

Tekst 5

Carnival queen

by Bagehot

1 **During** her short, sad life, Diana was seen as a scandalously modern princess; after her sadder death she has been enlisted as a posthumous poster girl for various progressive causes. “She wasn’t seen as posh. She was one of the people,” argues *Time* magazine, hailing her as “the princess who transformed a nation”. She wasn’t—and she didn’t. Beyond her roles as fairy-tale princess and floundering, suffering divorcee, Diana’s appeal rested



in part on an ancient example: the monarch who walks among the people, working miracles; in her case among lepers, AIDS patients and maimed children.

2 Primitive fears of mortality; feelings of guilt; globalised media; a hot August 1997: all that, and a lot else besides, contributed to the hysteria of “Diana week”, between the crash in Paris and the surreal funeral. The precise chemistry is still a mystery; like many great events, it is remembered differently by different people. But at least one interpretation that seemed plausible during those strange days in London now looks conclusively wrong. At the time, a few optimistic republicans thought the end of the monarchy was near. Yet five years later, huge and loyal crowds turned out for the queen mother’s funeral, and for the queen’s Golden Jubilee. Nowadays, the Windsors’ poll ratings are even rosy.

3 Instead of heralding a republic, that week is now often said to have saved the monarchy, by forcing it to emulate the mourned, modern princess’ behaviour. In fact, the royal family started to change before Diana became part of it: the queen had begun to “let in daylight upon the magic” as early as 1969. With hindsight, the public seems to have lamented Diana as much because she was one of the royals as because she was estranged from them. The masses are more conservative than rebellious—and were quickly calmed when the queen walked amongst them.

4 As well as shaking up the throne, Diana’s death has been regarded as the spark of broader shifts in Britain’s politics and personality. Because of her colour-blind taste in men and the diversity of the crowds, “Diana week” has been seen as a milestone in the evolution of a multi-ethnic nation—mostly by people who hadn’t noticed that Britain had already become one. The massive public weeping and hugging have been seen as evidence of a general longing to be part of something bigger. That longing, if it existed, seems to have faded.

5 Still more ambitiously, “Diana week” is extolled as the time when Britain’s upper lip definitively relaxed. That notion overestimates both how stiff the lip was before—Britain was never quite as emotionally deformed as alleged—and how slack it has become since. Even now the British do not routinely weep at

- funerals; subsequent and greater tragedies, such as the terrorist attacks of July 7th 2005, have evoked touchingly restrained responses.
- 6 The exception to this phenomenon involves the institution that once seemed most likely to be changed by Diana's death: the press. Hated, like the Windsors, for their contribution to her fate, the media 20 intruding in her two sons' lives—but only temporarily. Now grown up, sometimes dating girlfriends, they are considered fair game. The commercial and technological forces that made their mother a hyperstar have made celebrity yet more desired, and privacy still less respected.
- 7 Had she lived, Diana would eventually have become less beautiful, less interesting. By dying, she immortalised herself as the “queen of hearts”. But in truth she became a carnival queen: monarch of a temporary disorder that, when it passed, left the old order intact, or stronger.

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- 1p **16** What does paragraph 1 make clear about the writer with regard to princess Diana?
- A He disagrees with the way in which she is portrayed by the media.
 - B He fails to explain why she became popular with the masses.
 - C He ignores the fact that she is praised for doing so much charity work.
 - D He objects to the fact that her private life is being discussed so publicly.
 - E He stresses the fact that she never behaved like the other royals.

“But at least ... wrong.” (midden alinea 2)

- 1p **17** Welke interpretatie met betrekking tot “Diana week” wordt hier bedoeld?

- 2p **18** Geef voor elk van de volgende beweringen aan of deze wel of niet in overeenstemming is met de inhoud van de alinea’s 3 en 4.

- 1 Diana had begun to influence the Royal family long before her death.
- 2 Diana’s death forced politicians to deal with multi-cultural problems.
- 3 Diana was specifically mourned by the white lower-classes.
- 4 The people in general rather tend to dislike major changes.

Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door “wel” of “niet”.

- 1p **19** What is the relation between the remark “Britain’s upper ... relaxed” and the statement “Even now ... responses.” in paragraph 5?

The statement in the final sentence

- A explains the first remark.
- B illustrates the first remark.
- C modifies the first remark.
- D supports the first remark.

- 1p **20** Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 6?

- A agreed on
- B became rich from
- C insisted on
- D kept from