.

<sup>190</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 232.

<sup>191</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 232.

contact with the King and received constant updates on military affairs. It even justified her communication and later meeting with Napoleon himself. According to Wright, it was Hardenberg who advised Louise before she met with the French emperor. He coached her “to speak only as a wife and a mother” in negotiating the terms of the Peace of Tilsit, encouraging her to use her domestic authority as *Landesmutter* to appeal to Napoleon.<sup>192</sup> Although ultimately unsuccessful, Louise’s meeting with Napoleon serves as the culminating example of Louise’s power. It was a combination of her formal and informal power and her role as wife, mother, and *Landesmutter*, that made her an instrument for the Prussians to potentially reach Napoleon.

There is much mythology surrounding Louise’s actions at Tilsit. It is certain, however, that things were not going well for the Prussians even before Louise’s arrival in the East Prussian town. According to Clark, Frederick William was belittled by Napoleon who “advertised to the world the inferior status of the defeated King of Prussia.”<sup>193</sup> This belittlement included Frederick William standing “miserably” on the bank of the river, while Napoleon and Tsar Alexander of Russia met on a raft to negotiate, and Napoleon “hectoring him about the many military and administrative errors he had made during the war.”<sup>194</sup> By early July, he decided to write to Louise requesting her assistance.

Louise immediately made the journey to her husband, despite being pregnant for the ninth time. Louise stayed outside of Tilsit, in the small village of Picktupöhnen. Upon her arrival, she met with Hardenberg. According to Wright, “She had bargained of his telling her exactly what to say to Napoleon...”<sup>195</sup> He apparently advised her to avoid confronting Napoleon about the slander written about Louise in the French bulletins. These bulletins used Louise’s

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<sup>192</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 169.

<sup>193</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 309.

<sup>194</sup> Clark, 309.

<sup>195</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 169.

non-traditional involvement in politics and the military as a tool to criticize her role as queen, as well as the Prussian monarchy in general. The representations in these bulletins will be analyzed in great detail in chapter three. Louise met with Napoleon on July 6, 1807 and despite Hardenberg's advice, Wright claims Louise immediately addressed the slander, stating: "Sire, I know you have accused me of meddling in politics."<sup>196</sup> It is important to note, however, that the exact dialogue of the meeting is unknown. Louise and Napoleon were left completely alone and according to Wright, Louise never finished her diary entry from that day. The remains of that unfinished entry, along with letters describing the meeting, are the only evidence available to piece together their conversation.<sup>197</sup> It is known, however, that Louise left her first meeting with the French Emperor feeling optimistic.

Louise and Frederick William dined with Napoleon that night, and their discussion continued. According to Wright, Napoleon "gave most of his attention to Louise" and continued to speak with her after dinner. It was then that Napoleon asked "Madame, what exactly do you want of me?" and Louise responded by discussing the importance of Prussia's providences to the Kingdom, Magdeburg in particular, which were to be lost under the treaty. Napoleon allegedly responded with a smile: "You want a great deal."<sup>198</sup> Although Louise was initially optimistic, it became clear during their final dinner together that Napoleon was not likely to alter the stipulations of the treaty. As she rode away from the house in Tilsit that served as the Prussian headquarters, she allegedly cried: "In that house I was cruelly deceived!"<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> *Hohenzollern Jahrbuch* (1899), 236, quoted in Constance Wright, *Beautiful Enemy: A Biography of Queen Louise of Prussia* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1969), 171; Wright, 172-175.

<sup>197</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 245.

<sup>198</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 173.

<sup>199</sup> Wright, *Beautiful Enemy*, 176.

### **Conclusion: Louise and Early Modern Queens**

Although the source and extent of Louise's power varied, it is certain that she held it and that it was often intimately linked with her gender. Whether it was formal or informal, such power depended on Louise's position as wife and *Landesmutter*, just as many Prussian women needed to justify their involvement in the war through supporting the family or the home. Although this analysis relies upon an understanding of gender in Prussia specifically, these examples of Louise's power are comparable to the power of several early modern queens.

For example, as previously mentioned Wilson argues that Johanna Elisabeth and Maria Auguste were limited by prevailing norms of gender to the roles of wife, mother, or a participant in the court. Louise, too, is limited by these roles; however, Louise used the roles of wife and mother to exercise political influence. She used her position as wife to legitimize everything from her interference in state politics to her interest in military affairs. Unlike Johanna Elisabeth and Maria Auguste of Württemberg, instead of being limited by her feminine roles, Louise was empowered by them. This empowerment can also be compared to Biskup's analysis of Elisabeth Christine of Prussia, one of Louise's predecessors. According to Biskup, the Frederick II's personality and preferences created a situation where he became reliant on Elisabeth Christine's court. Elisabeth Christine therefore held informal power. Louise also held informal power because of her husband's timid personality and their strong relationship. Unfortunately for Elisabeth Christine, it was the distance and poor relationship with her husband which gave her power, whereas it was the opposite for Louise: her close relationship with Frederick William meant the king relied on her for advice and support. Finally, parallels can be drawn between Louise and her aunt Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen consort of England, which go beyond their familial bonds. As explained by Orr, Charlotte used an acceptable activity, reading,

in order to spread political ideas. This involved both formal and informal power, because Charlotte was acting within a recognized role as a woman to spread ideas and act as a confidant for her husband, through her devotion to reading. Louise also acted within a recognized role as a wife and a confidant for her husband; however, instead of being a catalyst for the spread of ideas like Charlotte, Louise's domestic roles as a wife and mother as well as her personal interest in military affairs allowed her to become an instrument of negotiation for the Prussian state. As a mother and wife, Louise could uniquely approach Napoleon as not just the mother of the crown prince, but as the mother of her people. Her involvement at Tilsit had nothing to do with her negotiating skills, but rather the feminine role of being a being a caring domestic figure. However different the details, in both examples the queens rely on a combination of formal and informal power.

Clark compares Louise's meeting with Napoleon to an early modern attempt to negotiate peace. He writes that sending Louise was "unwittingly evoking parallels with the 1630s, when the unhappy Elector George William had sent his womenfolk out of Berlin to parley with the approaching Gustavus Adolphus."<sup>200</sup> Here, Clark is describing an instance during the Thirty Years War where George William, the elector of Brandenburg and Duke of Prussia, was desperately trying to save his territory from the Swedish King. Clark describes George William similarly to Frederick William: "a timid, indecisive man ill equipped to master the extreme predicaments of his era..."<sup>201</sup> When he realized Gustavus Adolphus and his army was close, he sent not just any womenfolk, but the "women of his family," to convince the King to negotiate. Louise was sent on a very similar mission—to convince Napoleon to be open to negotiations.

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<sup>200</sup> Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 310.

<sup>201</sup> Clark, 20.

Unlike the women of George William's family, Louise ultimately failed to persuade Napoleon, but her presence at Tilsit was indicative of both her formal and informal power as queen.

Considering these various parallels, it seems that acceptable roles for women during the early modern period and the *Sattelzeit* period in Prussia are fairly similar, with queens expected to act within the gendered roles of wives and mothers. Louise's power as queen is comparable to several early modern queens; however it seems the war allowed Louise to use her role as wife and mother to legitimize a much deeper involvement than Johanna Elisabeth, Maria Auguste and Elisabeth Christine, each of whom experienced limitations on the extent of power granted to them by these roles. Louise would, of course, experience limitations and even negative consequences for her seemingly un-feminine actions. These consequences, in the form of negative media representations of the Queen, came from outside the Prussian state, inspired by intentions far beyond limiting the queen's power. Her prevalence in the media set her apart from early modern queens and will be a central part of what makes her a *Sattelzeit* Queen.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **From "Dressed Like An Amazon" to a "Defenseless Woman:" Representations of Louise of in the Media**

In 1876, August Kluckhohn published *Luise Königin von Preussen: zur Erinnerung an ihren hundertjährigen Geburtstag*. This commemorative memorial book celebrated the Queen's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and was translated into English by Elizabeth H. Denio in 1881. In it Kluckhohn aimed to highlight the virtues of the queen. To do so, he included a letter from Karoline von Berg, a lady in waiting, to Baron vom Stein:



She disdains... the little expedients which power might afford her; one must esteem her the higher. Feeling her duty as a wife, she shares all the King's sympathies and opinions, defending those that he defends. Could one reproach her for that? Meanwhile, the misfortunes have been so great and cruel that her eyes are opened to many things. She is a mother, and she cannot permit the future of her son, of her children, to be a matter of indifference; for this reason, she clings closely to her country.<sup>202</sup>

By including this letter in his commemorative book, Kluckhohn represented Louise less as a queen, but more as a helpless domesticated figure. Her virtues are not that of a queen, but rather that of a wife and a mother. Representations such as this reveal the image of Louise shaped by the media. This media presence began during her lifetime, but became most pronounced after her death. Writers like Kluckhohn became responsible for shaping new representations of the queen, often projecting contemporary societal constructions onto Louise.

My analysis of Louise's power revealed many similarities to early modern queens; however, as a *Sattelzeit* queen, Louise also shares much in common with modern queens. This chapter provides a close analysis of various representations of Louise in the media. Louise's prominence in the media, not just in Prussia but also in France and Britain, can be compared to the relationship between many modern queens and the media. Although Louise was positively represented in the German and British media during and briefly after her death, the French media represented her as an unfeminine warmonger. This representation was a direct commentary on her irregular involvement in the political, or masculine, sphere of influence. The French's representation of Louise also represents an attack upon Frederick William's masculinity as king. The French attempt to slander Louise did not go unnoticed. Both the British and the German media came to Louise's defense, highlighting her noble qualities—often those which were acceptable feminine qualities during the nineteenth century. These domestic qualities will later

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<sup>202</sup> August Kluckhohn, *Louise, Queen of Prussia: A Memorial*, trans. Elizabeth H. Denio (Boston: Rand, 1889), 42.

become a part of a larger narrative in which Louise becomes a martyred victim of Napoleon, and is immortalized as a womanly and beloved queen after her death in 1810.

The second half of the chapter provides an analysis of various representations of Louise later in the nineteenth century. These representations often had larger, political goals, but generally portray Louise positively—as a beloved and virtuous queen. These representations of Louise often focus on acceptable feminine roles—not acknowledging or in some cases denying her involvement in political or military affairs. It is important to note that this chapter only provides a brief survey of various media representations, using selected examples to represent a vast array of media outlets; however, even a survey of these various representations can support Louise’s position as a transitional queen. Her presence in media outlets before and after her death, both in Prussia and abroad, creates a bridge between media representations of queens of the early modern era and the reign of modern queens such as Victoria.

### **Media During the anti-Napoleonic Wars**

An analysis of German, French and British media is necessary to fully understand how Louise was represented in the media as queen from 1806-1813. Select sources from these three countries can provide a broader understanding of how Louise’s role as queen was represented by both her supporters and her enemies, as well as how her gender was used to criticize her legitimacy, as Queen. First, an analysis of German media reveals Louise’s popularity amongst her subjects, who celebrated her as a noble queen, wife, and mother. This noble representation is contradicted by French representations of Louise, which blames her for the war with France—and for Prussia’s defeat. The British media, reprinting the French bulletins, came to Louise’s

defense, criticizing Napoleon and asserting her qualities as a noble and dutiful queen.

Collectively, an analysis of these sources reveals Louise's predominance in international media, and how the media used her position as queen as a tool to their own advantage during the war.

### **German Media: 1806-1813**

The anti-Napoleonic Wars witnessed a prolific production of new media and topical literature in Prussia. The production of newspapers ebbed and flowed between 1806-1813 as the number of papers dropped due to censorship under French occupation and then boomed again after 1812. Hagemann explains this censorship came from both the French and the Prussians, as "from the defeat of October 1806 until the end of the French occupation in December 1808, censorship was the province of the Napoleonic administration, which controlled the letter post, mail service, publishing and book trade."<sup>203</sup> The Prussian government reinforced censorship in order to "forestall French sanctions," and even expanded it to unoccupied areas.<sup>204</sup> This censorship was mainly concerned with political criticism, though newspapers that focused on "literature, scholarship and art; or trade, industry and agriculture; or contained only advertisements," continued to appear in print. It is worth noting, as Hagemann does, this censorship was not always successful. Some editors, especially those publishing historical-political journals, were able to circumvent censorship. She notes that those dodging censorship often "had their works printed illegally and anonymously or they chose to print where censorship practice was more liberal and then smuggled the work into the territorial state in question."<sup>205</sup> A consideration of this censorship is crucial in analyzing the German media's representation of

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<sup>203</sup> Karen Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon: History, Culture and Memory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 87.

<sup>204</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 87.

<sup>205</sup> Hagemann, 88.

Louise during the final four years of her life, as it indicates that critical representations of the Queen were limited or being published illegally.

An example of a journal that printed news can be found in *Pantheon: A Journal for Science and Art* published in Leipzig. In 1809 *Pantheon* published a poem titled “On the return of the King and Queen to Berlin.” Although the poem does not make any direct statements about Louise, it does provide insight on Louise’s representation as a beloved queen, even during her lifetime. The first stanza of the poem describes an emotional crowd receiving the king and queen. It describes how the crowd had waited for their return: “It is finally here after years / the longed for beautiful luck,” but notes that, before their arrival, it is “...not joy which can be seen,” but instead, the author perceives the crowd as “mourning.”<sup>206</sup> The second stanza alludes that this mourning was for the years of oppression under Napoleonic occupation, and the absence of the king and queen; however, the return of the king and the queen spurs “a river of joy, because the night is gone now.”<sup>207</sup> The king and queen are the sun in this poem, their return bringing the warmth of spring to Berlin. Although this poem speaks about both the king and queen, it can serve as an example of how Louise and Frederick William were seen during the anti-Napoleonic Wars. Here, the royal family’s presence in Berlin is longed for and their arrival brings joy. Even at face value, the poem serves as an example of a positive representation of Louise, based on her strong relationship with her subjects. The role of Louise and Frederick William in this poem could also be interpreted as that of a protective mother and father, returning to care for their children. The author places much emphasis on the tears of the crowd, making it seem vulnerable

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<sup>206</sup> K.F.L. Kannegießer, “Bei der Rückkehr des Königs und der Königin nach Berlin, den 23sten Dezember 1809,” *Pantheon: A Journal for Science and Art*, (1810), 337.

<sup>207</sup> Kannegießer, “Bei der Rückkehr des Königs und der Königin nach Berlin,” 338.

and lost without the king and queen, as a child is lost without its mother and father. At both face value and with deeper interpretation, Louise is celebrated as a beloved queen.

Immediately after Louise's death, many publications commemorated her life. In June of 1811, the *Neue Berlinische Monatsschrift* published "The Wanderer: A cantata to the orphaned birthdays of the unforgettable, Queen Luise of Prussia." This poem was written to celebrate the first birthday after Louise's death. Unlike the poem published in the *Pantheon*, it also features a short introduction. This introduction also serves as a reflection of Louise's positive representation in the media. It presents her death as "A blow that hit the world," and justifies the public's mourning of Louise, calling her a "rightly honored queen."<sup>208</sup> It even includes information about the author of the poem, "who was penetrated by the most tremendous pain when he gave the following words a musical accompaniment..." The article also describes how the composer wished to present Louise: "[H]e demanded words for the sounds, which in his mind celebrated the heavenly soul, which was no longer to glorify the earth."<sup>209</sup> It concludes by explaining the need for such commemorative literature: "Luise needs nothing from us; but we need her never fading remembrance, her inspiring example, we need the sanctifying feeling of her beautiful soul...we need the purifying mourning for the noble."<sup>210</sup> The introduction provides useful insight to the purpose of the poem, and how the composer wished to represent Louise. Just as *Pantheon* represented Louise's absence from Berlin as a period of mourning, the *Neue Berlinische Monatsschrift* represented her death as a tremendous loss.

The poem itself describes a pilgrimage to see Louise, which then turns into a pilgrimage to Louise's burial site. The poem praises Louise, focusing on her noble qualities and acceptable

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<sup>208</sup> C.A. Tiedge, "Die Wanderer. Eine Kantate dem verwaisten Geburtstage der unvergeßlichen Königin Luise von Preussen gewidmet," *Berlinische Monatschrift*, (1811), 193.

<sup>209</sup> Tiedge, "Die Wanderer," 194.

<sup>210</sup> Tiedge, 197.

roles as queen and mother. It proclaims, “The motherly woman... How sovereign she was, how regal and noble!...She is not anymore!” transitioning from the pilgrimage to the realization of her death.<sup>211</sup> The rest of the poem describes the grief of the travelers, who sing out, “Follow us to the holy grave...Find there the silent sorrow...”<sup>212</sup> As in *Pantheon*, Louise is honored and seen as a motherly figure. By writing from the perspective of a pilgrimage, the breadth of Louise’s impact becomes clear—her death is represented as a devastating loss for not just for the royal family, but also for all of her Prussian subjects. In this poem, Louise emerges as a beloved and popular queen.

Although political commentary on Louise between 1806-1813 was limited due to both Prussian and French censorship, it is clear what was published portrayed Louise as noble and beloved, often highlighting her feminine role as mother. Although these representations of Louise are limited, discourse on the queen increased dramatically after her death—particularly between the years 1813 and 1815. Highly politicized representations of Louise appeared again in German media around the 50<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of her death as well as following the unification of the Germans after 1871. These representations will be explored later in this chapter, as a part of a larger analysis of commemorative literature.

### **Napoleon’s Bulletins: Amazons, Armide, and Helen of Troy**

Although praised by the Prussians, Louise’s involvement in political and military affairs was not always viewed as an acceptable feminine role for a queen. Her involvement was occasionally interpreted as disrupting traditional gender roles, and used as a weapon by the French to criticize not just Louise, but the Prussian monarchy as a whole. The most prominent

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<sup>211</sup> Tiedge, 201.

<sup>212</sup> Tiedge, 204.

example of this criticism can be seen in Napoleon's bulletins, often used as a platform to slander both the king and queen.

Napoleon was a master of the media, mostly controlling the press through censorship and even the elimination of many newspapers entirely. According to Dwyer, "The suppression of newspapers in France was little short of spectacular... instead of getting rid of the journalists, the regime got rid of the newspapers they wrote for."<sup>213</sup> As an example, he notes that by 1811 there were only four newspapers left in Paris, each heavily censored by the regime. The regime would also produce its own news reports in military bulletins. According to J. David Markham, these bulletins reflected Napoleon's worldview, as he wrote many of them directly, and are mostly focused on detailing the progress of military operations. It is important to note, however, that the bulletins were assembled for the general public, which included not just the people of France and the Empire, but also that in other countries, notably Britain and Russia, as the bulletins were often translated and published internationally. For example, the November 13, 1806 issue of London's *The Times* featured an almost exact replica of the fourteenth and fifteenth bulletin on its front page. These bulletins, both from October 22 of that year, appear almost unedited. A single sentence, which referred to Britain as "the enemy" seems to be the only alteration.<sup>214</sup> This meant that the bulletins held international importance, for "they were an excellent way for [Napoleon] to reach not only his army and his people, but also the people of his enemies."<sup>215</sup> Louise was often the topic of these bulletins, especially in 1806. Through these highly visible

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<sup>213</sup> Philip G. Dwyer, *Citizen Emperor: Napoleon in Power*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 16.

<sup>214</sup> "From The French Papers." *Times*, Nov. 13, 1806, 1; Napoleon, I, Emperor of the French, and J. David Markham, *Imperial Glory: The Bulletins of Napoleon's Grande Armée, 1805-1814, with Additional Supporting Documents*. (London: Greenhill, 2003), 91.

<sup>215</sup> Napoleon, *Imperial Glory*, 6.

bulletins, Napoleon attempted to delegitimize Louise's power publicly through public criticism of her gender.<sup>216</sup>

Louise is mentioned in the "First Bulletin" of the Prussian campaign. Written on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1806, the bulletin recounts a communication between Napoleon and one of his Marshals, Luis-Alexandre Berthier before setting out to Saxony and drawing nearer to Prussia. It quotes Napoleon telling Berthier, "they say a beautiful Queen is there, who desires to see battle, let us be courteous, and march to Saxony without going to bed!"<sup>217</sup> In this first mention of Louise, she is already being depicted as war-like, and is being used to justify moving against Prussia immediately. Although this justification was written in a rather mocking and tongue-in-cheek manner, the implication that Louise was a warmonger is only intensified as the bulletin justifies Napoleon's slander. It claims, "The Emperor was right to speak this way, for the Queen of Prussia is with the army, dressed like an Amazon, wearing the uniform of their regiment of dragoons, and writing 20 letters a day to excite incendiary feelings from all sides."<sup>218</sup> This statement alone clearly indicates Napoleon's opinions on the queen, and uses gender as a means of criticism against Louise and her power and authority as queen.

Although meant as slander, this statement has a certain degree of accuracy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Louise followed the army as it traveled to Auerstedt. She writes about this journey in her own letters. Although she does not mention what she was wearing at this time, there is visual evidence that Louise wore feminized versions of Prussian uniforms. From 1808-1809 Wilhelm Ternite, who later served as Frederick William's portrait painter, was commissioned to create a portrait of Louise in her riding habit. The portrait (see fig.

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<sup>216</sup> Napoleon, 1-8.

<sup>217</sup> Napoleon, 77.

<sup>218</sup> Napoleon, 77.



1) titled *Königin Luise im Reitkleid „à la hussarde*,“ depicts Louise standing straight, her hands crossed a bit above her waist. One hand is gloveless, while the other holds a riding crop. Her hair is drawn back under a black hat. Her chemisette covers all of her neck, a typical style for Louise. Perhaps the most prominent detail of the portrait is her spencer, which is dark blue with gold laces and buttons.<sup>219</sup> It is certain that the portrait depicts a real riding habit worn by Louise, as the actual hat and spencer still exist, and are currently on display in the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in Berlin. According to the museum, the hat is made out of rabbit-skin felt and ornamented with ostrich feathers. It was most likely the latest fashion trend, as it was purchased from a famous hat-maker in London. The woolen spencer, however, was most likely designed to mirror the style of Schill’s uniform, as it was the same shade of blue and had the same yellow-gold lacings. Viet Veltzke argues, “The jacket was a political scheme and thought of as riding clothes for the presentation and also in front of general audience.”<sup>220</sup> This is significant because it indicates that the spencer was a decision designed to promote Schill and broadcast Louise’s support to the public.

A second portrait (see fig. 2) also by Ternite, depicts Louise in a different spencer, this one inspired by her dragoon’s uniform. Here, Louise wears an identical chemisette to the previous portrait, but a different dark blue spencer: the facings are red, with silver-white and gold lace. The facing and lace matched the facings of the queen’s dragoon regiment.<sup>221</sup> The

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<sup>219</sup> Wilhelm Ternite, *Königin Luise im Reitkleid „à la hussarde*, “1810, painting, 30.9 x 23.9 in., Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten, Verwaltung Jagdschloss in Constance Wright, *Beautiful Enemy: A Biography of Queen Louise of Prussia*, (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1969).

<sup>220</sup> Veit Veltzke, *Für Die Freiheit Gegen Napoleon. Ferdinand Von Schill Preußen Und Die Deutsche Nation*, (Köln: Böhlau, 2009), 125.

<sup>221</sup> Wilhelm Ternite, “Prussian Queen Louise in Dragoon Uniform,” 1837-8, oil on canvas, 76 x 76 cm, National Gallery of Slovenia, Ljubljana, accessed March 28, 2019. <https://www.ng-slo.si/en/304/prussian-queen-louise-in-dragoon-uniform-wilhelm-ternite?workId=1572>.

actual spencer is on display in the Hohenzollern Castle, in Bisingen. These two paintings, as well as material evidence, suggest that Louise was not afraid to be represented in uniform, and openly identified with Prussia's military. This representation is significant as the French represent her as unfeminine and unnatural, using Louise's position within traditional gender constructions against her.

The most notable part of this quote is the use of the word "Amazon" to describe Louise in her quasi-military dress. Amazon is not the only allusion made in reference to Louise. For example, this line is followed by: "He seems to see the confused *Armide*, setting fire to her own palace."<sup>222</sup> In a later bulletin, on October 30<sup>th</sup>, Louise was described as "a beauty as fatal to the people of Prussia as Helen was to the Trojans."<sup>223</sup> There is no doubt the use of these allusions are rhetorical devices meant to make the reader question Louise's femininity. In this context, Amazon is a reference to an all-female tribe of warriors in Greek mythology. The Amazons have a long and complicated cultural history, as explained by Adrienne Mayor, who aims to separate the Amazon myths from the facts regarding real Amazon-like women. In doing so, she addresses a long list of attributes associated with Amazons. These include "repulsive monsters or 'Others' who threatened the Greek masculine ego; as figures justifying gender inequality or expressing fears of female rebellion against male oppression...as symbols of wild, animal—like sexuality... as asexual 'un—women'..."<sup>224</sup> Although it is impossible to say exactly which of these stereotypes Napoleon was thinking of when he called Louise an Amazon, it is clear that "Amazon" has deep connotative meaning, suggesting that Louise was acting in an un-womanly manner. It is no coincidence that the word "Amazon" is placed in juxtaposition with Louise's

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<sup>222</sup> Napoleon, *Imperial Glory*, 77.

<sup>223</sup> Napoleon, 104.

<sup>224</sup> Mayor, Adrienne. *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women Across the Ancient World*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 26.

military uniform and a report of her leading her dragoons. To recall Prussian constructions of gender, women's roles in the war were justified through their connections to the home. In Prussia's case, men served in the military and that solidified their position of power in the family and in society. In isolating Louise's involvement in the war to her connection with the military, Louise comes across as disrupting the traditional constructions of gender—as an un-feminine queen who has the potential to threaten masculine power.

The bulletin's allusion to *Armide* can also be interpreted as commentary on Louise's femininity. *Armide* is a reference to character in a French opera by the same name, written by Jean-Baptiste Lully and Philippe Quinault. It was considered a masterpiece of its time, and stood out from other pieces by Lully, as it focused on the psychological development of the main character, *Armide*. In the tragedy, *Armide* is a warrior and magician who captures Crusaders and commands daemons, but falls in love with an enemy knight. *Armide* uses her magic to force him to love her, but ultimately, the knight escapes. In a fit of rage, *Armide* destroys her palace and is left alone and distraught.<sup>225</sup> Susan McClary, analyzing women in seventeenth century operas, categorizes *Armide* as a “monster” and claims that she “inspired both admiration and anxiety,” just as some powerful women of the court had during the seventeenth century.<sup>226</sup> She describes *Armide*'s passions as “violence, tenderness, shame, remorse, vengeance.”<sup>227</sup> These passions can be interpreted a part of what McClary calls *Armide*'s masculine qualities. She argues, “both *Médée* [a character in Marc-Antoine Charpentier's opera of the same name] and *Armide* possess

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<sup>225</sup> Lois Rosow, "Armide (i)." Grove Music Online. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-5000900197>. 2002.

<sup>226</sup> Susan McClary, "The Dragon Cart: The Femme Fatale in Seventeenth-Century French Opera," In *Desire and Pleasure in Seventeenth-Century Music*, 258-74. (University of California Press, 2012), 263-264.

<sup>227</sup> McClary, "The Dragon Cart," 268.

cultural attributes of ‘the masculine’ in their success as warriors and military leaders; their downfalls...result from their inadvertent surrender to their feminine sides,” such as their passions and emotions.<sup>228</sup> It is not a coincidence that McClary refers to these attributes as the character’s “Amazonian predispositions.”<sup>229</sup> In comparing Louise to Armide, the bulletin, again, depicts her as un-womanly. As McClary’s argument stands, the bulletin can be interpreted as implying that Louise’s involvement in the war, in its violation of gender boundaries, would be Prussia’s undoing.

This inference can also be found in the bulletin’s comparison of Louise to another figure of Greek mythology, Helen of Troy. Again, it can be difficult to understand exactly which interpretation of Helen of Troy the bulletin is referring to, as there are many variations, but the pretext that Louise is “a beauty as fatal to the people...as Helen” informs the reader that Louise is at fault for the war.<sup>230</sup> According to Mihoko Suzuki, through a fascination in Western culture with the fall of Troy, “Helen attained the status of a secular Eve. Like Eve and Pandora, Helen became a type of all women who bring woe to man.”<sup>231</sup> The bulletins seem to place Louise on this list of women who cause trouble for men. In this instance, however, Louise is not disrupting traditional conceptions of gender. Rather, it is one of her accepted womanly attributes, that of beauty, which allowed her to lead men to Prussia’s ruin. Adding this to the previous allusions, it becomes clear that these comparisons aim to criticize Louise’s queenly authority by using societal understandings of gender. This type of criticism is a common theme in the Bulletin’s

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<sup>228</sup> McClary, 273.

<sup>229</sup> McClary, *The Dragon Cart*, 273

<sup>230</sup> Napoleon, *Imperial Glory*, 104;

<sup>231</sup> Mihoko Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen: Authority, Difference, and the Epic*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 13.

many mentions of Louise. These three allusions, to Amazons, Armide, and to Helen of Troy, were intended to criticize Louise's femininity and humiliate her on an international stage.

Although the eighth Bulletin, dated October 16<sup>th</sup> 1806, does not make any direct literary comparisons, it continued to emphasize Louise's desire for war. Claiming to be able to see Louise from French posts near Weimar, it describes her as being "in continual trances and alarms."<sup>232</sup> It also claims that she "ceaselessly stirred up the King and his generals. She wanted blood..."<sup>233</sup> These descriptions make Louise out to be a witch or sorceress, controlling the opinions of the powerful males around her. Europe has a long history of associating women with witches and sorcery. According to Clarke Garrett, in many cases, this association was rooted in societal constructions of gender, and often occurred when those constructions were disrupted. Referring to early modern Europe in particular, he explains, "When a woman failed to maintain her reputation because of inappropriate female behavior, she faced not ostracism...but distrust, animosity, and even fear. Unless the woman left...years of distrust and suspicion might culminate in accusations of witchcraft..."<sup>234</sup> This can be applied to Louise as—yet again—the bulletins criticize her involvement in the war as unfeminine.

A later bulletin from October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1806 expands this criticism to include Louise's involvement in politics as well. It reports, "It was from this moment that the Queen left the care of her interior affairs and the grave occupations of the dressing table to meddle in the affairs of state, to influence the King and spark off everywhere the fire with which she had been possessed."<sup>235</sup> This quote is significant, as it directly criticizes Louise's shift from womanly and

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<sup>232</sup> Napoleon, *Imperial Glory*, 85.

<sup>233</sup> Napoleon, 85.

<sup>234</sup> Clarke Garrett, "Women and Witches: Patterns of Analysis," *Signs* 3, no. 2 (1977): 466. Accessed March 27, 2019. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3173296>.

<sup>235</sup> Napoleon, 95.

domestic “interior affairs,” or rather the affairs of the home as indicated by the inclusion of “dressing table,” to the masculine “affairs of state.”<sup>236</sup> The bulletin suggests that this inappropriate female behavior occurred because Louise was possessed and that she possessed the king as well. This criticism can be interpreted as an attempt to delegitimize her informal power over her husband and incite suspicion over her involvement in politics.

Louise’s involvement in politics is continually criticized. The “Second Bulletin” from October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1806 claims that Louise and Prince Louis of Prussia led the political war faction, and furthermore, shaped the opinions of the court. It reports, “Following the examples of those two great people, all the adherents of the court seem eager for war.”<sup>237</sup> The bulletin then predicts the regret of this faction: “But when war shall present itself in all its horrors, everyone will excuse themselves from having been culpable, and to have brought down the thunder of war upon the peaceable provinces of the north.”<sup>238</sup> The imagery here is significant, as this will not be the only time Louise faces the “thunder of war.”<sup>239</sup> In 1806, a satirical print of Louise (see fig. 3) was published in France, featuring Louise and Frederick William battling a metaphorical storm. Under the king and queen, the caption reads: “The King of Prussia going to war against the French, his wife follows him exciting his ardor.” Frederick William is indeed placed in front of Louise, and seems to be bearing the brunt of the war, as lightning, emanating from an eagle, strikes him. The eagle can be interpreted as the French Imperial Eagle, used to represent Napoleon’s Grande Armée. It holds a torn treaty in its beak, symbolizing the potential alliance between the French and the Prussians. One bolt of lightning has cracked Fredrick William’s sword and appears to be knocking his crown off his head. The other bolt appears to have struck

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<sup>236</sup> Napoleon, 95.

<sup>237</sup> Napoleon, 78.

<sup>238</sup> Napoleon, 78.

<sup>239</sup> Napoleon, 78.

his genitalia, which can be interpreted as metaphoric act of emasculation. The sexual implications of this print cannot be ignored. The caption itself is sexual, as the French word “excite” means to excite sexually. Louise, is depicted holding a cracked pistol. The placement of the pistol suggests that Louise holds Frederick William’s manhood, and that the French have damaged it. In fact, Louise is depicted with more masculine qualities than the King. She too holds a sword, however, it has remained intact. She is depicted in a spencer similar to the one painted by Ternite, which resembled Schill’s. Her hair blows wildly as she takes a defensive stance towards the eagle.<sup>240</sup> It is clear that the print is suggesting that Louise is a wilder, less civilized opponent than her husband—whom she controls—and furthermore, that she is the more masculine of the two. In this print, Louise is more than prepared for the thunder of war—she is encouraging it.

It is important to note that in both the bulletin and the print, Frederick William is painted as the victim of Louise’s war faction. The bulletin predicts that the faction’s leaders will eventually place the blame on Frederick William, “the dupe of their own intrigues and artifices!”<sup>241</sup> In each instance that the bulletin criticizes Louise’s inappropriate behavior as a woman, it also implies that Frederick William has lost control, not only of his wife, but also of Prussia. These criticisms are therefore not just humiliating for Louise, but for her husband as well. For example, the bulletins often list Louise among those making decisions; this can be interpreted as emasculating for Frederick William, as it implies he needs his wife take action.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Anonymous, *Le Roi de Prusse allant à la guerre contre les Français, sa femme le suit et excite son ardeur*, 1806, print, 247 x 350 mm., (Paris, France) The British Museum, accessed March 28, 2019:

[https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details/collection\\_image\\_gallery.aspx?assetId=98016001&objectId=1336098&partId=1](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?assetId=98016001&objectId=1336098&partId=1).

<sup>241</sup> Napoleon, *Imperial Glory*, 78.

<sup>242</sup> Napoleon, 80.

Although Louise's influence over the king allotted her some power, it could also be interpreted as too much power, and was easily criticized by her enemies. For example, a bulletin from October 17<sup>th</sup>, details Napoleon's impression of Louise. It reports:

The Emperor is lodged at the Palace of Weimar, where the Queen of Prussia lodged days before. It appears that what is said of her is true. She is a woman with a very pretty figure, but little spirit, incapable of seeing the consequences of what she does. It is necessary today, rather than accusing her, to feel sorry for her because she ought to have great remorse for the evils that she has done to her country and for the influence that she has exercised on her husband the King, whom one must present as a perfectly honest man who wishes for peace and the well-being of his people.<sup>243</sup>

Here, Louise's influence over the king is depicted as misguided and even evil. At face value, Frederick William is depicted as an innocent victim of his wife's influence; however, in following his wife Frederick William can be interpreted as lacking the masculine values of valor, strength, and leadership.

Frederick William's bravery comes into question again in the "Fifteenth Bulletin" of October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1806. This bulletin reports a conversation between Louise and the King. According to the bulletin, Louise told the King "that it was said that he was not brave, and that if he did not make war, it was because he was afraid of putting himself at the head of his army."<sup>244</sup> The bulletin alludes that this greatly affected the king as he then "gave way, without giving up his private opinion that he was making a big mistake."<sup>245</sup> It is important to note that this was also published on the front page of *The Times* on November 13<sup>th</sup> of the same year. It seems Frederick William's masculinity and ability to lead could be questioned not just by the enemy, but by a potential ally, the British, as well.

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<sup>243</sup> Napoleon, 86.

<sup>244</sup> Napoleon, 92.

<sup>245</sup> Napoleon, 92.



Although Napoleon was not the official author of the bulletins or the print, based on his diligent control of the French media, it is fair to argue that these were pointed pieces of French propaganda aimed at an international audience. In each criticism of Louise, gender and gender constructions play a central role in delegitimizing her power. This propaganda in itself can serve as evidence that Louise held unnatural power as queen consort. The frequency of these criticisms of Louise as well as their prominence within the bulletins and in illustrations, indicate that she was indeed perceived as a threat to the French. She was enough of a threat that a legitimate attempt was made to lessen her power and humiliate her in the public eye. It was also an effort to diminish and intimidate an enemy. It is also significant that this criticism was being broadcasted internationally and could have affected the views of potential allies in the war against the French.

### **British Sympathy for an “Unfortunate Queen”**

Despite the many British papers that published the French criticisms, numerous others remained sympathetic to the Prussian Queen. In considering coverage of Louise in Britain, it is important to note that before the 1806 defeats, Prussia and Britain were allies; however, in 1807 Prussia was forced to sign the Franco-Prussian Treaty. Britain and Prussia would not be formal allies again until 1813, during the War of the Sixth Coalition. Although Britain’s formal alliances shifted, the British press seems sympathetic to the Prussians. They seem to extend this sympathy to Louise, who was occasionally mentioned in her British news reports. These news reports, however, were often vague and uncertain, as they were being reported from behind enemy lines. For example, in a “Private Correspondence” from “July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1807 *The Times* reported from beyond the Rhine, “nothing of importance is known concerning the transactions at Tilsit.”<sup>246</sup> The

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<sup>246</sup> "Private Correspondence," *Times*, July 30, 1807, 3.

correspondence acknowledged Louise's involvement in negotiating the peace by noting "our anecdote-retailers amuse themselves by repeating the petty speeches of Buonaparte. He is said to have addressed the Queen of Prussia in the words, 'Till this moment I thought myself victorious, but now I feel that I am vanquished.'"<sup>247</sup> Napoleon is presented here as someone in awe of Louise's presence; however, the reporter doubts Napoleon's compliment and states: "The charms of the unfortunate queen merit a less trite compliment."<sup>248</sup> In calling Louise an "unfortunate queen," and wishing her greater commendation, the author supports a sympathetic vision of Louise, a strong queen who has become a victim of the enemy: Napoleon.

A later correspondence from July 29<sup>th</sup> of the same year is also sympathetic to Louise. Again, the reporter seems to be unable to obtain concrete facts regarding the state of Prussia; however, he reports what little is available to him, qualifying the information by stating "I make these statements merely on the conversation of the day." He then mentions a rumor that "Silesia was at first to have been taken from the King of Prussia..." This rumor also includes Louise, stating, "...the Queen was urged to solicit the restoration of that province." The correspondence then praises Louise for her attempts to intervene. It reports, "It is said, that this high-souled Princess, whose fame has not suffered degradation even from the compliments of Buonaparte, could not be induced to do more than make a simple request to Napoleon, to which she received an evasive answer..."<sup>249</sup> In this correspondence, Louise is praised for her attempts to defend the interests of her kingdom. It defends Louise's popularity, directly addressing Napoleon's attempts to slander her image. The British press further criticized this slander, often published in French bulletins, and her former and future allies continually depicted Louise as a sympathetic figure.

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<sup>247</sup> "Private Correspondence," *Times*, July 30, 1807, 3.

<sup>248</sup> "Private Correspondence," *Times*, July 30, 1807, 3.

<sup>249</sup> "Private Correspondence." *Times*, Aug. 11 1807, 4.

Although many bulletins, including the ones that compared Louise to Amazons and Armide, were reprinted in London's *The Times*, many papers directly challenged the bulletin's criticisms. For example, the November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1806 issue of the *Chester Courant* criticizes the bulletin in general, including treatment of Louise. In a section called "Friday Mail," from London it reports that these bulletins include "dialogue, anecdotes, expressions of hatred towards England, reproaches to the Queen of Prussia."<sup>250</sup> Considering the reproaches to Louise in particular, it explains that one of the bulletins "concludes with some ridicule of the Queen of Prussia, and even some slanderous insinuations. Such is the gallantry of a Republican conqueror!" The article notes, "The Queen of Prussia is somewhat more mentioned in his Bulletins than either of the armies. The 18<sup>th</sup> mentions the capture of the fortress of Spandau, a place of great strength, and capable of holding out for 2 months!" It suggests the bulletin concludes with "the favorite topic—abuse of the Queen!"<sup>251</sup>

A December 1806 issue of *Morning Post* also addresses the bulletin's treatment of Louise, comparing her to the Queen of Naples. It reports, "His Libels and his Bulletins of the last year conferred on the Queen of Naples the same illiberal abuse with which his present bulletins overwhelm the Queen of Prussia."<sup>252</sup> The article expresses surprise that Louise would be the target of such slander, stating "But that the amiable and too condescending Queen of Prussia should be the object of this calumny and malignity, is totally unexpected." It then defends Louise: "This beautiful Princess is a dutiful wife, a tender mother, and a beloved Sovereign," emphasizing her role as a domestic figure. Further, "Her early sacrifices at the shrine of sanguinary power, she merely obeyed the wishes of her Royal Husband, seduced in his turn by

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<sup>250</sup> "Friday's Mail," *Chester Courant*, November 18, 1806, 2.

<sup>251</sup> "Friday's Mail," *Chester Courant*, November 18, 1806, 2.

<sup>252</sup> "The Queens of Naples and Prussia," *Morning Post*, December 1, 1806, 3.

the artful and treacherous sophistry of his weak or wicked Counsellors.” This depicts Louise’s an obedient wife, and instead places the blame on the King’s councilors. Again, she is depicted performing domestic activities: “So long ago as December, 1799 when Bonaparte’s Aid de Camp, Duroc, arrived and intrigued at Berlin, she knitted with her own hand a scarf, similar to those worn by the officers of her own guard (which had been admired by him), and presented it to this contemptible valet of a despicable master.”<sup>253</sup> This depiction represents Louise’s interaction with the military in an appropriately feminine way, further defending the Queen.

The *Manchester Mercury* cannot even bring itself to publish the bulletins. In an November 1806 article it states, “The French have published accounts of the operations of the war. We have but little room and less heart to make copious remarks upon them—they present a disgusting and dispiriting mass, in which the insolence of success is mixed with unmanly levity...”<sup>254</sup> The newspaper does, however, deem it necessary to comment upon the bulletin’s treatment of Louise, which it calls a “vulgar abuse of the Queen of Prussia, a woman not less beautiful than good.”<sup>255</sup> It then criticizes Napoleon stating, “Bonaparte is never more pleased than in insulting and traducing the character of a defenseless woman.”<sup>256</sup> In depicting Louise as beautiful, good, and defenseless, it is clear that the paper rejects Napoleon’s criticisms, and is continually sympathetic to the Prussian Queen.

### **Representations of Louise After 1810: A Beloved Wife and Mother**

Although she received considerable attention from the French during the war, Louise’s representation in the media did not end with her death—but continued years after 1810, as she

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<sup>253</sup> “The Queens of Naples and Prussia,” *Morning Post*, December 1, 1806, 3.

<sup>254</sup> “Friday’s & Saturday’s Posts,” *Manchester Mercury*, November 4, 1806, 2.

<sup>255</sup> “Friday’s & Saturday’s Posts,” *Manchester Mercury*, November 4, 1806, 2.

<sup>256</sup> “Friday’s & Saturday’s Posts,” *Manchester Mercury*, November 4, 1806, 2.

was the subject of various novels, monuments, and commemorative literature. In Germany, Frederick William was certainly not the only one to mourn his wife—Prussians saw her death as another casualty of war. It was popularly said that Napoleon’s harsh treatment of Prussia was the cause of her death.<sup>257</sup> The news of her death was reported internationally. In Britain, on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1810 *The Times* reprinted a German article “respecting the last moments of the late Queen of Prussia.”<sup>258</sup> The article highlighted the presence of Frederick William in these final moments reporting, “[H]e arrived at five o’clock in the morning, and the Queen, who in the expectation of his approach rallied her utmost exhausted faculties, received him with a degree of tenderness and sensibility which dissolved every heart in tears.” It makes note of her emotional encounter with her children as well, reporting, “her reception of her children was equally affecting...”<sup>259</sup> In reports of the final moments of her life Louise was most prominently represented as a beloved wife and a mother. Louise’s image reappeared during and after the Wars of Liberation. As Hagemann writes, “From 1806/07 on, the patriotic daily writers raised her role the of the mother of the Prussian nation and future bearer of hope.”<sup>260</sup> Representations of Louise as a hopeful figure continued even after her death, becoming a part of her legacy as Queen.

Many of the works analyzed in this section commemorate the anniversaries of Louise’s death in 1860 and 1910, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her birth in 1876, or after the unification of Germany. German historians, such as Birte Förster, recognize “The characterization as a German

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<sup>257</sup> Constance Wright, *Beautiful Enemy: A Biography of Queen Louise of Prussia*, (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1969), 232.

<sup>258</sup> “The Late Queen of Prussia,” *Times*, September 17, 1810, 3.

<sup>259</sup> “The Late Queen of Prussia,” *Times*, September 17, 1810, 3.

<sup>260</sup> Karen Hagemann, *Männlicher Muth Und Deutsche Ehre: Nation, Militär Und Geschlecht Zur Zeit Der Antinapoleonischen Kriege Preussens*, Krieg in Der Geschichte, Bd. 8. Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2002.

queen is an important feature of...publications on the occasion of the 50th death in July 1860.” This section will support this argument and expand it, for it seems that by 1860, representations of Louise were associated less with Prussia, and increasingly with Germany. This section also examines the ways in which these representations of Louise continue to highlight her domestic qualities, which were accepted as feminine. These qualities, highlighted years after her death, have laid the foundation for a legacy that still lives on today.

### **German Media and the “German” Queen**

Writing extensively about representations of Louise after 1860, Birte Förster notes that myths surrounding Louise were “constantly present in the ‘new’ media.” This new media includes what Förster calls “entertainment media,” such as Germany’s “first printed mass medium... *Die Gartenlaube*.”<sup>261</sup> In her chapter focusing on the entertainment media in particular, Förster examines representations of Louise in *Die Gartenlaube*. She also considers the impact these representations had on the myth that surrounds Louise as a historical figure. Förster’s work creates a framework for further analysis of commemorative works, such as novels and monuments.

As Förster explains, *Die Gartenlaube* is an extremely useful representation of the media of the mid-nineteenth century, as it had “the highest circulation among family magazines,” and appealed to a new, broader audience than previous German media.<sup>262</sup> This significance is only compounded by the fact that it was published internationally, reaching an audience beyond Germany. This appeal to the family did not, however, prevent the magazine from making

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<sup>261</sup> Birte Förster, *Der Königin Luise-Mythos: Mediengeschichte Des "idealbilds Deutscher Weiblichkeit", 1860-1960*, (Göttingen: V & R Unipress, 2011), 15.

<sup>262</sup> Förster, *Der Königin Luise-Mythos*, 52.

political statements. Förster argues that this is important to consider, as a wide audience saw highly politicized representations of Louise, often with pointed political and highly gendered messages.

In her close analysis of *Die Gartenlaube*, Förster argues that representations of Louise from the year 1860 are highly politicized in the sense that they encouraged German nationalism. To support this, she analyzes a picture of Louise by Max Ring and an accompanying article published to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death. This picture, according to Förster, was described by editors of the magazine as a reflection of Germany's tumultuous history—both tragic and honorable. This connection to German history indicates that Louise was being represented as both a Prussian and German figure. The nationalization of the monarchy is also made clear in the title: “A German Queen.” Förster notes that this title alone is political, as it calls Louise a *German Queen* rather than a *Prussian* one. Förster also points to the *Die Gartenlaube*'s representation of Louise's virtues as a political message because of its nationalistic undertones. Förster argues that Louise's “simplicity,’ ‘modesty,’ ‘sense of domesticity,’” and her “sense of duty as a loving wife and mother” are deliberately nationalistic, as they were contrasted “against so-called ‘French frivolity.’”<sup>263</sup> Ultimately, Förster argues, “The nationalized bourgeois femininity of Queen Louise,” as depicted in entertainment media such as *Die Gartenlaube*, “corresponded to a normative gender model of separate spheres of action.”<sup>264</sup> This is significant, as it indicates that Louise was not only a model for femininity, but also a national icon of the dynastic family.

Förster's argument can be applied not just to entertainment media, but also to a wide spectrum of commemorative literature created during the late nineteenth century including

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<sup>263</sup> Förster, 57.

<sup>264</sup> Förster, 63.

Louise Mühlbach's novels, and even public monuments. This study now looks specifically at gender in these various representations after her death, arguing that in each case Louise remains a feminine, domestic, and noble figure.

### **“My Sacred Duty to Control my Feelings”: Louise in Nineteenth Century German Novels**

Following the Napoleonic and Revolutionary Wars, novels became a popular medium for expressing memories of the war in Germany, and across all of Europe. According to Maria Schultz, from the years 1815 to 1845, over 560 war novels were published in Germany alone.<sup>265</sup> Schultz attributes this popularity to the war itself: “The impact of vast armies on the march across Europe which had to be billeted and supplied; the worsening economic situation; the intensification of mobilization, involving volunteers, conscripted troops and patriotic women’s associations—all this meant that broad swathes of the population were directly involved in the wars to an unprecedented degree.”<sup>266</sup> The war radically changed people’s lives and disrupted traditional constructions in society, including gender and memory. Although novels were popular, Schultz is careful in noting that these stories did not often represent the reality of the past, but rather reflected “the context of contemporary issues and conflicts.”<sup>267</sup> Historical figures, for example, were crafted as characters and used to “create an exciting plot,” rather than reflect history. Gender becomes a central theme of German novels after the war. Hagemann argues that this occurred because as communities reorganized they asked themselves “who belongs to or

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<sup>265</sup> Maria Schultz, “German Patriots and French Soldiers: Memories of the Napoleonic Wars in German Historical Novels on the Rhineland,” in *War Memories: The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in Modern European Culture*, ed. Alan Forrest, Étienne François, and Karen Hagemann, 156. (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.)

<sup>266</sup> Schultz, “German Patriots and French Soldiers,” 156.

<sup>267</sup> Schultz, 168.



must be excluded from the nation, and in which ways.”<sup>268</sup> She argues that for women specifically, this meant returning to their role in the private sphere of the home and family. Although Hagemann noted that novels depicting women acting outside the private sphere in instances of “extraordinary emergencies of the family” did so positively, she argues “women...are accorded little latitude for action even in the works of female authors.”<sup>269</sup> Louise Mühlbach’s representations of Louise in her novels can certainly be counted among these figures. An analysis of two of Mühlbach’s novels reveals representations of Louise motivated almost purely by an extraordinary family emergency. In these novels, Louise embodies the traditional roles of women: that of the wife and mother.<sup>270</sup>

Mühlbach’s novels can serve as a valuable example of how Louise is represented in the years after her death and her immense popularity. Luise Mühlbach, Clara Mundt’s pseudonym, was born in 1814 and published essays, social commentaries, and novels until her death in 1873. According to Sam Mustafa, Mühlbach was “surely the most widely read female author in Germany, if not all of Europe,” as her work was translated and reprinted for years.<sup>271</sup> Like Schultz, Mustafa is careful to note that the novels were not grounded in reality but rather “melodramatic to the extreme” in order to “spice up what were otherwise staid parlor-room scenes...” for readers.<sup>272</sup> He calls Louise “Mühlbach’s favorite heroine.”<sup>273</sup> Indeed, Louise is a character in various Mühlbach novels; however, she is only the main subject of two: *Napoleon and the Queen of Prussia* originally published in 1858 and *Louise of Prussia and her Times*

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<sup>268</sup> Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars against Napoleon*, 371.

<sup>269</sup> Hagemann, 371.

<sup>270</sup> Schultz, “German Patriots and French Soldiers,” 167.

<sup>271</sup> Sam A. Mustafa, *The Long Ride of Major Von Schill: A Journey through German History and Memory*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), 205.

<sup>272</sup> Mustafa, *The Long Ride of Major Von Schill*, 205.

<sup>273</sup> Mustafa, 205.

translated to English in 1867. Mustafa describes her characterization as “the frustrated patriot queen in search of a ‘real man’ who can save Germany.”<sup>274</sup>

Even a brief analysis of Mühlbach’s novels reveals a patriotic characterization of Louise, however, this type of patriotism is far from the French bulletin’s war-mongering Amazon—rather it is often illustrated through her role as a devoted wife and mother, fitting within acceptable gender constructions of the nineteenth century. For example, Louise is first introduced in *Napoleon and the Queen of Prussia* greeting her people after the battle of Jena. Upon meeting the crowd of “thousands of voices” shouting, “Long live our Queen Louisa!” this fictional Louise “buried her face in her hands, and sobbed aloud.”<sup>275</sup> She justifies her sorrows by telling the crowd, “I should gladly plunge into obscurity and death if my husband and my children were exempted from humiliation, and if these good people, who love me, are attached to their king, should not be compelled to recognize a foreigner as their master and bow to him!”<sup>276</sup> Here, her sorrows are centered on the reputations of her husband and her children, and a concern for her subjects. She has no personal attachment to her power or position as queen. This lament concludes with the same theme. She tells the crowd: “I hope the people will remain faithful to us in adversity, and never forget their love for their king!... I will weep no more; but remember that I am a mother, and shall see my children again—not to leave them, but to hasten with them to my husband...”<sup>277</sup> In both beginning and concluding this address with Louise’s patriotism and domestic duty, this representation of Louise emphasizes her queenly role within acceptable gender boundaries.

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<sup>274</sup> Mustafa, 206, 205-206.

<sup>275</sup> Luise Mühlbach, *Napoleon and the Queen of Prussia: An Historical Novel*, trans. F. Jordan (New York: D. Appleton, 1867), 18.

<sup>276</sup> Mühlbach, *Napoleon and the Queen of Prussia*, 18.

<sup>277</sup> Mühlbach, 18.

Even during the novel's climactic meeting between Louise and Napoleon, Louise embodies the appropriate gender norms. After reading Frederick William's request that she meet with Napoleon, she is "absorbed in grief; only incoherent lamentations fell from her lips..." when Madame von Berg finds her.<sup>278</sup> After sharing the letter with her friend, she exclaims "I am to meet politely him who has robbed my children of their inheritance, and caused me so many sleepless nights, so many pangs!"<sup>279</sup> It is notable that again, Louise places her children and her position as mother before herself and her own position as queen.

At first glance, it seems as though Mühlbach recognizes Louise's formal power as queen. In an earlier scene, she describes Frederick William struggling to call upon Louise for assistance. Ultimately, he decides to appeal to "her sacred duty to make a last effort for the preservation of Prussia."<sup>280</sup> This line implies that part of Louise's queenly duty is to support the Prussian state in political manner—that her role as queen is liked to protecting the state itself; however, Mühlbach later explains this concept from Louise's point of view. After reading Frederick William's letter, she cries, "I must do what my king and husband asks me to do. He wrote to me that it is my sacred duty to control my feelings and come to him..."<sup>281</sup> Here, Louise's duties are merely bound to obedience to her husband, a traditional feminine role. She holds no clear political role or obligation to serve the Prussian state in the novel—just an obligation to her husband and children.

This conversation with Madame von Berg also reveals Louise's concern with disrupting traditional constructs of femininity. She cries, "As it behooves every lady, though no queen, I am not to wait for him to come to me, but I am to go to him! I am to force my visit on him –I am to

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<sup>278</sup> Mühlbach, 120.

<sup>279</sup> Mühlbach, 121.

<sup>280</sup> Mühlbach, 120.

<sup>281</sup> Mühlbach, 121.

court his favor! Ah, it is too much—too cruel!” In claiming that being forced to go meet Napoleon was “cruel,” this quote suggests that Louise is aghast by the idea of compromising feminine and queenly protocol for even a moment. This conversation, although only a few pages long, highlights Louise femininity as it is highlighted throughout the novel. It is also worth noting that Louise foreshadows her own death in this lamentation, crying to Madame von Berg, “I tell you, he will be the cause of my death!”<sup>282</sup> This clearly insinuates that Napoleon killed her—a German sentiment explored in the previous chapter.

Before the famous meeting, Louise pleads with Frederick William to stay with her. Her husband explains that “etiquette,” forces him to leave her alone with Napoleon, for “The emperor pays a visit to the queen alone; hence you must receive him alone.”<sup>283</sup> As her husband leaves she exclaims, “Oh, my children!...I am doing this for you—for your sake I will speak and humble my heart!”<sup>284</sup> This line places her children, again, front and center, even when speaking with Napoleon. She evokes her family again during the meeting, telling Napoleon, “I have come hither as consort of the king, as mother of my children, and as representative of my people!”<sup>285</sup> Consistent with the rest of the novel’s representation of Louise, she appears as a mother, a wife, and a mother of her people. Not once does she evoke her power or position as queen independent of these roles.

In *Louise of Prussia and her Times*, etiquette is, again, a major concern; however, this time it is openly broken by the king and queen. Louise is first introduced during an argument between Frederick William and Countess von Voss, the mistress of ceremonies at the court of Prussia. The countess urges Frederick William not to refer to Louise as his wife. Upon hearing

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<sup>282</sup> Mühlbach, 121.

<sup>283</sup> Mühlbach, 127.

<sup>284</sup> Mühlbach, 127.

<sup>285</sup> Mühlbach, 128.

this word, she cries “Your *wife!*...But your majesty, a king has no *wife!*”<sup>286</sup> Voss supports this need for etiquette by explaining that “Etiquette is something sublime and holy—it is the sacred wall separating the sovereign from his people.”<sup>287</sup> Frederick William insists Louise is innocent of breaching etiquette: “You may accuse me just as much as you please, but pray let me hear no more complaints about my Louise!”<sup>288</sup> In the following scene, Louise requests, “I want you to allow me to be a wife and a mother in my own house, without any restraint whatever, and to fulfill my sacred duties as such without fear and without regard to etiquette.”<sup>289</sup> The king immediately agrees to this wish. It is important to note that although the king and queen desired to break courtly etiquette, they challenged the acceptable gender constructions of the time. If anything, this characterization of their desire to act as husband and wife reinforces traditional gender roles, ignoring any power that might have been granted by Louise’s position as queen. Mühlbach’s emphasis on Louise and Frederick’s relationship as a married couple can be explained by Daniel Schönflug’s argument, summarized previously in chapter one. As monarchies adapted to the nineteenth century, a personal and emotional bond between the king and queen was often displayed to the public, to make them captivating public figures.<sup>290</sup> Even if this was not Mühlbach’s goal, it is certainly consistent with the monarchy’s goals in adapting to the nineteenth century.

From these selected passages, it is clear that Mühlbach’s depictions of Louise associate her queenship with traditional feminine roles. She portrays Louise, first and foremost, as a

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<sup>286</sup> Luise Mühlbach, *Louisa of Prussia and Her Times: An Historical Novel*, trans. F. Jordan (Philadelphia: John D. Morris, 1867), 30.

<sup>287</sup> Mühlbach, *Louisa of Prussia and Her Times*, 31.

<sup>288</sup> Mühlbach, 31.

<sup>289</sup> Mühlbach, 33.

<sup>290</sup> Daniel Schönflug, “Heirs Before the Altar: Hohenzollern Marriages in a Bourgeoisie Age,” in *Sons and Heirs: Succession and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Frank Lorenz Müller and Heidi Mehrkens. (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 68.

mother and a wife. These roles are her sole motivation for her patriotism. Mühlbach does not acknowledge her position as the Queen of Prussia nor does she feature any aspect of actual formal and informal power Louise held. Her involvement in political or military affairs is forced upon Louise, depicted as an obedient and traditional wife in this work of historical fiction. Although this was a generally complimentary representation of Louise at the time it was published, in making her merely a mother and a wife, Mühlbach creates a merely domestic representation of Louise as queen.

### **Louise in the Teirgarten: A Representation the Ideal *Landesmutter***

In visual culture as well as literature, Louise's feminine roles during the war were highlighted after her death. These roles, as mother, wife, a model of charity, caregiver, and as a patriot, are clearly depicted on a statue of Louise residing in the Tiergarten on a small island called Luiseninsel. The island was originally named after Louise in 1809, the same year the king and queen returned to Prussia. According to Demandt, the residents of the Tiergartenstraße erected the stone altar after her death, and planting flowers around the island became an early cult ritual to commemorate her birthday.<sup>291</sup> This monument was remodeled in 1880 by Encke as an eightieth birthday present for Kaiser Wilhelm I, her son. According to Demandt, it was financed by both public and private funds. The building of the statue was organized by the Berlin Memorial Committee which was chaired by the mayor of Berlin, Arthur Hobrecht. They managed to raise one hundred thousand marks from both public and private donations. Their goal was to portray, "the wishes and prayers of the blessed Mother" through the memorial.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Philipp Demandt, *Luisenkult: Die Unsterblichkeit Der Königin Von Preussen*, (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 384.

<sup>292</sup> Demandt, *Luisenkult*, 388.

The memorial is located not far from a similarly-styled statue of Friedrich Wilhelm III, a possible nod to her role as his advisor and their loving relationship.

According to Demandt, there was much debate over accurately portraying the queen. Contemporary critics, such as those writing for *Journal of Fine Arts* were quick to worry that Encke would depict the queen as too happy and ignore the realities of the war and the suffering of the Prussian people.<sup>293</sup> He quotes an issue from April of 1877 which expressed worry that “the artist wanted to remove the melancholy shadow hovering on her forehead, so Berlin would be enriched with a sculpture perfection.”<sup>294</sup> Despite this criticism, the Monument Committee stood behind Encke, who was praised by art historian Adolf Rosenberg for creating a statue that embodied the spirit of the queen. Demandt’s analysis, however, does not describe the relief beneath Louise’s feet. This, if any part of the statue, depicts the hardships of the Napoleonic Wars and can be interpreted to symbolize Louise’s role as *Landesmutter*.

Walking into the garden, usually filled with roses, it is easy to see Louise standing tall at the top of the statue. Below her is a relief portraying vignettes of women acting out various roles. Moving around the relief counterclockwise and beginning directly under the front of Louise, one can find a vignette of a woman representing motherhood. This woman is depicted sitting down with her arms around two young children. The third child is in the arms of a soldier, who can be interpreted as the father—his wife looks up to him as he kisses the baby. The inclusion of this vignette, as well as its location directly below the front-facing statue of Louise, highlights the public’s understanding of Louise as a motherly figure.

To the right of the motherhood vignette is a man and a woman embracing. The man, wearing a lion-skin on his head and a sword at his hip leans on an axe. He is clearly a warrior.

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<sup>293</sup> Demandt, 382.

<sup>294</sup> Demandt, 382.

Although the identity of the woman embracing him is less clear, the position of the two, with their arms around each other, moments away from a kiss, is clearly a depiction of love and affection—feelings Louise certainly expressed towards her husband in her letters.

After the couple, still moving counterclockwise around the statue, is a vignette representing charity. In this scene, a crippled, elderly-looking beggar holds his hand out for food. Next to him stands a young woman, her arms positioned around his shoulders as if to protect him or offer him support. It seems as though the man could be blind—his gaze does not meet the eyes of the woman in front of him. The woman stands tall before him wearing a long dress and a headscarf. She has gathered her dress in order to hold what appears to be potatoes, one of which she offers to the man. This emphasis on charity, especially by 1880, was frequently associated with Louise who promoted charity from local businesses and often personally visited orphanages during her time as queen.<sup>295</sup> Although Louise and her daughters' engagement in charity work are well documented, this memorial features the ideal representation.

The next vignette represents healing. In this scene, two women assist what appears to be a wounded soldier. The soldier, depicted with a quiver of arrows, sits on the ground with his head lowered from the women above him. Perhaps the most peculiar detail is the position of his right hand. Positioned behind him, it almost looks as though the hand should be supporting him and lying flat on the ground. However, the palm of the hand is facing outwards in a rather unnatural position. This could perhaps be an indication of his injuries or an indication of his resignation to the two women. These two women above him are depicted treating his head wound. The woman closest to him ties a bandage around his head while the other watches over, holding what appears to be a small bowl. Combining this vignette with the previous one

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<sup>295</sup> Jean Helen Quataert, *Staging Philanthropy: Patriotic Women and the National Imagination in Dynastic Germany, 1813-1916*, (University of Michigan Press, 2010), 39.



representing charity, it is clear that the public saw Louise as a caring figure, concerned with the well-being of others.

French occupation brought not only wounded soldiers, but many grieving mothers and wives. The two women embracing each other in the next vignette clearly depict grief. The first woman stands facing forward, her head low and her hand covering her eyes. Her other arm is extended, revealing a hand clutching what appears to be a smaller piece of fabric—something similar to a handkerchief. The second woman leans on the first, her arms wrapped around her and her head leaning on her shoulder. Next to them, a man reaches out to console the second woman by placing a hand on her shoulder. With the Prussians facing a series of defeats and personal losses, this was certainly not an uncommon scene at the end of Louise’s lifetime.

Finally, the last vignette represents victory. The scene features yet another couple embracing followed by a young boy carrying a staff. The staff is wrapped in cloth, almost like a flag, with a laurel wreath—a clear symbol of victory—hanging on the top. At the boy’s feet lies a basket abundant with grapes representing the prosperity of the victors.

Collectively, the women in these vignettes express a late nineteenth-century interpretation of a *Landesmutter’s* responsibilities—all of which were acceptable feminine activities during the war. Placing them on a statue of Louise implies that she performed these roles during her time as queen. The monument, organized both publicly and privately by the Berlin Memorial Committee, served as an example of the city’s memory of Louise after her death. The reliefs in particular serve as an example of continuity between the role she performed in her life and the public’s commemoration of her role as queen.

### **“Never Did a People Mourn more Deeply”: Commemorative Literature**

Media and monuments were not the only popular forms of commemoration. Commemorative literature, such as the piece written by Kluckhohn to celebrate Louise's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, also became popular representations of the queen. The memorial begins by describing Louise's "high virtues," which Kluckhohn hoped will "long prove an ornament to the Imperial throne, and conducive to the welfare of the people," connecting the virtues of Louise to that of her son, Kaiser William I, who was ruling at the time.<sup>296</sup> These virtues include having "full confidence in God and full faith in the better future of the Fatherland."<sup>297</sup> According to Kluckhohn, these virtues "inspired souls and strengthened hearts" to fight Napoleon.<sup>298</sup> Kluckhohn represented her as a motivating force as "the whole nation... went forth to an earnest and victorious contest, the memory of her and others, in glory, served to fill the champions of the Fatherland with an ideal sentiment, and to bequeath their sons and grandsons an inexhaustible treasure of moral power."<sup>299</sup> It is for this reason that Kluckhohn justified that the one hundredth anniversary Louise's birthday "deserves to be honored by all Germans as one of the great memorial days in their country's history," which also justified his own memorial to Louise.<sup>300</sup>

After this brief introduction, the memorial recounted Louise's life and represented her as a moral and helpful symbol. Throughout the whole pamphlet, Kluckhohn highlighted Louise's virtues. He noted that when she became queen in 1797: "Louise stood at the summit of prosperity, beloved and honored by all circles of the people, as rarely a queen has been."<sup>301</sup> He continually emphasized her beauty and virtues, and even offered an assessment of various perceptions of Louise, writing, "While one blessed her name on account of the benevolence

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<sup>296</sup> Kluckhohn, *Louise, Queen of Prussia*, 3.

<sup>297</sup> Kluckhohn, 3.

<sup>298</sup> Kluckhohn, 3.

<sup>299</sup> Kluckhohn, 4.

<sup>300</sup> Kluckhohn, 3.

<sup>301</sup> Kluckhohn, 13.

which she practiced in secret, others praised the gracious and kind condescension that she showed to everyone, and again others honored her as an exalted pattern of all virtues.”<sup>302</sup> By including attributes such as benevolence, graciousness, kindness, and virtue, Kluckhohn revealed popular perceptions of Louise, which are overwhelmingly positive. From Kluckhohn’s perspective she was clearly beloved by her subjects.<sup>303</sup>

Along with her beauty and virtue, Kluckhohn also highlighted her position as wife and mother. He wrote, “With justice it has been noticed of Louise's sweet kindness, that she became a gentle bond of union between monarch and people; where it was important to thank, to answer, to represent, she served the taciturn King as a mouthpiece.”<sup>304</sup> He also note that Louise joined her husband on tours of Konigsberg, Warsaw, and Breslau and credited her with keeping him strong. He wrote, “Supported by her love, Frederick William found strength to exercise the duties of a royal office under the most difficult circumstances conceivable...”<sup>305</sup> He compared this loving relationship with her husband to her relationship with her children writing, “Along with her husband's love, mother-love blessed the Queen.”<sup>306</sup> These two positions, frequently used to justify Louise’s involvement in the political realm, are also prominent in this memorial of her life.

Although Louise’s womanly roles of wife and mother are prominent in the memorial, Kluckhohn acknowledged her connection to public affairs and connects them to her role as wife. Initially, after describing the defeats of 1806, Kluckhohn depicted Louise as disinterested in political and military activities. In describing the 1806 defeat he first highlighted Napoleon’s

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<sup>302</sup> Kluckhohn, 13.

<sup>303</sup> Kluckhohn, 13.

<sup>304</sup> Kluckhohn, 15.

<sup>305</sup> Kluckhohn, 40.

<sup>306</sup> Kluckhohn, 16.

slander of Louise: “As is well known, Napoleon had in his lying bulletins tried to make Queen Louise responsible for the war, and, with the vulgarity of which he was capable, slandered and laughed her to scorn.”<sup>307</sup> Kluckhohn insisted that Louise played no role in the war before this point. Overall, he seems to place blame on the King and his advisors, writing that it was “The imperfect conduct of the war and the condition of the army” which led to defeat. He supported Louise’s lack of involvement in this failure by stating, “A few days before the battle of Jena she remarked to Frederick Gentz, in a memorable audience, that she had never been consulted about public affairs, and did not aspire to be.”<sup>308</sup> Although these quotes make it clear that Kluckhohn adamantly believed that Louise was not involved in the failures of 1806, he admitted that Louise later approved of the war and became more involved. He stated, “Although the Queen had not advised war, after it was ended she no longer concealed that she approved of it, and showed herself brave and loyally devoted to her husband.”<sup>309</sup> This quote is significant in assessing representations of Louise, as it validates her involvement in public affairs by connecting them to her husband.

Kluckhohn continued to connect Louise’s involvement to the king, representing her as his advisor and counselor, even more so than his cabinet. He even makes a direct comparison to the King’s men, writing, “Although the men that surrounded the unfortunate King counseled surrender to the conqueror, at his discretion, one woman saw rescue only in a prolonged resistance.”<sup>310</sup> This quote recognizes her involvement in politics, and represents this involvement positively, even though she stood in opposition to her husband’s advisors, who are notably men.

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<sup>307</sup> Kluckhohn, 22.

<sup>308</sup> Kluckhohn, 22.

<sup>309</sup> Kluckhohn, 23.

<sup>310</sup> Kluckhohn, 25.

It seems, from Kluckhohn's perspective, that Louise confronted men in political matters, but did so to aid her husband and Prussia.

Louise's involvement is further highlighted through Kluckhohn's representation of her relationship with various statesmen, including Hardenberg and Stein. To sum up her involvement with these statesmen, Kluckhohn writes, "it was she, who, for those men, smoothed the ways at court and helped to overcome the difficulties, obstacles, and prejudices with which they had to contend."<sup>311</sup> In saying this, Kluckhohn insisted that Louise was not actually "being entrusted with questions of administration and legislation," but merely using her position as queen to help Hardenberg and Stein advance their careers.<sup>312</sup> This is important, as it is the first time Kluckhohn suggested Louise acted independently, assisting these men independently from her husband. Although it could be argued that she was acting in her husband's best interests, this representation of Louise does not immediately justify her actions by connecting them to the king, thus acknowledges a degree of Louise's political power and influence.

Although he momentarily disconnects Louise from her husband, Kluckhohn returns to representing Louise as a loyal wife while describing her negotiations with Napoleon at Tilsit. Here, he represented Louise as dutiful and noble; however, he does also highlight her emotional response to the event. He states, "Louise did not hesitate to do what was desired of her, but she did it with a sorely wounded heart."<sup>313</sup> He elaborated by writing, "We can comprehend that the letter that bade her come to Tilsit caused her many tears."<sup>314</sup> By including these two statements in the memorial, Kluckhohn stressed that Louise's involvement in the political sphere was stressful and unnatural; however, he generally praised her behavior at Tilsit, stating "Quick-

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<sup>311</sup> Kluckhohn, 47.

<sup>312</sup> Kluckhohn, 48.

<sup>313</sup> Kluckhohn, 32.

<sup>314</sup> Kluckhohn, 32.

witted, full of spirit and fine tact, the Queen ever kept her ground as the mistress of the conversation.”<sup>315</sup> This praise of her behavior is short lived, as Kluckhohn quickly reverts back to her emotional despair, this time over the failure of the negotiations: “Even more painfully in the coming days the Queen felt that all she had done for the sake of the King, her children, and the people, for the mitigation of the fate of the state, had been in vain. She appeared sad and cast down, and spent many gloomy hours in tears.”<sup>316</sup> In this representation of the negotiations, Louise participated in political affairs because it was a duty forced upon her. Kluckhohn represented her as noble because she performed this unnatural and unfeminine duty despite the great deal of emotional strain it caused her.

Finally, in chronicling her death Kluckhohn states, “Never did a people mourn more deeply for a sovereign than did Prussia and a great part of the rest of Germany for Queen Louise.”<sup>317</sup> Here, Kluckhorn too represented Louise as the victim of Napoleon. He explains, “The grief was soon converted into a feeling of anger and revenge, of revenge toward those who had tortured to death this noble woman. It was universally said that the foe had killed the tutelary goddess of the people; and thus the name of the gentle, saintly sufferer became the watchword in conflict and war.”<sup>318</sup> Many of the main themes of Kluckhorn’s book are represented in this statement: Louise’s virtues as a noble, gentle woman who cared deeply for her people as well as her position as a suffering victim, innocent of any involvement beyond that of support.

This memorial book of Louise, written one hundred years after her birth, presents a representation of Louise which is comparable to the earlier representations of Louise depicted in both the Mühlbach novels and the statue of Louise. In both the novels and the memorials,

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<sup>315</sup> Kluckhohn, 35.

<sup>316</sup> Kluckhohn, 39.

<sup>317</sup> Kluckhohn, 79.

<sup>318</sup> Kluckhohn, 80.

Louise's actions are connected to her role as a wife. In the novels and in Kluckhorn's book, Louise and Frederick William's relationship is depicted as loving, as well as beneficial to the King. In both, her emotional responses to Tilsit are highlighted, indicating that her work in political affairs was unnatural; however, Kluckhorn's memorial book stands out, as it is the only representation, which acknowledged a degree of queenly power, independent of her husband. This power lies in her involvement in the careers of her favored statesmen. This idea, previously explored in an assessment of Louise's formal power, reinforces that Louise's involvement in these political careers was accepted, and indicates that these relationships were still a part of Louise's legacy one hundred years after her birth.

### **Conclusion: Louise and Modern Queenship**

Louise's frequent representation in the media is part of what distinguishes her from early modern queens and ties her to modern queens—in particular, Queen Victoria. During her lifetime, her representation became entangled in the anti-Napoleonic Wars, and was used as a tool for propaganda on both sides. For the German and the British press, she was used to represent the plight of the Prussians, and is later represented as the innocent victim of the ruthless Napoleon. In the French bulletins, Louise became a representation of an unnatural wife and queen as well as of the wrongdoings of the Prussians, justifying occupation. On both sides, representations of Louise were used to make larger comments about the war and the Prussian monarchy.

Although Louise did not receive as much media attention as Victoria during her lifetime, after her death the media continued shaping her legacy. Just as John Plunkett argues that Victoria was “part of a much larger block of populist discourse that was intent on celebrating the

changing character of the monarchy,” nineteenth-century media was also crucial in creating a representation of Louise which highlighted gendered qualities of a nineteenth century Prussia queen. This can be seen clearly in *Die Gartenlaube*, as it highlights Louise’s feminine—particularly domestic—virtues in an effort to make a large statement about German nationalism. In both Kluckhohn and Mühlbach’s work, Louise’s actions during the war are connected to her role as a wife. The Tiergarten monument also focuses on Louise’s feminine roles during the war. In each commemoration, Louise’s involvement in politics and the military is represented merely as a wifely duty, or is even forced upon Louise. Her queenly authority and personal motivations are almost completely ignored. Louise’s legacy, as shaped by the media, is feminine and in compliance with acceptable gender roles of the nineteenth century.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> John Plunkett, "Of Hype and Type: The Media Making of Queen Victoria 1837-1845," *Critical Survey* 13, no. 2 (2001): 8. doi:10.3167/001115701782483471.



## Conclusion

### Revisiting *Unter den Linden*

Traveling along *Unter den Linden* today, it is not difficult to find representations of the still-popular Prussian Queen. Although the street is utterly transformed from the wide, dirt boulevard that Louise's wedding procession followed to the *Statdschloss*, one of the landmarks still remains: the *Zeughaus*. In 1793, the building would have been an armory, but today, it is home to the German Historical Museum. Walking inside, one can find a gift shop filled with Louise-related merchandise: bookmarks, postcards, picture books, miniature busts, and even jewelry. Upstairs, visitors can see her blue and gold riding chemise on display with her black hat. The statue of Louise in the Tiergarten is within walking distance of the museum, and Charlottenburg Palace, her home and final resting place, just short *S-Bahn* ride away.

Representations of Louise are everywhere in Berlin, and German scholarship seems to reflect her popularity and legacy completely; however, literature on Louise has ignored her situation as a *Sattelzeit* queen. This transitional value was first demonstrated through an assessment of Louise's power in chapter two. This chapter revealed the similarities between acceptable roles for women during the early modern period and the *Sattelzeit* period in Prussia. In both periods, queens such as Louise were expected to act within the domestic roles of wives and mothers just as queens such as Johanna Elisabeth and Maria Auguste of Württemberg, and Elisabeth Christine of Prussia did before her; however, Louise was able to use her close relationship with her husband to empower her role as wife and become involved in state and military affairs.

Louise's involvement in politics becomes particularly clear when considering her meeting with Napoleon at Tilsit, where she uses her position as a wife and mother to appeal to

the French Emperor on behalf of Prussia. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the meeting serves as an example of her formal and informal power, and how her roles as wife, mother, and *Landesmutter*, were used by the Prussians as an instrument to potentially reach Napoleon. This too has roots in the early modern era, harkening back to Elector George William's wife acting as a similar instrument for a potential negotiation with Gustavus Adolphus.

Although the gendered limitations placed on Louise were similar to those placed on early modern queens, Louise's prominence in the media distinguishes her and ties her to modern queens such as Queen Victoria. As in the case of Victoria, the nineteenth century media was crucial in creating a gendered representation of Louise as a Prussia queen. During her lifetime, she was acknowledged as feminine by the German and British media. The French, however, used media as a tool for criticizing Louise's power, humiliating her and the King through gendered commentary. After her death Louise's legacy continued to be shaped by the media. She was remembered as overwhelmingly feminine and in compliance with acceptable gender roles of the nineteenth century. Represented both positively and negatively by international media outlets, it becomes clear that Louise's was a prominent figure in the media, which shaped her public image. This is similar to Victoria's relationship with the media, making Louise a more modern queen. After considering the impact of her gender, the extent of her power, and her representation in the media, it is clear that Louise can be understood as a transitional queen of the *Sattelzeit* era, connecting early modern and modern European queenship studies.

Considering Louise as a queen of the *Sattelzeit* era is a valuable contribution to queenship studies as she provides a better understanding of how the role of queen changes between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe. Louise's position as a transitional *Sattelzeit* queen can be helpful for considering modern queenship in particular, as it highlights the role of the war

and the adaptation of the monarchy during the nineteenth century in redefining gender expectations for queens. Before Louise, domestic roles such as that of a mother or a wife were often limiting; however, after Louise, queens like Victoria also begin to use their role as mothers and wives to empower their positions as queens. Louise can also help illustrate how nineteenth century monarchies begin to adapt to major changes. Her close relationship with Frederick William III set the precedent for creating public, loving, relationships between the king and queen. This created the image of an approachable, relatable monarchy that mirrored the acceptable gender constructions of the time. Louise, therefore, can be used a model for modern queenship studies, an area receiving very little attention.

Although this research provides evidence to support the value of Louise's position as a *Sattelzeit* queen, a continuation of this research might include a larger comparative analysis. For example, a direct comparison between Louise and Victoria would help strengthen the discussion of similarities between the two queens, and further demonstrate Louise's position as a transitional queen. A more detailed comparison between Louise and other early modern queens, such as one of her predecessors, Elisabeth Christine of Prussia. This research could also continue to look into media representations of Louise, as there are many to consider. This research could even be extended to consider modern-day representations of Louise in more detail, demonstrating the legacy of the Prussian Queen in its entirety.

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