

ChatGPT Version 5.5 Thinking

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Was regina a common name for Jewish women in the fourteenth century Crown of Aragon?
Was Regina a common name for Christian women in that time and place?

I'll treat this as a prosopographical/onomastic question rather than just a Latin-vocabulary question: the key distinction is whether Regina appears as a personal name in Jewish and Christian naming pools, and how often relative to common names like Astruga, Bonafilia, Maria, etc.

Thought for 49s

Probably yes for Jewish women; probably no, or at least much less common, for Christian women.

For **Jewish women in late medieval Catalonia / Crown of Aragon**, Regina appears to have been a recognizably common Romance/Catalan Jewish woman's name, not an anomaly. A compiled dataset of Jewish names from Catalonia, 1250–1400, based on wills, lists Regina. →Regine. →Reina. →Reginette several times, including examples such as “**Regina uxor Bondia Coras**” and “**Regine filie Goyo**”. The same naming study summarizes the top women's names and says that among the five most frequent, only **Aster/Esther** is biblical, while **Regina, Bonafilia, Bonadona, and Astruga** are Catalan/Romance names used by Jews.

That pattern also fits the notarial evidence from Girona around 1391–1420. Alexandra Guerson and Dana Wessell Lightfoot open their article on Catalan Jewish women and conversas with a Jewish widow named **Regina**, active in Girona credit records after 1391; later they mention **two Jewish women named Regina** in Girona credit-market documents, one the widow of Salamó Saporta and another the widow of Mossé Falcó.

For **Christian women**, I would be much more cautious. Regina certainly could be a Christian name in Latin Europe—especially because it means “queen” and had Christian resonances through Marian language such as Regina.caeli and saints named Regina—but I do **not** see evidence that it was common among Christian women in fourteenth-century Catalonia or the Crown of Aragon. In a small but useful late-fifteenth-century Barcelona guild-name sample, common women's names include **Eulàlia, Francina, Caterina, Joana,**

Margarida, Maria, Elisabet, Elionor, etc.; **Regina does not appear** in that women's-name list. The sample is later and limited, so it is not proof of absence, but it is consistent with the impression that Regina was not a mainstream Christian female name there.

The important methodological warning: in Latin chancery or notarial records, **regina** can simply mean “**queen**” rather than a personal name. So if the form appears as *domina regina*, *regina Aragonum*, *regina consors nostra*, etc., it is almost certainly a title. But if it appears in a naming formula such as **Regina uxor X, Regine filie Y, Regina vidua quondam X**, then it is a personal name.

My working conclusion would be:

Jewish woman named Regina in fourteenth-century Crown of Aragon? Very plausible and not surprising; probably fairly common among Catalan Jewish women.

Christian woman named Regina in the same milieu? Possible, but I would not call it common without specific local evidence. For Christian women, I would expect names like Maria, Caterina, Eulàlia, Joana, Margarida, Francesca/Francina, Elionor, Sibil·la, Constança, etc. to be much more typical.