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## How was the perception of Queen Victoria in Norway years after her passing?

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How was the perception of Queen Victoria in Norway years after her passing?

## **Introduction**

This paper will serve to shed some light on how the Norwegian public perceived Queen Victoria after her death. How Victoria`s role affected the Norwegian people and nation as well as Europe as a whole. This paper will start with a brief account Queen Alexandria`s life, to serve as context for her later decisions which formed the public`s view on her character. A big resource in this endeavor is the Norwegian papers written at the time of the queen`s death and several years later, these are used to gain insight into how the Norwegian press viewed the queen and her reign as well as looking at how they choose to describe Victoria to the Norwegian public. It is however the media`s point of view and additional research into old documents could yield additional in depth data on this topic. There will also be parts that describe the political climate at this at this time. Paragraphs about the Victorian era`s characteristics, acts Victoria made in her younger days that might have improved her standing with Europe, Norway`s political strife in the 1800`s, as well as how Norway`s relationship has been with England. By researching this subject, we hopefully gain insight into the relationship between Norway and England.

## Queen Victoria

Victoria Alexandria reigned as queen of the British Empire for nearly 64 years, from 1837 to her passing 22. January 1901. During her reign she was in a symbolic seating of power in an imperium that were on the rise, acquiring landmasses, huge amount of resources and political power. The question is of how this role defined her legacy as a monarch and as a person and if these roles could be distinguished from one another.

Victoria could arguably be described as the most iconic British Monarch in history, due to the length and time of her reign. She was many things, some could call her a walking contradiction, she was reclusive, yet liked to participate in politics and participate in festivities, and she was independent yet still searched for a strong man to be by her side to lean on. One could say that there were three different queens during her reign, the independent young queen who spent her time educating herself, being interested by her political duties and getting used to the role as queen. The second queen would be the passive queen by her husband Albert`s side and the elusive widow who wore all black clothing at all times mourning the passing of her husband Albert.<sup>1</sup>

As Queen of the biggest power in the world, one would have a lot of eyes on them, although Victoria didn`t make political decisions or pass bills she still functioned as the figure of the Empire, absorbing much of the responsibility, whether it be praise or downright outrage. During her reign however, she adopted the persona of a loving woman who loved her subjects, from all the corners of the Empire equally, something that gave the impression of a kind character. Although Irish nationalist feminism did not see eye to eye with her, but more about this later.

Few people could have been said to be legends in their own life time, Queen Victoria however were one of these. She became such a huge figure throughout history by being a distinct character by her own right but also inhabited the throne on the pinnacle of power during a time

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<sup>1</sup> Strachey. Lytton, Queen Victoria : A Life. London: I. B. Tauris & Company, Limited, 2012 Accessed March 30, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central. Address: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.uis.no/lib/uisbib/reader.action?docID=945539>

of industrialization, height of trade and British supremacy. She became so well known that many made efforts to immortalize her life through writing biographies about her. She is probably the most documented person in history at the time and several decades later. Few British towns didn't have a monument of Victoria in some way or shape. This may be to provide the populace with the reminder that they have a powerful motherly figure watching over them. Depending on the perspective of the people, one could derive unpleasant feelings from these statues. Victoria made a point out of not smiling for portraits, statues or photographs, something that made her appear cold in some instances and as a stern matriarch.<sup>2</sup>

Ultimately Victoria was a symbol of patriotism and national pride, at home in the isles and abroad in the colonies. Showing love for the queen became a good attribute and value, giving people incentive to show and demonstrate how much they appreciate her. Although she harbored good will amongst her people, they still fought for reform of the monarchy and democracy.

Qualities that most likely helped her develop a positive reputation across Europe were her constant fight for peace and equality, as well as social reform and rights.<sup>3</sup> These qualities especially gave a lasting impression on the working class as this showed that they were acknowledged by the influential queen of Britain. This weren't the only way for her to imprint on Europe, she gave birth to 9 children with her husband Albert, and they would later be married off to the European noble families.<sup>4</sup> Her granddaughter Maud became Norway's first queen, creating a long lasting connection with the Norwegian people.

Victoria had a very controlled childhood which were orchestrated by her mother's warden, the general John Conroy after her father's passing. For the young queen to be, the crown came as an inconvenience, one she did not aspire for, but worked through.<sup>5</sup> Her most healthy and honest relationships were with handmaidens and workers of a lower class, except Albert who married

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<sup>2</sup> Reynolds. K. D., and Matthew, H. C. G.. 1995. Queen Victoria. Oxford University Press. Accessed March 30, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central. s. 111

<sup>3</sup> MOST GLORIOUS SPEECH OF HER GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA, ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT, November 20, 1837. National Library of Scotland, Visited: 17.05.22, Address: <https://digital.nls.uk/broadsides-from-the-crawford-collection/archive/186897227?mode=transcription>

<sup>4</sup> Reynolds. K. D., and Matthew, H. C. G.. 1995. Queen Victoria. Oxford University Press. Accessed March 30, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central. s. 23-24

<sup>5</sup> Ibid s. 2

her and controlled her.<sup>6</sup> On all accounts, she wanted a normal life and did not want to be queen; in fact she dreaded it for most of her childhood.<sup>7</sup> The thought of the queen not striving to become the monarch rather being selected to ascend the crown is one that makes her out to be a part of a system, a victim of circumstance more than power hungry, which possibly helped her image with the lower classes and public in general.

### **Queen Victoria memorialization by the people in the British Empire.**

The death of Queen Victoria became a national tragedy, one which shook the Empire to its core. The memorialization of the dead queen came materially in the form of statues. These symbols carved out of rocks were meant to portray Victoria as a symbol of staunch presence, maternal heart of the Empire and the ideological weight of being the focal point of the Empire. It might be easy to correlate the rule of the queen with the state, but these were different institutions altogether. Ordinarily the monarchy had little more than symbolic power and influence, but in certain instances such as the court not coming to an agreement or political oversaturation; the queen could jump in and make rulings. Normally however she had little executive power in the Parliament.

As the symbol of one of the biggest Empires ever made, it would come as no surprise that she became idealized by her people far and wide through the corners of the Empire. To commemorate the death of this historical figure, two large scale developments started right after her death in the form of the erection of two statues. Arguably the most prominent would be the memorial that would alter Buckingham Palace itself. To start a committee were formed by the Lord mayor and King Edward VII and held a meeting deciding on how to memorialize the late queen in a way that would show her gravitas, character and meaning to the people in a symbolic

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<sup>6</sup> Reynolds. K. D., and Matthew, H. C. G.. 1995. Queen Victoria. Oxford University Press. Accessed March 30, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central. s. 21-22

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, s. 6

way that also show the Empires power and significance.<sup>8</sup> Funds were collected from the colonies around the world, as well as from churches around the nation in the form of donations, Victoria's son King Edward VII also contributed with a sum of 1000 guineas. The Indian colony struggled with the donations as they after much strife within the country opted not to donate to the memorial efforts.<sup>9</sup> Lord Curzon who were the administrator of the Indian Colony and the Indian maharajahs and communities decline the request for funding the white marble immortalizing the dead queen at the Buckingham palace, reasoning being he had he`s own plans for doing this in the peninsula. As Indian nationalism were on the rise after the rebellion in 1957, and if we take the instance of the already erected statue of Queen Victoria in Bombay (now Mumbai) being desecrated with tar as an example of how the Empire`s symbol of power, then it might be understandable that funds didn`t go to the memorial committee`s effort.<sup>10</sup> We can here see a nation living in resentments towards the late queens and many here were in contention to the legacy that Victoria envisioned and others saw her carrying. As the figure head of the most expansive Empire ever to have been on this Earth, it is clear that this cultivated a rising resentment of her abroad.

After the funds had been collected the memorial committee approached architects and a sculpture named Thomas Brock. After arranging a contest for the architects and seeing their designs, the decision was made to choose Aston Webb as the person for the job.<sup>11</sup> The grandiose statues, arches and monuments were meant to symbolize the greatness of the Empire both domestically and in the colonies. Brock's memorial therefore became a statue of a circular pediment which would have Queen Victoria sitting on a big throne in the middle, surrounded by two fountain basins. The intention of this monument was to cater to both Imperial nationalism, identity and the populist reinvasion of the monarchy. The statue were meant to symbolize the allegory of social hierarchy in addition to the best qualities found in the Empires public, according to Brock this were peace, progression, patriotism, labor and other attributes that reflects the greatness of the domain. Here we can see not just how the sculptor and architects, as

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<sup>8</sup> Plunkett. J., (2022) "A Tale of Two Statues: Memorializing Queen Victoria in London and Calcutta", 19: *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 2022(33). doi: <https://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.6408>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

well as the king and mayor saw the deceased Queen, but also how these prominent people wanted the public of Britain and the rest of the world to remember her.

Victoria memorial Hall were another monument erected in her memory, this however were the project of Lord Curzon.<sup>12</sup> The monument were erected in Calcutta and stood to symbolize the life of Queen Victoria, although this was arguably a power move but also a statement to prove how important the Indian colony was to the British Empire. This monument however were looked upon by the Indian people as a heartwarming reminder that a powerful woman who stood at the top of the world cared for all her subject, no matter creed, skin color or religion. To Lord Curzon`s surprise, most Indians were positive to the erection project, she became a mother figure, a strong woman who protects. The fact that most of the Indian people choose to see the dead monarch of an expansionist nation who forced themselves on the nation during a divisive time in Indian politics in such a favorable way, is a peculiar matter altogether.<sup>13</sup> This wave of admiration may stem from her public demeanor during her reign as a staunch defender of inequality and fairness, at the very least in the eyes of many of the people within her reign. Another point to make would be the fact that the British forces who established the colony in India did so under the pretense of uniting the nation by abolishing the feudal division within it. The British Empire brought a lot to India, but still, many nationalists still stood in opposition to the British Empire and therefor also Victoria.

When talking about Queen Victoria as the motherly symbol of the British Empire it would be important to point out the contention within the Irish nationalist populace group called “Daughters of Ireland”, one that were among others lead by the feminist actress activist Maud Gonne. Daughter to an Irish army officer she fought for Irish independence by trying to adopt the role of a motherly figure for the Irish people, this however lead to the opposition to the legacy Queen Victoria had cultivated.<sup>14</sup> As an Irish patriot she developed her character as the feminine mother figure of the country in conjunction with Victoria and in opposition, all the while

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Plunkett, J., (2022) “A Tale of Two Statues: Memorializing Queen Victoria in London and Calcutta”, 19: *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 2022(33). doi: <https://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.6408>

<sup>14</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Maud Gonne." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, April 23, 2022. <https://www-britannica-com.ezproxy.uis.no/biography/Maud-Gonne>.

knowing it would mean a national feminine nationalist country. She fought the Queen's imperial maternity with the goal of independence. In the 1880's, Victoria regularly had to butt heads with the Irish parliamentarian Charles Stewart Parnell who managed to build a populace party with the intent of home rule. He described the queen as selfish, mean and vixenish.<sup>15</sup>

It is clear that among all the good will Victoria had throughout her empire, there were also many who held her in contempt. Great Britain were known for strict management of rule in their colonies and countries under their umbrella, therefore many had started in the latter half of the 1800's national movements and wishes for independence, Ireland in this case. Parnell gave examples such as Victoria forcing homeless Irish girls to flee to England where they would be vulnerable to sexual predators.<sup>16</sup> When we think of how the late queen is going to be remembered as a mother figure for England to this day, we also have to take these instances into consideration since they reflect other minority's views on Victoria, this also adds up to how she will be remembered. It differs starkly on the time and place how people view Queen Victoria in lieu of her death. If we look at England as a whole, then she would be looked upon very favorably, if we ask the Indians, we might get a mixed perception, the Irish too, but social differences and national strife between the two countries might paint Victoria in a completely different light.

Being the monarch of the biggest empire ever seen, can make you the target for many grievances and complaints. Although she has little to do with how the government conduct themselves, she is still the face of the Empire. This might not be an excuse for her actions but it gives us some perspective into how people would remember her.

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<sup>15</sup> Bobotis. Andrea, *Rival Maternities: Maud Gonne, Queen Victoria, and the Reign of the Political Mother*, Project Muse, (2006, Indiana University Press) Visited: 13.05.22, Address: <https://muse-jhu.edu.ezproxy.uis.no/article/214202>

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

## The Victorian Era

The Victorian era was a period not entirely corresponding with the reign of Queen Victoria, but is widely regarded as the time; Great Britain became a powerhouse of an empire. It was named after the powerful queen. The era stretched from 1820 to 1914 and is regarded as a time of great development within Europe. This is the time in which the British economy was growing rapidly as a result of colonial expansion and the industrial complex. A time where class were a big factor for how one would live their lives, although the number of people were now eligible to vote, three thirds of the population in the British empire were working-class.<sup>17</sup>

Although the struggle as a working class citizen were a big part of the Victorian era as a historic springboard for socio-economic revolution and change, the topic for this paper is Queen Victoria herself and the way the Norwegian people viewed her after her death in 1901.

The way this era`s societal norms were for the most part categorized, it is a society based more on class and age then on other factors such as race, religion, ethnicity, region, although they still were a prevalent part of one`s character. Class and gender divided the people. Since the Victorian era fostered a society based a hierarchical system in which people struggled to work themselves out of, few others. Gender was at the time also a way to determine someone`s current and potential character solely based on their biological functions.<sup>18</sup> This was at the time such an ingrained aspect of society, that women were expected to not be as sexually indulgent as men, and used solely as a way to please ones husband within a marriage.<sup>19</sup> Women were also expected to stay at home and take care of the kids, although most working-class families couldn`t survive on a single persons salary. This aspect is also known as a gender ideology based on two different spheres, these being man and women and the thought that they are different and should and live in their “roles”, this affected how people saw Victoria too, although she was by no means a

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<sup>17</sup> Mustad. Erik, Store Norske Leksikon, Viktoritiden, Published: 28.09.2019. Last edited: 28.09.19. Visited: 08.05.22, Address: <https://snl.no/Viktoriatiden>

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Steinbach. S. "Victorian era." Encyclopedia Britannica, October 08, 2019. Last updated: March 12, 202, Visited: 02.05.22 Address <https://www.britannica.com/event/Victorian-era>.

normal woman or living in poverty or having to work all day for a living, she still felt the sphere that enveloped woman at the time.<sup>20</sup> She is known for fighting for women, but at the same time had something many would call a dependence on a close male figure, at first it was Albert, then it was John Brown. This may perhaps be an after effect of the loss of her father at a young age and the instilled dependence on Sir Conroy.<sup>21</sup> The difference of gender ideology showed itself when Victoria's relationship with Brown developed. There were rumors going around that the Queen and Brown had a romantic and perhaps a physical relationship, this didn't generally go over well with the general public and the courts. This is because of the difference in class between John Brown and the Queen, that for a woman to develop a relationship with someone of no noble family line were something that fell outside of the sphere, it wasn't something that woman should do, although it was rather common for men to do so.

When it came to the morale of the woman population at this time, more than what has already been pointed out about women's role as a caretaker, woman also started to become employed in the factories, making products.<sup>22</sup> This was a whole new shift in how women were looked at in society and the social ramifications of this would later be that woman could be individuals, earn wages, own land and live a life less dependent on a man. This however would come at a later date; this was regardless a turning point in British history. Although high class women found themselves fighting boredom at home, working class women started getting employed, the high middle-class however is where the women pushed the envelope. These women, redefined what a woman looked like at this time, the naming of this period may have been influenced by this fact, it is named after the queen "Victoria", a woman's name.<sup>23</sup>

Charles Darwin's book about the theory of evolution through natural selection had a big impact in the 1800's. Darwin's book named "The Origins of Species, by means of natural selection" drew a lot of attention when it was released in 1859, it was one step in the right direction of one

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<sup>20</sup> Mustad. Erik, Store Norske Leksikon, Viktoritiden, Published: 28.09.2019. Last edited: 28.09.19. Visited: 08.05.22, Address: <https://snl.no/Viktoriatiden>

<sup>21</sup> Reynolds, K. D., and Matthew, H. C. G.. 1995. Queen Victoria. Oxford University Press. Accessed March 30, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>22</sup> Mustad. Erik, Store Norske Leksikon, Viktoritiden, Published: 28.09.2019. Last edited: 28.09.19. Visited: 08.05.22, Address: <https://snl.no/Viktoriatiden>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

if not the most important discovery humankind have made about our natural world.<sup>24</sup> Many however saw this theory as a direct contradiction to the Bible, this created a division, and the book was lambasted with critique and opposition from the church. It was a climate where scientific breakthrough was at an all-time high, still, the church still had a big role in society and most people in Great Britain were Christian.<sup>25</sup> The research and ideas from this book became a vehicle for racism; it was being used to justify segregation between Europeans and Africans. The abolition of the slave trade were a big shift in the empire at the time, yet the effects of Darwin`s book were used to validate racism regardless of the intended purpose of the book. This shows how big part of the climate at the time and how big deal it was that Queen Victoria made a deal to show her in opposition to this idea. Overall it was a time of great colonial expansionism, innovation, industrialization, a time with classes, and gender roles that dictated how one`s life should look like.

The Victorian era was can be seen as a turning point for Europe especially in Great Britain, as the economy grew because of new social decrees, life expectancy went up, and quality of life also went up. Victoria often showed interest for how people in the Empire had it, for better or for worse.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Mustad. Erik, Store Norske Leksikon, Viktoritiden, Published: 28.09.2019. Last edited: 28.09.19. Visited: 08.05.22, Address: <https://snl.no/Viktoriatiden>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

## **The perception of Queen Victoria in the Norwegian press, 1901-1914**

The question of how the Norwegian people took the news of Queen Victoria's death. A way to do this would be to investigate and study the old newspapers from the time right after Queen Victoria's death in 1901. If we look at *Morgenbladet* from 1901, we can see the obituary of Queen Alexandria Victoria, and a fairly long passage about how she was as a queen, not only to the people of the British Empire but also for the European society as a whole. By looking at these papers, we get a prime resource that gives us insight into not only how Norway as a country viewed Queen Victoria but also how the journalists chose to describe the recently deceased woman.

*Morgenbladet* starts with pointing out when and where the queen was found dead, then continues to remark details about her time as a monarch, as to point out the gravity of the matter, precisely that she was royalty and a big part of the British people heritage. Although talking about her as a person, the paper also saw it fit to talk about other important players that helped define the era she ruled, names like Darwin, Dickens, Stuart Mill, and many others, as to point out how long she has lived. This was perhaps in an attempt to soothe the reader by reminding them that even though Alexandria Victoria died, she still had a long life.<sup>27</sup> They also mention the other political powers at the time who shaped the European landscape, characters like Napoleon III the third and Ludvig Phillip as guest at the palace.

The Norwegian paper described her favorably but did insist on saying that they did not think she was one of the most influential woman figures in recent history, it is written in the paper that although she was a good monarch and did many things in her life, people would describe as valuable, practical and sometimes outright "good", she never crossed that threshold of the

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<sup>27</sup> Dronning Victoria, *Morgenbladet*, onsdag 23. januar 1901, Adresse: <https://www.nb.no/items/35fd08be56bf656bd7df90061cc0484b?page=0&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria%20d%C3%B8d>

greats.<sup>28</sup> People they mention are more influential and worthy of being revered was Queen Elisabeth, Maria Therese and Katarina the eleventh. Of course this would only be the opinions of one paper, written the same year Queen Victoria died, it doesn't necessarily mirror the thoughts of the Norwegian people in general, but it does shine some light on how she were viewed at the time of her passing.

They still pointed out in the issue that Queen Victoria even though not as great as some of the other women of the time, they still thought she did things worthwhile, as the Prime Minister in Britain at the time, Robert Peele grew irritated by the royal house and specifically with Queen Victoria and the fact that she used her influence over parliament to install handmaidens in them, people with good ties to the royal house and to herself.<sup>29</sup> These women were used to keep Victoria up to date on what happened to the countries policies and decisions. Peele did not find this quaint, and declared a condition of him instating the parliament and establishing a government that the queen would retrieve her personal handmaidens from the government place of business.<sup>30</sup> He experienced pushback from the queen in this apartment but prevailed in the end on this effort. The paper goes on to shed light on how Peele's politic affiliations as a conservative and affiliation with Napoleon's coup, provoked the queen to press the prime minister to step down, although Peele would go out and tell the people he decided to step down on his own volition, it may very well be interpreted like that, because it would be safe to assume his term became harder because of the queens opposition to him.<sup>31</sup>

On the other side of all the negative mentions in this particular paper issue, we have to remember that the wound is still fresh, this paper were published right after her passing. The fact that there is a segment in this issue that mentions how they thought that while not necessarily a revolutionary queen domestically, she did a good job as a monarch, they made it a point to say they think Queen Victoria played her part as a queen well, she did what was expected of her.<sup>32</sup> This point hits all the harder when we remember how much Alexandria Victoria as a child

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<sup>28</sup> Dronning Victoria, Morgenbladet, onsdag 23. januar 1901, Adresse: <https://www.nb.no/items/35fd08be56bf656bd7df90061cc0484b?page=0&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria%20d%C3%B8d>

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

dreaded becoming queen. It is clear that John Conroy's installment of dependency inflated these thoughts. But as we can tell by this paper, the people and foreign press, didn't see her in an overall negative way, if we take the sentiments of this paper into focus as an example then they were overall content, at the very least with the way she acted and filled the role as a monarch.<sup>33</sup>

It is mentioned in this paper that Justin Mac Earty said that Queen Victoria was the first true "constitutional monarch" and that she filled her role as the queen of England to an astonishingly well extent, in his eyes she were a fighter for peace and prosperity. The paper points out that this historical assessment of the queen might not be completely warranted and asks the reader if she truly did have much of an impact on the general peace, especially in Europe.<sup>34</sup>

They write later in the article that a big factor and reason why the late Queen Victoria were so venerated and beloved is that most if not all at her time of death only had her as their monarch during their lives. This might just be a cause of people valuing stability over change, it is like they say, you never know what you have until it's gone. This might be a reason for at the very least the British people's positive outlook on Victoria as their queen after her death.

Kongsberg Adresse, lørdag 26. januar 1901, Points out the peculiarity with the dead queen. In contrast to Morgenbladet they mention how the queen did not make much headway politically and were in many ways a recluse making others, especially ministers and officials do the political work.<sup>35</sup> Like Morgenbladet however they point out how Victoria filled another role as the monarch, the moral and motherly matron of the Empire. She garnered good will by portraying herself as a loving older woman figure that cares for the people. The woman of the nation took especially to this message and looked up to the queen, and saw her as a champion for woman rights and a force for changing the status quo on how woman were viewed. Although not in a political way but in a symbolic way for the people. As Great Britain had a close relationship with Norway after the union with Denmark, through trade, cultural similarities and values, it

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<sup>33</sup> Dronning Victoria, Morgenbladet, onsdag 23. januar 1901, Adresse:  
<https://www.nb.no/items/35fd08be56bf656bd7df90061cc0484b?page=0&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria%20d%C3%B8d>

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> Dronning Victoria, Trondheims Folkeblad, torsdag 24. januar 1901, Address:  
<https://www.nb.no/items/806349ecadb136451588f984275e7d9d?page=1&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria>

would not be farfetched to think that her efforts and persona as a loving older woman who fights for woman would garner her good will in the Nordic country.<sup>36</sup>

Bodø Tidene goes over much of what “Morgenbladet” did but also comes forward with other important notes about the late Queen who had such a big role in the British Empires Victorian era that she wore the title of “Empress of India” among others.<sup>37</sup> This paper mentions the queen`s interest in elevating women`s position in society, making them less reliant on men for their necessities in life.<sup>38</sup> One can argue here that this notion might stem from her childhood and her relationship to Sir Conroy as their dynamic were more like a controlling power hungry man grooming a young girl into becoming a puppet. In Victoria`s later days, her perspective and introspective knowledge on the matter would have become more nuanced. Just the fact that this paper deemed it necessary to mention this trait, might show us that it was a valued part of her character that the Norwegian people valued, further nodding to the idea of Queen Victoria harboring good will among the Norwegian people.

In 1902 a paper released by “Lister og Mandals Amtstidende og Adresseavis” in Norway that describes how after the Queens death, her son, Prince of Wales Edward ascended the responsibilities of the throne as the monarch of the British Empire. They also point out how they thought of the late queen Victoria as a calm collected woman with admirable political sense. They describe her as a queen that represented the values of the majority of the country.<sup>39</sup>

Even several years after her death, the late Queen Victoria would still be a part of the royal and political discourse. In “Morgenbladet” 1909 Issue, she was still referred to a remarkable woman,

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<sup>36</sup> Dronning Victoria, Trondheims Folkeblad, torsdag 24. januar 1901, Adress:  
<https://www.nb.no/items/806349ecadb136451588f984275e7d9d?page=1&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria>

<sup>37</sup> Dronning Victoria og den nye Konge, Bodø Tidende, tirsdag 29. januar 1901, Address:  
<https://www.nb.no/items/fff682f7d7326ecb917292c1ee60981c?page=0&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria>

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

<sup>39</sup> Utenlands oversikt av en medarbeider, Lister og Mandals Amtstidende og Adresseavis, torsdag 2. januar 1902, Address:  
<https://www.nb.no/items/1f0656d819a8a05656f8accfa593c82d?page=1&searchText=dronning%20victoria>

and a wise political character in the 1800`s. They write in this paper how she were a power to be reckoned with, that she was a good side to the great empire and that she conducted her politically in a way that many of her descendants and other political actors for years to come. They point out how they think it is admirable that the queen seemed to rule more with influence and less with a strict command. She does not command respect but facilitates it. This reflects a positive impression of Victoria, not quite unlike the way she was portrayed in the same paper the day she died.<sup>40</sup>

In Værdalens Blad from 1914 Victoria were spoken of as a powerful woman in her time, a woman that filled her role as a queen as a noble woman quite well, so well in fact that she sired 9 children and that if the monarchs of the time had spearheaded the war efforts, then it would have been world`s biggest family quarrel. Here you can clearly see the effects of Victoria Alexandra on Europe. Even after 11 years since her passing, she still has a big impression on Europe and Norway.<sup>41</sup>

In the process of using the National Library of Norway to study the papers that has been published by Norwegian press at the time of the late British queen`s death, there was a discovery that was made. The discovery turned out to be that there were several papers about her death published around the few years after her death but subsided as the years went by. It is reasonable to think that as the focus of Queen Victoria shifted to the current ruler of the English throne, which at this time in history was her son Edward IIV. It would be rational to assume that the rulers hence forth would be compared to the rule of Queen Victoria, asking the questions if they are filling their role to the extent that she did. This as mentioned in the 1909 Issue in Morgenbladet is an example on the fact that comparing the rule of present monarchs to that of the mighty queen is an understandable fact, at the least to this paper. If we look at the papers released in Norway from 1914 and onwards, were mostly covering Victoria Alexandria`s

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<sup>40</sup> Dronning Victoria so ung Pike, Morgenbladet, lørdag 30. november 1912, Address:  
<https://www.nb.no/items/04730927ee2fe50336f5e3d67397dfef?page=0&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria>

<sup>41</sup> Verdenskrigen og Fyrstehusene, En Stor Familie, Værdalens Blad, mandag 5. oktober 1914, Address:  
<https://www.nb.no/items/70afd04b42912b0fc6924412f23eae1e?page=0&searchText=Dronning%20Victoria%20v%C3%A6rdalens%20blad>

children more than her herself, although she were referred to from time to time, the media had more or less moved on to covering at the time more present matters.

## **Victoria`s Acts of Rights**

Victoria reigned for over 60 years, from 1837 to 1901. In this time, she enacted a slew of different rulings, with the focus on how the Norwegian people looked upon her after her death. Under her King George IV rule, the slave trade were abolished and shunned when the Parliament in 1807 passed an anti-slave trade act, something that shook the Britain`s economic status. In the year 1833, four years before Victoria would ascend the throne and take over the role as monarch of the British Empire, the monumental bill to abolish slavery was passed by the parliament. Slavery was now illegal throughout the colonies. The practice of selling another human being was deemed an evil that outweighed the economic benefits; the question became that of “goodness”. Plenty pro-slavery activists gathered in protest, but ultimately lost the case because they could not mount a valid argument to how slavery was a force for goodness in this world. Slaves were a big part of import and export of the empire, through the queen to be`s childhood this part of the economy were a subject of contention because of the ramifications this had for traders, companies and profit overall. Because of the ramifications, Queen Victoria through acts of alleviations helped these former slave trading companies and traders stay afloat, she tried to make the transition smoother.<sup>42</sup> An example of this is the act 19. On “The Tables of Disputes”, this says that it seeks to amend the act of slave abolition. One could play with the idea that her relationship to the slave-trade was one of disgust, as mentioned before we know she regularly called her staff or other within her family racist for questioning the methods and appearance of her Indian teacher named Mohammed Abdul Karim.

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<sup>42</sup> A Collection of the Public General Statutes, Passed In the First and Second Year of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, s. 1264 Version: 2019.07.29 18:29, Visited: 08.05.22. Address: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951002484383v&view=1up&seq=7&skin=2021&q1=slavery>

The quality of seeing the value of humans around the globe as equal is still a struggle to this day but is vastly more spread, but at the time of her reign, it was common, particularly in the British Empire as it took part in the slave-trade. In fact, acts such as her 19<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup>, the Queen took during her reign centered on the slave trade, and how to amend the damage sustained to human dignity, but most of all profit stability. She signed treaties with several other countries regarding the slave trade, nations like our neighbor Sweden, the Netherlands and others. Her thirty-sixth act as queen was to carry into effect a convention of Accession of the Hans Towns to two conventions with the king of the French, for suppressing the slave-trade.<sup>43</sup> This act ultimately made the illegal action of buying and selling human being much more risky and difficult for slave traders. We need to remember that this was in 1838, around thirty years after the abolished of the slave trade by King George III in 1833. This wasn't that long after it was deemed illegal, and underground working, still indulged in the trade of humans, this bill however made that action less lucrative, which is a positive thing overall and most likely garnered the queen good will world around Norway included. We still need to remember that the young Queen became a symbol of nobility, however she backed these proposals heavily and just before she ascended the throne, the slave abolition act of 1933 was passed, cementing the idea to paper that slave trade were illegal and compensated previous slave-owners for letting go of such a large part of their income.<sup>44</sup> As mentioned earlier in this paragraph, Victoria also backed these acts.

One could also see Norway as a repenting nation when it comes to the slavery question, as a country under direct control of Denmark, which was a slave-trading nation from 1660 to 1806.<sup>45</sup> Norway therefore took part in the trade of Africans themselves, whether it was voluntarily or born out of a climate under Denmark which facilitated it. Nevertheless, most of the world saw slavery as blight on our history, Norway too.<sup>46</sup> Seeing Queen Victoria being vehemently against

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<sup>43</sup> A Collection of the Public General Statutes, Passed In the First and Second Year of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, s. 1264 Version: 2019.07.29 18:29, Visited: 08.05.22. Address:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951002484383v&view=1up&seq=7&skin=2021&q1=slavery>

<sup>44</sup> Henry L. Natasha, Britannica, Slavery Abolition Act, Published: June 16. 2016, Last edited: Jul 25. 2021. Visited: 08.05.22, Address: <https://www-britannica-com.ezproxy.uis.no/topic/Slavery-Abolition-Act/additional-info#history>

<sup>45</sup> SCHNAKENBOURG. ERIC, Scandinavians and the Atlantic slave trade, Seventeenth to early nineteenth century, Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe [online], ISSN 2677-6588, published on 22/06/20, consulted on 06/05/2022. Permalink : <https://ehne.fr/en/node/12480>

<sup>46</sup> Anderse. Audrey, News In English, Slave trading past still haunts Norway, Published: September 28. 2014, Visited: 08.05.22. Address: <https://www.newsinenglish.no/2014/09/28/slave-trading-past-still-haunts-norway/>

the slave-trade, might have born a view of her in Scandinavian countries of change for the better and that of a good Queen.

## **Norway in the Victorian Era**

As stated earlier, the Victorian era was a time stretching from 1820 to 1914. Norway was within this stretch of time within at least two different positions, just before the Victorian era, Norway were under the direct control of Denmark, until Sweden gained the country as an appeasement gift. One position where they were a part of Sweden after Denmark's defeat by the Swedish general Karl Johan claimed Norway as spoils of war, and as an independent state, which we have continued to be to this day.<sup>47</sup> An important turning point for the tiny nation was when Sweden established a union with Norway under the same Swedish king named Karl Johan. Norway at this point, precisely 1814 tasted its first feeling of autonomy as it gained its constitution allowing it to manage its internal affairs, regulate its laws and cultivate an identity separate to bigger nations around it. It however wouldn't be until its complete separation from the union with Sweden in 1905 that Norway as a solitary nation could call itself completely free from external nations influence. Historians generally refer to this period in Norway's history as "Unionstiden", the time at which the union with the Scandinavian neighbor were active.<sup>48</sup>

The state of the economy in Norway was at the first few years of its union with Sweden in a very weak state. A deep depression grew and the tiny nation at the outskirts of the Scandinavian Peninsula faced great struggles. The reason for this economic instability likely resulted from a dramatic drop in trade with the British Empire; one of Norway's most lucrative trading partners.<sup>49</sup> As most of the biggest trading investments in Norway into its woods, sawmills, shipwright and mining, most of which at the time England bought from Canada, something took its toll on the Norwegian economy through loss of jobs, export, the country were essentially dropped from the nest by its parent bird, and it took some time before Norway again took to the

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<sup>47</sup> Mahrddal R. Magnus, Norsk historie fra 1815 til 1905, Store Norske Leksikon, Made: 14.02.2009, Last Updated: 19.04.22, Visited: [https://snl.no/Norsk\\_historie\\_fra\\_1815\\_til\\_1905](https://snl.no/Norsk_historie_fra_1815_til_1905)

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

<sup>49</sup> Ibid

sky. The fact that Norway had national debts to Denmark, which fostered bitterness, King Johan at the time wanted to change the constitution under the union to grant him more power, something which were heavily criticized and never came to pass; this is a big reason for the celebrations on Mai. 17, Norway was allowed to work out its own challenges.

As a newly autonomous country in 1814, there were times when farmers made up of much of the government, after the movement that effected Europe at the time referred to “julirevolusjonen” in which the voting rights of the working-class were a main driving point; more farmers made Stortinget its place of work.<sup>50</sup> The text John Neergaards wrote called “Ola-boka” which is a text that stated that the working-class specifically farmers need to elect peers to actually drive some change in the nation.<sup>51</sup> This movement resulted in a majority of the government being run by farmers, and for a time, the people had more to say about how the country was run. With Ole Gabriel Ueland as a leader, the farmers strove to keep the majority of the government under the control of the farmers and decrease the influence the major officials had.<sup>52</sup> There were no political parties at this point, so the farmers had to discuss their goals very thoroughly before running. This “bondekommunale” rule did last for a while and bills were past but the government was reclaimed by the educated political officials by 1870.<sup>53</sup>

As the trading from 1830 and onwards slowly picked itself up, the more the people wanted freer trade overall and less restrictive tolls for a more lucrative economy. This is understandable as Norway faced challenging times with debt and a rise in export rivals. In 1839 handcraft became freer inland and in 1842 the tariffs and tolls got lighter making trade less of an economic burden and more free.<sup>54</sup>

Focus were also put to improve the infrastructure and communication within the country, after Frederik Stang became the leader for the office of interior department to prioritize construction

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<sup>50</sup> Mahrddal R. Magnus, Norsk historie fra 1815 til 1905, Store Norske Leksikon, Made: 14.02.2009, Last Updated: 19.04.22, Visited: [https://snl.no/Norsk\\_historie\\_fra\\_1815\\_til\\_1905](https://snl.no/Norsk_historie_fra_1815_til_1905)

<sup>51</sup> Mustad. Erik, Store Norske Leksikon, Viktoritiden, Published: 28.09.2019. Last edited:28.09.19. Visited: 08.05.22, Address: <https://snl.no/Viktoriatiden>

<sup>52</sup> Mahrddal R. Magnus, Norsk historie fra 1815 til 1905, Store Norske Leksikon, Made: 14.02.2009, Last Updated: 19.04.22, Visited: [https://snl.no/Norsk\\_historie\\_fra\\_1815\\_til\\_1905](https://snl.no/Norsk_historie_fra_1815_til_1905)

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

of roads and other infrastructure to improve transit of goods across the nation. Agriculture were also greatly improved over the years and implementation of schools centered on agriculture. The industry was on the way up after the 1840`s, prioritizing textile and mechanic workshops, making it possible to produce more specialized products aiding Norway`s comeback into the European trade.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Mahrddal R. Magnus, Norsk historie fra 1815 til 1905, Store Norske Leksikon, Made: 14.02.2009, Last Updated: 19.04.22, Visited: [https://snl.no/Norsk\\_historie\\_fra\\_1815\\_til\\_1905](https://snl.no/Norsk_historie_fra_1815_til_1905)

## Norway`s Relationship with Britain

The relationship between Norway and Great Britain goes back a thousand years; Vikings fared across the ocean on peaceful trading missions. Funnily enough most of the history between Norway and Britain is colored with bloodshed and expansion. In newer times, specifically the 1800-century, the most important part of the roles encompasses exchange of services between the two nations. In the 1800-century the English style came into fashion in Norway, wealthy ship-owners imported luxurious goods from the isles, wares like: glass, furniture, silver and ceramics. This shows the impact of the communication and the open market.<sup>56</sup>

At this part of history, Norway was under the rule of Denmark and ultimately had to do some harsh naval actions against Britain at times, suffering naval conflicts under the discretion of the Danish government. Norway ultimately suffered greatly at the hands of both England and Denmark, ultimately leading to poverty and bankruptcy when the English put up the continental blockade. Norway were transferred to Sweden after Denmark suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Swedish Carl Johan, although Norway wasn't taking this well. As a compromise to the unhappy populace, the Swedish government decided to grant the nation "a free, independent, indivisible and inalienable kingdom united with Sweden under one king".<sup>57</sup>

Not only do our two nations have a long relationship, based on all from war to peaceful trade. A relevant topic is the history of the deep ties both our royal families have. Queen Victoria the subject of our paper was the grandmother to Princess Maud who married Prince Carl of Denmark in Buckingham palace, which later became the monarchs of Norway, cementing its ties to both Denmark and England, in addition to this, it established a link to the old monarch in England who died only 4 years prior to Norway's declaration of independence in 1905.<sup>58</sup> Carl and Maud were chosen to be the royalty of the young nation, and King Carl decided to change his name to

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<sup>56</sup> Norway and the United Kingdom, Regjeringen.no, (2001, Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Visited: 25.04.22, Address: [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kilde/ud/bro/2001/0010/ddd/pdfv/139387-norway\\_uk.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kilde/ud/bro/2001/0010/ddd/pdfv/139387-norway_uk.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> Ibid

Haakon, to fill his role as king of Norway better. This created a strong familiarity and solidarity between the two countries, not only were Britain on friendly terms with Norway for several hundred years through trade, they also found themselves involved with the young country's effort of securing independence from Sweden and an identity.<sup>59</sup> Although the union of Haakon and Maud as the monarchy happened after Victoria's death in 1901, it wasn't sudden at all, these two nations have for a long time had close ties to one another as trade partners, very importantly Britain exported quality goods like wool, glass, furniture, tobacco, sugar and much more, Norway in turn exported fish, timber and metal. The exports of Norway came in very useful for England under the Fire of London incident in 1666. Norway sold an abundance of timber to help alleviate England's wood deficit, and need for quick access to raw building materials. So our nations have had a close relationship, not just by family ties, such as princess Maud being Norway's first queen but also because of trade. Victoria became a symbol marking the entire era she reigned, connecting Europe with family ties, peaceful values as well as a fighter for woman's rights. Her way of looking at humanity corresponded with the time she lived but also pushed the envelope, during her reign as mentioned previously, there were a shift in worker rights, standard of living, and gender roles. All these shifts could also be applied to Norway who at the later parts of the 1800 hundred became a free country as well as in the early 1900 hundreds became an independent state. Queen Victoria defined an era in which life became easier, making her a symbol of progress. Norway with close ties to Great Britain therefore overall saw Victoria in an overall positive light.

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<sup>59</sup> Norway and the United Kingdom, Regjeringen.no, (2001, Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Visited: 25.04.22 Address: Address: [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kilde/ud/bro/2001/0010/ddd/pdfv/139387-norway\\_uk.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kilde/ud/bro/2001/0010/ddd/pdfv/139387-norway_uk.pdf)

## Conclusion

Queen Victoria's life had a long but sheltered life, groomed at a young age, but were guided and taught valuable lessons by her maids and other characters she would call friends. She cultivated few but deep connections throughout her life. Although being the symbol of the most powerful empire in history and ruling during a time of great social change, she presented a tough front, but people saw her as a warmhearted motherly figure, domestically and abroad. After her death they made several statues to memorialize her, as a big and powerful character as well as presenting the characteristics of the people and empire.

If we take all the factors mentioned in this text into account, we can see that Norway's view on Queen Victoria were overall positive. For those who at the time after her death in 1901 had opinions on her reign, if we take what the accounts in the Norwegian papers say, we can surmise that Victoria was looked upon favorably by the Norwegian people, that she filled her role as a queen very well. Although "Morgenbladet" for example made sure to point out how people thought she might not have done enough and weren't one of the all-time greatest women in history.

Others however don't view her in the same light, as contemporary political powers and nationalist opposition to the imperialist rule of Great Britain. Norway has had close ties to Great Britain for a long time and only deepened after Maud became the first Norwegian queen. Having a queen that was English helped bridge gaps between the two nations.

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