

## **Bakalářská práce**

# **The Platinum Jubilee Celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II: What does their media picture say about the role of the Queen in the United Kingdom today?**

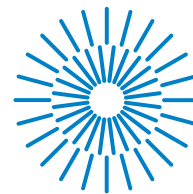
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## Zadání bakalářské práce

# The Platinum Jubilee Celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II: What does their media picture say about the role of the Queen in the United Kingdom today?

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### Zásady pro vypracování:

Bakalářská práce se zaměří na oslavy platinového jubilea královny Alžběty II., které se konaly 2. – 5. června 2022. Hlavním cílem práce bude odpověď na otázku, jak byly oslavy reflektovány ve vybraných médiích? Autorka se pokusí o analýzu odrazu role panovnice a královské rodiny v britské společnosti právě v jejich mediálním obrazu. Oslavy velkých výročí jsou k takovému rozboru vhodný materiál, proto bude součástí práce i pasáž o dalších jubileích v britské královské rodině za 70 let vlády Alžběty II. Tato perspektiva umožní události platinového jubilea a jejich mediální obraz zpracovat v dlouhodobé komparativní perspektivě.

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25. dubna 2023

Eliška Schölerová

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## **Anotace a klíčová slova**

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na oslavy platinového jubilea královny Alžběty II., které se konaly 2.–5. června 2022. Hlavním cílem práce bylo odpovědět na otázku, jak byly oslavy reflektovány ve vybraných médiích. Na začátku práce je stručně představen život královny Alžběty II., přičemž na její život a vládu je nahlíženo i z historicko-politické perspektivy jako na monarchu, ženu, která byla významným mezníkem v soudobých dějinách – nejdéle vládnoucí britský panovník. K tomuto tématu je připojena i úvahová kapitola o její symbolice. Kromě analýzy oficiálního programu a událostí s tím spojených se práce také zabývá tím, jaký mediální obraz panovnice a královská rodina v britské společnosti měla a v současné době má a zda se změnil. Součástí práce je i pasáž o dalších obdobných a významných jubileích v historii britské královské rodiny.

**Klíčová slova:** Alžběta II., platinové jubileum, oslavy, britská královská rodina, média, historie, politika, monarchie

## **Abstract & Keywords**

This bachelor's thesis focuses on the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II, which occurred on 2–5 June 2022. The main goal of the thesis was to answer the question of how the celebrations were reflected in selected media. At the beginning of the work is a brief introduction to the life of Queen Elizabeth II. At the same time, her life and reign are also viewed from a historical-political perspective as a monarch, a woman who was an important milestone in contemporary history – the longest-reigning British monarch. Reflection chapters on the symbolism of the Queen are also attached to this topic. In addition to the analysis of the official program and its associated events, the thesis also deals with the media image of the Queen and the royal family in British society and whether it has changed. The work also includes a passage about other similar and important jubilees in the history of the British royal family.

**Keywords:** Elizabeth II, Platinum Jubilee, Celebrations, British royal family, Media, History, Politics, Monarchy

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## **Introduction**

This bachelor's thesis deals with the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II that took place on 2–5 June 2022 and explores the detailed program of the celebrations together with the media perspective of this event. The work focuses on the topic mainly theoretically, while it is continuously supplemented with a practical part – research in selected media and the analysis of particular articles.

These days, media forms a significant part of our lives. They have many functions, such as providing people with information and facts about current events, persuading or influencing the public. However, to a certain extent, their action negatively affects a person, especially their strong impact on the human mind. It is no different in Great Britain – in past years, but even today, we can witness the pervasive influence of the British media and their relationship with the public. Authors of articles and reports are very fond of writing about members of the royal family, and the platinum jubilee celebration was an extraordinary opportunity for them. As was expected, royal family members would appear in public more often than usual and thus, journalists would have easier access to them.

Since the media made the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations visible worldwide, the thesis aims to answer these questions: What does the media picture say about the role of the monarchy and the Queen? How were the individual events presented, to what extent did the media cover them, and was their focus balanced? Was the press also critical, or did one particular attitude towards the Queen and other royal family members prevail?

The first chapter deals with Elizabeth II and her life, from birth and early childhood, and since she lived through World War II, I am including a brief subchapter

on how she and her family experienced it. Since George VI died relatively early, at the age of 56 in 1952, Elizabeth II became the Queen very young; she was 26 years old. In addition to political life, the end of the first chapter also deals with family life, which is attached with a list of her descendants.

Considering that the thesis deals with the platinum jubilee, it is appropriate to introduce what the term jubilee means, what it entails and what royal jubilees, related to the anniversary of the coronation and reign, have been celebrated in British history. My research revealed that a total of six monarchs celebrated such anniversaries in the history of Great Britain. Regarding the jubilee celebrations of the kings Henry III and Edward III, almost no records have been preserved, and therefore they are mentioned only briefly at the beginning of the chapter. The first sovereign who held a recorded jubilee celebration was George III, who celebrated 50 years on the throne, i.e., the golden jubilee. Nevertheless, his anniversary differed from other monarchs; this is discussed in Chapter 2.1. The most considerable awareness of the anniversary of the reign was Queen Victoria's, who held the lead in the number of years of reign until Elizabeth II surpassed her in 2015. Victoria I celebrated two jubilees during her life – 50 years, i.e., golden, and 60 years, which we call the diamond jubilee. Both celebrations had some elements in common, but they differed a lot. The third monarch was George V, Queen Victoria's grandson and Elizabeth II's grandfather, who celebrated only 25 years on the throne. It was the first-ever celebration of a monarch's Silver Jubilee in the history of Great Britain. The last monarch to be dealt with is Elizabeth II, who celebrated a total of four such anniversaries: silver, gold, diamond, and platinum, which is the subject of the rest of this work. Individual jubilees are briefly described in Chapter 2.4.

The following third chapter deals with the main topic of this thesis – the Platinum Jubilee – and tries to answer the questions mentioned above. In addition to the everyday

program and events organised in the so-called “Central Weekend”, the chapter is also devoted to the presentation of the royal family, which events the queen and members of the royal family attended. Each day is accompanied by a subsection focusing on selected media’s reactions. In this work, I mainly focused on research in the British media: broadsheet newspapers such as The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian and tabloid newspapers like The Sun and Daily Mail. Every day, the BBC also broadcasted a summary, and in some cases, presenters invited guests, primarily experts on the royal family. In some cases, especially if it was something that the British media did not deal with that much, articles that were not produced by the British press were also used. Therefore, a comparison of British and foreign media is purposefully incorporated into the work.

Chapter 4 is focused on the Queen’s role, to what extent it is symbolic, and all this in the context of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Various authors’ perspectives and intentions in media during the celebrations are also included together with their reflections, for example, whether the monarchy is still the right choice for Great Britain. The queen is also seen here as a symbol of unity, stability and tradition, succession, a new era, and a religious symbol. However, it is crucial to think about the essence of the office and remember that the head of the British nation is not only symbolic but is also the head of legislation and execution and has many other powers.

With this work, I aimed to raise awareness of Queen Elizabeth II and the British royal family as well, and at the same time, I wanted to point out how large and prominent role the media have today in creating a media image. As material for research, I took the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, which could be an example of this phenomenon, and it is material that will allow the media image of the Queen to be processed in a long-term comparative perspective.

While writing this thesis, I was interested in the journal article *Media, Discourse, and the Public Sphere: Electronic Memorials to Diana, Princess of Wales*, in which Marguerite Helmers (2001, 437–456) reflects on the story of Princess Diana. Although she writes about the then Princess of Wales, I was inspired by her approach and based on it, I then thought about how a media image or a story is built and how the media can influence life. She points out that life in the royal family may not be comparable to a fairy tale. I thought about that, given that the media initially made a fairy tale out of life in the royal family, and in some cases, they still do to this day. The question remains, to what extent this “fairy tale story”, which is shaped by the media, is accurate, and how much it distracts people’s attention from actual events and facts.

# 1 Queen Elizabeth II

Elizabeth II was<sup>1</sup> Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and several other Commonwealth states for seven decades. She became a historical milestone. Therefore, at the beginning of this thesis, it is appropriate to briefly introduce her and her life. Summarising and describing the 96 years of her life from all levels would be challenging, and several authors have already attempted to do so. The following chapters deal only with significant events and milestones in her early life, childhood, education, life during World War II, accession to the British throne, and her political and family life.

## 1.1 Early Life

Elizabeth II was born on 21 April 1926 in Mayfair, London, to Prince Albert and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, Duke and Duchess of York. Her full name was Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary of Windsor. At this time, England was ruled by George V, whose successor was Prince Edward, Elizabeth's uncle, so she was never expected to become the Queen.

Edward VIII ascended the throne after his father's death. However, he remained in power for just under 11 months. Formerly, the royal family had fixed rules about whom one could marry. Edward wanted to take Wallis Simpson as his wife, but the government did not allow him because she was a divorced American woman. King Edward's abdication was welcomed for other reasons as well. He clearly sympathised with Adolf Hitler, and even after he abdicated the throne, their cooperation continued. "With the abdication of the king, the German ambassador Joachim von Ribbentrop lost Wallis – his

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<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, during the writing of this work, Elizabeth II passed away, so several members of the royal family changed their titles. The work thus contains original titles as well as new ones. Which members have a changed title can be found in Appendix A

most influential intermediary” (Harris 2016, 20). Today, however, we can only speculate about how the Second World War would have turned out if Germany had such a strong ally as Great Britain on its side. Edward VIII abdicated, so his brother Albert, who took the royal name George VI, became the King. Even in the 20th century, the rule of male primogeniture applied and since George VI was no longer expected to have any male offspring, Princess Elizabeth became the successor to the throne. Today, the rule of absolute primogeniture is valid in the United Kingdom, meaning that the firstborn child inherits the throne, regardless of whether it is male or female.

## **1.2 Education**

Elizabeth did not receive the same education as other children, and her parents initially refused to let her go to school. At the age of 13, she began attending constitutional history classes twice a week at Eton, a school that also prepared British prime ministers (Harris 2016, 26). Not to be so isolated from her peers, a special school was founded in Buckingham Palace for Elizabeth, which she attended together with other noble girls. “The task of the special school was primarily to prepare girls for the role of future women, wives and mothers, to which the selected subjects were also adapted. This included cooking, sewing, knitting and embroidery...the principle applied that a woman – whether a duchess, lady or the Queen herself – should always have all the skills that the servants will do for her” (Košťálová 2016, 10–11).

## **1.3 World War II**

During World War II, Elizabeth and her sister Margaret were to be sent to Canada. Their mother, Queen Elizabeth, rejected this, saying they would all stay at home in Britain besides the King (Arbiter 2020, 8). The fact that the family remained in England during the war was a significant step for the monarch and his government – it should give people courage, hope and less fear. However, the royal family functioned as an important

propaganda tool for Winston Churchill. Harris (2016, 23) also mentions this idea and proves it with another act, with which the royal family tried to contribute to calming the atmosphere: “During the war, Princess Elizabeth broadcast an appeal to children evacuated from London.” A few years later, Elizabeth joined the Auxiliary Territorial Services (ATS), a unit where women were entrusted with several important roles during the Second World War (National Army Museum n.d.). Elizabeth served here as a driver and mechanic. “Elizabeth enthusiastically donned a reservist uniform, completed a driving and technical course, and passed her test. Photos of the smiling heir to the throne in green and with a jack or behind the wheel of a military truck were among the most popular” (Harris 2016, 23).

#### **1.4 Accession and Coronation**

On 6 February 1952, King George VI died and Elizabeth became the new head of state. At that time, she was in Kenya as part of an overseas tour of the Commonwealth. On the eve of the coronation, the Queen made a radio broadcast in which she promised her devotion to her people “Throughout all my life and with all my heart, I shall strive to be worthy of your trust” (The Royal Family n. d.). The coronation took place on 2 June 1953 in Westminster Abbey under the guidance of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was also the first time in history that such a ceremony was broadcast on television. “An estimated 27 million people in Britain watched the ceremony on television, and 11 million listened on the radio (Britain’s population at the time was just over 36 million)” (The Royal Family n. d.). So, the Queen’s media portrait began to shape more during this period.

## **1.5 Commonwealth**

*“As Head of the Commonwealth, The Queen played an important symbolic and unifying role, reinforcing the links by which the Commonwealth joins people together across the globe”* (The Royal Family n. d.).

The Commonwealth comprises 56 independent countries, including advanced and developing countries. It is the modern successor of the former British Empire, whose member states share common goals, values and attitudes (The Commonwealth n.d.).

In 1953–1954, Queen Elizabeth and her husband, Prince Philip, made a six-month tour of the Commonwealth countries. They visited 12 countries on five continents and covered almost 70,000 kilometres – this was the most significant state visit in history (Arbiter 2020, 9).

During the reign of Elizabeth II, the community of Commonwealth nations gradually changed – many states became independent, and some were admitted over time. “Her Majesty and other members of the Royal Family often attended independence events marking the transition from realm to the republic” (The Royal Family n. d.).

In fulfilling her “transnational task”, the Queen has made more than 200 visits to Commonwealth countries and has visited almost every country in the association. Although the title of Head of the Commonwealth does not belong to the Crown, members of the association agreed in 2018 that Prince Charles would succeed the Queen (The Royal Family n. d.).

## **1.6 Family Life**

Elizabeth II married Philip of Greece and Denmark on 20 November 1947 at Westminster Abbey. Their marriage lasted 74 years until Philip’s death on April 9, 2021. Together they had four children – Charles, Anna, Andrew, and Edward. Due to Elizabeth’s



early accession to the British throne, they could only enjoy a “free family life” for a short time. “The Queen is devoted to her country, but unfortunately often at the expense of her role as wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother” (Arbiter 2020, 48). However, it is evident that because Elizabeth II ruled for a long time, her descendants had the opportunity to devote more time to their families.

They had four children with Prince Philip: Charles, Anne, Andrew, and Edward. The last two were the first children born to the ruling monarch since Queen Victoria. (The Royal Family n. d.)

Prince Charles, her first son and heir to the throne, was married to Diana Spencer in 1981–1996, and they had two sons – William and Harry. The marriage with Diana was not happy, and it was accompanied by several scandals that shook the media. Diana died in 1997, which greatly affected the royal family, their media image was significantly exacerbated, and it deeply affected the public’s overall impression. In 2005, Charles married Camilla Parker Bowles, and since 8 September 2022, they have been known as King Charles III and Queen Consort.

Anne, Princess Royal, is the only daughter of Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. She also experienced many things that greatly affected the royal family and were widely discussed in the media. One of them is, for example, a love affair with Camilla’s ex-husband, today’s queen consort. With her first husband, Mark Phillips, they have two children, Peter and Zara, who have no royal titles at Princess Royal’s request. This marriage also broke up after a few years, but Anna got later married again to Timothy Laurence. She had no more children with him, and they are still married today. Princess Anna is considered to be the hardest-working member of the royal family; she has several hundred engagements every year. The media also deal with this every year, so people can

notice Hardest-working Royal articles every year in December (in 2021, according to the Daily Mail, she had 387 engagements, and in 2022, according to the Mirror and People, 214). She inherited her mother's love for horses, which led her to the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976. She is also a patron of approximately 300 charities and military organisations. Her life is not so connected with the army, but despite that, she is the only woman in the royal family who can be seen in uniform at important events. She is currently 16th in line to the British throne.

Prince Andrew, Duke of York, is the second son and third child of Queen Elizabeth. At first, he devoted his life to the army, but then he married Sarah Fergusson and started a family. They had two daughters, Beatrice and Eugenie, both having the title of Princess. Even this marriage did not work out (their story also shook the newspapers and popular tabloids), so after a few years, there was a divorce. Unlike their siblings, Sarah and Andrew still get along and occasionally appear together in public. Prince Andrew has recently been a much-discussed family member due to the Epstein affair. Because of this scandal, he has been removed from several titles and ranks and currently does not represent the royal family. Despite this, he is still 8th in line to the British throne.

The youngest of the four children is Prince Edward, who, shortly after the accession of Charles III to the British throne, received the title of Duke of Edinburgh, which his father held until his death. After studying at the university, he was supposed to join the army, but he did not last. He tried to apply his artistic talents and thus focused on film, theatre and television. Rather neglected by the media, the Prince is still married to his first wife, Sophie. They have two children together – Louise and James. He is currently 13th in line to the British throne.

Elizabeth II and Prince Philip had eight grandchildren, who are enumerated here; in parentheses are then their parents. Peter and Zara Phillips (Princess Anne and Peter Phillips); Prince William of Wales and Prince Henry of Wales (Prince Charles and Diana Spencer); Princess Beatrice of York and Princess Eugenie of York (Prince Andrew and Sarah Fergusson) and Lady Louise Windsor and James, Viscount Severn (Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones).

The Queen's family is extensive; over the past few years, even more descendants have been born to her grandchildren. Her 12 great-grandchildren are Prince George, Princess Charlotte, and Prince Louis (Prince William and Catherine Middleton); Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet (Prince Harry and Meghan Markle); Savannah and Isla Phillips (Peter and Autumn Phillips); Mia, Lena, and Lucas Tindall (Zara and Michael Tindall); Sienna (Princess Beatrice and Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi) and August (Princess Eugenie and Jack Brooksbank).

The lives of the British royal family members is the most discussed topic about this institution in the media. In the last 70 years, when Elizabeth II was on the throne, family members have gone through several crises, and the media has also enlarged them. However, the reader cannot know what happened with certainty and should be prudent in handling that information. Members of the royal family adhere to the motto "Never Complain, Never Explain", especially concerning journalists. It is quite possible that secrecy has already protected them from further media pressure in many cases.

## 2 History of Royal Jubilees

A jubilee is a celebration of an anniversary. In the case of the jubilee of the British monarch, however, the primary data are similar to those celebrated by ordinary people on occasions such as weddings or birthdays. For a monarch, significant events to celebrate a jubilee include the anniversary of the accession and the coronation itself. This chapter deals with the definition of the term jubilee, what types exist and are celebrated, as well as a historical overview, in which the British monarchs who celebrated some of the jubilees are listed.

A jubilee, which celebrates the monarch, his (her) life and rule, usually does not happen yearly, but it marks significant milestones, making them unique (Royal Collection Trust, n. d.). Each such milestone has its appropriate name indicating the number of years celebrated. The jubilee is usually celebrated from the 25th anniversary, referred to as the silver jubilee. Next comes the anniversary of 40 years, called the ruby jubilee, 50 years, marked as golden, 60 years as diamond, 65 as sapphire and 70 as platinum. Since no monarch celebrated more than 70 years, the list ends here.

In the history of Great Britain, it is documented that six monarchs celebrated some of the jubilees mentioned above – Kings Henry III, Edward III, George III, George V, and Queens Victoria and Elizabeth II. Historical sources confirm that in 1265, Henry III already celebrated an anniversary, precisely 50 years of rule, but nothing much is known about it; no mentions or fragments have survived if the anniversary of this monarch was somehow celebrated.

His grandson, Edward III, also celebrated the Golden Jubilee in 1376. From this, a piece of information has been preserved that the celebration was preceded by a procession that led through the streets of London from the Tower of London to Smith

Field, accompanied by trumpet players and specially made banners, which are the seeds of celebrations of today's type (Farris 2022).

## 2.1 George III

King George III (born 1738, reign 1760–1820) was the first monarch to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of his reign. This happened in 1809, and his jubilee and celebrations started the tradition that has been preserved to this day. Moreover, George III's Golden Jubilee was the first in the public consciousness. It comprised a private service in Windsor, a grand fete, and a firework display at Frogmore. In London, the Thanksgiving service took place at St Paul's Cathedral, and after that, the King and other royal family members held a dinner at the Mansion House.

But George III's anniversary differed from other monarchs who celebrated after him. George III celebrated his 50th anniversary as early as 1809 since the 50th anniversary year begins at the end of the 49th. *“When the king or queen succeeds to the throne, that first year becomes the first year of their reign, so the 50th year of the reign actually begins at the end of the 49th year, so you complete the 49 years and then the 50th year is the whole year leading up to the actual anniversary – the 50th anniversary of the reign”* (Prosser 2022). George III celebrated his jubilee after completing only 49 years, so there were celebrations throughout the year, culminating in more fabulous celebrations at the end of it. Today, we celebrate after the monarch completes the anniversary year, so in the case of Queen Elizabeth II, which will be mentioned later, the Platinum Jubilee celebrations were in the 71st year of her reign (Farris 2022).

## 2.2 Victoria I

Queen Victoria (born 1819, reign 1837–1901) celebrated twice in her lifetime. Golden Jubilee in 1887 and Diamond Jubilee in 1987. Both jubilees were spectacular but different from each other.

Today it is even known how the Queen spent her day on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee: *“On 20 June, the day began quietly with breakfast under the trees at Frogmore, the resting place of her beloved late husband, Prince Albert. She then travelled by train from Windsor to Paddington and across the parks to Buckingham Palace for a royal banquet in the evening. Fifty foreign kings and princes, along with the governing heads of Britain’s overseas colonies and dominions, attended the feast.”*<sup>2</sup>

In A History of Royal Jubilees podcast, Joanna Marschner (2022) compares The Queen’s jubilee celebrations. Both jubilees were, she says, “massively spectacular and real pieces of theatre” but different from each other. The Golden Jubilee involved an extraordinary procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey, which was visited by about 50 crowned heads of Europe – that made it the biggest gathering of royalty in Europe that had ever been seen. It was a celebration of the dynasty and its power (all her children entered into marriages of convenience with members of other royal families). The Diamond Jubilee, on the contrary, was a celebration of Britain in the world as an Empire. Marschner also adds that planning the subsequent anniversary celebrations was more complicated because it would be inappropriate for both jubilees to be identical.

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<sup>2</sup> more from Queen Victoria’s diary can be seen on [queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://queenvictoriasjournals.org), which went online in 2012 (the access is only for those undertaking academic research on written application to the Senior Archivist)

Victoria then wrote about her jubilee in her diary: *“No one ever, I believe, has met with such an ovation as was given to me, passing through those 6 miles of streets . . . The cheering was quite deafening & every face seemed to be filled with real joy. I was much moved and gratified”* (The Royal Family n. d.). From this, we can conclude today that her popularity was, at least in London and its surroundings, the same as that of Elizabeth II.

### **2.3 George V**

George V (born 1865, reign 1911–1936) was Queen Victoria’s grandson and celebrated, compared to his predecessors, only 25 years on the throne. His anniversary in 1935 was the first-ever Silver Jubilee celebration of the British monarch. It included pageants, fetes, and parties and was declared a public holiday. The royal family attended a Thanksgiving service at St Paul’s Cathedral and then appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace to greet the crowds of cheering people. The King and Queen Mary, accompanied by their granddaughters, Princesses Margaret and Elizabeth, then set out in carriages for a ride through the streets of London (Historic Royal Palaces n. d.). Nevertheless, it is known that the celebrations were slightly more modest than the preceding Queen Victoria’s celebrations (Farris 2022).

### **2.4 Elizabeth II**

Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her first, Silver Jubilee, in 1977, marking 25 years on the British throne. This jubilee was considered a great event; the Queen, accompanied by her husband, Prince Philip, undertook a series of tours of the Commonwealth countries (Historic Royal Palaces n. d.). Unlike previous anniversaries, this one was different in that several parks, buildings, monuments, and public transport stations were renamed in honour of the Queen and her service to the country (Royal Collection Trust n. d.).

Twenty-five years later, in 2002, Queen Elizabeth celebrated her Golden Jubilee. Smith (2012, 366) also deals with the date of the Queen's accession to the throne, i.e. 6 February, the day her father died, and states: "The anniversary of her accession to the throne on 6 February the Queen usually celebrates in private. She commemorated fifty years of reign publicly, and her Thank you message was published in a modern spirit on the website dedicated to the jubilee." Based on this excerpt, it seems that for the Queen, this day was not a celebration, but rather a day of mourning, which she probably dedicated to the memories of her father. At celebrations in June, Six key Jubilee themes marked particular events – Celebration, Community, Service, Past and future, Giving thanks and Commonwealth. The Queen and Prince Philip again toured several Commonwealth countries and the United Kingdom. Like previous celebrations, there was a service at St Paul's Cathedral, as well as street parties, dinners, and a special garden party for those born on Accession Day. The main event of the celebrations was the jubilee weekend, which began with the classical music concert in the gardens of Buckingham Palace and culminated in a pop concert with performers including Paul McCartney, Bryan Adams, and Elton John (Royal Collection Trust n. d.).

The Diamond Jubilee in 2012 was similar to the previous ones. The difference, however, was that the Queen visited only Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Other royal family members, including the heirs to the throne, took over Commonwealth visits for her. The jubilee weekend included a pageant on the river Thames, a maritime parade of 1,000 boats, including the Royal Barge, which formed the centrepiece of the flotilla, with the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, and other members of the royal family on board.



### **3 Central Weekend – Day-to-Day Programme and Media Reactions**

The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee was considered to be a milestone that may never happen again. In honour, celebrations had been going on since the accession day in February and culminated in a Central Weekend that included small community activities, large public events and nationwide happenings to mark the occasion of the Queen’s 70 years of service. The Government of the United Kingdom also announced an additional bank holiday on the occasion of this event, creating a four-day weekend from Thursday, 2 June to Sunday, 5 June 2022 (Government 2020). These days were chosen to connect the celebrations with her birthday, which the Queen usually celebrated on the second Saturday in June, due to better weather allowing more people to join the celebrations (The Royal Family n. d.). It is known that the Queen, although her birthday was in April, celebrated it later.

The following subchapters analyse individual days and events during the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. They are also supplemented by the media reactions that come out those days.

#### **3.1 Thursday, 2 June 2022**

The Platinum Jubilee celebrations began on Thursday, 2 June, when the HAC regiment fired a gun salute from the Tower of London. Honourable Artillery Company is the oldest regiment in the British Army and the second-highest unit of the Army Reserves. It is part of the Army’s 77th Brigade, which recruits soldiers mainly from London and the surrounding area. These HAC soldiers frequently deploy to operations at home and overseas, and their regiment also has an important ceremonial role – the soldiers provide a guard of honour at the Guildhall and a gun salute at the Tower of London (Honourable Artillery Company n. d.).

The gun salute was then followed by the Trooping the Colour Parade, which took place in Central London. “The Colour or regimental flag was trooped by the 1st Battalion, Irish Guards, and more than 1200 officers and soldiers from the Household Division who put on a display of military pageantry on Horse Guards Parade, together with hundreds of Army musicians and around 240 horses” (The Royal Family n. d.).

The entire procession was watched by thousands of people who gathered at The Mall, and many could watch on big screens nearby in St James Park. The event was also covered by many media outlets and was broadcast on local television stations, BBC and ITV.

At the end of the Parade, the royal procession returned to Buckingham Palace. The Queen, accompanied by other senior members of the royal family, came out on the balcony and observed a flypast of over 70 aircraft (The Royal Family n. d.).

Lightning-up beacons, the first community event of the jubilee weekend, also marked the first day of celebrations. According to the official website of this event, Beacon events are divided into three parts. The first, the Community beacons, which means that thousands of beacons were lit by charities, communities and other different groups throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories; the second, the Commonwealth beacons, which were lit only in the capital cities of the Commonwealth and the third, The Principal beacon, which was lit on the 2 June 2022 by The Queen herself in the quadrangle of Windsor Castle (The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Beacons n. d.). “The Queen began the ceremony by touching a globe representing the Commonwealth nations, symbolically sending a chain of lights from Windsor Castle to Buckingham Palace” (BBC 2022). “Here, the Queen was deputised by

Prince William, who was present at the lighting of the Tree of Trees, an almost 70 feet height art installation made of 350 small trees (Williams 2022).

The purpose of the event was to bring together people from various parts of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth to celebrate this historical moment of their longest-reigning monarch celebrating a jubilee (The Royal Family n. d.). Over 3,500 beacons were lit throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, United Kingdom Overseas Territories, and the Commonwealth (The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons n. d.).

### **Media Reaction on 2 June**

Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee celebrations were covered in all the British media. They mainly focused on the day's program and the appearance of the Royal Family, which attracted the media's attention and, thus, readers not only in England but almost all over the world. Along with the official photo, the Queen's statement was also released on this day, in which she thanked the nation for participating in her celebrations and the organisers for preparing the individual events. The BBC was one of the first sites to report on this. In addition to the statement mentioned above and the portrait, the authors of the article also focused on what events will take place on Central Weekend. They also offered pictures from the first day of the celebrations. At the same time, they also informed that the Queen had cancelled several events, and it was not certain yet, whether she attends at least some of them (Faulkner, Lee 2022).

The Guardian mentions in one of its first articles that the Queen "was able to perform the fanfare lighting of the beacon chain, comprising more than 3000 beacons across the UK and Commonwealth, during a ceremony at Windsor Castle" and continues with the statement from Buckingham Palace in the Queen's response to the celebrations:

“The Queen greatly enjoyed today’s Birthday Parade and flypast but did experience some discomfort. Taking into account the journey and activity required to participate in tomorrow’s national service of thanksgiving at St Paul’s Cathedral, Her Majesty, with great reluctance, has concluded that she will not attend” (Davies 2022).

The article “Trooping the colour kicks off Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations,” in addition to repeating information from the previous article, also mentions which members of the royal family will not participate in the official events of the celebration. These were Prince Andrew, this time due to a positive test for Covid, and Prince Harry and his wife Meghan, who gave up their roles as senior members of The Royal Family. There is also a tiny memory of Prince Philip in connection with the fact that this was the first significant event without him undertaken by the Queen (Davies 2022). It can be seen that the media focused more on news that they know will bring them more readers. It is interesting that although the headlines of the articles and their contents are repeated, they are still popular among people and are read very often.

For BBC television, the celebrations were the main news of the day. In the 10 pm news, Reeta Chakrabarti summed up the events, which she described as spectacular. The first topic in the report was the announcement that the Queen would not attend Thanksgiving the following day due to health issues. However, commentator Martine Croxall pointed out that the Queen showed no signs of difficulties. For the first time, Elizabeth II also missed the Trooping the Colour Parade, which was a subsequent topic of the reportage. She was replaced in the role by Charles, Prince of Wales. This happened for the first time since 1951 when King George VI was stood in by his daughter, Princess Elizabeth. Short attention was paid to a group of protestants who tried to disrupt the procession, but Croxall also observed George, Charlotte and Louis, princes and princess of Cambridge, and added that this was their first appearance on Trooping the Colour

Parade. The report ended with a shot of the royal family watching the flypast from the balcony of Buckingham Palace, which Croxall summed up the start of the celebrations: “Her 70 years on the throne were marked in style” (BBC 2022).

The Sun published a total of 56 articles relating to the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee on its website that day, on 2 June 2022. However, these articles focused rather on other family members instead of the Queen. Prince Louis of Cambridge was the most interesting element for this medium; he waved so much during the parade that Princess Charlotte had to calm him down. An example is the article “Big Sis Duties Adorable moment Charlotte playfully calms little brother Louis, 4, as he enthusiastically waves to jubilee crowds” (Fuller 2022). Then, while watching the aeroplanes fly by from the balcony, he made various grimaces, which The Sun captured with the headline: “Stealing The Show! Adorable Prince Louis jumps up and down with joy as he’s wowed by Red Arrows, much to the Queen’s delight” (Aoraha 2022). Another topic of a large number of articles was the return of Prince Harry and his wife Meghan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, who gave up their roles as senior members of the royal family, so it was not clear until the last minute whether they would appear at the festivities. While some articles were written neutrally, such as “Duchess Of Shushex Meghan Markle and Prince Harry playfully shush kids as they finally reunite with Royals for the first time since Megxit”, where authors Britta Zeltmann and Matt Wilkinson (2022) summarise what was captured by photographers, i.e. the couple’s conversation with the Duke from Kent and how they play and talk with the children. Other articles indicate a bias against Harry and Meghan, such as the article “Mega Burn Royals have been ‘burnt’ by Harry & Meghan and fear they will use what they hear to their advantage, says Paul Burrell” (Cliff 2022). Apart from the topics mentioned earlier, The Sun also dealt with the fact that Prince Andrew had Coronavirus or how Kate honoured the memory of Princess Diana.

It was evident that headlines with the royal family increase people's attention, which means an extension of sales and profits, and editors are aware of that. It can be seen that they dealt with the celebrations very often and in detail and immediately communicated current events and the development of situations. It was expected, and this premiss was also fulfilled, that senior members of the royal family will fill the headlines of newspapers and internet posts, more precisely, Elizabeth II, Prince Charles with Camilla, Prince William and Catherine, and their children. Great attention was also paid to Prince Harry and his wife, who resigned from the position of senior members in 2020. However, they are still demanded by the public and the media.

### **3.2 Friday, 3 June 2022**

The celebrations continued the following day, 3 June. On this day, a Thanksgiving service was scheduled at 11:30 am in St. Paul's Cathedral. Queen Elizabeth II did not attend this service, but also other events on this day after having experienced some discomfort after the 2 June Trooping the Colour. But other royal family members stood her in, especially the heir to the throne, Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla.

Over 400 people from all four nations in the United Kingdom, who significantly contribute to public life at the community and national level, received an invitation. These included representatives of the National Health Service, as well as people from the ranks of teachers and representatives of the armed forces, charities, social enterprises, and voluntary groups (Clarence House 2022). The ceremony itself contained bible readings, anthems, prayers, and congregational hymns, which expressed thankfulness not only for The Queen's reign, faith and service but also the desire to foster unity and peace among people and commitment to care for God's creation (St. Paul's Cathedral 2022). After the service, the royals moved to London's Guildhall for a reception hosted by the Lord Mayor of London (The Royal Family n. d.).

During the central weekend, events were held in London, and members of the royal family also visited various places in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Accompanied by her husband Timothy Laurence, Princess Anne joined the celebrations in Edinburgh, where she met local people, visited the zoo and then HMS Albion, where she inspected a Guard of Honour (The Royal Family 2022).

Although it is not an official event, it is appropriate to mention it at least marginally due to the relationship with the Queen. The so-called Corgi's Parade also took place in honour of the Queen and her love of Welsh Corgi dogs. About a hundred dogs and their owners gathered and walked together through the streets and parks of London (Reuters 2022).

Since this day, the British also had the opportunity to see a display looking back at Her Majesty's previous Jubilees, which contained outfits worn by the Queen in previous jubilees in 1977, 2002 and 2012, as well as those worn during the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, i.e., in the previous days during her two appearances on the Buckingham Palace balcony. In addition to these ensembles, a collection of gifts and ceremonial objects related to the Queen's official engagements in Scotland throughout her 70-year reign was also displayed (Royal Collection Trust 2022).

### **Media Reaction on 3 June**

The anniversary is an opportunity to remember the events that took place on a particular day in the past, but also during the following years until today. In the case of Elizabeth II, it was 70 years since her coronation, and many media outlets looked back to the past to commemorate the Queen's life and reign.

On this day, The Sun newspaper also looked back on the past 70 years of the reign and published an article listing seventy interesting facts about the Queen. The article is

entitled “The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee: 70 brilliant facts you never knew about Her Majesty” and is composed of facts such as that the Queen never went to school, that her wedding dress was paid for with rationing coupons or that her favourite song was “Dancing Queen” by Swedish band Abba (Pemberton 2022). However, the reader does not know where The Sun gets this information, and it is up to them to believe it.

But the newspaper stayed restrained against the Queen with the article with an ambiguous title “The Queen needs rest after spending nearly 30 mins on her feet on palace balcony” (Wilkinson 2022). While the article does not bring anything new and is conducted in a calm spirit, the headline suggests that the author was not delighted that the Queen does not appear in public as often as she should on this occasion.

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex were again a frequent topic on the second day. The Sun tabloid convincingly stated that there was a very cold mood between them and the other royal family members. Harry and Meghan had to sit away from the rest of the royal family, and there was no eye contact or that Prince William used the “barrier method” to avoid Prince Harry, which was also confirmed by body language expert Judi James. The articles in The Sun showed whose side they take (Hall 2022).

For comparison, another tabloid – Daily Express, in most of its articles on 3 June 2022, paid attention to global and British personalities and celebrities who commented on the Platinum Jubilee and wished the Queen, for example, by sharing photos in which they are captured with her majesty, for example, “Victoria Beckham wishes fans ‘super spicy Jubilee weekend’ with throwback Spice Girls pics” (Kaidan 2022).

Other examined media – The Guardian and The Telegraph expressed similar views. Frequent headlines included media reporting that The Queen did not attend Thanksgiving and that she will not attend the Epsom Derby the next day. The Guardian,



for example, described the Queen's absence as symbolic with regard to representing Prince Charles. It can also appear symbolic in retrospect because the Queen died in three months and thus enabled her successor to prepare for the role of the king at least partially. The Guardian also provided a summary of the event on its website. Nicola Slawson, the author, gave the key points: Senior royals, parliamentarians and diplomats joined 400 members of the public at St Paul's to celebrate the 70-year reign of the Queen.; The Prince of Wales filled in for the Queen at the Thanksgiving service.; The Archbishop of York thanked the Queen for "staying the course" while The Queen was watching the service on television.; Some members of the crowd loudly booed as Boris Johnson arrived at the cathedral; A huge cheer went up when Prince Harry and Meghan arrived.; The royals, senior politicians and other guests attended a jubilee reception at the Guildhall in central London following the service.; Television viewing figures for the first day of the Queen's jubilee were substantially down on previous royal occasions, although millions still tuned in.; The Duchess of Cambridge said that The Queen had a "lovely" time at Thursday's Platinum Jubilee celebrations but found the day "very tiring"; Thunderstorms could dampen Platinum Jubilee festivities, with the Met Office issuing a weather warning for southern England (Slawson 2022).

The evening news on the BBC again summarised the events of the day. The leading information of the day was the war in Ukraine, the Gun Law plea in the USA and UEFA's apology for the riots during the champions league after one of the matches. Despite these events, the Jubilee celebrations remained the number one news item. Presenter Annita McVeigh began with the Thanksgiving service, to which she said that although the Queen had not attended in person, she was known to have been watching from Windsor Castle. McVeigh also said it was the first official event for Prince Harry and his wife Meghan after stepping down as senior royal family members. A significant

part of the event, which caught the attention of the media, was the speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who mentioned the Queen's fondness for horse riding and, in this spirit, shared with her "for being still in the saddle". Then the news correspondent Helena Wilkinson added that it was now sure that the Queen would not take part in the Epsom Derby the next day. She said that the Queen only missed the derby twice in her lifetime. According to her, she will be watching Epsom Downs on TV at home in Windsor. At the end of the entry part of the news, she mentioned what actions and events the British could expect over the weekend. At the very end, the newsmakers returned to the Platinum Jubilee celebrations – especially the ceremonial parade planned for the next day. In a short report, they showed a behind-the-scenes look at the parade participants' preparations (BBC 2022).

### **3.3 Saturday, 4 June 2022**

The following day, Saturday, 4 June 2022, started with the previously mentioned Epsom Derby. This Derby is one of the most famous classic English horse races since 1661 (annually since 1778) and is run over one mile, four furlongs and 10 yards. In 2022, on the occasion of the Queen's jubilee, Epsom Downs Racecourse held its 243rd edition (The Royal Family n.d.). The Epsom Derby, as well as other races, has become a several-day festival, which, in addition to the race itself, also includes musical and social events. Derby Day at Epsom Downs is more formal than most sporting events today. As in Ascot, the Epsom Derby maintains a dress code for all spectators, and women often attend the event wearing extravagant hats. The winner of the year 2022 at Epsom Downs was a horse called Dessert Crown (Britannica n. d.).

The event was attended by Princess Anna, her husband Sir Timothy Lawrence, and Zara Tindall with her husband Mike Tindall and Peter Philips. The selection of the

royal representatives at the event might seem expected, given that both Princess Anne and her daughter are interested in horse riding, and both have won many competitions.

The royal family also attended various events on the day at multiple locations to mark the Platinum Jubilee. The members continued their visits to Northern Ireland, where the Queen's youngest son and his wife, the Earl and Countess of Wessex, represented the royal family. They first visited Belfast, where the royal couple attended a 1950s-themed celebration. The next stop was in Bangor, which was on this day granted city status (The Royal Family 2022). The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visited Cardiff, Wales, together with their two children, George and Charlotte (The Prince and Princess of Wales 2022). These tours were recorded and published together with photos on the official profiles of the social networks Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

In the afternoon, crowds began to gather at The Mall, wanting to take the best place from where would be a good view of the upcoming program – i.e., the Platinum Party at the Palace. The programme started at 7:30 pm with a pre-recorded video called “Ma’amalade sandwich Your Majesty?” directed by Mark Burton, in which the Queen performed with CGI Paddington Bear, voiced by Ben Whishaw (Beaumont-Thomas 2022), the famous British animated character from the film of the same name. The short video made an immense reaction not only during the celebrations but also when the Queen died, and many Paddington teddy bears were seen at the memorial places. In the video, The Queen has a dialogue with this teddy bear and offers him tea. Clumsy Paddington drinks all the tea and manages to destroy the small snacks that are on the table. He is sorry, so he takes out a sandwich with orange marmalade from his hat and offers it to the Queen. However, she refuses, saying she has one “for emergencies” hidden in her purse. This moment is interrupted by a palace footman announcing that the party is about to start and live footage of the cheering crowd outside Buckingham Palace. At the end of the

video, Paddington Bear takes off his red hat, wishes the Queen a beautiful jubilee, and thanks her for everything. Her Majesty replies that it is very kind of him. Their conversation ends with the first notes of the famous song “We will rock you” by the group Queen, played by the Corps of Drums from the Bands of Her Majesty’s Royal Marines, to whose rhythm Elizabeth II and Paddington clink their spoons on teacups.<sup>3</sup>

The spokesman for Buckingham Palace also commented on this video, adding: “While the Queen may not be attending the concert in person, she was very keen that people understood how much it meant to her and that all those watching had a great time. ... Her Majesty is well known for her sense of humour, so it should be no surprise that she decided to take part in tonight’s sketch. There was an interest in the filming and animation process, and the opportunity to invite a famous bear to tea was just too much fun to miss” (Furness 2022).

In her article “Queen’s Jubilee Surprise: A starring role with Paddington Bear (and what she really keeps in her handbag)” for The Telegraph, Hannah Furness (2022) claims that the filming of this short video took around half a day, took place at Windsor Castle and was top secret – so that not even some of her children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren knew about it. Furness adds that preparations took about half a year, and the response was spectacular – more than 10,000 people at The Mall were pleasantly surprised and cheered. The Queen’s great-grandchildren, sitting in the audience, shared the crowd’s enthusiasm.

The skit was reminiscent of the one in 2012 when Her Majesty appeared alongside Daniel and Craig as James Bond at the Summer Olympic Games.

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<sup>3</sup> The video can be viewed freely on YouTube, on the official channel of the British royal family.

The short spot smoothly transitioned into the central part of the program – the concert in front of Buckingham Palace, which began with the songs of the Queen band performed by the remaining members – Brian May, Roger Taylor and Adam Lambert. Other performers (in chronological order) were: Jax Jones, Elbow and the Citizens of the World Choir; ‘The History of British Pop’: Beatles, Bee Gees, David Bowie, Spice Girls, One Direction, Stormzy, Craig David, Mimi Webb, Musical medley, Sam Ryder, George Ezra, Rod Stewart, Andrea Bocelli, Duran Duran, Alicia Keys, Celeste/Hans Zimmer, Elton John (pre-recorded and screened at the Buckingham Palace), RAF Trumpeters and Choir, Sigala and Ella Eyre, Mica Paris, Ruby Turner and Nicola Roberts. Singer Diana Ross ended the concert with her songs Chain Reaction, Thank You and Ain’t No Mountain High Enough. A full list of the performers and their songs can be found in Appendices.

With a few exceptions, the selection of performers consisted mainly of British artists, which means that the Platinum Jubilee Party can be characterised not only as a celebration of the Queen herself but also as a celebration of the British nation and its culture. After the concert ended, Prince Charles took the stage to give a speech honouring his mother, Queen Elizabeth. His wife Camilla was by his side the whole time.

The Prince of Wales’s speech was focused on both politics and her personal life. He paid tribute and thanked Elizabeth II for her lifelong service to the country, but at the same time, expressed his regret that she could not be there with them in person. The beginning of his speech contained a profoundly personal address, “*Your Majesty, Mummy*”, that he had already used in the past, precisely ten years ago in 2012, during a speech as part of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations. He captivated the crowd with his address, and the beginning of the speech probably worked so well that he also used it at the Platinum Jubilee speech.

He also remembered his father, Prince Philip, who, according to him, would enjoy the celebrations. *“Your strength and stay is much missed this evening, but I am sure he is here in spirit. My Papa would have enjoyed the show and joined us wholeheartedly in celebrating all you continue to do for your country and your people.”*

Throughout the speech, there were strong references to the bond between the Queen, her family, and the people. *“You are our Head of State. And you are also our mother. ... But I know what really gets my mother up in the morning is all of you, ladies and gentlemen, all of you watching at home, represented here tonight in this great audience. ... You have met us and talked with us. You laugh and cry with us, and, most importantly, you have been there for us for these 70 years.”*

As Prince Charles spoke, footage from the Queen’s life was shown at Buckingham Palace. His speech was successful with the people present in the crowd, as it was interrupted several times by loud cheers and applause. Ultimately, he invited the public to a big cheer, which he said could be heard to Windsor Castle, where the Queen was currently staying. *“Now, I know the Queen is watching these celebrations with much emotion, having, I hope, finished her marmalade sandwich, including immense regret that she cannot be here in person with us this evening. But Windsor Castle is barely 20 miles away, so if we cheer loudly enough, she might, might just hear us”* (Sky News 2022).

His son, Prince William, who was not accompanied by his wife Catherine, made an appearance right after him. In his speech, Prince William focused mainly on the environment. In the beginning, he showed his pride that his family, especially his father and grandfather, had previously shown an interest in protecting our planet. *“As I watch those extraordinary images, it does make me think of all the monumental and pioneering work of so many visionary environmentalists that have gone before. I am so proud that*

*my grandfather and my father have been part of those efforts. And I am in awe of people like the great Sir David Attenborough, who look at the beauty and power of our Earth and then work to celebrate and preserve it.”*

His speech was also connected with how life changed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth II and what goals humanity achieved. Just like her, Prince William sees the future positively. Ultimately, he called on all people to try to help nature protect it for themselves and future generations. *“Today, in 2022, as the Queen celebrates her Platinum Jubilee, the pressing need to protect and restore our planet has never been more urgent. But, like her, I am an optimist. Decades of making the case for taking better care of our world has meant that environmental issues are now at the top of the global agenda.”*

As part of his message, which could be reminiscent of enlightenment, raising public awareness or encouraging people to think and realise how they themselves contribute to the maintenance of the Earth in all aspects, he also mentioned the most important things that humankind has invented during the past 70 years: *“In the past 70 years, mankind has put a man on the moon; we have built the World Wide Web. And we have developed vaccines and solutions to some of the most life-threatening diseases on Earth. When humankind focuses its mind, anything is possible.”*

Although the central theme of the speech was protecting the environment rather than the Queen herself, Prince William’s speech was profound and relevant today. It was clear that the royal family is actively engaged in discussions on the topic, but the question may remain whether their actions will match their words.

After both speeches, whose written records in their entirety are attached in the appendices as Appendix C and Appendix D, came the drone show. Drones have been a

top-rated program in recent times and are thought to replace fireworks in the future, which most people today believe have negative effects.

Accompanied by a music and dance performance and a projection on the walls of Buckingham Palace, drones flew into the air, capturing specific things for Elizabeth II and the United Kingdom. These images included: the flag of the United Kingdom, a corgi with a bone, a handbag, a teapot with a cup of tea, soldiers in typical red uniforms with tall bearskin caps, a blooming flower, a portrait of Her Majesty resembling a stamp, a swan in flight, a horse moving as if jumping in front of the fence and at the end the number 70 with the royal crown, which was the emblem accompanying the entire celebration (Drone Seekers International 2022).

On that day, 4 June, a video entitled “Constant in culture” was released on the official profile of the British royal family, which depicts Elizabeth II as she has become part of British culture over the years. A comment was added to this post: “For 70 years, The Queen has been at the centre of our culture, much imitated, but never bettered. In today’s video, we look at the face which has launched ships, adorned billions of coins and banknotes, inspired works of art and more ...” (The Royal Family 2022). In this short spot, it is emphasised that during her 70-year reign, the Queen appeared not only on billions of coins and banknotes, as it is said in the shot comment, but her portraits adorned many postage stamps. Various local and distant places, centres and ships were named after her. It is also mentioned that she has sat for hundreds of portraits, and she was an inspiration for many artists – in the art of painting, for example, Andy Warhol or Justin Mortimer. She was also imitated many times; the video shows Freddie Mercury, who appeared several times in an ermine cloak and crown at concerts of the band Queen, or RuPaul, who dressed up as the queen in his drag shows, as well as in the series *The Simpsons* or *Peppa Pig*. At first glance, a believable copy of her can be found in Madame



Tussaud's Museum, and the Barbie Doll was supposed to be similar. However, at the end of the video, it is mentioned that there is only one original, and an actual photo of the Queen was attached (The Royal Family 2022).

### **Media Reaction on 4 June**

This day was very rich for journalists because of the varied program that was prepared for the day. The first most talked about event of the day was the visit of Prince William and his family to Cardiff. The media focused on the fact that children also participated in the event, which was not originally expected. In her article for The Telegraph, Hannah Furness (2022) pointed out that this was George and Charlotte's first official visit to Wales. Prince Louis was absent from the visit, which was an opportunity for the media to repeatedly return to his previous appearances. The articles are tuned mainly in a positive spirit, and Prince William and his family are commended not only in tabloid magazines.

Articles related to the event contained many of the same themes – cheering crowds, meeting Bonnie Tyler, shy royal children, or what the royal couple said to the people. However, in one of its articles, People magazine recalls the historical context – Prince William made the first official visit to Wales with his parents, Prince Charles and Princess Diana, at the same age as Prince George. Among other things, the author of the article, Simon Perry (2022), also mentions the historical significance of the royal visit as part of the jubilee, saying that it is an opportunity to show the succession and the monarchy as a whole.

The visit to Northern Ireland by Prince Edward and his wife Sophie was not overlooked, although it might seem that the journalists focused their attention more on the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The couple met groups of street artists but also

ordinary people. Their visit was summarised on the BBC and The Independent websites, which particularly highlighted their meetings and communication with people. On the contrary, the Daily Mail focused more on the omelette cook-off, where the Earl and Countess competed under professional supervision to see who could make the better omelette, and on the bartending skills of Prince Edward, who tapped beer as part of a Bangor inhabitants' meeting (Carr 2022).

There are only minor references in newspaper articles to Princess Anne and her participation in the Epsom Derby. On this day, People magazine published an article on this topic, briefly describing the event. It was reported that Princess Anne was accompanied by her husband, Tim Lawrence, daughter Zara Tindall and son Peter Phillips with their partners. Before the races began, everyone was greeted by a special honour guard of 40 jockeys wearing the purple and gold colours accompanying the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The article was supplemented by the fact that the Queen herself has loved horses and everything related to them since childhood (Boucher 2022). The Sun, like People, initially said the Queen did not attend the event due to discomfort she had been experiencing in recent days but added that five royal horses were also shown at the event (Hawkins 2022).

However, the media's attention was mainly paid to the evening party in front of Buckingham Palace. The concert was broadcast on BBC One and averaged 12 million television viewers. In addition, it was stated on their website that the viewership of this program exceeded even many recent high-profile events. The BBC also adds: "The Platinum Party at the Palace on BBC One was the most watched program of the year so far" (Clarke 2022).

There were also celebrations in Scotland, despite the discussions that are led for the past few years on whether to remain a part of Great Britain or become an independent state. It seems that the celebrations in Scotland were not as visible in the media as those in other places. It was the only part of the United Kingdom that was not visited by any of the royal family on 5 June. In Kelso, a reconstruction of the Queen's coronation was held, which was organised by local children and together with them, people remembered the events of 1953. A parade of sailing boats was held in the capital, Edinburgh, but also the Republicans organised a demonstration, gathering against the monarchy (BBC 2022).

### **3.4 Sunday, 5 June 2022**

Sunday, 5 June, was the last day of Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The last day was relatively peaceful, but simultaneously the program was very varied, and the end of the celebration was spectacular. Two significant events were planned on this day – The Big Jubilee Lunch and The Platinum Jubilee Pageant.

The Big Jubilee Lunch was an event that took place across the UK. Its aim was not only “bringing neighbours and communities together to share friendship, food and fun” (Eden Project Communities n. d.) but also to encourage people to come together and thank the Queen and their neighbours, friends, and people who in some way participated in the changes in the United Kingdom in the last two years. The Windsor Big Lunch is part of the National Thanksgiving Day – first held in 2021 to celebrate communities helping each other during the coronavirus pandemic. In 2022, it was planned to become part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The events were attended by more than 10 million people from Great Britain (The Royal Family n. d.) at an estimated 16,000 parties, and around 600 such “lunches” were held around the world on this day (Rao, Pinkney 2022). The event, which The Guardian aptly called “Record-breaking picnic planned for a record-breaking Queen”, also included street parties, gatherings and garden barbecues.

However, the central point was the record-long 500, which was supposed to accommodate over 1,600 people. “A lunchtime picnic in Windsor on 5 June to mark the Platinum Jubilee is expected to become the longest ever held, breaking a record set in Memphis, Tennessee, in 2019” (Rudgard 2022).

A Platinum Jubilee Parade was held in the afternoon, the last major event of the jubilee celebrations. The procession covered a 3-kilometre-long route and was meant to represent both the Queen, the Commonwealth and England in the changing course of the past 70 years. The parade was divided into 4 acts: For Queen and Country, The Time of Our Lives, Let’s Celebrate and Happy and Glorious.

The first act, entitled For Queen and Country, included a military parade with 1,750 men and 200 horses. According to the organisers, it was one of modern history’s most significant military spectacles. The procession also featured a coronation carriage in which a hologram of the Queen was projected precisely as it was on the day of her coronation.

The second act, The Time of Our Lives, celebrated seven decades of culture, music and fashion. The parade featured people in typical clothing for a specific decade, period cars, and double-deckers with people in masks, dancing to the rhythm of the music that was also identical to the decade of creation.

The third act, Let’s Celebrate, was to present the Queen’s life story in 12 chapters, with a tribute to her corgis and beloved horses. This rendition of an Afro-Caribbean carnival-style coronation by mahogany carnival art from Brent represents the animal kingdom’s response to Princess Elizabeth’s accession to the throne in 1952 while being in Kenya. Without prior notice that the procession would consist of these parts, it would be difficult to recognise at first glance what the procession is supposed to symbolise, so

only a perceptive and thoughtful viewer would probably guess that the exotic animals at the beginning of the third act represent Kenya, that is the place where Princess Elizabeth was staying at the time when she learned that she had become queen. Other symbols the dancers created were her wedding cake, a reference to her wedding with Prince Philip, and the coronation robe as a representation of the coronation.

The fourth, final act, Happy and Glorious, occurred outside Buckingham Palace. Singer Ed Sheeran played the guitar and sang a few songs from his repertoire. This act was concluded by the appearance of the Queen, Prince Charles with Camilla and Prince William with Kate and their children. At the very end, the national anthem was played (Sky News 2022).

The official website of the royal family stated that “10,000 people were involved, including the military, over 6,000 volunteers, performers, key workers and 2,500 members of the general public” (The Royal Family n. d.).

Buckingham Palace also released the Queen’s “Thank you message”, in which she mentions that although she was unable to attend some of the events in person, her heart was with everyone. She was also pleased with the kindness, joy and kinship that prevailed among people, and at the same time, she expressed her desire for this harmony between people to continue. In the end, she thanked all the people for their wishes and for being a part of her celebrations. The entire text of the statement is included in the appendices of this thesis (Appendix E).

### **Media Reaction on 5 June**

On Sunday, some newspapers already looked back on the progress and began to evaluate the several-day event on the occasion of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. As mentioned above, one of the events of this day was the “Platinum Jubilee Lunch” and the

associated street parties. The estimates regarding participation were already known before this event took place. Eden Project executive director Peter Stewart also said: “Hundreds of thousands of Big Jubilee Lunch street parties, BBQs and picnics are being planned across the nation to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen’s amazing 70 years” (Rao, Pinkney 2022). In addition, the Sky News website has published an interactive map of the UK with marked points where exactly the big lunches will be held. People could thus find out if some event was about to happen near them, and when they clicked on the marked place on the map, important information such as time, place, number of expected people or the program was displayed (Rao, Pickney 2022).

This event brought together people from the neighbourhood as well as different cultures. The Guardian published an article interviewing several people who participated in the event. As well as their views on the Queen, her reign and the celebrations, they also said what food will be served on this occasion. One of the respondents was Tehseen Majothi, who prepared a special Queen’s jubilee biryani for the street party, which was a spicy mixture of saffron, sultanas, seasonal vegetables and rice, served topped with a crown of fried onions and coloured rice arranged in the shape of a Union Jack. Majothi adds that he learned that the Queen did not like potatoes, so he modified the recipe. “On Sunday morning, Majothi will wake up at 4 am in preparation for the street party in the afternoon, where she and her team plan to serve 3,000 portions of the jubilee dish to St Mark’s Road residents and the nearby community for free” (Das 2022).

In one of its articles, published on 5 June, The Telegraph reflects on the past four days with the title “The Platinum Jubilee celebrations were brilliantly British – and fit for a Queen”. Author Judith Woods believes that from Trooping the Colour to the Pageant, the kingdom has come together to show respect and warmth for Her Majesty. From the beginning of the article, she emphasises that no national celebration can be done without

people dressed in the national tricolour: “We don’t have a written constitution, but if we did, it would surely state that no royal event can possibly take place without a phalanx of red-white-and-blue bedecked superfans to make the rest of us stiffies feel less self-conscious about manically waving Union flags once a decade” (Woods 2022). It is therefore clear from the beginning that the celebrations were spectacular and the people who took part in them clearly showed their liking for the Queen and the monarchy, especially with their external appearance – Tim Adams very aptly described this in one of his articles as “a very British way of celebrating”.

In the article, Woods returns to past events and royal visits and occasionally adds popular and often repeated media topics – royal children and Harry and Meghan. For example, she reacted in this way to the behaviour of Prince Louis and Princess Charlotte. Although she does not state the sources, she does not forgive herself for the cheap remark and writes: “No wonder some corners of social media have been calling for the succession to skip Charles, William and George in favour of putting confident, capable Charlotte on the throne. After all, Britain’s queens do have a rather spectacular track record.” (Woods 2022). Like many other columnists, Woods carried this look back in a very positive and patriotic spirit, which is most evident at the end: “She smiled at each of us. She waved. ... God Save Our Gracious Queen” (Woods 2022).

The Platinum Jubilee of the monarch was not only an occasion to celebrate and praise the royal family. There was also space for various expressions connected with her reign and the events that happened in 70 years and were not very optimistic. This day, The Guardian also published an article titled “We have got other things to worry about: former colonies react to Platinum Jubilee.” This is a perspective of the jubilee celebrations in places in sub-Saharan Africa, where the troubled past of the British Empire and its influence on deepening the economic problems there were remembered. Jason Burke, the

author of the article, says that on one side, politicians issue statements honouring the Queen and praising her for service to the nations, but on the other side are the ordinary people who do not share this view. Burke also gives a specific example: Clever Dlamini, an unemployed man from Alexandra, a poor neighbourhood in north-east Johannesburg. He has very little interest in the events in Britain and Queen Elizabeth II, even though South Africa is part of the Commonwealth, which joined in the celebrations. “All that was a long time ago... I do not know what it has to do with us now. ... It is nice for her, but we have got other things to worry about” (Burke 2022).

It can be seen that although the celebrations were presented in a very fancy way and the media mainly presented photos of happy people enjoying exuberant celebrations, there is still a less prominent side which reveals that not everywhere people are enthusiastic about the celebrations. Whether it is the political situation or the constant impact of the past on some countries’ current state, many people still do not need to celebrate the Queen. “It is just sheer lack of interest. People talked about the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and Russia but are more interested in rising fuel prices than the Queen” (Burke 2022).

The article also contains statements that were carried in a more severe spirit: “To this day, she has never publicly admitted, let alone apologised for, the oppression, torture, dehumanisation, and dispossession visited upon people in the colony of Kenya before and after she acceded to the throne.” says Patrick Gathara, a Kenyan cartoonist, writer, and commentator (Burke 2022).

In addition to the Queen’s Jubilee, the BBC’s headlines on the day included the war in Ukraine or the fire in Bangladesh, but the main topic was still the celebrations. Presenter Reeta Chakrabarti introduced parts of the Queen’s Thank you message at the



beginning and also mentioned the Queen's unexpected appearance on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. Nicolas Witchell's report then focused on the Platinum Jubilee Parade, which, according to him, was a show of modern Britain with a focus on the environment. Then the attention was focused on the Big Jubilee Lunch event, where some members of the royal family were also mentioned because some of them attended those events. While Prince Charles and Camilla remained in London and joined the hundreds of visitors at The Oval Cricket Ground, the Earl and Countess of Wessex visited Winsor and chatted with the organisers and local people. Mishal Husain was in Leicester, where the local people were very determined to celebrate, which they confirmed in the interviews. One of the visitors described: "Despite the rain, everyone has got a smile on their face, and everyone is just happy, full of energy as well."

At the end of the news, there was an interview between Reeta Chakrabarti and her guest, royal correspondent Nicolas Witchell. When asked what these celebrations meant for the royal family, he answered: "It is a much more daunting challenge for her successor. The bar has been raised even higher, and I think the Queen is very much aware of that. I think the message of the balcony appearance was one of confidence in her heirs, Charles in particular. Confidence by the Queen that the monarchy will be safe in his or their hands whenever the time comes." Witchell focused more on the other members of the royal family, and even then, it is apparent that the Queen's health was not in the best of shape. "Clearly, she is now more frail physically, but according to people who know her, mentally, she is still very sharp, and we saw that particularly in the Paddington Bear skit." He highlighted the function of the closest members of the royal family, who have stood in for the queen in the past four days (BBC 2022).

## **4 The Symbolic and Real Role of Elizabeth II in the Context of Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

In many articles published first as part of the seven-decade anniversary of her reign, then and after her death, Elizabeth II was considered a symbol. The symbolism of unity, stability and tradition was evident during the celebrations. Unity was also seen in the fact that the celebrations were not only held in the United Kingdom but also in the countries of the Commonwealth. The number of people who joined the celebrations can attest to the fact that the Queen is still popular in many states around the world. But what exactly is her role? This chapter is devoted to the role of Queen Elizabeth and also deals with the question of to what extent her function is symbolic. It focuses on aspects of Elizabeth II as a symbol of an era, a religious symbol, and a symbol of tradition, succession, and power.

In his reflections, Prasun Sonwalkar quotes the commentator Andrew Marr when, shortly after the Queen died, he alludes to the fact that the Queen's death will question the British perception of itself – it can be seen that for people, the Queen was a great person. “The Queen is a very important part of the glue” (Sonwalkar 2022). The reason for this reaction is due to the fact that the majority of Britons have never seen anyone else on the throne other than Elizabeth II, and it was her that people most associated with their government. It can be said that for some, she was even a national treasure. After her death, photos of a rainbow over Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace or a shot of a cloud that looked like her even appeared on the Internet. People immediately saw a certain symbolism in it. The day she died, so did their national certainty. Nevertheless, there is still a group of people who think about the possibility of Great Britain becoming a republic. They believe that the monarchy is a remnant of history and that modern Britain should have an elected head of state.

At the beginning of her reign, the Queen was seen as a symbol of a new era, of a change, especially after her predecessors George V (death, January 1936), Edward VIII (abdication, December 1936), and George VI (death, February 1952) and their quick succession on the British throne. The war, from which Great Britain was still recovering, also played a significant role in this symbolism. In retrospect, if we look back at her reign, it could be stated that it was indeed a new era, but not to the extent it was intended. This also mentions historian Chris Bambery (2022), who adds that the “new Elizabethan era” was a term invented by Winston Churchill, who referred to the reign of Elizabeth I and, at the same time, wanted to indicate that the country would continue to flourish under the new rule. Over the years, other states continued to secede from the British Empire, especially after the Suez Crisis in 1956, when Britain lost much of its influence in the Middle East. Thus, Elizabeth II became, after several centuries, the sovereign of a disintegrating empire.

Elizabeth II was also a religious symbol. The monarch of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is also the head of the Church of England and holds the title “Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England.” Her role is rather ceremonial; although she is the head of this institution, her role is represented by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Queen herself is religious and takes an active interest in the Church and its activities. But there are many other churches on the territory of England, so it may seem that the symbol of the unity and togetherness of the monarch with his people can diverge at this level. This is not the case; the queen herself was aware of diversity and, despite being the head of the Anglican Church, at the same time respecting the existence of others. The royal family’s official website confirms that Elizabeth II was part of this church and took her role very seriously. “Her Majesty has spoken openly on many occasions about the strength she has drawn from her Christian

faith and has often turned to the teachings of the Bible at difficult times in her own life and the life of the nation” (The Royal Family n. d.).

Robert Atwell, Bishop of Exeter, mentioned in his speech on the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee: “Her constancy in times of pressure and difficulty, as well as in times of joy, has been exemplary. Public service, duty and a devout Christian faith remain hallmarks of Queen Elizabeth’s reign. Her trust in Jesus Christ is central to her life” (The Church of England 2022). For the believers in England, the Queen played an essential role in maintaining and preserving the inviolability of the Church of England and its worship, discipline and government as stipulated by the law in England, which was also stated in her promise at her coronation (The Royal Family n. d.).

The celebrations were also in the spirit of tradition and succession. Queen Elizabeth II herself was that symbol of tradition and certainty. She ruled England for 70 years; most British people have never experienced anyone else on the throne except her. “For many people around the world, Queen Elizabeth II represented great poise and tradition. As the longest reigning British monarch, the Queen also became a seminal figure guarding over our important social events. One would expect to see her at holidays, memorials, royal births, and weddings. As such, the Queen took on a special significance in the collective formation of memories for generations of people around the world. Her presence at once signified an important event and reified the societal values around grand concepts like birth, death, and time” (de Groot, Berger, Shepard 2022).

Elizabeth II had four children and thus gave the monarchy solid pillars for the future and ensured a clear continuation of the monarchy, a practice that has been in England for many centuries and of which she was a symbol at the time. Due to the Queen’s age, it was expected that she would not participate in all the events, which meant

that her descendants would join in the celebrations and represent her, but at the same time, they would express their devotion to the Queen through their speeches. Their presence and appearance assured the people that although the family has gone through many complicated situations, it does not limit them from fulfilling their duties.

Almost all royal family members, including the youngest, participated in the celebration. The most anticipated was the participation of Prince William and his children, Louis, Charlotte and especially George, who was third in line in the succession to the British throne at that time. From some newspapers, articles and statements, the presence of these royal family members was only considered entertaining – the family went to enjoy the attractions and have fun with people. Despite this, it would be appropriate to think about the more profound meaning and remember the actual function of the royal family and its members – the representative function. The participation of these key persons in the monarchy had, among other things, the aim of showing people the monarchy's stability and the certainty of its continuation in the future.

Elizabeth II had less power than it might seem. Therefore, referring to her as a symbol of power is unsuitable. England has a constitutional monarchy, so the constitution limits the monarch's abilities, and his government rests on parliament. The Queen has only a representative and ceremonial function and has to stick to specific rules even on occasions connected with various ceremonies or the representation of the royal family. But if we look back, we will find that despite England being essentially ruled by its parliament, Elizabeth II established herself for several decades as the global face not only of the British royal family but also of the United Kingdom.

Ask an ordinary person not involved in world politics what kind of state entity Sweden is, for example. He probably won't answer that it's a kingdom and that King Carl

XVI Gustaf rules here. Why? The Swedish royal family is not uninteresting after all; its members, in many cases, do the same job, regularly visit various places and devote themselves to charity, but they also have their scandals, which the media would undoubtedly be more interested in than the whole essence of the work of the members of the royal family. It may therefore seem that Sweden or any other European royal family does not have such a strong media base that would present the actions of its “Elizabeths, Charles’ or Williams and Catherines” so much and so often.

This brings us to the idea of another level of the Queen’s power – media power. Although it was said above that we should not call the Queen a symbol of power, in this work, it is appropriate to indicate and reflect at least partially on her power, but from a different point of view. The Queen cannot influence everything the media write, say, or post about her. But whenever she appeared in public or made a statement, it immediately appeared in all the local press and, in more critical cases, the world’s media. Elizabeth II and the institution of which she is the head are very popular in this regard. Nobody even has to show up or say anything. The media often produce new articles with references to “a close friend” or “a source close to the royal household”.

Yasser Ali Nasser (2022), who is on the editorial team of the Democratic Left, refers to Queen Elizabeth as “the symbol of the empire” in the headline of his article. But when reading his report, the reader will not come across words, sentences, or thoughts praising the Queen and the monarchy. It is one of the few negative considerations (especially after her death) that is not inherently positive and does not place the British monarch in a position of very positive social recognition. Nasser is very critical of her role, but at the same time, does not condemn those for whom she was an “icon”. “I feel ill at ease with the hagiographical portrayal of her “reign” and the ceremonial pomp associated with her succession. ... Elizabeth II earned neither title nor wealth through the

strength of her character or fruits of her labour. She was born into the role, a role that was always going to be hers and only hers by the nature of her parentage. That level of hereditary privilege and status is bizarre even in a capitalist society” (Nasser 2022). Despite the overuse of negations, Nasser’s arguments are suggestive, and the reader will undoubtedly think more deeply about the facts he presents.

Not so much media as would have been expected took the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations as an opportunity to reflect on her reign. Many retrospectives have been released just after her death. Yet, both of these milestones encourage the media to look back at the past 70 years, recapitulate and, if necessary, evaluate them. But it is said, “*De mortuis nil nisi bene*”, and the question is whether the Queen’s death, which followed not long after the celebrations, could be the reason why more critical and objective articles were not published.

However, her role was not purely symbolic. Brits who contribute to the state coffers with their taxes and pay the Queen and her family for living and working, nor the government of Great Britain, would probably not want or even allow to have someone who is only a symbol as head of state.

Great Britain is a constitutional monarchy, which means that it holds the office of the head of state, but only parliament can create and approve laws. As head of state, the monarch commits to constitutional and representative duties that have developed over more than a thousand years of history. The monarch works closely with the Government and attends regular meetings with the Prime Minister. His or her powers also include appointing ministers into their offices, convening but also dissolving parliament or signing laws approved by parliament. The sovereign’s task is also to represent abroad during state visits and to host world leaders when they visit Great Britain.

The Queen was also a Commander in Chief of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. During the year, she participated in several events connected with the military. The important role the army has was also seen at the Platinum Jubilee celebrations when several military parades were held.

As the head of the nation, the monarch also acts as a focus of national identity, unity, and pride. She or he performs at important events, celebrates, and recognises people for their contributions. During holidays or other traditions, the monarch issues a statement or message. Most notable was the annual Christmas message, which was broadcasted live, and Elizabeth II was the first British monarch to address the nation via television.



## 5 Conclusion

This bachelor's thesis focused on the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II, which took place on 2–5 June 2022 and examined the media response, which thereby formed part of the Queen's media portrait. I sought for the answers to the given questions: What does the media picture say about the role of the monarchy and the Queen? How were the individual events presented, to what extent did the media cover them, and was their focus balanced? Were the media also critical, or did one particular attitude towards the Queen and other royal family members prevail?

The research revealed that the British media tends to glorify both the Queen and members of the British royal family significantly. Most of the articles followed a certain formula that seems to be strictly given in today's Britain – the Queen, William and Kate are portrayed in the best way in the media. Charles and Camilla as well; however, it should be mentioned that their media image is quite tarnished due to their past, and it took a long time for the media to write about them “nicely”. On the other side, there are Harry and Megan, who have made many decisions over the past few years that have not met with understanding. The media often portrays them critically, talking about them as the black sheep of the family and writing mostly negative articles about them and not only in articles published on the occasion of Platinum Jubilee. Meghan is a metaphorical “thorn in the side” of the British media, and Prince Harry's media picture, who stands by her side, has gone from a popular prince to a less popular one. Members mentioned in this paragraph are the most visible in the media also in a longer temporal perspective.

It also appears that the more events there were on a given day, and the more members of the royal family appeared in public, the more different articles were published on that day. While attention was not that high on Friday, it was at its peak on Saturday.

However, the Queen was mostly not present due to health reasons, but it was clear that her participation in most events was counted on until the last moment. Elizabeth II thus communicated with the public through announcements and was always mentioned during speeches by members of the royal family. Her feelings about the celebrations were expressed by Princes Charles and William in their speeches on Saturday, 4 June 2022, after the Platinum Jubilee Concert, which are mentioned in Chapter 3.3 and their full text can be found in the Appendices. She also stepped on the balcony of Buckingham Palace several times and waved to the crowds gathered from the Queen Victoria Monument to the end of The Mall. It was apparent that the Queen was not in good health by the time of the celebrations and, therefore, rarely appeared. In retrospect, these were precious last moments when Elizabeth II was seen in public like this, and whether the Queen already knew that this was one of her last appearances remains a question for all of us.

The Queen's absence had, from a certain aspect, deeper meaning – it tested her successors. This topic was discussed in Chapter 3.4, and I would like to stress Nicolas Witchell, who confirmed this claim: *“It is a much more daunting challenge for her successor. The bar has been raised even higher, and I think the Queen is very much aware of that. I think the message of the balcony appearance was one of confidence in her heirs, Charles in particular. Confidence by the Queen that the monarchy will be safe in his or their hands whenever the time comes.”*

After a closer critical look, it was possible to find out that the articles were not written in neutral language, as we should expect from the media, and this is also connected with their significant bias. People would expect principles such as neutrality, objectivity, or even the balance of individual elements from the media, and not only from the public-law ones. It was also clear beforehand that we would not get these elements from tabloid articles. They did not focus at all on the meaning or essence of the celebrations, but their

front pages were mostly filled with the children of the Prince and Princess of Wales, as well as the aforementioned Duke and Duchess of Sussex. The headings of the articles are examples of this: “MEGA BURN Royals have been ‘burnt’ by Harry & Meghan and fear they will use what they hear to their advantage” or “BATTLE ROYAL Prince William used a ‘barrier method’ against Prince Harry at thanksgiving service, says body language expert.”

In my research, I also tried to find articles with a critical point of view. I found only a few in my first few attempts, and this led me to the question, whether the small number of articles indicates the constant popularity of the royal family. However, none of the reflections were conceived strictly persuasively, and the authors acknowledged that people might have the opposite opinion. For example, Yasser Ali Nasser wrote an article “Elizabeth II: A Symbol of Empire”, emphasising: *“She was born into the role, a role that was always going to be hers and only hers by the nature of her parentage. That level of hereditary privilege and status is bizarre even in a capitalist society.”*

In conclusion, although the Queen did not appear in public much, her media image remained the same. Not only the media but also the British people still tend to glorify her. This can be evidenced by photos of people in the typical celebratory clothes there, with their faces painted in the colours of the tricolour. But whether the British people and the media only worshipped the Queen because it was her, or whether they really venerate the monarch, will be uncovered at the coronation of King Charles III, which will take place on 6 May 2023, symbolically exactly 70 years after Elizabeth II ascended the throne.

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## **Appendices**

Appendix A: New titles of British royal family members after the death of Elizabeth II

Appendix B: List of performers at the Platinum Jubilee Concert

Appendix C: A written record of Prince Charles' Speech

Appendix D: A written record of Prince Williams' speech

Appendix E: A thank you message

## **Appendix A: New titles of British royal family members after the death of Elizabeth II**

Elizabeth II passed away during the writing of this work, so several members of the royal family changed their titles. Although they still have their original titles, it is a rule that higher titles are used when writing about them or when addressing them. In this work, original as well as newly acquired titles were used. These are, in particular, the following members:

Charles, Prince of Wales, who became King Charles III, and his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, who is now Queen Consort.

Prince William and his wife Catherine, originally the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, are now, by succession, Prince and Princess of Wales.

The King's youngest brother Edward and his wife, Sophie, who were originally the Earl and Countess of Wessex, now hold the title of Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh.

Two children of Harry and Meghan now have the titles of Prince and Princess.

## **Appendix B: List of performers at the Platinum Jubilee Concert**

- **Queen:** We Will Rock You, Don't Stop Me Now, We Are The Champions
- **Jax Jones:** You Don't Know Me, Instruction (ft Stefflon Don + Nandi Bushell), Don't Call Me Up (ft Mabel), Where Did You Go? (ft John Newman)
- **Elbow and the Citizens of the World Choir:** One Day Like This
- **Diversity – ‘The History of British Pop’:** Beatles – She Loves You, Bee Gees – Night Fever, David Bowie – Let's Dance, Spice Girls – Spice Up Your Life, One Direction – What Makes You Beautiful, Stormzy – Big For Your Boots
- **Craig David:** Ain't Giving Up For You, Re-rewind (The Crowd Say Bo Selecta), Fill Me In
- **Mimi Webb:** House on Fire
- **Musicals medley:** Memory (from Cats), You'll Be Back/Wait For It (from Hamilton), Phantom of the Opera (from Phantom), Circle of Life (from The Lion King), Ex-Wives/Six (from Six), Any Dream Will Do (from Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat)
- **Sam Ryder:** Space Man
- **George Ezra:** Green Green Grass, Shotgun
- **Rod Stewart:** Baby Jane, Sweet Caroline
- **Andrea Bocelli:** Nessun Dorma
- **Duran Duran:** Notorious (ft Nile Rodgers and Ms Banks), Girls On Film
- **Alicia Keys:** Superwoman, Girl On Fire, City of Gods, Empire State of Mind
- **Celeste/Hans Zimmer:** What A Wonderful World
- **Elton John:** Your Song
- **RAF Trumpeters and Choir:** The National Anthem
- **Sigala ft Ella Eyre:** Came Here For Love
- **Mica Paris, Ruby Turner and Nicola Roberts:** Climb Every Mountain
- **Diana Ross:** Chain Reaction, Thank You, Ain't No Mountain High Enough

## **Appendix C: A Written Record of Prince Charles' Speech**

Your Majesty, Mummy,

The scale of this evening's celebration – and the outpouring of warmth and affection over this whole jubilee weekend – is our way of saying thank you, thank you from your family, the country, the Commonwealth, in fact, the whole world.

On behalf of us all, I wanted to pay my own tribute to your lifetime of selfless service in pictures, in words and in light.

Your family now spans four generations. You are our Head of State. And you are also our mother.

Your “strength and stay” is much missed this evening, but I am sure he is here in spirit. My Papa would have enjoyed the show and joined us wholeheartedly in celebrating all you continue to do for your country and your people.

Looking back, we think of the countless state occasions that are milestones along this nation's road. And you will think of red boxes filled with government papers at the end of the day.

You will remember those who have led this country, indeed, all the countries you serve, and leaders across the world.

How things have changed. We think of all you have done to make the Commonwealth such an important force for good. You continue to make history.

And there was still time for fun amongst the work. We might have been celebrating that Derby winner this evening. Next year, perhaps? But I know what really gets my

mother up in the morning is all of you, ladies and gentlemen, all of you watching at home, represented here tonight in this great audience.

Your Majesty, you have been with us in our difficult times. And you bring us together to celebrate moments of pride, joy and happiness. Maybe this year, it really is coming home.

You have met us and talked with us. You laugh and cry with us, and, most importantly, you have been there for us for these 70 years. You pledged to serve your whole life – you continue to deliver.

That is why we are here. That is what we celebrate tonight. These pictures of your house are the story of your life and ours. So, Your Majesty, that is why we all say thank you.

Now, I know the Queen is watching these celebrations with much emotion, having, I hope, finished her marmalade sandwich, including immense regret that she cannot be here in person with us this evening. But Windsor Castle is barely 20 miles away, so if we cheer loudly enough, she might, might just hear us.

So, let's all join together....

[Three cheers for Her Majesty]

## **Appendix D: A Written Record of Prince Williams' Speech**

Good evening, everyone. It's so wonderful to be here with you on this incredible night, and great to see Buckingham Palace turned into an IMAX screen!

As I watch those extraordinary images, it does make me think of all the monumental and pioneering work of so many visionary environmentalists that have gone before.

I'm so proud that my grandfather and my father have been part of those efforts. And I'm in awe of people like the great Sir David Attenborough, who look at the beauty and power of our Earth and then work to celebrate and preserve it.

I think of Rachel Carson from America, Wangari Maathai from Kenya, Sunita Narain from India, and so many others.

While no one's grandmother thanks them for talking about their age, my own grandmother has been alive for nearly a century. In that time, mankind has benefited from unimaginable technological developments and scientific breakthroughs.

And although those breakthroughs have increased our awareness of the impact humans have on our world, our planet has become more fragile.

Today, in 2022, as the Queen celebrates her Platinum Jubilee, the pressing need to protect and restore our planet has never been more urgent.

But, like her, I am an optimist. Decades of making the case for taking better care of our world has meant that environmental issues are now at the top of the global agenda.



More and more businesses and politicians are answering the call. And – perhaps most inspiringly, the cause is now being spearheaded by an amazing and united generation of young people across the world.

Congratulations to all of them; they won't accept the status quo, they won't accept that change is too difficult to deliver. Never before have we had so much power to change the big things.

In the past 70 years, mankind has put a man on the moon; we have built the World Wide Web. And we have developed vaccines and solutions to some of the most life-threatening diseases on Earth. When humankind focuses its mind, anything is possible.

It's my firm hope that my grandmother's words are as true in 70 years time as they are tonight. That as nations, we come together for a common cause because then there is always room for hope.

Tonight has been full of such optimism and joy – and there is hope. Together, if we harness the very best of humankind and restore our planet, we will protect it for our children, for our grandchildren and for future generations to come.

They will be able to say with pride at what's been achieved – “What a Wonderful World”.

## Appendix E: A Thank You Message



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

When it comes to how to mark seventy years as your Queen, there is no guidebook to follow. It really is a first. But I have been humbled and deeply touched that so many people have taken to the streets to celebrate my Platinum Jubilee.

While I may not have attended every event in person, my heart has been with you all; and I remain committed to serving you to the best of my ability, supported by my family.

I have been inspired by the kindness, joy and kinship that has been so evident in recent days, and I hope this renewed sense of togetherness will be felt for many years to come.

I thank you most sincerely for your good wishes and for the part you have all played in these happy celebrations.