

Eleanor's association with King Louis VII of France and the circumstances of their relationship until 1145

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Abstract

This study deals with the marriage of Eleanor, Duchess of Aquitaine, to the King of France, Louis VII, and traces the circumstances of their marriage, the reflection of that association on the property of Queen Eleanor, and the activity of Queen Eleanor in the French court, and the challenges and achievements she faced, in addition to her ability to acquire Her husband, the king, who seemed clear by putting him in military projects of her own, including Toulouse, which asked her husband to conquer it as part of the legacy of her usurper ancestors, and she also encouraged him to stand against the papacy when he nominated one of his advisors for the position of Archbishop of Bourges, ignoring the choice of Pope Innocent The second, this position belonged to his relative, Peter de La Chartre, which brought him into heated conflict with the Pope.

Conditions of France before the coupling of Eleanor with Louis VII

Eleanor's marriage to King Louis VII of France cannot be traced without addressing some facts associated with France, which since the collapse of the Carolingian Empire ⁽¹⁾, it was divided into fiefdoms of varying size, including Anjou, Aquitaine, Blois, Brittany, Maine, Toulouse, Normandia, Burgundy, Poitou, and other fiefdoms, each of which was subject to a semi-independent feudal ruler from the French throne, and it was more like an uncrowned king in his fiefdom, and in such a fragmented system The nobles of each feudal lord submitted to its ruler as their direct feudal lord, while the French king was theoretically the supreme feudal lord of all the rulers of the feudal lords, but their subordination did not entail anything tangible except for an oath of allegiance that the feudal lord offered to the King of France on separate occasions, and therefore the subordination of the feudal lords of France to its kings depended on intentions Sincere more than relying on official matters and legal materials ⁽²⁾. However, changes in France since 987 resulted in the country gradually submitting to the rule of the Capetian family (987-1328) ⁽³⁾, which witnessed the emergence of powerful kings who strengthened the French royal power at the expense of the feudal system ⁽⁴⁾, most notably, Louis VI (1108-1137) ⁽⁵⁾, who was a powerful monarch who was able to consolidate his influence in all his private feudal possessions ⁽⁶⁾, in Ile-de-France ⁽⁷⁾.

Prince Philip, the eldest son of the French monarch and heir apparent, died after falling from his horse during a tour with his companions on the banks of the Seine in October 1131. Louis VI chose his second son, Louis the eleven-year-old, to be his crown prince. Louis was then a student at the cathedral school in Paris ⁽⁸⁾, supervised by Father Sugar ⁽⁹⁾, the sources mention that Prince Louis was jealous of his father and his family in many of his qualities, especially his asceticism, his piety, and his reluctance to have fun and mess around, so his clothes were rough like those of monks, but his build was weak, his hair was long

yellow, and his eyes were blue ⁽¹⁰⁾, but he enjoyed great intelligence, which prompted his father to choose him as his successor after the death of his brother Philip, significantly since the health of King Louis VI was deteriorating. His conflict raged with some of his followers, especially the descendants of the Norman house, namely the King of England and Duke of Normandy Henry I (Henry I) (1069-1135) ⁽¹¹⁾, Comte de Blois and ruler of Champagne Thibou IV (1102-1108) ⁽¹²⁾, who was equal to the French throne and acted fiercely against it, and there is no doubt that after all this, the king was keen to crown his son Louis as soon as possible ⁽⁸⁾. So, three days after the death of Philippe, Louis VI set out for Reims, the seat of the coronation of the kings of the Franks, in the presence of the most prominent religious figures in Europe to confer a sacred character on this coronation, and the sources tell us that 13 archbishops and 260 bishops from all over Europe attended that coronation, as well as on behalf of Pope Innocent II himself, and it seems that the Pope found in this gathering interest for him because it contributed to confirming his legitimacy after his expulsion from Rome at the hands of the supporters of the dissident Pope Anaclet II ⁽¹³⁾, after this gathering converged, King Louis VI and Queen Mother Adelaide (1115-1137) asked the Archbishop of Reims and the assembled bishops to direct the coronation ceremony of their son Louis ⁽⁸⁾, Pope Innocent II himself proceeded with those decrees, which he initiated with a eulogy addressed to King Louis, in which he said: "Your son died innocent, but the Lord who took one of your sons for Himself left others for you to rule after you. Many glories were said about her, in which life does not know death, her eternity does not die, and her joys do not end." Then, Pope Louis, the Younger was anointed with the holy oil with which St. Remigius Clovis was anointed, and thus the coronation took place ⁽⁸⁾, on October 25, 1131 ⁽¹⁴⁾, in Reims Cathedral ⁽⁸⁾, Although Louis VII became a partner to his father in the rule for the next six years, it was a theoretical partnership because Louis VII carried the royal title only, and Louis VI remained the sole controller of the affairs of his kingdom ⁽¹⁵⁾, Although some sources indicated that King Louis VI abdicated to his son permanently in 1135, due to his worsening health condition ⁽⁸⁾, and his suffering from dysentery, and obesity ⁽¹⁶⁾, which prevented him from bending over or riding his horse, despite the efforts of the Paris doctors and pharmacists to treat him ⁽¹⁷⁾. However, what is proven is that Louis VII remained until the death of his father subject to him and at his disposal ⁽¹⁸⁾.

King Louis VI, after organizing the affairs of the institution of the French throne, began to extend his influence to the rest of the fiefs of France by various means ⁽¹⁹⁾, most notably, political marriage, to merge large areas of other fiefdoms with lands directly belonging to the kings of France ⁽²⁰⁾, he decided to marry his crown prince, Louis, to Eleanor, heiress of the Duke of Aquitaine, William X, to ensure the transfer of her possessions to the royal lands, which also agrees with the interest of the Eleanor family on the grounds that this marriage will contribute to consolidating her influence among the rest of the fiefs of France, and will provide the dukes of Aquitaine with the support of the French throne for them against potential risks and challenges ⁽⁴⁾, especially from their neighbors who scrambled to expand their lands adjacent to the duchy, and then the Salic law ⁽²¹⁾, it was not permissible for a woman to seize the rule of a fief or a group of fiefs, according to its texts, which stated that "women in the lands of the Salic Franks do not obtain any part of the land inheritance, which is exclusively the right of males." ⁽²²⁾, it seems that Eleanor, in turn, was aware of the challenges she faced and convinced of the importance of coupling with the heir to the French throne, especially since her father went on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain in 1137 ⁽²³⁾, she placed her under the tutelage of Louis VI, and thus everyone's interests met in the association of Eleanor with Louis VII, as Father William X was sure that his daughter could not succeed him in the rule of Aquitaine and Potosi without the support of France's King Louis VI ⁽²⁴⁾, and the latter, in

turn, found an opportunity to take advantage of this matter to annex the provinces of Aquitaine and Potosi to the lands belonging to the French throne ⁽²¹⁾, Eleanor, who clung to her father's possessions, wanted to marry someone who would protect her property ⁽²⁵⁾, and Prince Louis, in turn, was subject to his father's desire to marry Eleanor, the heiress of Aquitaine, after her father's death in 1137, although he did not know anything about her and had no previous connection with her, not to mention the difference in his conservative nature with her natural looking forward to the pleasures and pleasures of the world, and there is no doubt that Louis VII He was aware of his father's political goals behind that marriage as a valuable opportunity to restore an important part of southern France after his abdication from the throne for more than three centuries ⁽²¹⁾, Thus, the Duchy of Aquitaine became up for grabs for the French throne ⁽¹⁹⁾, after the marriage of Eleanor to Crown Prince Louis VII, in 1137 ⁽²⁶⁾, that is, in the same year of the death of her father, William X, who died at the age of 38 ⁽²⁵⁾.

Louis VII's marriage to Eleanor and his accession to the throne of France in 1137

On June 18, 1137, Prince Louis set out for his future bride ⁽²⁴⁾, with a caravan that included five hundred senior knights and nobles of the kingdom, headed by Count Thibaut and his cousin Raoul Count of Vermandois, Count of Auxerre, Tonnerre Guillaume de Nevers, Rotrou Count Perche, as well as prominent bishops from Ile-de-France such as the papal legate and Bishop of Chartres Geoffroy de Lev ⁽²⁷⁾, and the weather was so hot that Louis and his companions had to travel at night, and rest during the day, and yet most of their supplies and food were destroyed due to the severity of the heat ⁽¹⁹⁾, the path of that convoy extended from the suburbs of Paris towards Orleans ⁽²⁸⁾, then Bordeaux, which they reached on Sunday, July 11, and encamped east of it on the banks of the Garonne River ⁽²⁷⁾, so they were hosted by the ruler of that city, Geoffroy de Loraux, who participated in the marital negotiations in cooperation with Father Suger, and this ruler took over the protection of Eleanor, the heiress of Aquitaine, while waiting for her fiancé, Louis VII, because she was an attractive prey for everyone, so that some greedy followers thought of kidnapping her and marrying her by force. to seize the Duchy of Aquitaine ⁽²⁹⁾.

Louis VII crossed the river to Bordeaux the next day, accompanied by the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who came on behalf of the Duchess to receive him to meet his future wife. Two weeks later, Eleanor's followers submitted to the fait accompli, and attended the wedding ceremony to celebrate their new master ⁽¹⁹⁾, On July 25, 1137, the marriage of Eleanor and Louis was celebrated in Saint Andrew's Cathedral in the presence of Suger and the senior nobles of France ⁽³⁰⁾, which was not common at the time, because the nobles were associated with women much younger than them, and perhaps this was behind Eleanor's optimism that their marriage would turn into true love ⁽³¹⁾, the wedding ceremony took place in Bordeaux, then the couple exchanged marriage vows in St. Andrew's Church, so the trumpets rang, the bells rang, pointed candles lit the sides of the church, and the choir members rose in the church, after which the couple was crowned with the golden crown of the Duke of Aquitaine, and the Duchess Eleanor oversaw the wedding banquet, which included many items of food and drink ⁽³²⁾, in accordance with the traditions of the Aquitaine, many poets and artists attended, and they sang troubadour songs filled with love and unbridled physical desires ⁽²⁶⁾, while the drunken guests are enjoying the party ⁽³³⁾, Eleanor gave her husband, Louis VII, a rock crystal icon ⁽³⁴⁾, she inherited it from her grandfather, William IX, who obtained it from the last Muslim ruler of Zaragoza it is now in the Louvre Museum ⁽¹⁴⁾.

The couple then set out for Poitiers, the ancient capital of Poitiers and the most important city in Aquitaine ⁽³⁵⁾, On August 1, 1137, the inhabitants of Medina gladly received them ⁽²⁶⁾, they stayed in the tower that Eleanor's grandfather had built for his wife

⁽³⁰⁾, there they were received by some of Eleanor's nobles, who presented gifts to the newlyweds, and the celebrations culminated on August 8 when they were installed Count and Countess of Poitiers in Poitiers Cathedral ⁽²⁶⁾. However, they were surprised by the news of the death of King Louis VI on August 1, so they hurried towards Paris via Orléans ⁽³⁰⁾, after their arrival, they learned of the burial of the king in the Abbey of Saint-Denis, and Louis VII was proclaimed king of France, and Eleanor, in turn, became queen of France ⁽³⁶⁾.

Eleanor's activities at the French royal court

The couple settled in Paris in an old mansion overlooking the western side of El Dolaciti Island, and Paris was then a medium-sized city across from that island ⁽³⁷⁾, in addition, the lifestyle in it was completely different from what Eleanor knew in her homeland. Life in Paris was boring for Eleanor, and the people of Paris were primitive, almost barbaric in her view ⁽²⁷⁾, this is what she realized after touring the streets of Paris accompanied by her sister Petronella and some of her entourage. Eleanor was subjected to harsh criticism from the people, who saw her, and they complained about her clothes and her liberal behavior, which made Eleanor realize the extent of the Church's dominance over Paris and the royal court itself, especially since most of the personalities the politicians had a priestly religious background, including Father Suger, King Louis VII's advisor ⁽³¹⁾, what made it worse was that the young bride was accustomed to living in luxurious palaces, so she was so uncomfortable being in small, dark rooms with few windows that the king renovated and enlarged the rooms in the following winter, and installed fireplaces and chimneys in them, and the queen decorated the rooms with embroidered bedspreads and curtains of Bourges, and Eleanor was feeling at ease More in the palace gardens full of willows, figs, pear trees and others ⁽³²⁾. And it seems that the foregoing was not enough to satisfy Queen Eleanor, who loved parties, dancing, singing, and other entertainment and entertainment that she knew in Aquitaine, so she invited a number of artists to perform plays and paid money to celebrities to entertain her, and then lived in Paris was boring and monotonous for Eleanor, who spent half Since then, to sit with the ladies of the court in the garden of the palace, or to play chess with them and share with them singing, telling stories and rhymes inside, the queen and her companions were rarely allowed to enter Paris and take a walk in it ⁽²⁷⁾.

So, Queen Eleanor felt that she was in an educational and social incubator that was very different from what she had seen in her homeland, which reflected negatively on her, and the matter got worse because of the personality pattern of her husband, Louis VII, was completely different from what Eleanor drew in most of the men and nobles of Aquitaine, and although Eleanor tried to change the personality of her husband in accordance with Her taste, however, she was disappointed by his extreme religiosity and devotion of his time to worship, such as attending Mass daily in church, fasting with the monks every Wednesday, wearing modest clothes that were not befitting of his royal self, his abhorrence of luxurious royal hospitality, his preference for sublime religious passions over worldly desires, as well as his extreme indecision. And his lack of experience in managing his kingdom ⁽⁵⁾, at that time, Queen Eleanor decided to fulfill her personal desires by taking possession of her weak husband and competing with the influential figures in his court, especially Father Suger and Queen Mother Adelaide ⁽³⁸⁾, most of those who were exposed to the biography of Eleanor mentioned that their relationship was bad from the beginning so that Queen Mother Adelaide criticized Eleanor repeatedly for various reasons, including her inappropriate clothes and her exorbitant spending on silk and jeweler, and her generosity at the expense of the royal treasury and her use of cosmetics, and her lack of piety and her lack of interest in learning The French language, and there is no doubt that the transfer of part of the power of the Queen Mother Adelaide to Eleanor was not the last reason for her intense hatred of her, especially

after Eleanor was able to influence her husband's decisions, and since the Queen Mother Adelaide was in constant conflict with Father Suger, so her hostility to Eleanor was an additional reason for leaving the court of her son, Louis VII, shortly after Eleanor's arrival⁽²⁷⁾.

Acquisition of Eleanor by her husband, Louis VII

The influence of Eleanor grew on her husband, Louis VII, in many political and military matters, and so when the inhabitants of Poitiers rebelled against the authority of Louis VII over them in late 1137 and declared that they were ruling themselves, Queen Eleanor asked her husband to personally go to them to punish them, so Louis marched with his army to Poitiers and occupied it and took some of her sons were taken as hostages, so Father Suger was disturbed by his behavior, and he asked his monarch to withdraw from Poitiers so as not to provoke the wrath of the nobles of the province of Poitiers, so Louis canceled his previous measures and returned to his capital, after arousing resentment and fear among the inhabitants of Poitiers, so his wife got angry and accused him of weakness and obedience to Suger's orders, and asked He should listen to her alone in the future because she is more knowledgeable about her citizens, and it seems that the king yielded to the pressures of his wife and her irresponsible dictates, and the weakness of the influence of Father Suger on him⁽³⁰⁾, at that time, Queen Eleanor embarked on a remarkable political activity, which appeared in her frequent visits to her possessions in southern France, starting in September 1138⁽³⁹⁾, as she attended the Festival of Our Lady in Boy Love in neighboring Quercy and was accompanied by her husband Louis or her favorite sister, Petronella, and one source confirmed that Eleanor's attachment to her sister was one of the reasons for her husband's aversion to her behavior and their relationship later reaching a point of no return⁽³³⁾.

In 1141, Queen Eleanor instructed her husband, the king, to claim the province of Toulouse under the pretext of her hereditary rights in it, as the granddaughter of Philippa of Toulouse, who was the ruler of that province⁽³⁰⁾, over the twenty years that preceded the association of Eleanor with Louis VII, Toulouse belonged to Alfonso Jordan (1103-1148). to the coasts of the Mediterranean, so the king prepared preparations for his campaign against Toulouse without consulting Suger or his other advisors, who, after knowing the intentions of their king, refused to involve themselves in his imminent campaign, including Count Thibaut IV⁽⁴⁰⁾, count of Blois and Champagne, who invoked the need to consult his feudal followers before doing so, and refused to send any troops to King Louis VII, which ended in a complete break between them⁽³³⁾.

Louis did not care about the positions of Count Thibaut and his other nobles and marched his army through Aquitaine, leaving Eleanor in Poitiers, waiting for the results of his campaign, and although King Louis VII counted on taking Toulouse by surprise, he was surprised that Alfonso Jordan mobilized his forces in preparation to meet the army of King Louis, and he something that indicated that the news of the campaign had leaked to Alfonso, so King Louis realized that the most important elements of his plan had failed, so he immediately retreated through Angoulême to Poitiers, so that Toulouse would remain outside his authority⁽⁹⁾.

And it seems that Louis VII - under the influence of his wife Eleanor - decided to be a strong king with independent and decisive decisions, even if it cost him to stand against the papacy, so he nominated one of his advisers called Cadurc (Cadurc) for the position of Archbishop of Bourges, ignoring the choice of Pope Innocent II for this position for his relative Peter de La Chartres (Peter de Lachartre), which involved him in a heated conflict with the Pope, especially after Louis VII announced his approval of any person chosen by the

residents of the city of Bourges for their archbishop's position, provided that he not be the papal candidate Peter de Lachartre, and after the Pope insisted on his candidate, King Louis VII swore all that was It is sacred that he will not allow the Pope's mentor to enter the city of Bourges, so Pope Innocent declared a general papal excommunication that included the king and his subjects to put pressure on him, and therefore the church bells and rituals of worship such as masses, weddings and baptisms stopped in the areas belonging to King Louis VII ⁽³⁰⁾, and the matter got worse after the marriage of Petronilla, the sister of Queen Eleanor, to Count Raoul de Vermandios, despite his association with the sister of Count Thibaut IV, especially since the king fell again under the influence of his wife, so he persuaded three bishops from the royal court to bless Petronilla's marriage and dissolve the first marriage, so the count was angry thibaut appealed to Pope Innocent II to punish the king for this decision, which contradicts the constants of Catholic marriage, so the Pope instructed to hold a council in the city of Lagni near Paris, in which he declared the invalidity of Petronella's marriage and the legality of Count Raoul's marriage to his first wife, but Raoul refused to give up Petronella, who She was pregnant with him, so the Pope declared them excommunicated and imposed clerical penalties on the clergy because they blessed the second marriage on the orders of their monarch, Louis VII ⁽⁴¹⁾. However, the latter did not yield to the pressures of the Pope, and matched his wife Eleanor's desire to confront Pope Innocent II, and take revenge for her sister Petronella from Count Thibaut IV, who was the reason for the annulment of her marriage to Raoul. ⁽⁴²⁾. So, at the beginning of 1143, King Louis led his army towards Champagne, the stronghold of Count Thibaut ⁽³⁶⁾, he met little resistance in the town of Vitry on the Marne ⁽²⁷⁾, count Thibaut led it personally, and after the Count fortified himself in one of his castles, King Louis decided to take revenge on the residents of Vitry, so he ordered his soldiers to set fire to its wooden houses, so most of the city's residents fled to St. And women and the elderly ⁽⁹⁾, Victims were estimated by some sources at a thousand people ⁽²⁷⁾, other sources reported that they increased more than three hundred ⁽⁹⁾, it seems that King Louis, who witnessed that scene and heard the cries of the innocent, was affected by the horror of the scene, and he slept in his tent for a few days ⁽²⁷⁾.

Then he returned to Paris, leaving his soldiers to wreak havoc until they occupied most of it, but the influence of Father Suger on King Louis VII ended because he agreed to peace negotiations with Count Thibaut in late 1143 ⁽³⁹⁾, St. Bernard contributed to removing the king's dispute with the Pope and Count Thibaut, which led to the conclusion of the Treaty of Vitry in 1143 ⁽⁴³⁾, the most important of which was the release of Count Thibaut IV, who was captured in Vitry, in exchange for the annulment of the excommunication issued by the Pope against Raul de Vermando and his wife, Petronella ⁽⁹⁾, and for Louis VII to recognize Peter de La Châtre as Archbishop of Borgia ⁽⁴³⁾.

It seems that this agreement was temporary because as soon as Count Thibaut IV was released, Pope Innocent reinstated the excommunication of Count Raoul and his wife Petronella. Louis VII got angry at what he considered a renunciation of the Vitry agreement and invaded part of the lands of Count Thibaut and declared his refusal to imitate the papacy of any person in the vacant episcopal regions. But Count Thibaut IV allied this time with the Countess of Flandzo and Soissons, and sought to intermarry with them by announcing the betrothal of his son to the daughter of the Count of Flanders and the betrothal of his daughter to the Count of Soissons, which was rejected by Louis VII and his promise was illegitimate because it took place between the separation of two feudal vassals without his consent, and he claimed the existence of A forbidden kinship relationship prevents intermarriage ⁽⁹⁾, but St. Bernard criticized the above-mentioned King's pretensions ⁽⁴⁴⁾, on basis, the king himself is married to Eleanor, who is his relative of the fourth degree, which is not favored by the

Church, and although the king ignored the opinion of St. Bernard, Eleanor later relied on him.⁽⁴⁵⁾ although matters almost developed into unimaginable consequences, the death of Pope Innocent II on September 24, 1143, and Celestine II's accession to the papacy ended the dispute between the institution of the French throne and the papacy, because the new pope was moderate and counting on opening a new page with King Louis VII, through The abolition of the papal presence on royal lands⁽³⁹⁾, Queen Eleanor, for her part, made an extra effort to improve France's relationship with the papacy and to rid her sister Petronella and her husband of the papal ex-communication, so during her pilgrimage with her husband on June 11, 1144, from Paris to Saint-Denis to open one of her churches, she met St. Bernard secretly and demanded that he cancel the ex-communication against her sister and husband. She promised him that, in return, she would try to convince her husband to end the war in Champagne and to recognize the church's candidate as Archbishop of Borgia. She showed him her fear of not having an heir to the king despite the passage of 7 years of their marriage. Bernard took pity on her and promised her that he would pray for her if he kept her promises⁽²⁷⁾, shortly after this meeting, peace returned to France, and a new truce was signed between Louis and Thibaut, the most important of which was the lifting of the papal ex-communication from Petronilla and her husband, and Louis's recognition of the church's candidate for the Archbishop of Bourges. Thus, Eleanor proved the extent of her control over her husband, the king, and Eleanor believed that St. Bernard's invitation to her was behind her childbearing. In the year 1145, a baby girl was named (Maryam) or Mary after the name of the Virgin Mary, peace be upon her⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Conclusions

- In 1137, Eleanor married her first husband, Louis VII, and their marriage was celebrated in Saint Andrew's Cathedral in the presence of Suger and the senior nobles of France.
- The couple settled in Paris in an old mansion overlooking the western side of the island of El Dolaciti, and Paris at that time was a medium-sized city opposite that island.
- Eleanor's lifestyle at the French court differed from what she had known in her native land, Aquitaine, which put her in a difficult labour that was evident in everyone's criticism of her dress and liberal behavior, to realize that she was in a cognitive and social incubator different from what she was familiar with, but she refused to coexist with her new environment and brought in a large number of her entourage including artists and poets to the French court.
- Eleanor was able to take possession of her husband, Louis VII, and this was evident when she asked him to attack Toulouse, which she considered the legacy of her ancestors.
- The study showed the influence of Eleanor on the decisions of Louis VII regarding his relationship with the papacy and his decision regarding the selection of one of his candidates for the presidency of the bishopric of Bourges, ignoring the choice of Pope Innocent II for this position for his relative Peter de Lachartre, which plunged him into a heated conflict with the papacy.

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