

Call for papers: Anti-Monarchism in the British Isles and beyond
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‘Now that the fairy-tale of the British monarchy’s relation with the public is over, and a debate about the future of the House of Windsor has at last opened up, it is perhaps time to consider whether the recent disillusionment with the throne is a unique event or part of a recurrent pattern of decay and renewal in the life cycle of the throne. This is an area that has received very little attention from historians of popular politics who tend to see republicanism in Britain as the dog that does not bark.’

These opening words to Antony Taylor’s *Down with the Crown’: British Anti-monarchism and Debates about Royalty since 1790*, first published in November 1999 by Chicago University Press (p. 11), sound like they could have been written a mere few months ago. Indeed, the death of Elizabeth II on 8 September this year was interpreted by the media and throughout the world as marking the end of an era as well as the beginning of a new period during which the British monarchy might witness transformations and perhaps even face a more uncertain future. The late Queen was hailed by then PM Liz Truss as being ‘the rock on which modern Britain was built’ and embodying ‘the very spirit of Great Britain.’ In 2021, she had already been named the third most admired woman in the world (<https://today.yougov.com/topics/international/articles-reports/2021/12/13/worlds-most-admired-2021>). Yet her passing and the accession to the throne of Charles III - who has never come close to the level of popularity of his mother - has also brought to light the fact that anti-Crown sentiment seems to be on the rise once again both in Britain and in the Commonwealth and may not abate anytime soon. The number of Britons favourable to the abolition of the monarchy may have been estimated ‘year upon year at only about 20-27%.’ (Le Monde, 9 September 2022) Nevertheless, some recent polls, such as a November 2021 *YouGovPoll*, also showed that only 62% of Britons supported the monarchy — mostly the older generations — and that 41% of the respondents believed that the monarchy would not endure beyond a further 100 years — by opposition to 39% (<https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/three-five-favour-britain-remaining-monarchy-although-support-falls-2012-peak-more-become-0>). Even before the death of Elizabeth II, the Platinum Jubilee of February 2022 coincided with an anti-monarchy conference which urged to ‘make Elizabeth the last.’ The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge’s tour in the West Indies in celebration of the Jubilee sparked criticism in the Bahamas and Jamaica, where reparations were demanded from the royal family for its historical endorsement of the slave system and colonization. This follows Barbados’ decision to become a Republic in 2021, after 400 years under the rule of the British Crown.

The British monarchy is the oldest in the world and has shown remarkable longevity: Britain has been a hereditary monarchy for over 900 years and the British monarch retains an important role, albeit a mostly symbolic one today. Yet, anti-monarchism and anti-Crown sentiments are nothing new in English and British history: as is well known, the Crown has been forced over the centuries to gradually cede power to Parliament; it was faced with two revolutions in the 17th century, the first one leading to a Republican experiment of 11 years (1649-1660). Academic studies such as Taylor’s have shown that anti-Crown sentiment persisted at later stages of British history, even during periods when the Crown rebranded its public image such as the Victorian era (as was exemplified by the unpopularity of George IV, Victoria & the scandal around her treatment of Flora Hastings or the 1992 *annus horribilis*, etc.).

The aim of this upcoming issue of RANAM (*Recherches Anglaises et Nord-Américaines*) is to examine how anti Crown sentiment has expressed itself in the past, how it has evolved, and where the British monarchy stands today, as it faces new challenges within the Union and from the Commonwealth. While more has been published since Taylor’s evaluation of the historiography, anti-monarchism remains a subject requiring investigation, especially in light of recent developments which include not only the recent scandals affecting the House of Windsor (cf. the soured relationship between the royal family and Prince Harry and Megan Markle, Prince Andrew and the Epstein scandal) but also ground-breaking events such as devolution, Brexit or the George Floyd protests.

We welcome proposals from the arts, humanities, social sciences and related disciplines and would especially consider studies on the following themes:

- anti-Crown sentiments throughout the various periods of British history
- anti-British Crown views in some of the four nations of the United Kingdom, notably Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, where the British Crown has traditionally been less popular.
- opposition to the British crown as part of the rise of anti-imperialism and republicanism in the former British empire
- opposition to the British crown in the Commonwealth
- satires or unflattering/critical representations of the British monarchy:
 - in the visual arts (as in the case of Gillray's caricatures of George III for instance);
 - in literature (as in the works of, amongst others, Thomas More, John Milton (cf. *Eikonoklastes*, 1649); Andrew Marvel; John Dryden; James Harrington (cf. *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, 1656); Mary Wollstonecraft (cf. her *Vindications of the Rights of Women*, 1792), William Godwin, Thomas Paine; Percy Shelley (cf. his sonnet 'England'); William Wordsworth (cf. his 'Letter to the Bishop of Llandaf'); Robert Southey; William Hone; William Morris (cf. *News from Nowhere*, 1890); and, in more recent times, in dystopian fiction such as Sue Townsend's 1994 *The Queen and I*).
 - and in popular culture (cf. the Sex Pistols' 'God Save the Queen (1976), The Smiths' 'The Queen is Dead' (1986), films and series such as – amongst others – *The Queen* by Stephen Frears or the more recent Netflix hit *The Crown*)
- the extent of anti-monarchism and republicanism in British political parties (segments of the Labour party, the Green Party as well as political parties in Scotland, Wales and Ireland/Northern Ireland), in the media (cf. *The Guardian* for instance) and in press illustrations.
- British republican lobbies
- discourse analysis of the anti-monarchist and republican discourse in the context of the British Isles and/or the Commonwealth.

Please note that proposals (250 words) should be sent to Pauline Collombier (collombier@unistra.fr), **by 15 February 2023** and full papers by **1 September 2023**.

RANAM (Recherches Anglaises et Nord-AMéricaines) is an international, scholarly journal. It was founded in 1967 and has published one volume a year uninterruptedly ever since. *RANAM* publishes papers on topics related to the culture and the language of the English-speaking world (literature, social and political history, fine arts, philosophy, linguistics...) and has opted for an interdisciplinary approach. *RANAM* operates with a double-blind peer review policy.

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