Queen and Scholar: Elizabeth Tudor and Wisdom Imagery

Katherine Eleanor Maltby

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (English Language and Literature) at University College London (UCL)
Declaration

I, Katherine Eleanor Maltby, known as Kate, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

What does it mean for a queen to be wise? In the context of early modern English Protestantism, wisdom was predominantly understood as a response to divine revelation, often mediated through scriptural authority. For a queen like Elizabeth Tudor, whose accession revived anxieties about women’s fitness to rule, the demonstration of Protestant erudition was an essential aspect of performing her suitability for godly governance. This thesis explores wisdom imagery in the representation and self-representation of Elizabeth. As such, it is a study of ways in which the display of godly wisdom and biblical scholarship were key to assuaging anxieties about female authority in sixteenth-century England.

Scholars of queenship have focused our attention on what Susan Frye has termed ‘the competition for representation’. My thesis builds on this work to examine how wisdom imagery became a way for both the queen and her subjects to negotiate the representation of female authority. Linda Shenk has already explored the double-edged nature of ‘learned authority’, but she has focused on diplomatic and international perspectives. I assess it primarily in domestic contexts. I also explore Elizabeth’s use of Greek texts, identifying for the first time the source of a Greek verse published under her name in 1548, and I examine under-studied neo-Latin panegyric, including some transcribed here for the first time.

I examine the entire period of the life of Elizabeth Tudor, but this final version of the thesis is weighted towards the first decades of Elizabeth’s life and reign. I make extensive use of writings published in the queen’s name, but I explore them alongside texts in which her subjects made clear their own demanding definitions of royal wisdom. Many contemporaries participated in Elizabeth Tudor’s strategies to present herself as a wise queen, but others used wisdom imagery to express anxieties about her competence.
# Table of Contents

Declaration p. 2  
Abstract p. 3  
Impact Statement p. 5  
Acknowledgements p. 6  
Summary List of Illustrations p. 8  
A Note on the Text p. 10  
Abbreviations p. 12  

***  
Introduction to the Thesis p. 13  
Chapter 1: Roger Ascham and the Learned Lady p. 40  
Chapter 2: ‘Languages, Lernynges and Vertues’ p. 89  
Chapter 3: Elizabeth’s Contested Accession p. 133  
Chapter 4: Marriage and Minerva p. 181  
Chapter 5: The Wisdom of Solomon p. 229  
Chapter 6: Thomas Blenerhasset and the Gospel Militant p. 266  
Epilogue: The Consolations of Philosophy p. 293  

***  
Illustrations p. 299  
Bibliography p. 312
Impact Statement

I am fortunate in that my concomitant career as a journalist and arts critic has already given me a number of opportunities to share my research and my scholarly interests with a wider public. My understanding of literary and historical perspectives informs my regular broadcasting and writing for national newspapers, but on the specific concerns of this thesis I have appeared on two television programmes during the course of this project: BBC 2’s *Elizabeth’s Secret Agents* (2017) and Channel 5’s *the Last Days of Mary, Queen of Scots* (2015). My contributions to both were informed by my research for Chapter 6 of this thesis. I have written several times for *History Today*, most recently on the subject of Joan Kelly-Gadol’s famous essay, ‘Did Women Have a Renaissance’, a piece which was informed by Chapter 2 section ii. Perhaps most importantly, when an early modern translation of Tacitus was newly attributed to Elizabeth in 2019, thanks to the superb work of John-Mark Philo, I was invited by *The Times* to contribute an article setting the piece in context for their readers. I also appeared on ITV news that evening and was lucky enough to show the manuscript to viewers.

In a very different form of public engagement, I also enjoyed taking part in the 2014 Open Cambridge reconstruction of the processions and pageantry which commemorated Elizabeth I’s 1564 visit to Cambridge, a historical event which I discuss in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Beyond the thesis, I hope that my research will continue to inform my public-facing journalism. Most immediately, however, I am interested in exploring the options for scholarly publication and peer review. My work on the Greek ‘sentence’ published under Elizabeth Tudor’s name by John Bale adds new context and raises new questions about this important early piece of Elizabeth’s bibliography. My work on neo-Latin verses presented or orated to Elizabeth builds on and, I hope, will contribute to growing momentum in this small and under-supported field.

More broadly, this thesis has taught me to think deeply about national mythmaking. It has taught me to question many of the cultural assumptions about Elizabeth I and her era with which I was raised, and in some cases with which I even entered the PhD programme. Many of these myths now inform our national life at all levels. My thesis therefore serves an important role in unpicking historical myths and in teaching readers to think critically about the construction of nativist personae for figures such as Elizabeth – both in her own lifetime and in her long afterlives. In my public-facing work, I hope to be able to pass on these lessons.
Acknowledgements

My greatest and overwhelming debts are to Alison Shell and Helen Hackett, my primary and secondary supervisors respectively. Over the many years that I have slow-cooked this PhD, Alison’s patience and generosity – generosity both of spirit and of expertise – have unfailingly carried me through. Her expertise with religious matters, manuscripts and neo-Latin has been particularly invaluable: she is cited where specifically appropriate, but I would like to acknowledge more broadly her guidance with the manuscript work in this thesis. I would also like to pay tribute to the exceptional way she has supported all her graduate students and fostered our community during the recent Covid pandemic. Over these years, I have often felt like Elizabeth, sending anxious emails confessing to ‘nothing done as it should be’, but I could not ask for anyone better placed to ‘rub out, polish, and mend’ – although of course these words and all their errors are my own.

In the long gestation of this thesis Helen Hackett has gone far beyond the call of duty as a secondary supervisor. Her expertise as a scholar of Elizabeth is well known and has influenced every page of this thesis, but she is also the most dedicated of teachers. I look forward with pleasure to our many more conversations about Elizabeth I to come.

During the few years she spent at UCL before her death, Lisa Jardine welcomed me into her graduate seminar at the Centre for Editing Lives and Letters. I have written elsewhere about the impact of her mentorship on so many generations of feminist scholars. What perhaps should be said here is that when the distractions of my journalism career surged, Lisa’s encouragement to continue with my academic interests and the blessing of her confidence in me made all the difference. I am also grateful to the wider familia Lisa built around her at CELL, including Matthew Symonds, Robyn Adams, Will Tosh, Nadine Akkerman, James Everett, Kirsty Rolphe, Katie Bank, Helen Matheson-Pollock, Alan Stewart and Brooke Palmieri.

Through the Yale-UCL collaborative exchange, I was lucky enough to spend time as a graduate exchange student back at Yale, where I had been an undergraduate. Then and since, David Scott Kastan has been an inspiration and a deeply valued adviser. Kathryn James of the Beinecke Library at Yale also went above and beyond in advising me on rare books. I have also been lucky to take advantage through the wider University of London of classes in neo-
Latin, and in medieval Latin palaeography. For their teaching, I am indebted to Victoria Moul, Daniel Foster, Carlotta Dionisotti and Lucy Nicholas. To Lucy Nicholas I am particularly grateful for pivotal advice on Roger Ascham.

Elsewhere at UCL, Eric Langley, Chris Stamatakis, Gesine Manuwald, John Mullan and Chris Laoutaris have all at crucial moments offered me valuable support.

I am grateful to the trust and generosity of both Rosemary Macaulay and Micha Lazarus for sharing with me unpublished work: I am particularly grateful to Dr Lazarus for our ongoing correspondence on Isocrates. Beyond the achievement of his work on Elizabeth’s Tacitus, John-Mark Philo has been a generous interlocutor in correspondence.

In the wider academic world, I am indebted for academic or moral support to Guillaume Coatalen, Micheline White, Jamie Goodrich, Arnold Hunt, Linda Shenk, Laurie Maguire, Katherine Ibbett, Melissa Terras, Nigel Smith, Charles Beem, Jane Lawson, Rhodri Lewis and the Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford. I am also grateful to Katy Mair for help at the National Archives. For sharing their experience and proving shining exempla that PhDs really can be completed, I happily acknowledge the encouragement of my friends and fellow early career scholars Emma Whipday, Roberta Klimt, Elsa Court, Gabriel Bloomfield, Dan Starza Smith, Kaye McLelland, Sasha Garwood Lloyd, Estelle Paranque, Miranda Kaufmann, Philip Sidney, Joanne Paul, Serena Gosden-Hood and Tessie Prakas. Peter Olive generously advised on Greek in an earlier version of the work on Jane Lumley. As the Covid pandemic forced UCL’s communities online, Jacob Wiseman, Shiran Avni and Dana Key have been the best of comrades in Zoom solidarity.

In the separate career that I have concurrently pursued in journalism and broadcasting, I am lucky to have had Kirsty Hurrell provide stellar administrative and diary support. Without Kirsty I would have had much more difficulty protecting the time for this project, although she has not worked on it directly. With the knowledge of my supervisor, Kate Haigh and Louise Bolotin each proofread an earlier draft of some sections of this thesis. Any errors are, of course, my own.

Without my parents Colin and Vicky, my brother Matt and many of my friends, this PhD would never have been started, let alone completed.
Summary List of Illustrations

Figure 1 p. 299
Elizabeth Tudor, *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by John Bale (Wesel {Marburg}, 1548) STC 17320, Fi'–Fii'.

Figure 2 p. 300

Figure 3 p. 300
Elizabeth Tudor, *A godly meditation of the soule*, ed. by James Cancellar (London, 1580) STC 17321, Aviii'.

Figure 4 p. 301
Elizabeth Tudor, *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by John Bale (Wesel {Marburg}, 1548) STC 17320, Ai'.

Figure 5 p. 301

Figure 6 p. 302
Attributed to William Scrots – ‘Elizabeth I when a Princess’ (1533-1603).

Figure 7 p. 302

Figure 8 p. 303

Figure 9 p. 304
‘The Great Bible’, 1539, titlepage.

Figure 10 p. 305
Figure 11

*Christian prayers and meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke and Latine* (London, 1569)
STC 6248, A1'.

Figure 12

*Christian prayers and meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke and Latine* (London, 1569)
STC 6248, A2'.

Figure 13


Figure 14


Figure 15

Signature inscription by Dorothy Morison, *The monument of matrones*, titlepage to the ‘First Lamp’, as above.

Figure 16

*The monument of matrones*, titlepage to the ‘Second Lamp’, as above.

Figure 17

A Note On The Text

This thesis has been prepared using a customised format based on the MHRA model, including MHRA preference for capitalisation across all modern titles.

I have largely maintained original spellings, but in line with standard practice I have silently adjusted ‘j’ for ‘i’ and ‘v’ for ‘u’ where appropriate in English spellings and Latin spellings. I have also silently expanded contractions, including Latin tildes, and I have removed accent marks from English and Latin texts.

On the basis that readers may be more familiar with Latin than with Greek, Latin quotations are usually provided in both Latin and English translation. If merely used to provide intellectual background, I cite Greek texts in English only, but I provide both Greek and English translation when discussing the use of specific language.

In-text translations are mine, unless otherwise stated. Where I have based my translation on another scholar’s version, but improved it in small details, I have indicated this. In-text quotations of Latin and modern languages are italicised if they consist of five words or fewer, but otherwise are quoted in roman text. (I appreciate that the necessity of a sharp cut-off point leads in some cases to roman and italic quotations appearing from the same Latin source in close proximity). Long quotations are indented, and italicised unless they are in English, in which case they remain roman.

On a number of occasions, I have made use of Greek or Latin texts provided with an English translation from John Nichols’ The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I: A New Edition of the Early Modern Sources, ed. by Elizabeth Goldring, Faith Eales, Elizabeth Clarke, Jayne Elisabeth Archer, 5 vols (Oxford: OUP, 2014), abbreviated as Progresses. As translations are often printed much later in this edition, I use a colon to indicate where the English may be found, e.g. Progresses v, 180:193-4, indicates a Latin text that can be found at v, 180, with its English translation at pages 193-4 of the same volume.


As I note in my Introduction to the Thesis, some writings attributed to Elizabeth Tudor are reprinted in different versions across the volumes produced by the University of Chicago Press’ Collected Works project. Where I cite multiple versions of the same text (e.g. a Latin original and an English translation), I give both page references but quote the title only once.

I give dates in-text according to the modern calendar. However, if close reading is necessary of early modern manuscripts or printed texts in which a date is inscribed, I give both Old and New style date – e.g. Jan 1549/50.

In some rare cases, archive closures due to Covid-19 have prevented me from returning to check the original spelling of early modern texts. In these cases, I have quoted from modern editions. I intend to revisit the archived originals before any future publication of this work. In some cases, library closures have also prevented me from performing a final check on modern
reference page numbers, although in all cases I work from careful initial notes. I have therefore occasionally used the non-MHRA term ‘ff’ to indicate a broader reference.

I use short forms for early modern printed books. In keeping with MHRA guidelines, issue numbers and months/seasons are only given for journals where each issue starts at page 1, or in the case of online-only journals, where traditional pagination is not used. A list of abbreviations is given below.

Please see also the Covid Impact Statement attached to this thesis.
Abbreviations

Academic Presses
ACMRS = Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies Press
CUP = Cambridge University Press
Harvard = Harvard University Press
OUP = Oxford University Press
Palgrave = Palgrave Macmillan
Princeton = Princeton University Press
Yale = Yale University Press
Elsewhere, the abbreviation ‘UP’ indicates a university press: e.g. ‘Nebraska UP’ = ‘University of
Nebraska Press).

Titles of Journals
HER = English Historical Review
ELR = English Literary Renaissance
EMLS = Early Modern Literary Studies
JBS = The Journal of British Studies
JWCI = Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes
HJ = The Historical Journal
HLQ = Huntington Library Quarterly
RES = The Review of English Studies
RQ = Renaissance Quarterly
RS = Renaissance Studies
Sixteenth Century = The Sixteenth Century Journal
SEL = Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900
SP = Studies in Philology
TRHS = Transactions of the Royal Historical Society

Other
CW = Elizabeth I: Collected Works, ed. by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose
(Chicago: Chicago UP, 2002)
ACFLO = Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals, ed. by Janel
T1 = Elizabeth I: Translations, 1544-1589, ed. by Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel (Chicago:
Chicago UP, 2009)
T2 = Elizabeth I: Translations, 1592-1598, ed. by Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel (Chicago:
Chicago UP, 2009)
Progresses = John Nichols’ The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I: A New
Edition of the Early Modern Sources, ed. by Elizabeth Goldring, Faith Eales, Elizabeth
Clarke, Jayne Elisabeth Archer, 5 vols (Oxford: OUP, 2014)

ODNB = Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
EEBO = Early English Books Online
UFTC = Universal Short Title Catalogue
ESTC = English Short Title Catalogue
STC = Short Title Catalogue
Introduction to the Thesis

i. Points of entry

1. *...me vero corpore integram, forma bona, ingenio et sano et solido, prudentia etiam preter [praeter] alias foeminas, eximia atque prestante, literarum praeterea atque linguarum cognitione et usu, quum in hoc sexu esse solet, maiore.¹*

   Indeed, I am unimpaired in body, with a good form, a healthy and substantial wit, prudence even beyond other women, and beyond this, distinguished and superior in the knowledge and use of literature and languages, which is highly esteemed because unusual in my sex.

2. She that was thought so full with wisdom fraught, that all the world might go to her to scole
   and he that at no tyme by her was taught, is taken yet by som but halfe a foole
   She that taught princes how ther states to weld and that imbassadours what to doe and say
   she that for sober and devout was held and clerckes & preistes taught how to prach and pray
   She that so many yeares refusd to wed, and boasted what virginitie was worthe
   Even she I say hath lost her maidenhead & daughters.³ to all the world Brought forthe
   Which Ill averre on Churche and on Churchesteple are bastardes bred right children of the people.²

This thesis examines ways in which Elizabeth Tudor was associated with images and personae of ‘wisdom’ and ‘learning’. These concepts were culturally fraught at the time of her birth in 1533 and would remain so throughout her reign from 1558 to 1603 as Queen of England. Ideals of ‘learning’ were particularly contested; classical and biblical traditions of scholarship, and the values they encoded, were often in tension with each other.

¹ ACFLO, ‘Prayer 8’, p. 121; CW, p. 141.
As a young girl of questionable legitimacy and uncertain royal standing, displays of erudition would allow Elizabeth to assert her place in a royal family which enacted collaboration through gift-exchange of translations and prayers. These same displays would be appropriated and publicised by Protestant partisans, including Elizabeth’s tutor Roger Ascham and the polemicist John Bale, who were determined to define excellence in textual scholarship as the sole compass of evangelicals. As a queen, Elizabeth would be routinely praised for her ‘wisdom’. But kingly wisdom, of which Solomon was the pre-eminent biblical example, depended on God’s providence, and any monarch’s claim to its authority required proofs of piety and a performance of submission to that providence. In the case of Elizabeth, prayers and sermons that praised the queen’s wisdom often contained suggestions as to how it could be better applied, while praise for her understanding of Scriptures often came from militant Protestants urging aggressive promulgation of the vernacular Gospel, at home and abroad.

Elizabeth’s sex complicated the discourse of intellect and royal authority. Displays of scholarship could bolster Elizabeth’s credentials to govern by situating her as exceptional: a prince to whom the common limitations of women did not apply. Yet the emergent humanism in which Elizabeth had been educated also elevated a network of men who considered themselves trained to give ‘counsel’ – a dynamic that particularly opened up a female monarch to constraint and admonition.4 When the queen visited universities or addressed her

---

3 On the definition of religious terms, see section iii below.
parliaments, her display of familiarity with contemporary ideas required her to engage with the conciliar theories of a new class of all-male public servants. As I will argue in this thesis, when Elizabeth was associated with wisdom or learning, she and her contemporaries were also negotiating questions about religious difference, the sex/gender system and institutional power-sharing.

My two epigraphs indicate in microcosm the double-edged nature of Elizabethan discourse about the queen’s ‘wisdom’. The first is taken from a prayerbook printed in the queen’s own name, undoubtedly with her full authority. Like many of the works I examine in this thesis, it rewards study in the original Latin. The full title of this 1563 prayerbook, Precationes privatae. Regiae. E. R., offered the Latin-literate public a fantasy of observing their queen at her ‘private prayers’; the editors of Elizabeth’s Collected Works link it to ‘Elizabeth’s desire to make a public demonstration of gratitude to God for her recovery from her near-fatal case of smallpox in October 1562’. In section v. below, I discuss the complex challenges of attributing authorship of such publications to the queen: however, with Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose, I accept this as a text ‘authorised’ by Elizabeth. The queen’s prayer makes explicit her use of intellectual performance to assert her exceptionalism among women: she has prudence ‘etiam preter alias foeminas’ (‘even beyond other women’), and a knowledge of languages unusual in her sex. The terms ‘cognitio’ and ‘usus’, neither of which necessarily refer to education, avoid the question of whether the extension of Elizabeth’s educational

---

5 I discuss the definition of ‘counsel’ at Chapter 3, section iii and Chapter 4, section ii. Throughout I use ‘counsellors’ as a broad term which encompasses both informal advisors and members of the Privy Council, but I specify the latter where appropriate.

6 CW, p. 136.
opportunities to other women might render similar results. The prayer also stresses multilingualism as a marker of Elizabeth’s intellect – a trope we shall meet often – and links mental and physical excellence. It isolates three different types of intellectual quality which, as this thesis will show, were each attributed for different purposes to Elizabeth in her lifetime: ‘ingenio’ (‘wit’), ‘prudentia’ (‘prudence’) and ‘literarum praeterea atque linguarum cognitio et usus’ (‘the knowledge and use of literature and languages’).

My second epigraph, however, is a preview of ways that efforts by loyalists to extol the queen’s intellect met with resistance and resentment, particularly from subjects who responded to a female sovereign with sexual innuendo and gendered slander. Some recent scholars, notably Susan Doran and Natalie Mears, have downplayed the impact of Elizabeth’s sex on the challenges she faced as a ruler, but it is my position throughout this thesis that problems of sex and gender underpinned almost every aspect of Elizabeth’s queenship: the misogyny of poems such as this demonstrate why.7 The author uses the conventions of praise-poetry to lure the reader into identifying his unnamed subject as Elizabeth, only to introduce another familiar theme – that a woman who projects a public face, whatever her claims to intellect and virginity, must be a dissembling whore. Nonetheless, before this twist, the anonymous author helpfully lists ways in which Elizabeth’s ‘wisdom’ was indeed used to bolster her authority. She is a mentor and patroness of education; she elicits intellectual engagement at court as a condition of her patronage; she plays the benign adviser with foreign princes; she asserts herself with ambassadors. Above all, she claims religious authority over the clergy, qualifying her to instruct them in the use of religious speech. The poem is undated, but Henry Stanford’s anthology was compiled over a thirty-year period at the turn of the seventeenth century and the

7 Natalie Mears, Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), pp. 5-6, 73-103; Susan Doran, Monarchy & Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth I (London: Routledge, 1996; repr, 2015), p. 11. This issue is discussed in Chapter 3, section i.
reference to Elizabeth schooling ambassadors may allude to her explicitly didactic Latin upbraiding of the Polish ambassador in 1597.  

ii. The subject of Elizabeth: scholarly studies of agency and power

My themes are wisdom and learning in Elizabeth Tudor’s representation and self-representation. To elucidate my framework and methodology, however, I will first trace the history of scholarly approaches to Elizabeth’s broader image-making.

In his book *The Subject of Elizabeth*, Louis Montrose uses his ‘intentionally ambiguous’ title to articulate a Janus-faced problem of agency in the cultural relationship between Elizabeth Tudor and her contemporaries. After November 1558 Elizabeth’s English contemporaries were all her political ‘subjects’, but no living person was so unremittingly the ‘subject’ of symbolic reshapings, collective and individual, by her contemporaries. In England, no one was written about, fantasised about, revered, and criticised more continuously throughout the nearly forty-five years of her reign; across Europe, the attempts to fix the English queen in text were almost as prolific. As Montrose observes: ‘Elizabeth Tudor was a privileged agent in the production of the royal image, but she was not its master.’ Elizabeth was both the predominant cultural subject of the English imagination and the dominant political agent of her

---


11 Montrose, *Subject of Elizabeth*, p. 3.
age. She shaped and was shaped by the imaginative lives of her people. They were her subjects and she theirs.

Scholars have adopted a wide range of models to delineate the queen’s own agency in image-making, the cultural power she shared with state institutions and the mythmaking capacities of her private subjects. Elizabeth and her ministers clearly attempted to shape her perception by her subjects – *Precationes privatae*, the source of my first epigraph, is one such example. Yet they encountered a cross-current of opposition, demonstrated by seditious poems like my second epigraph. Throughout this thesis, I rely on the model developed by Susan Frye, who in 1993 expressed the ceaselessness of this imaginative struggle by terming it ‘the competition for representation’. Nonetheless, to explain this approach, I will contextualise it with a brief scholarly history. If this summary makes little reference to studies of wisdom and literacy, focusing instead of issues of religion, sexual status and international politics, it is because these are the issues which have most preoccupied previous scholars – and an understanding of them is a *sine qua non* on which any study of this period is built. Only one major modern scholar has worked extensively on Elizabeth as a ‘learned queen’ and I return to this important work by Linda Shenk in section iv, below.

Appraisals of the queen’s agency and of her strategies of self-representation have often followed broader trends in the study of history and cultural politics. Political historians who understood Elizabeth Tudor as a successful, politically effective ruler have tended to work contemporaneously with literary critics who understood her as mistress of her own image; Elizabeth-sceptics in both politics and literature have similarly co-existed.

---

In the words of Julia M. Walker: ‘If Elizabeth and her reign have become a canonical subject in the fields of history, literature and art history, the canonical secondary texts in Elizabethan studies are those of Roy Strong and Frances A. Yates and the history of J. E. Neale.’

In the field of image-making, Yates and Strong represent one extreme of the debate over royal agency, with their celebratory appreciation of Elizabeth’s cultural power. Their impact owes much to Strong’s influence on British life as Director of, successively, the National Portrait Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum. In a famous essay of 1947, later republished and expanded, Yates envisaged Elizabeth self-fashioning as ‘Astraea’, an emblem of religious concord and sacred knowledge, in accordance with a propagandistic ‘imperial theme’ that allowed the queen to assert a transnational legitimacy over divided realms.

Strong added in 1977: ‘The cult of Gloriana was skilfully created to buttress public order and, even more, deliberately to replace the pre-Reformation externals of religion, the cult of the Virgin and saints with their attendant images, processions, ceremonies and secular rejoicing.'

This approach drew on E. C. Wilson, who had concluded his encyclopaedic and inchoate collection of Elizabethan panegyric by stating:

Elizabeth, a paradoxical virgin mother of her state at a time when many men were questioning the authority of a holy Virgin Mother, focused in her broad temper for all patriotic Englishmen that love of country which was now burning brightly.

Strong’s attitude was eagerly received within a cultural climate which popularised parallels between Elizabeth Tudor and Elizabeth Windsor as sources of national unity.

Neale’s biography, written for the quatercentenary of Elizabeth Tudor’s birth, was reissued for the new

---

14 ‘Introduction’, Dissing Elizabeth, p. 3.
queen’s coronation. It retains an unjust reputation for hagiography, although on the subject of Elizabeth’s literary life, despite Neale’s expressed delight in what he affirms as a golden age of education for women, he writes, ‘early she began a habit which was to grow into a curse, making her studied writings insufferably obscure and involved’.

In addition to their debt to Neale, Yates and Strong built on the jingoistic mid-century scholarship of A. L. Rowse, who credited the first Elizabeth with proactively laying the foundations of the British Empire. They owed something also to E. M. Tillyard’s wartime tome, *The Elizabethan World Picture*, which insisted nostalgically upon a unified aesthetic understanding among Elizabetheans, predicated on belief in a ‘Great Chain of Being’. By the 1950s to 1970s, however, the significant constitutional historian was Geoffrey Elton, whose ‘institutional’ approach to Tudor politics defined a generation. Elton’s vision of a ‘national, bureaucratic’ government, which had emerged from the state machinery of Thomas Cromwell, emphasised the role of the Privy Council. He presented Elizabeth and her Privy Council as a fundamentally stable and homogenous political unit. For Elton, the other major institution of state was parliament, which functioned fairly smoothly, offered legislative remedy for private grievances, and was a training ground for future counsellors. Where Neale’s Elizabeth had resented parliament as a locus of discord, for Elton ‘Elizabeth readily conceded a political function to her parliaments, provided she was allowed to turn the tap off when it suited her’.

---

Where Yates and Strong had described Elizabeth’s public image as coherent and venerated, Elton depicted her polity and government as equally successful and cohesive.

As the twentieth century drew on, revisionist historians began to question this approach, emphasising Elizabeth’s periods of unpopularity and weakness. In Mears’ words, it was Christopher Haigh who provided ‘the first significant assault on Elizabeth’s queenship’ in 1984.\(^{25}\) For the first time in a century, Haigh popularised a model of a Crown which often seemed incapable of enforcing power. Instead of being the centre of concentric spheres of influence, Elizabeth’s court and even the monarch itself were entities upon which external pressures wreaked havoc.

Wallace T. MacCaffrey’s study of Elizabeth, published in three volumes between 1968 and 1992, provided a counterbalance, describing the queen as an impressive woman who responded deftly to external circumstances, although – as in Haigh’s model – she was fundamentally at their mercy.\(^{26}\) But other scholars of politics and religion followed Haigh’s lead. In his 1989 inaugural lecture as Regius Professor of History at Cambridge, Patrick Collinson called for a ‘new political history’, which rejected Elton’s emphasis on central institutions and the assertion of sovereignty.\(^{27}\) Collinson’s work has richly developed our awareness of religious dissent and of republican ideas across Elizabethan England: his ground-breaking essay on England as a ‘monarchical republic’ examines William Cecil’s attempt to exclude Mary Stuart from the succession and concluded that by the 1580s, at least, the men of the Elizabethan conciliar class were capable of imagining themselves as republican citizens, even governing temporarily


without a monarch.\textsuperscript{28} John Guy’s conception of the ‘second reign’ of the 1590s argues for Elizabeth’s political decline in her last decade.\textsuperscript{29} Peter Lake takes an even more extreme view in \textit{Bad Queen Bess}, which stresses the impact of Catholic polemic in Elizabethan England and argues that debate between loyalists and dissidents bubbled over the social surface into a ‘public politics’.\textsuperscript{30} Similarly, Stephen Alford writes in his general-readership book \textit{The Watchers}, ‘Elizabeth’s England was in fact anything but stable […] Elizabethan propaganda was not a thing of luxury: it was an essential anaesthetic’.\textsuperscript{31} It is only thanks to Simon Adams, who has demonstrated the absence of factionalism in Elizabeth’s early Privy Council, that we have begun to see how a more stable portrait of Elizabeth’s reign might emerge – although Adams locates intense factionalism in the later reign, with the disruptive arrival of Robert Devereux.\textsuperscript{32}

Amid such shifts in political historiography, since the 1980s literary critics and cultural historians have accordingly challenged the tradition of Elizabeth as a unifying cultural figure. In his 1992 study of Tudor image-making, Sydney Anglo critiqued the assumption of ‘government planning in the creation and propagation of political symbolism on the one hand; and the existence of a sophisticated and informed public response on the other’.\textsuperscript{33} Anglo’s work helped deconstruct the exceptionalism of Yates and Strong’s ‘Cult’ by establishing that many images we associate with Elizabeth were recycled from her Tudor predecessors, including

Mary Tudor. A similar approach also informed Helen Hackett’s 1995 *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, which painstakingly demonstrated that most symbols presented by Yates as evidence of a Mariological ‘cult’ of Astraea-Virgo were conventional symbols of English and European queenship.\(^{34}\) Unlike Anglo’s work, Hackett’s study also reflected feminist approaches which had gathered steam in the 1980s and 1990s. In Chapter 2, I include an extensive review of feminist scholarship on early modern women writers, especially female translators.\(^{35}\) What is relevant here, however, is that this field emerged from both the politically organised feminism of the 1970s and the increasing interest of literary scholars in systems of power and dissent. New Historicist pioneers were shaped by the global impact of Michel Foucault and his understanding of the state and its surveillance of social order. Like them, I rely at times in this thesis on Foucault’s definition of ‘discourse’, a system in which ‘énoncés’ (‘utterances’) are governed by the ‘archive’ or the unspoken codes of society. The ‘archive’ may include ‘the limits and forms of sayability […] of conservation […] of memory […] of reactivation […] and of appropriation’.\(^{36}\) Yet the first New Historicists responded to Foucault with an exclusively masculine lens: in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Stephen Greenblatt examines ‘the project of grasping how we have become the way we are’ through six case studies, which were all male and, by his own admission, all ‘with the partial exception of [Thomas] Wyatt’, middle class.\(^{37}\)

In subsequent years, scholars have nonetheless applied ideas about ‘self-fashioning’ to the shaping of the royal image: I have made particular use of work by John N. King and Kevin Sharpe.\(^{38}\)

---

\(^{34}\) Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995).

\(^{35}\) Chapter 2, section ii.


Feminist scholarship, by contrast, has emphasised the limitations imposed by gender on the queen’s power to self-fashion. Hackett extends this pessimistic approach to highlight the prevalence of negative and misogynistic images of the queen which overshadowed her later years. Walker’s essay collection, *Dissing Elizabeth*, also examines the dark side of the queen’s representation, although in her introduction she rejects the ‘scholarly factionalism’ of ‘anti-Yatesian’ critics. Yet neither Hackett nor Walker suggest that Elizabeth’s reign was overwhelmed by this opposition. Feminist criticism has felt no need to present Elizabeth as a weak queen. The work of Carole Levin, for example, maps the misogynistic fantasies of the Elizabethan popular imagination, but frequently draws attention to the flexibility and political nous with which the queen responded to this discourse. In *Of Chastity and Power*, Philippa Berry explores the role of Diana in the iconography of Elizabeth, but she also develops a fascinating wider survey of the influence of Petrarchism and Neoplatonism on the poetics of early modern queenship, arguing:

Renaissance absolutism adopted a potentially unorthodox model of gender relations, whose inner contradictions become especially apparent in literary representations of an unmarried queen as an object of sublimated desire.

For Berry, the ways Elizabeth’s courtiers elevated her as a symbol for divinity also served to dehumanise and limit her. Where she acknowledges ‘a special debt’ to Greenblatt, Berry also addresses the difficulty for feminist critics of Elizabeth Tudor in associating themselves with a New Historicist scholarship concerned ‘to amplify… the marginalized voices of the ruled,


Levin, *Heart and Stomach*; Levin, “‘We Shall Never Have a Merry World While the Queene Lyveth’: Gender, Monarchy, and the Power of Seditious Words’, in Walker, *Dissing Elizabeth*, pp. 77-95; see also n. 10 above.

exploited, oppressed and excluded’.\textsuperscript{42} Yet as she counters, to study Elizabeth is not simply to study ‘the embodiment of state power’, but ‘to elucidate the curious conjunction of roles which Elizabeth had perforce to play (as oppressor and oppressed), the contradictory positions which she had to assume (centre-stage, and marginalized)’.\textsuperscript{43}

It is this same conjunction of Elizabeth as ‘oppressor and oppressed’, ‘centre-stage, and marginalized’ – or perhaps ‘subject and subjected’ – that underpins Susan Frye’s landmark study, \textit{Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation}. In her preface, Frye writes:

\begin{quote}
Instead of assuming either that Elizabeth was in full control of how she was represented or that she was controlled by the special-interest groups surrounding her, my focus is the very issue of her agency.\textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}

One lesson of Frye’s work is that this contest was not binary, as Montrose sometimes implies. In Frye’s model, queen, subjects and foreign observers ‘competed’ to define the royal image. Although Frye highlights Elizabeth’s posthumous successes, the ‘competition’ was a circular, indefinite process that has not ended with her afterlives. Words like ‘struggle’ and ‘contest’ appear frequently in Frye’s work, as they will here. Crucially, Frye develops both Foucault’s concept of ‘representation’ and Ferdinand de Saussure’s insistence on the arbitrary relationship between ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ to argue that Elizabethan allegory and symbolism are always unstable, the gap between the sign and its referent always at risk of exposure.\textsuperscript{45} When Elizabeth’s subjects described her as Deborah, Judith or Esther, there was always a risk that those signifiers could be detached from their conventional meanings and cloak darker messages; ‘Gloriana’ did not always mean ‘Gloriana’.

\textsuperscript{43} Berry, \textit{Chastity and Power}, p. 7.  
\textsuperscript{44} Frye, \textit{Competition}, p. vii.  
My thesis owes a great debt to this work by Susan Frye and is underpinned by her idea of a ‘competition for representation’. From Helen Hackett’s writings I have also drawn some of my key lessons, particularly on the need to recognise the instability of linguistic meanings in Elizabethan poetics and the flexibility of uses to which symbols in Elizabeth’s iconography could be put. Elizabeth Tudor was, as Hackett writes of the medieval Virgin, ‘an “overdetermined” symbol, a composite figure overlaid with a multiplicity of superimposed meanings because she fulfilled a multiplicity of different desires’. Meanwhile, Carole Levin’s work underpins my understanding of the depth of anxiety and fantasy that shaped the English nation’s response to a female sovereign: I share with her a recognition of the importance of gender in such studies, and an alertness to the ways Elizabeth and her contemporaries attempted to solve the problem by splitting her image into a series of dual masculine and feminine symbols. The feminist work of these literary critics has been matched by the political history of A. N. McLaren, which particularly informs my third chapter.

iii. Definition of key terms

Montrose defines ‘the work of the Elizabethan imaginary’ as ‘the collective corpus of images, tropes and other verbal iconic resources that provided a growing and changing matrix for the varied and sharply contested processes of royal representation.’ I find this term useful, but following Thomas M. Greene, I also use where appropriate the term ‘mundus significans’ to

---

47 Levin, Heart and Stomach, pp. 121-48.
49 Montrose, Subject of Elizabeth, p. 3.
refer to a ‘unique semiotic matrix… a rhetorical and symbolic vocabulary, a storehouse of
signifying capacities potentially available to each member of a given culture.’

Throughout this thesis, I frequently refer to the ‘personae’ associated with Elizabeth. The
concept of the persona was codified in literary studies under New Criticism, a symptom of that
movement’s insistence on the delineation of boundaries between author and voice. As Sam
Fallon notes in his recent *Paper Monsters*, the Latin term refers to an actor’s mask, and thus
‘persona masks identity as a matter of performance: to be a *dramatis persona* is to efface one
identity (by that name) by assuming another as a role’. Yet when I speak of Elizabeth’s
personae, I do not speak exclusively of her own construction of an identity, although texts such
as my first epigraph do fall within this limited category. Rather, I speak about the many literary
and cultural identities constructed for her, in which her own participation varied widely. In this,
I follow Linda Shenk and her work on Elizabeth’s ‘learned persona’. However, I read the
texts in this thesis not for a single ‘learned persona’, but for a multiplicity of learned personae,
jostling up against the plural identities that have co-existed across Elizabeth’s youth, reign and
afterlives. Introducing an influential essay collection, Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman
show a similar interest in imagined identities, framed in historical rather than literary terms,
when they write:

> A historical myth is a widely held interpretation of historical events that is believed,
not for its veracity, but because it explains the past in a way that somehow satisfies
the worldview of those who believe it […] The commonly held image of Elizabeth as

---

53 Shenk, *Learned Queen*. 

27
the Virgin Queen, solitary but glorious defender of the English Church and architect of England’s greatness, is also a myth.\textsuperscript{54}

Doran and Freeman are correct, and this particular myth, which has proved pervasive throughout centuries, has recently had dangerous real-world consequences. In my first chapter, I dissect the role of Roger Ascham in nationalist mythmaking. But there are other dangerous myths of Elizabeth which still have currency, most of them misogynistic. Among them: the myth of a romantic, authentically ‘feminine’ Mary Stuart mistreated by her jealous, ‘unfeminine’ cousin; the myth of the inconstant Elizabeth, driving her counsellors mad with feminine indecision; even the myth of Elizabeth who was too successful to be a woman, encoded in the continuing popularity of the tale of the ‘Bisley Boy’.\textsuperscript{55} For such reasons, and recognising the multiplicity of myths which are not just historical but surrounded Elizabeth during her own lifetime, I refer to ‘the myths of Elizabeth’ rather than ‘the myth’.

Discussions of sex and gender are crucial to this thesis: following Montrose and many other scholars of Elizabethan queenship, I rely on what Gayle Rubin has called a ‘sex/gender system’, which Rubin defines as ‘a set of arrangements by which the biological raw material of human sex and procreation is shaped by human, social intervention’.\textsuperscript{56} We are living through a time of change in our own understanding of sex and gender; nonetheless, this remains a useful broad definition.\textsuperscript{57}


\textsuperscript{57} Although Elizabethans understood sex as immutable and essential, I recognise the work of scholars in the newly emerging field of early modern trans studies who explore the era’s latent fears of individuals who challenged that understanding. See \textit{Early Modern Trans Studies} ed. by Simone Chess, Colby Gordon and Will Fisher (= \textit{Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies}, 19.4 (Fall, 2019)).
There can be a temptation among students of early modern England to simplify its slippery religious landscape by imposing rigid definitions of confessional difference. My approach is influenced by the diachronic evolution of early modern vocabulary. Thus between Elizabeth’s birth in 1533 and the Elizabethan Religious Settlement of 1559, I use the terms ‘reformist’, ‘evangelical’, or occasionally “hot” Protestant’ to indicate those Protestants pushing for the overhaul of the established order, in contrast to ‘Henrician Catholics’ in England and ‘Roman Catholics’, in both England and the continent. After the Elizabethan settlement, I refer to ‘Roman Catholics’ in both England and the continent, but ‘recusant Catholics’ when discussing English people who fit specific criteria around recusancy. On the other side of the aisle, I follow Peter Lake in distinguishing between ‘conformists’, ‘Presbyterians’ and ‘Puritans’.58 Nonetheless, these categories were porous. As John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim have observed, ‘defining Puritanism has become a favourite parlour game for early modern historians’.59 I define Puritanism primarily in terms of its distinctive devotional practices within the home, the anxieties of its adherents about what a ‘godly’ life might look like, and their increasing self-segregation from the ‘ungodly’. I discuss these issues of terminology again in Chapter 6, where I use Blair Worden’s term ‘forward Protestantism’, in the context of the political militancy of the 1580s among the group traditionally termed English ‘Calvinists’.60

iv. Literature review: Elizabeth in learning and letters

In the opening of her otherwise brilliant *Of Chastity and Power*, Berry notes that ‘what chiefly remains of Elizabeth Tudor is her silence’. 61 Whether or not this was true in 1989, it is not true today. The last twenty years have seen a rush to assess Elizabeth’s use of language, driven primarily by the success of a project based at Chicago University. The 2000 edition of her *Collected Works (CW)* was followed in 2003 by a companion volume of original-spelling and foreign-language materials, *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals (ACFLO)*. It was not without critics: Douglas Brewster, with some reason, described it as ‘half scholarly, half popular’. 62 The division into a volume of hyper-modernised spellings and a volume of (selected) diplomatic transcriptions can feel unsatisfactory for the student seeking a readable yet truthful version to cite. The organisation of *ACFLO* into ‘autograph compositions’ and ‘non-autograph, foreign language originals’ means that the chronology of texts is not consistent across both volumes. These editions were followed by two volumes of Elizabeth’s translations, edited by Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel, which further complicate the organisation of material. 63 For example, competing versions of Elizabeth’s December 1545 letter to Katherine Parr appear in *CW, ACFLO,* and *T1.* 64 Nonetheless, without this remarkable scholarly project, a great deal of work on Elizabeth’s literary persona, including this thesis, simply could not have been written. If the collection of materials it attributes to Elizabeth has since been superseded by manuscript scholars such as Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume Coatalen, Jonathan Gibson, Alan Bryson and Mel Evans, that is largely because of the exponential interest it has successfully generated in this very field. 65

61 Berry, *Chastity and Power*, p. 6.
63 *T1; T2.*
64 *CW, ‘Letter 4’, pp. 10-13; ACFLO, pp. 9-12; T1, pp. 212-19.*
65 Carlo M. Bajetta, *Elizabeth I’s Italian Letters* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2017); Guillaume Coatalen and Jonathan Gibson, ‘Six Holograph Letters in French from Queen Elizabeth I to the Duke of Anjou: Texts and Analysis’ in *Elizabeth I’s Foreign Correspondence: Letters, Rhetoric, and Politics*, ed. by Bajetta, Coatalen,
Previously, printed access to Elizabeth’s writings depended on G. B. Harrison’s 1935 edition of letters and Leicester Bradner’s 1964 edition of poetry. Both were limited. Harrison produced an updated collection of letters in 1968, which became the basis for Mary Thomas Crane’s foundational article, ‘Video et Taceo: Elizabeth I and the Rhetoric of Counsel’. The only earlier version of Elizabeth’s translations was Caroline Pemberton’s unreliable collection; by contrast, Noel Kaylor and James Philip’s diplomatic transcription of her Boethius translation came out in 2009 and was eclipsed by the Chicago project. For years, Steven W. May has been a leading figure in the analysis of manuscript sources for Elizabeth’s corpus, particularly her poetry. E. I. Kouri’s 1982 collection of Elizabeth’s letters was not well-received, but Rayne Allinson has recently published an impressive analysis of Elizabeth’s correspondence. Developments in this field continue: shortly after the submission of this thesis, Guillaume Coatalen is due to publish an investigation into the letters by Elizabeth held in St Petersburg.
Armed with these new tools, scholars have looked more closely at what Elizabeth’s words might teach us about her image-making. Ilona Bell has brought insight to our sense of Elizabeth’s poetry. In 2010, Linda Shenk published *Learned Queen*, the culmination of years of studies into Elizabeth’s ‘learned persona’ in poetry and politics. Shenk is primarily interested in Elizabeth as Plato’s ideal of the ‘learned prince’, and on this subject she is indispensable; she also deserves great credit for highlighting the importance of Elizabeth’s identification with Solomon, an image I explore myself in Chapter 5. Shenk’s work, however, focuses on Elizabeth’s later years and locates Elizabeth’s persona as ‘learned queen’ in the context of transnational politics and diplomacy. By contrast, my thesis extensively examines Elizabeth’s reputation for learning in her youth, before her accession. I usually look inwards to domestic contexts, where Shenk usually looks outwards to Europe and the Americas. And where Shenk focuses consistently on the ‘learned prince’, I stress Elizabeth’s multiple ‘learned personae’ and the ‘competition of representation’ constituted by her contrasting identifications with different wisdom figures. I do not always share Shenk’s ‘decodings’ of well-known texts, such as *The Lady of May* or *The Four Foster Children of Desire*. However, her work is invaluable.

---


Our growing access to Elizabeth’s writings has intersected with a growing interest in monarchs’ writing as a genre. Studies are too numerous to list here, although Reading Monarchs Writing, edited by Peter Herman, is an important starting point.75 There are, however, two important consequences I wish to consider at the close of this review.

Firstly, the wider understanding of Elizabeth as a *monarch* who wrote has been an important corrective to an older trend in women’s studies, which anthologised Elizabeth as a *woman* who wrote. The push to anthologise Elizabeth among ‘rediscovered’ female authors was itself part of the broader feminist movement that I review in Chapter 2. Yet even its pioneers understood the complexity of claiming Elizabeth for ‘women’s studies’. In her essay for Betty Travitsky and Adele Seeff’s pivotal collection, Susan Dwyer Amussen included an even-handed exploration of the ‘exceptionality’ of Elizabeth Tudor, of whom initially ‘it is difficult to see the relevance of her experience to other women’s lives’. By comparing her life to that of Alice Balstone, a vagrant who appeared frequently before the courts, Amussen identified one sense in which Elizabeth’s exceptionality was also Balstone’s exceptionality: each was an early modern woman whose life was regularly recorded: ‘As extreme examples, they force us to confront the exceptionality of all the women about whom we have more than fragmentary information.’76 Our study of Elizabeth Tudor, especially her ‘domestic’ life, can therefore shed light on the hidden experiences of other, unrecorded women – even as the fact of these records reaffirms the exceptionality of her experiences.

75 *Reading Monarchs Writing: The Poetry of Henry VIII, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, and James VI/I*, ed. by Peter C. Herman (Tempe, AZ: ACMRS, 2002).
Secondly, this new understanding of Elizabeth as a monarch – powered in part by crucial work on ‘queenship’ in the Palgrave Macmillan *Queenship and Power* series – should set us looking for continuities between the representation of Elizabeth Tudor and that of other queens, notably her sister Mary Tudor. Recent years have seen a concerted effort to rehabilitate Mary by scholars who reject the ‘good queen, bad queen’ opposition which A. N. McLaren rightly traces to Elizabeth’s earliest Protestant apologists and which casts a long shadow in English Protestant nationalism.\(^77\) In my study of Elizabeth’s education and imagery, I have been profoundly influenced by the suggestion of Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock that ‘thinking about the queenship of Mary and Elizabeth has to be less about binaries than continuities’.\(^78\) Feminist criticism should have no patience with the long tradition of pitting women against each other. Where I occasionally demur from Mary’s most enthusiastic scholarly supporters is that I am wary of attempts to discredit Elizabeth’s legacy in order to impose a new binary ranking in Mary’s favour.\(^79\) In the first half of this thesis, I frequently discuss challenges and limitations faced by both women by virtue of their sex. Given that this is a feminist project, I stress shared experience among these royal women, rather than difference.

v. Thesis summary

---


\(^{78}\) ‘Introduction’, in *Tudor Queenship*, pp. 1-7 (p. 2).

\(^{79}\) Judith Richards, on whose excellent work I often rely, nonetheless strongly implies Elizabeth’s culpability in the Wyatt plot and attempts in one instance to mitigate the pain involved in death by burning (under Mary) by comparison with hanging (under Elizabeth). Richards, ‘Examples and Admonitions: What Mary Demonstrated for Elizabeth’, in *Tudor Queenship*, pp. 31-45.
As I have stated, this thesis examines ways in which Elizabeth Tudor was associated with images and personae of ‘wisdom’ and ‘learning’. During her early years, Elizabeth’s reputation for learning served to assert her legitimacy as a member of the Tudor dynasty, but it was also appropriated by Ascham and Bale to claim her as a model for a particular type of Protestant humanism. During her own reign, wisdom imagery became a way for both queen and subjects to negotiate the representation of female authority. My thesis takes a chronological approach, and in part for reasons explained in my Covid Impact Statement, this final version is weighted towards the first half of Elizabeth’s lifetime. I touch, however, on the full span of Elizabeth Tudor’s life from her earliest education to her final years, and even consider the impact of her ‘learned persona’ on her potent afterlives.

I make use of my previous training in Latin and Ancient Greek, and in one case I identify a previously unrecognised Greek source for Elizabeth’s writings: a reference to Isocrates quoted in John Bale’s 1548 publication of *A godly medytacyon*. Nonetheless, this is primarily a work of English literary criticism. My work spans a broad range of genres – including but not limited to translations, neo-Latin verse books, prayers, sermons and public pageants – and in doing so it demands that I pay attention to literary form. Elizabethan concerns encoded within images of wisdom or learning are often tied to the genre in which they are expressed: for example; university verse books worked within a specific academic and classical tradition to frame the queen as a patroness of learning, while pageants at city entries articulated local anxieties. The sheer range of genres tackled has been one of the challenges of this thesis, and I include relevant critical background on the study of specific genres in the appropriate chapters.

One challenge facing any scholar of Elizabeth’s self-representation is the complexity of issues involved in defining a ‘corpus’ of Elizabeth’s own writings. In the first instance, this is a basic
question of assigning provenance to each text: if a manuscript, can we recognise the hand? Is there a signature; is it a holograph or an autograph? If a printed book, what claims for authorship are made in its paratexts and by its printer? The more complex challenge, however, particularly in the case of a crowned sovereign, is to dissect the definitions of such ‘authorship’.

As queen, Elizabeth constructed her correspondence in collaboration with a secretariat.\textsuperscript{80} What we understand as a single ‘letter’ might go through many drafts and copies for different purposes, with the involvement of many hands, literal and figurative. In the case of her speeches, Mueller, Marcus and Rose make a persuasive case that Elizabeth often ‘spoke either extemporaneously or from memory, and only wrote the speech down afterward or had it transcribed from her dictation’. Furthermore, ‘texts of speeches bearing the mark of Elizabeth’s hand sometimes circulated as official versions that had been reshaped for the purpose of dissemination to a broader public’.\textsuperscript{81} Meanwhile, when Elizabeth appeared in public her remarks were often transcribed in competing versions by observers whose recollections varied. When other texts were published under her name, the extent to which they were authorised, and by whom, is often unclear. My own expertise does not lie in the transmission of texts nor have I always had access to original manuscripts: in navigating issues of textual authenticity and authorship I have therefore relied significantly on work by relevant scholars. However, at all stages I have tried to address these questions with care and on the introduction of specific texts I include a discussion of attribution issues wherever relevant.

Throughout this thesis, I am interested in mythmaking and its motivations. In Chapter 1, I have therefore chosen to assess the claims of one of the most successful mythmakers of Elizabeth

\textsuperscript{80} Allinson, Monarchy of Letters, esp. pp. 17-35.
Tudor’s lifetime, her one-time tutor Roger Ascham. Ascham’s legend of Elizabeth’s education was not only key to establishing her early ‘learned persona’, but underpinned a Protestant nationalist mythmaking that has deep consequences today. Nonetheless, Ascham’s legend was not built on sand: Elizabeth did receive an exceptional education and she put it to good use. Thus in Chapter 2, I explore the evidence for her education on its own terms, before revisiting the religious politics of John Bale’s publication of *A godly medytacyon*. In Chapter 3, I summarise the gendered challenges facing Elizabeth on her accession, and I introduce more fully the Platonic ideal of the philosopher-king, or the ‘learned prince’. I also introduce the motif of Deborah as a model for female wisdom, and tackle two texts which have been heavily studied by previous scholars. I read John Aylmer’s *An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subjects* for ways its author uses Elizabeth’s ‘learned persona’ to soothe anxieties about female rule, and Richard Mulcaster’s account of Elizabeth’s pre-coronation procession for its depiction of a young queen learning to receive counsel. The political issues summarised in this chapter are also at stake in Chapter 4, but there I generally tackle materials that have been much less studied. Drawing on school verse books, the 1561-62 Inner Temple Entertainments and Elizabeth’s visits to the universities, I explore ways the figure of Minerva could be used to praise Elizabeth as a wise and peaceful queen, but could simultaneously be used to urge her to accept counsel, to extend financial patronage, or even to marry. In Chapter 5, I assess Elizabeth’s relationship with another traditional icon of wisdom, the biblical King Solomon. Like Minerva, Solomon was an unstable symbol with multiple usages, but the biblical story of Solomon’s meeting with the Queen of Sheba had the specific advantage of allowing Elizabeth’s male and female associations to be split. In Chapter 6, I return to the subject of Minerva, offering a close reading of Thomas Blenerhasset’s *The revelation of the true Minerva*. Blenerhasset’s work exemplifies the efforts of ‘forward Protestants’ to argue for Elizabeth’s providential role as militant propagator of the Gospel. The shift in emphasis between Minerva...
as a guarantor of peace, as we see frequently in Chapter 4, to an unabashedly militant goddess in Chapter 6, exemplifies not only a chronological shift in the tone of English panegyric during these decades, but also the versatility of many of the symbols ostensibly associated with ‘wisdom’ traditions in this period. By praising Elizabeth as an icon of wisdom, her subjects were all too often expressing instead their anxieties about religion, gender, and diplomacy.

Elizabeth’s contemporaries constructed ideas of queenship in media as varied as – but not limited to – their private correspondence; legal and medical records of treasons and fantasies; gossip and dream reports; broadside ballads and popular woodcuts; theological pamphlets; popular ritual and even the private glosses of personal Bibles and Scriptures. Royal power and individual interest competed more directly to shape the diplomatic reports that left London; the courtly poetry that circulated in small print circles and manuscript coteries; the sacred music and liturgy of the era; the academic drama and high jinks of the Inns of Court; popular drama; public sermons; bills and speeches issuing from the queen’s parliaments. At the hard end of power, royal authority attempted to assert direct control over the images used on coins and seals; prayerbook texts and their images; diplomatic correspondence; official portraiture and the more informal circulation of miniatures to favourites; pageants and progresses, which we partially trace through expenditure receipts; even the ritual exchange of courtly gifts and the preponderance of jewelled images and decorative objects. At the New Year of January 1574/5, for example, Charles Howard, Baron of Effingham gave his queen ‘a Jeull of golde being a Tablet Conteyning a woman called Sapient Victrix’, which was probably a reference to Juvenal's Satire 13, l. 20: ‘victrix fortunæ sapientia’, or ‘wisdom conquers fortune’.82

Although I cannot examine all such objects, the scope of this thesis is broad. That breadth reflects my sense of the sheer saturation of the Elizabethan *mundus significans* with images of the queen, and the importance of understanding her cultural impact in the round. Nevertheless, my focus is the imagery of wisdom and learning. I argue that although Elizabeth’s ‘learned persona’ became a cornerstone of her royal authority, in her youth it also limited her, allowing her to be defined by the religio-political agenda of older men. In later years, through the use of symbols like Minerva, Solomon, and the philosopher-king, the imagery of ‘wisdom’ became a key arena for the competition to represent Elizabeth’s learned authority – and an arena in which she was often successful.
Chapter 1: Roger Ascham and the Learned Lady

i. Introduction

In this thesis, I examine why and how Elizabeth Tudor was associated in her lifetime with images of wisdom and ideals of learning, and I ask who benefited at each turn.

In this first chapter, I discuss the role of Roger Ascham in framing Elizabeth’s learned persona and its posterity. Even in her own lifetime, Ascham’s mythmaking was fundamental to Elizabeth’s intellectual reputation, and he casts a long shadow over the rest of this thesis. His story must therefore be dissected first. Much of this chapter is concerned with deconstructing legends – and to deconstruct a historical legend, it is useful to look backwards at the story we have been told, as a first step in uncovering truths beneath.

Ascham, the humanist pedagogue who authored *The scholemaster* and *Toxophilus*, spent just two years formally employed as a tutor to the adolescent Elizabeth.\(^1\) He was not her only tutor.\(^2\) Yet as I shall outline here, he was a fastidious craftsman of his own legend. Ascham was central in the construction of a learned persona for the young Elizabeth: a model of the new, evangelical, Greek-based learning and a modest, diligent schoolgirl, obedient to male instruction. The myths of Elizabeth have meant many things to many people, but the first purpose of this mythic persona was to serve as an advertisement for Roger Ascham.

---

\(^{1}\) On definitions of ‘humanism’, see the Introduction, n. 4, esp. Crane, *Framing Authority*, p. 6.

\(^{2}\) Elizabeth’s other tutors are the subject of Chapter 2, section iv.
In this endeavour, Ascham was more successful posthumously than in his lifetime. He secured for himself an outsized presence in the afterlife of his most famous pupil. Recently, he has even been reimagined as the hero of a series of historical fantasies by the best-selling Australian author Matthew Reilly: a swashbuckling tutor who saves ‘Princess Elizabeth’ from the schemes of foes such as her sister Mary. Appropriately for the author of *Toxophilus*, he wields a bow. A key twist in Ascham’s legacy came in the nineteenth century and served a Victorian, imperial purpose. In 1865, John Allen Giles published the first volume of his collection of texts relating to Ascham, on which modern academic studies of Ascham still rely. The collection included all Ascham’s available letters and published writings, along with reminiscences and other materials from his contemporaries. This edition would be fundamental to modern perceptions of Ascham, and a central conduit of the British cultural memory of a precocious and learned young Elizabeth Tudor.

Two years earlier, the Danish Princess Alexandra had arrived in England to marry the Prince of Wales, after a Europe-wide search for a Protestant bride. Giles dedicated his edition to her:

Madam,
The public joy with which your Royal Highness’s coming among us was greeted by all our people, was felt most thoroughly by myself; and the pleasure which you visibly derived from it has given all a proof that you are, as much as our hearts can wish, a truly English Princess, as our hope is that you will hereafter become a truly English Queen. Permit me to lay at your feet the works of that great scholar, Roger ASCHAM, tutor to her whose glory, as an English Queen, has never been equalled until the present day, when all are ready to acknowledge that the crown of Elizabeth has gained fresh honour from encircling the brow of Victoria.7

---


6 Giles shared Ascham’s interest in education, serving as headmaster at Camberwell Collegiate School from 1834 to 1836, then at City of London School from 1836 to 1840. See *The Diary and Memories of John Allen Giles*, ed. by David Bromwich (Taunton: Somerset Record Society, 2000).

Giles’ dedication illustrates not only the longevity of the Ascham–Elizabeth legend, but the ease with which it still lent itself to English nationalist mythmaking. Alexandra’s arrival in 1863 had engendered anxieties about the lack of English blood in the royal family, an anxiety that would be exacerbated eleven years later by the arrival of Maria Alexandrovna of Russia to marry Victoria’s second son. Giles suggests that Englishness is something that can be learned, through both engagement with the English public and the study of English Protestant humanism at its best. Part of Alexandra’s value as a bride in 1863 was as a Protestant: a best-selling souvenir pamphlet published on her arrival included a five-page digression on the heroism of early modern Danish kings in promoting the ‘Northern Reformation’. The title epigraph read ‘the name of Anglo-Saxon is all other names above’. No wonder Giles saw value in claiming Ascham, the ultimate Anglo-Saxon Protestant educator, as the ideal guide to build on perceived Anglo-Danish commonalities and complete Alexandra’s assimilation.

Giles goes on to compare Alexandra, a future queen consort, with two very different queens regnant: Elizabeth and Victoria. His preface is thus a useful introduction, in this thesis to which the idea of a ‘queen’ will be central, to the slippery uses of that word. As Charles Beem observes, ‘the gendered nature of the English language has compelled us to call the ruling women of English history queens’ and thus:

In the historiography of European kingship, regnant queenship has not usually been considered a form of kingship, and is mostly examined right alongside other forms of queenship and other female power: queens consort, female regents, dowager queens, and other royal women able to exercise effective political power.

---

In fact, Alexandra had little in common with Elizabeth, who herself had little in common with Victoria. But they were all ‘queens’, centred in ambivalent networks of instruction and approval. In offering to ‘lay at your feet’ a work of edifying English pedagogy, Giles replicated in 1865 a pose often assumed by Ascham himself in relation to Elizabeth in the 1560s: performatively servile, yet master of the schoolroom. In promoting the example of Elizabeth as a queen who receptively read the books she was given, Giles was also appropriating a representational trope that, as we shall see, recurred throughout the early years of Elizabeth’s reign. By Elizabeth’s later years, however, she was regularly reversing this dynamic, expertly deploying her own learned persona to present herself as an educator and instructor. Her Latin castigation of the Polish Ambassador in 1597 for his failure to read ‘libros principium’ (‘the books of princes’) has become infamous.\(^\text{11}\)

It is not entirely surprising to find Ascham’s legacy being used to bolster Victorian nationalist mythmaking. In his own lifetime, Ascham fostered a legend for Elizabeth as a Protestant intellectual which was, as Europe became ever more polarised over religion, nakedly partisan. As Alexander Samson has recently suggested, Ascham was ‘a potentially important conduit for the Germanic version of the Black Legend’ given his Report and discourse of the affairs and state of Germany (written 1552-3), which painted an image of Spanish imperial tyranny and Catholic cruelty.\(^\text{12}\) His disdain for Italy has become notorious.\(^\text{13}\) For Ascham, Elizabeth and her literacy were not only vehicles for his self-promotion but weapons to be marshalled against papal hegemony – even if, ever concerned to find employment, he had no problem serving as Mary Tudor’s Latin Secretary. This is perhaps why his Report and discourse was published only posthumously, in 1570.

\(^{11}\) ACFLO, ‘Speech 22’, p. 168; CW, p. 333.
\(^{12}\) Samson, Mary and Philip, p. 62.
\(^{13}\) Melanie Ord, ‘Classical and Contemporary Italy in Roger Ascham’s The Scholemaster (1570)’, RS, 16 (2002), 202-16.
Ascham was not alone in crafting this evangelical learned persona for the young Elizabeth. In 1548, the year Ascham began formally tutoring Elizabeth, the agitator John Bale published an English prose translation of a French work of devotional verse. The French poem was authored by the sister of the king of France, Marguerite d’Angoulême, known from 1525, after her second marriage, as Marguerite de Navarre. The English translation was attributed to the sister of the king of England, Elizabeth Tudor. The original text was a meditation on the innate sinfulness of man, first published in 1531 as *Le Miroir de l’ame pecherresse, auquel elle recongnoist ses faultes et pechez, aussi les graces et benefices a elle faictz par Jesuchrist son espoux* (‘The mirror of a sinful soul, wherein she recognises her faults and sins, as well as the graces and gifts made to her by Jesus Christ her spouse’).  

Bale, ventriloquising Elizabeth, published his English version as *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle, concerninge a love towards God and hys Christe, compyled in frenche by lady Margarete queene of Naverre, and aptely translated into Englysh by the ryght vertuouse lady Elyzabeth doughter to our late soverayne Kynge Henri the. viii.* Although Bale was a radical evangelical, his title minimises Marguerite’s emphasis on a sinner’s need for self-surveillance and the redeeming power of grace. Instead, Bale’s title relies upon the pedigree provided by two royal and learned women.

Bale’s characterisation of Elizabeth here, reinforced by references to her in the 1559 edition of his catalogue of English writers, was as important as Ascham’s in the contest to shape Elizabeth’s reputation for erudition. It was Bale who put Elizabeth on the map as a translator.

---


16 J. Christopher Warner, ‘Elizabeth I, Savior of Books: John Bale's Preface to the *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytaniae ... catalogus* (1559)’, in *John Foxe and his World*, ed. by Christopher Highley and John N. King (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 91-101; see also section v below.
As Mueller and Scodel acknowledge in their edition of her translations, ‘the learned pious persona’ that Elizabeth acquired through her youthful translations was ‘her first public identity, and an enduring one’. In fact, Bale’s dedication to Elizabeth marked the first description I have found in English print of a woman being named as a ‘learned lady’. Models of female erudition were well established, notably Margaret Roper, whose father Thomas More promoted her reputation and who was seemingly the model for Magdalia in Erasmus’ 1524 colloquy Antronius, Magdalia (later reprinted as Abbatis et eruditae). When Roper published her anonymous translation of Erasmus’ Precatio dominica, the publisher Richard Hyde hinted heavily at her identity in a dedicatory epistle in which he described the author as ‘a yong vertuous and well lerned gentylwoman of.xix. yere of age’. But a gentlewoman was not a lady. Over twenty years after Roper’s translation of Erasmus, Elizabeth was the first to be identified as a ‘learned lady’ in print. In his own dedicatory epistle, in a status-adjusted echo of Hyde’s address to Roper, Bale addressed Elizabeth as a ‘most vertuous and lerned lady’. (She is also, in his opening, ‘the ryght vertuouse and christenly lerned yonge lady Elizabeth’.) In future decades, this term would be increasingly applied to Protestant women as a term of strategic praise, among them Jane Grey (posthumously), Anne Bacon and Mary Sidney Herbert.

---

18 I have made extensive searches of Early English Books Online and consulted the many anthologies and studies of early English writers which are itemised in Chapter 2 below.
20 Desiderius Erasmus, A devoute treatise upon the Pater noster (London, 1526), A17.
21 A godly medytacyon, A6v.
22 A godly medytacyon, A2r.
Ascham and Bale were two of the first men to participate in the contested representation of Elizabeth’s learned persona, and both sought to benefit. They were not the only agents to shape this image: even in her childhood, Elizabeth herself corresponded with her royal father, stepmother and brother in carefully polished displays of polyglot erudition. Yet it is Ascham whose name has become synonymous with Elizabeth’s education. As a teacher whose most famous publication is a pedagogic manual, he is the natural point of entry for a thesis which examines the ways in which his pupil navigated her society’s ideas about education and intellect.

I return to John Bale in Chapter 2, where I also discuss Elizabeth’s broader work as a translator, and the external evidence for the quality of her education. But for nearly four hundred and fifty years, the story of Elizabeth Tudor’s ‘learning’ has been the story of Roger Ascham.

ii. Ascham’s posthumous reputation

Ascham served as Elizabeth’s tutor from January 1548 to late January 1550, and appears to have left under a cloud.²⁴ He obtained the post of Latin Secretary in the last days of Edward VI, confirmed his appointment under Mary and held it under Elizabeth, who did not promote him or increase his stipend.²⁵ He would claim in The scholemaster that the two spent considerable time together after her accession, improving her Latin and Greek.²⁶ Modern scholarship on Ascham has been hampered by the fact that Giles’ collection remains the last comprehensive edition of his works. A less reliable edition by William Aldis Wright in 1904

consists of English-language works only. Of Ascham’s two significant publications in English, we only have one modern critical edition each: Peter E. Medine’s 2002 edition of *Toxophilus* and Lawrence V. Ryan’s 1967 edition of *The scholemaster*. Ryan is also Ascham’s only modern biographer. Giles remains our best source for Ascham’s extensive correspondence, although he did not translate from the Latin in which most were written. As Lucy Nicholas notes, Giles published only twenty-seven letters between Ascham and his favourite correspondent, the Strasbourg-based reformer Johannes Sturm, even though we know there were many more. A recent collection of essays edited by Nicholas and Ceri Law constitutes the most complete summation of current thinking on Ascham. Other work on Ascham is usually found within overviews of mid-Tudor humanist and educational thought. In his study of humanist pedagogy, Alan Stewart has provided a useful analysis of Ascham’s understanding of male–male friendships. Stewart parses the ways Ascham framed his literary relationships in the context of Cicero’s *De Amicitia* and locates Ascham’s anxieties about such relationships in the context of the perennially insecure status of the humanist tutor, intellectually – and at times physically – intimate with his charges, yet economically dependent on employment and patronage from the noble families over whose children he was charged with maintaining discipline.

---

30 Nicholas and Law, *Roger Ascham and His Sixteenth-Century World*.
Ascham’s posthumous association with Elizabeth owes much to his contemporary Edward Grant, who in 1576 published Ascham’s letters with a prefatory ‘oration’ of remembrance. Grant, who was Dean of Westminster School, addressed his oration to Elizabeth as the generous (re)foundress of the school (‘liberalissimae fundatrici’) and was careful to position himself, the queen and Ascham (‘præceptoris olim tui’ – ‘once your tutor’) in a shared educational network.33 Reassuring her of his pupils’ prayers, Grant ends his dedicatory letter by reminding Elizabeth that he is the governor of ‘her’ school at Westminster (‘scholæ tuæ Westmonasteriensis moderator’).34 The publication included a Latin elegy by the school’s second master, William Camden, who avowed that Minerva would have rather been born from Ascham’s head than Jove’s.35 To Grant we owe the story that Elizabeth mourned Ascham, allegedly declaring that ‘se malle decem librarum millia in mare projecisse, quam suum ASCHAMUM amisisse’ (‘she would rather hurl £10,000 into the sea, than lose her Ascham’).36 Ascham educated the future queen, Grant has it, ‘ad totius reipublicae maximam utilitatem’ (‘as a great service to the whole commonwealth’) – a conventionally humanist summation of the value of princely education.37

Alongside Camden’s tribute, this volume includes a number of prefatory neo-Latin poems largely ignored by modern scholars. These include a lengthy poem in praise of Elizabeth’s learning, which Grant claims was authored by Ascham himself a few days before his death – a story that seems too good to be true. These verses are notable for celebrating female rule as inclined to peace:

33 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 300 (‘Grant’s Oration’).
34 Diseritissimi viri Rogeri Aschami, ed. by E[ward] G[rant] (London, 1576), A7”.
36 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 342 (‘Grant’s Oration’).
37 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 301 (‘Grant’s Oration’).
Why do fools marvel at the sceptres of male sovereigns?
Why should the French continue to boast of their French agreements?
Other peoples have a male Mars for their king, but you, a woman, may rule us as a Pallas, and long may you rule us, learned Minerva.
If England should produce many women like you, why should England after this anxiously hunt with a prayer for male sceptres? For where a man rules, there violence rules also.

I will return to this poem in Chapter 4, during my study of Elizabeth’s representation as Minerva in educational contexts. In the current context, it is further evidence that Grant’s volume was partially a project to fix Ascham in the public consciousness in association with their ‘docta’ sovereign. In figuring Minerva as a goddess of both learning and peace (in contrast to her traditional martial associations), the poem also reiterates the relationship between princely education and the welfare of the commonwealth. A few lines previously, this poem recalls Ascham’s role as Elizabeth’s teacher, but acknowledges that the two have swapped roles. As queen and supreme governor, Elizabeth is now ‘doctrinae vera Christi, sanctaeque magistra / vitae’ (‘the teacher of God’s true doctrine, and of how to live a holy life’). Grant or Camden may have been its true author – or perhaps William Malym, the headmaster of St Paul’s School, a friend of Grant and the man behind many of the dedications to Elizabeth as Minerva that I discuss in Chapter 4.39 The initial poem, which is unsigned but prefaces Grant’s dedicatory letter to the queen, was likely written by Grant himself and confirms his project of framing Elizabeth’s own learning as an affirmation of the volume’s worth. Rather than be

concerned with the ‘indoctos’ (‘uneducated’) common crowds, the publisher of this book aims
only at pleasing the queen. Her judgement has value:

Ille solet graté doctos admittere libros,
Ille solet cupide volvere saepe libros.\footnote{Disertissimi, A2.}

She is accustomed to receive the books of the learned graciously,
She is accustomed to reflect on books eagerly and often.

As in the poem attributed to Ascham, Elizabeth has graduated from pupil to teacher: she will
sit in judgement on the books offered her as the ‘tutela Britannis’ – ‘tutela’ meaning guardian,
with a suggestion of teacher or guide. That she has reached such a summit of learned authority
is thanks to Ascham.

Yet Grant’s oration is clearly an unreliable text. Written with the support of Ascham’s family,
who provided access to his letters, it was hardly impartial. Sam Kennerley describes it as having
two key objects: ‘to commemorate Ascham as a Ciceronian stylist and to boost the career
chances of Ascham’s son Giles’, who was Grant’s pupil at Westminster.\footnote{Sam Kennerley, ‘Patristic Scholarship and Ascham’s “Troubled Years”’, in Roger Ascham and His Sixteenth-Century World, pp. 61-81 (p. 72).} Cecil was paying
Giles’ fees, and Grant may have been keen to ensure this arrangement continued.\footnote{Stewart, Close Readers, p. 112.} Giles would
bombard Cecil in the 1580s with demands for a pension allegedly promised to his father and
for a fellowship at Cambridge.\footnote{Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 358-65 (‘Seven letters of Giles Ascham’).} Meanwhile, Grant’s affirmation of Elizabeth’s benevolence
to scholars is itself a plea for continued patronage of his own work at Westminster, where she
had renewed the school’s charter and endowed forty ‘Queen’s Scholars’ in 1560 – although
Cecil and his wife Mildred were the driving force.\footnote{Herendeen, Camden, p. 144; John Carleton, Westminster School: A History (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1965), pp. 2-7.} This is a textbook case of the panegyric
form that Francis Bacon would later call laudando praecipere: ‘when by telling men what they

\footnote{40 Disertissimi, A2.}
\footnote{41 Sam Kennerley, ‘Patristic Scholarship and Ascham’s “Troubled Years”’, in Roger Ascham and His Sixteenth-Century World, pp. 61-81 (p. 72).}
\footnote{42 Stewart, Close Readers, p. 112.}
\footnote{43 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 358-65 (‘Seven letters of Giles Ascham’).}
are, they represent to them, what they should be’. In praising Elizabeth as patroness of England’s schools, Grant expressed his expectations.

Grant’s requests, however, were not in the first instance for himself. He firmly insinuated that the Ascham family had been insufficiently remunerated for Ascham’s service. Grant enthuses for several paragraphs on Ascham’s refusal to ask of Elizabeth the pensions she would surely have granted him if only, supposedly, he had been as demanding as more avaricious courtiers. In one characteristic snippet, Grant has a courtier asking Ascham:

Quid non regiam majestatem rogatibus sollicitas? Si careas, peccatum est in te, qui petere recusas, non in tua liberalissima domina, quæ largiri tibi complurima cupit.46

Why don’t you solicit Her Royal Majesty with petitions? If you are in want, the fault is yours for not asking, not in your most bountiful mistress, who desires to bestow much upon you.

There is a strong economic imperative discernible in Grant’s praise for the quality of the queen’s education, and his assertion that a debt for it has gone unpaid. But Grant’s economy with the truth becomes visible when he avows that Ascham left Elizabeth’s service in 1550 of his own volition, out of scholarly determination to pick up his own studies at Cambridge, ‘domina sua ELIZABETHA invitissima’ (‘when his mistress Elizabeth was most unwilling’) and ‘non satis consideratus’ (‘not having sufficiently considered’) the question of her own feelings.47 Samuel Johnson, in his own biographical sketch of Ascham, would repeat this claim almost verbatim, adding that Ascham must have been ‘disgusted either at her, or her domesticks’.48 In fact, we know from Ascham’s letters that he left after falling out of favour

46 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 339 (‘Grant’s Oration’).
47 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 324 (‘Grant’s Oration’).
with her guardians, referring to the affair as his ‘disastrous shipwreck’. It is not clear to what extent this ‘shipwreck’ intersected with the drama of Thomas Seymour’s execution in March 1549 and the concerns it evinced about Elizabeth’s chastity. Ryan insists this ‘seems to have been a personal rather than a state matter. Certainly it occurred too late to have been connected directly with the fall of Thomas Seymour’.

But it seems impossible that the scandal swirling around the household of a young woman would not have affected the standing of her tutor, especially as his close friends, John Astley and Anthony Denny, were at its centre. And while Ryan asserts that January 1550 was ‘too late’ to see consequences for a scandal in spring 1549, Alan Stewart observes that Ascham left no extant letters between July 1548 and January 1550. In a series of letters that did follow his departure from Elizabeth’s household, Ascham was anxious to repair apparent damage to his relationship with his mentor John Cheke, complaining:

\[ tantopere certi homines laborarent ut in meo maxime alieno difficilique tempore tue etiam de me benevolentiae cursum impedirent. \]

Certain men are working extremely hard during this time of greatest strangeness and difficulty for me to block the course of your kindness to me.

Cheke, who had recommended Ascham for the post, had himself been questioned during the inquiry into Elizabeth’s household. He may have expressed regret or disappointment in his protégé for dragging him into the scandal. Without the discovery of further correspondence, this must remain conjecture. But looking ahead to 1576, it is clear some serious rewriting of history was undertaken to erase the shadow of scandal from the story of the future queen’s adolescence. Ascham, as we shall see below, would remain sensitive to concerns around chastity in the narrative he presented of his pupil’s education.

---

49 Ryan, *Ascham*, p. 112.
51 Stewart, *Close Readers*, p. 130.
iii. Ascham’s *The scholemaster*

Ascham’s own claims about Elizabeth’s education are found in two formats. *The scholemaster* was published through the efforts of Ascham’s widow in 1570, after his death on 30 December 1568. Margaret Ascham addressed her dedicatory letter not to the queen but to her husband’s patron William Cecil, although a later manuscript copy exists of a dedicatory letter to Elizabeth purportedly written by Ascham himself in 1566.53 In the 1550s and 1560s, Ascham had also written a series of letters to his friend Johannes Sturm, in which he boasted of his pupil. I will focus on *The scholemaster* here and on the letters in the following section.

*The scholemaster* presents itself as a treatise on pedagogy, although as Greene has written, it yields richer readings if understood as ‘not about pedagogy but about literature’.54 Even Ascham’s sympathetic biographer summarises the treatise as ‘nothing wholly original and […] largely commonplaces of humanistic ethical and educational theory’, while writing of his subject that ‘in no respect was he a brilliant or original thinker or a literary innovator’.55 As a work ‘concerned above all with imitation’, *The scholemaster* synthesises a range of ideas already emerging from the pan-European humanist concern with linguistic relationships.56 Liz Oakley-Brown observes that *The scholemaster* arrived just when English pedagogues were particularly concerned to ‘categorise and limit’ the boundaries of different textual practices.57 For pedagogues like Ascham, the boundaries between different textual practices were policed

53 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Aii; BL Add. MS 33271, 36r-37v.
in the school room, made manifest in the different exercises the student could be asked to perform upon a single ‘original’ text. Thus as one technique for stretching a pupil’s fluency, Ascham recommended the sequence ‘*proprium, translatum, synonyma, diversa, contrarium, phrases*’. But the chief lesson Ascham gave his pupils was in *imitatio*: ‘all language, bothe learned and mother tonges, be gotten, and gotten onelie by Imitation’.

Ascham’s specific praise of *imitatio* as a technique for teaching classical languages – in which the pupil imitates by turns the different styles of specific writers – was intrinsically bound to his prescription that pupils imitate the interior and intellectual lives of renowned classical authors. The paragon was, of course, Cicero. Of the imitative practice he aspired to teach his pupils, Ascham wrote to Sturm:

> Whoever has been not only a diligent observer, but even one skilled in learning, prudent in judgment, of what path Cicero himself followed, and what steps Cicero himself ascended, when he followed, neared, and preceded the Greeks; and whoever notices wisely in which passages and by what method our model left the Greeks themselves behind, frequently equal, most often superior to them; he, and only he, would arrive safely and by a right road to the imitation of Cicero himself. For who perceives intelligently how Cicero followed others will himself see most happily by far the manner in which Cicero is to be followed.

Micha Lazarus usefully parses this passage thus: ‘to write like Cicero we must learn to imitate not Cicero’s writing, but Cicero’s own practices of reading’. Colin Burrow terms this ‘Sturmian meta-imitation, which imitates Cicero’s modes of imitation rather than Cicero’s language or phraseology’.

---

62 Burrow, Imitating Authors, p. 225.
Ascham peppers *The scholemaster* with references to his intellectual intimacy with the queen. In the preface, he locates the book’s origin in a conversation with his deceased patron Richard Sackville, making the point that Sackville hired him as a tutor for his grandson after ‘finding me in hir Majesties privy-chamber’ one evening, where Ascham and Elizabeth had retired to ‘red than [then] together in the Greke tonge’. Sackville is depicted dining with Ascham earlier that evening, along with other associates of the group Winthrop S. Hudson has termed ‘the Cambridge Connection’ or ‘the Athenians’. Ascham presents this as the wider humanist *familia* he shares with his royal pupil, but only he is invited upstairs to the inner circle. Sackville, entering the privy chamber and immediately removing himself with Ascham ‘by the hand, and carryng me to a window’, is admitted only to the edge of this inner ring. Graciously entertaining his conversation for a short while, Ascham leaves him when ‘sodenly […] called to come to the Queene’.

Stewart argues that this passage situates Ascham’s *amicitia* with his male companions as the driving force of the text, to which Elizabeth’s demands on Ascham are merely ‘an interruption and hindrance to the forging of a male social contract’. While this raises useful perspectives – Stewart makes a particularly apt observation that Ascham’s description of William Cecil as a dining partner exemplifies ‘the pretended levelling powers of humanism’ – we should not ignore Ascham’s insistence on his privileged relationship with the queen, which provides economic leverage in his transaction with Sackville. Sackville offers Ascham employment specifically because ‘I know verie well my self, that you did teach the Queene’. Ascham commodifies Elizabeth, but his work depends on her presence rather than being displaced by it. Sackville, the wealthy aristocrat, offers employment in return for a touch

63 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Biii.
65 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Biii.
68 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Bii'.

55
of an impoverished tutor’s royal stardust, a transaction mediated and guaranteed by what Lorna Hutson has called the ‘book-as-gift’, which Ascham will ostensibly produce as a brochure of services for the new pupil. 69 This is the text which will become The scholemaster. Through his proximity to the queen, Ascham is determined to rework economic reality and show himself as the condescending party.

Nonetheless, in The scholemaster Ascham only gives two detailed descriptions of the nature of Elizabeth’s ‘learnyng’. In what has become a much-cited passage, he admonishes contemporary young men:

> It is your shame, (I speake to you all, you yong Gentlemen of England) that one mayd should go beyond you all, in excellencie of learnyng, and knowledge of divers tonges. Pointe forth six of the best given Gentlemen of this Court, and all they together, shew not so much good will, spend not so much tyme, bestow not so many houres, dayly orderly, & constantly, for the increase of learning & knowledge, as doth the Queenes Majestie her selfe. Yea I beleve, that beside her perfit readiness, in Latin, Italian, French, & Spanish, she readeth here now at Windsore more Greeke every day, than some Prebendarie of this Chirch doth read Latin in a whole weeke. And that which is most praise worthie of all, within the walles of her privie chamber, she hath obtayned that excellencie of learnyng, to understand, speake, & write, both wittely with head, and faire with hand, as scarce one or two rare wittes in both the Universities have in many yeares reached unto. Amongst all the benefites yt God hath blessed me with all, next the knowledge of Christes true Religion, I counte this the greatest, that it pleased God to call me, to be one poore minister in setting forward these excellent giftes of learnyng in this most excellent Prince. 70

Later, he returns to the same theme:

> our most noble Queene Elizabeth, who never toke yet, Greeke nor Latin Grammer in her hand, after the first declining of a nowne and a verbe, but onely by this double translating of Demosthenes and Isocrates dailie without missing everie forenone, and likewise som part of Tullie every afternone, for the space of a yeare or two, hath attayned to soch a perfite understanding in both the tonges, and to soch a readie utterance of the latin, and that wyth soch a judgement, as they be fewe in nomber in both the universities, or els where in England, that be, in both tonges, comparable with her Majestie. 71

70 Ascham, Scholemaster, Hi’.
71 Ascham, Scholemaster, Liii’.
There were evident incentives for Ascham to prepare such a description, and for his widow to publish it. Nevertheless, it is worth examining the specific claims it makes for Elizabeth. The basis of Elizabeth’s education is reported to be languages, both ancient and modern. There is no mention of mathematics, which Ascham despised as a basis for education: when in 1564 Robert Dudley developed an interest in classical mathematics, Ascham would write, ‘I think you did yourself injury in changing Tully’s wisdom with Euclid’s pricks and lines’. There is no evidence Elizabeth ever studied abstract mathematics, although both she and her sister Mary were trained in the numeracy required to manage large estates. But Ascham’s claim that Elizabeth surpassed the young men of her court in modern languages is radical, as elite young men could travel abroad for immersive linguistic exchanges, which she could not. Ascham himself was notoriously anxious about the dangers posed to English youth by foreign travel, especially to Italy. Famously, Elizabeth was an advertisement for ‘this double translating’, on which The scholemaster expounds throughout. Ascham’s technique allegedly grounded her so well that Elizabeth had no need to reference grammar books, albeit after learning the basics of ‘declining of a nowne and a verbe’. This is a performance of linguistic translatio, paraphrasis, imitatio at its most fluent.

---

72 Ryan, *Ascham*, p. 223. For Ascham, the lowest animals rely on the laws of mathematics, but ‘that learning which furnisbeth the mind with judgment, the tongue with utterance, is not parted from man to any other living thing, except only to God himself’. Discussed in Mordechai Feingold, ‘Reading Mathematics in the English Collegiate-Humanist Universities’, in *Reading Mathematics in Early Modern Europe: Studies in the Production, Collection and Use of Mathematical Books*, ed. by Philip Beeley, Yelda Nasifoglu and Benjamin Wardaugh (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020), Chapter 5. Google ebook.

73 Jeri L. McIntosh, *From Heads of Household to Heads of State: The Preaccession Households of Mary and Elizabeth Tudor, 1516-1558* (New York, NY: Columbia UP, 2008); Aysha Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens? Representing the Schooling of Mary I and Elizabeth I’, in *Tudor Queenship*, pp. 127-44 (pp. 131-2); Bryson and Evans, ‘Seven Rediscovered Letters of Princess Elizabeth Tudor’.


But in promoting learning without ‘grammars’, Ascham was also advocating his opposition to the grammar school system, and in particular its use of corporal punishment. As a female pupil, and royal at that, Elizabeth could not be flogged, and therefore sat outside disciplinary relations enforced in standard educational settings – and indeed, the intimate and initiatory practices which Stewart has shrewdly identified as arising in early modern corporal discipline. Like Jane Grey, whom Ascham would claim loved her lessons because they were the only location she could escape physical torment in her household, Elizabeth seems a suitable advertisement for the joys of learning without the birch. Sackville, we are told, came to Ascham because he was one of the few masters who would not seek to flog his grandson. As a female pupil, however, Elizabeth was not a like-for-like example.

Ascham’s claim that Elizabeth outshone the brightest scholars of her universities is evidently hyperbole. Twice in the same decade, she would describe herself as far their inferior, with equally implausible hyperbole. In Chapter 4, I discuss the queen’s visits to Oxford and Cambridge: her speeches there all began with variants upon the *humilitatio* classical modesty topos, or the parliamentary ‘disabling’ statement, emphasising her inferiority to her learned hosts. But although both praise and humility tropes should elicit our scepticism, it is worth remembering that were Elizabeth Tudor notoriously incapable of stringing together a sentence in any foreign language, Ascham might not have based his formal praise first and foremost on her linguistic ability, nor so fervently advertised his responsibility for her education. The evidence I will discuss in Chapter 2 demonstrates that Elizabeth was clearly a capable linguist:

---

77 Ascham, *Scholasticus*, Ciii. I discuss this anecdote in Chapter 3, section v.
78 Fully cited at Chapter IV, section viii. The oft-quoted claim by Elizabeth in her 1592 oration that her Latin was so rusty that ‘in thirty-six years I scarcely remember using it thirty times’ is contradicted by the extensive Latin correspondence and the prayerbooks which at least carried her name.
the bigger questions are about why her contemporaries chose to praise specific qualities in her learning, and whether she really outshone other highly educated peers.

There are several definitions of intellect at play in the descriptions of Elizabeth in The scholemaster. In the first passage quoted, we are offered three different concepts in a single sentence. Elizabeth has ‘excellency of learning’, such that she handles language ‘wittily’, and she is also ‘fair with hand’. Ascham, as we shall see, was particularly proud of Elizabeth’s handwriting, although, as H. R. Woudhuysen reminds us, he never claimed to have taught it to her.79 Here her handwriting represents the exterior and aesthetic expression of elite education, in balance with the innate genius of ‘wit’ and the moral discipline required in ‘learning’, as enacted ‘orderly, & constantly’. The queen is also the superior of almost all ‘rare wittes in both the Universities’.

‘Wit’ is an ambivalent concept in The scholemaster. For contemporaries of Ascham such as Thomas Wilson and Thomas Hoby, it was associated with the ability to speak elegantly and off the cuff, ex tempore.80 In this sense, it was the building block for rhetoric, with all its morally ambivalent power. ‘Wit’ was also often associated with the Latin concept of ingenium. Thomas Elyot defines two meanings for ingenium: ‘the propre nature of a thynge. Also wytte’, later giving an example: ‘de Actore facile dicente ex tempore dictum est ingenium eum in numerato habere’ (‘of the plaintyfe, whan he speaketh quyckely and without study, it is sayde, that he hath a quycke wytte and a redy’).81 Elyot ostensibly separates his two definitions of ‘ingenium’, but the idea of ‘propre nature’ and innate character or genius clearly carries over

---

80 For useful background on ‘wit’ in this period, see Trevor Lenman, Sebastian Westcott, The Children of St Paul’s and ‘The Marriage of Wit and Science’ (Toronto: Toronto UP, 1975), esp. pp. 91-101.
81 The dictionary of Syr Thomas Eliot Knyght (London, 1538), L1*, P1*.  
59
to ‘wytte’. In a recent PhD thesis, Yuval Kramer details a number of ways that in *The scholemaster*, ‘Ascham’s wit is most frequently identified with his student’s inherent intellectual potential’. As such, it opposes the ideal of learning which can be acquired through regular exercises – and the pedagogy whereby Ascham earned his living. Throughout *The scholemaster*, Ascham prioritises learning earned by hard work (of both teacher and pupil), but grudgingly acknowledges the existence ‘of witte gathered, and good fortune gotten, by some, onely by experience, without learning’. In his section on the ideal student ‘Euphues’, whom John Lyly would appropriate in *Euphues: The anatomy of wit* (1578) and *Euphues and his England* (1580), Ascham defines three types of wit: ‘dull wits’ incapable of learning, ‘quick wits’ who are ‘apte to take, unapte to keep’, and ‘hard wits’ who are ‘hard to receive, but sure to keepe’; the hard wits are careful, sceptical of their teachers, but fundamentally most rewarding to teach. Elizabeth is clearly presented as an example of ‘hard wit’ given her association in the second passage with ‘judgement’. Hard wits, Ascham tells us, are ‘deepe of judgement, whether they write, or give counsell in all waightie affaires’. This is a queen with godly purpose; her ‘excellency in learning’ is a gift to be enjoyed in conjunction with Ascham’s ‘knowledge of Christ’s true religion’. Her superiority to the ‘university wits’ is also an indicator of Ascham’s prejudices. Although he lavishes praise on Cheke and his friends at St John’s College, Cambridge, universities are suspect, undermined by Elizabethan fathers’ purported use of them as a place to discard unwanted ‘wretched, lame, and deformed’ sons. Elizabeth is not the only person Ascham describes as better for having escaped an institutional education: his friend and bed-fellow John Whitney supposedly absorbed from Ascham’s tuition ‘the hardest pointes of Grammer, that some, in seven yeare in Grammer scholes, yea, & some

---

83 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Bi.ii.
84 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Di.ii.
85 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Diii.ii.
in the Universities to, can not do halfe so well’. \(^8^6\) Jonathan Goldberg, in his highly theoretical study of sixteenth-century pedagogy, asserts:

Ascham did not keep school: he wrote *The Scholemaster*, attempting from the margins to rewrite the centre of his society, the court as the apex of pedagogic culture. With Elizabeth on the throne, the project had some credibility. \(^8^7\)

Warren Boutcher writes similarly, in a passage on which Linda Shenk relies for her own analysis of Elizabeth’s learned persona:

With the advent of the printed templates of humanist pedagogy and the formalization of school and university arts education came a new definition of the elite ‘individual’. This was the *persona* whose compelling informal, free-thinking, occasion-specific mode of appropriation of classical wisdom aimed to define itself *against* and *above* the systems, types and routines of institutionalized arts pedagogy. \(^8^8\)

Shenk is right to point to Boutcher and to suggest that Elizabeth, as her reign progressed, increasingly asserted herself as precisely such an elite individual. Elizabeth’s exceptionalism in all spheres was key to asserting her own royal authority. Many young male courtiers of the 1590s also exemplified this free-wheeling intellectual approach. But although, as Goldberg writes, ‘Ascham did not keep school’, and nor did Elizabeth attend one, it is not fair to characterise the educated persona advertised by Ascham in Boutcher’s ‘anti-humanist’ terms. Ascham was not an aristocrat. Neither were his peers or competitors. In his letter to Leicester of 1564, Ascham condemns the aristocratic lack of diligence he associates with the pose of *sprezzatura*, telling Leicester he ‘could chide if I had authority, that by your own fault you do not exercise and exceed yourself by labour wherein you exceed almost all other by nature’. \(^8^9\)

Melanie Ord, exploring Ascham’s preference for ‘hard wits’, has written of ‘Ascham’s

---

\(^8^6\) Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Kiili.


\(^8^8\) Warren Boutcher, ‘Humanism and Literature in Late Tudor England: Translation, the Continental Book and the Case of Montaigne’s *Essais*’, in *Reassessing Tudor Humanism*, pp. 243-68 (p. 251); quoted in Shenk, *Learned Queen*, p. 10.

bourgeois preference for hard work over the ascriptive category of birth’ and although heavily loaded, the term ‘bourgeois’ does seem appropriate here.\textsuperscript{90} Once she became a regnant queen, as we shall see later in this thesis, Elizabeth would develop a learned and royal imagery that allowed her to escape from Ascham’s model. Nonetheless, the image of the highly educated princess which Ascham promoted fundamentally reflected the concerns of humanists as a class.

I will assess the extant evidence for Elizabeth’s facility with modern languages in Chapter 2. But far beyond his reference to Elizabeth’s talents in Latin or any modern language, Ascham stresses Greek. This is not surprising: as Michael Pincombe, J. S. Crown and many others have noted, one of Ascham’s chief projects was the promotion of Greek studies in English intellectual life.\textsuperscript{91} Ascham was a firm backer of his former teacher Cheke in the raging mid-Tudor wars over the pronunciation of Greek.\textsuperscript{92} He was also, despite an early experiment in rhyming Latin verse, a proponent of classical models in English poetry.\textsuperscript{93} Richard Helgerson describes him as ‘the first begetter of the quantitative movement’ in poetry to which Spenser and Harvey would both subscribe.\textsuperscript{94}

The first passage I have quoted from \textit{The scholemaster} is regularly cited as evidence of Elizabeth’s capacity for Greek. A reading of its context in \textit{The scholemaster}, however, makes clear that Ascham includes it as part of a broader argument about the importance of Greek in the education of rulers. Immediately beforehand, Ascham cites one of his heroes, the rhetorician Isocrates, on the virtues taught in ancient Athens. Isocrates appears repeatedly in

\textsuperscript{90} Ord, ‘Classical and Contemporary Italy’, p. 209.
the textual relics of Elizabeth’s studies with Ascham.\textsuperscript{95} In this instance, Ascham deploys Isocrates’ one flaw: he was a pagan.\textsuperscript{96} Just as Elizabeth, merely ‘one mayd’, is ‘a shame’ to the young gentlemen of England, Isocrates ‘a heithen writer’ is ‘a greater shame, to us Christian men’ for his superior understanding of how to educate a child in virtue.\textsuperscript{97} Pagan and female, Isocrates and Elizabeth both put Christian gentlemen to shame because of their access to Greek. In Ascham’s ears, the very language of Athens is shaped for inculcating virtue, having left to history the memory of ‘more learned men, and that in a manner altogether, than all time doth remember, than all place doth afford, than all other tongues do contain’.\textsuperscript{98} Just below, Ascham declares of the entirety of Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, Dutch and English literature: ‘Cicero onelie excepted, and one or two moe in Latin […] if there be any good in them, it is either lerned, borowed, or stolne, from some one of those worthie wittes of Athens.’\textsuperscript{99} The printed annotation to this passage in the 1570 edition of The scholemaster reads: ‘learning chiefly contained in the Greek and no other tongue’. Whoever wrote this annotation, it efficiently summarises Ascham’s argument. Ascham may exempt Cicero from the general principle of Rome’s inferiority, but he notes elsewhere that he does so only because of Cicero’s own dedication to imitating the Greek authors Demosthenes and Plato.\textsuperscript{100}

It is reasonable to infer that Ascham made every attempt to interest his royal pupil in his favourite language. Yet the purpose of this famous passage in The scholemaster is not so much

\textsuperscript{95} Micha Lazarus, ‘Ascham’s Bookshelf’, in \textit{Roger Ascham and His Sixteenth-Century World}, pp. 297-320; see also section v below.
\textsuperscript{96} Erasmus had deployed a similar rhetorical strategy in the opening of \textit{Institutio principis christiani}, both evoking and then rejecting Isocrates as a model as he addresses Charles V: ‘he was a sophist, instructing some petty king or rather tyrant, and both were pagans: I am a theologian addressing a renowned and upright prince, Christians both of us.’
\textsuperscript{97} Ascham, \textit{Scholemaster,} Fiv\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{98} Ascham, \textit{Scholemaster,} Gi\textsuperscript{i}.
\textsuperscript{99} Ascham, \textit{Scholemaster,} Gi\textsuperscript{i}.
to testify to Elizabeth’s capacity for Greek, as to construct the queen as the centre of an idealised summit of Athenian culture to which every young man in England should aspire to contribute. The attempt to marry a concept of monarchy with the democratic model of Athens was obviously fraught, but as a growing community of modern scholars of counsel have shown, long before Ascham the leading constitutional theorists of the new humanism had normalised the propagation of models for kingly concilium (counsel) which claimed to draw from classical republican structures.\footnote{Summarised in John Guy, ‘The Rhetoric of Counsel in Early Modern England’, in Tudor Political Culture, ed. by Dale Hoak (Cambridge: CUP, 1995), pp. 292-301. For what Elizabeth’s education taught her about classical models of counsel, see Mears, Queenship and Political Discourse, pp. 74-82. McLaren stresses the caveat that the ‘philosopher-king’ was a masculine model: McLaren, Political Culture, p. 14.} Ascham’s attack on wisdom ‘lerned, borowed, or stolne, from some one of those worthie wittes of Athens’ is more intriguing, as his own writing exemplified the humanist dependency on sententiae that Crane has called ‘the twin discursive practices of “gathering” these textual fragments and “framing” or forming, arranging, and assimilating them’ and was ‘for English humanists the central mode of transaction with classical antiquity’.\footnote{Crane, Framing Authority, p. 1.} No doubt Ascham would have considered himself a true scholar of Greek thought, rather than a mere tourist.

Ascham famously describes Elizabeth reading ‘more Greeke every day, than some Prebendarie of this Chirch doth read Latin in a whole weeke’. In a letter to Sturm of April 1550, Ascham had made explicit his wish to train Elizabeth in Greek as a foundation for understanding the Gospels. Each morning, he wrote, the king’s sister would read the New Testament in Greek. Isocrates and Sophocles were later added so that she might face the challenges of life with ‘linguam purissima dictione’ and ‘mentem aptissima praeeptione’ (‘purity of speech’ and ‘the most suitable teaching of the mind’).\footnote{Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, 1, 191-2 (‘Letter XCIX’).} But Ascham’s focus remained theological. After Elizabeth had become confident with the Gospels, he added ‘fontes scripturarum’, the epistles...
of Saint Cyprian and the commonplaces of Philip Melanchthon. The mention of Melanchthon here may have been included as a compliment to Sturm, who had written the preface to Melanchthon’s *De dialectica libri quatuor* and remained closely associated with him.\(^{104}\)

Several experts have recently outlined ways that the introduction of Greek into English universities saw English radicals eagerly appropriate Erasmus’ achievements in Greek to bolster evangelical projects, even as they rejected his reformist conservatism and denounced his continued deference to Rome.\(^{105}\) As Neil Rhodes explains, in producing his bilingual *Novum Instrumentum* in 1516, ‘Erasmus’ ultimate aim was to produce a new translation in the language of the educated classes: not pure and common Greek, but pure and common Latin’. But for many English evangelicals, ‘Greek became the door to the vernacular’, even if the standardised Attic understood by Erasmus and Ascham had less in common with the *koine* of the Greek Gospels than these reformists might admit.\(^{106}\) To Ascham and his peers, Greek–English translation was a shortcut to the ‘original’ Gospels that bypassed the Vulgate. Tyndale, whom Ascham admired, had written in his preface to his *Obedience*:

> they will say that [the Bible] cannot be translated into our tongue it is so rude. It is not so rude as they are false liars. For the Greek tongue agreeth more with the English than with the Latin.\(^{107}\)

For Ascham, a princess who could read Greek was a princess who could lead her subjects to the Gospels. In his famous contrast between Elizabeth and the hapless ‘Prebendarie of this

---

\(^{104}\) Philip Melanchthon, *De dialectica libri quatuor* (Antwerp, 1535).


\(^{106}\) Rhodes, *Common*, p. 31.

Chirch’ who merely reads Latin, we should not only read a tribute to her qualities as a linguist, but also recognise a humanist evangelical’s dig at Roman Catholic Latinity.108

Ostensibly, Elizabeth took Ascham’s concerns about ill-educated churchmen on board. Throughout her reign, she would complain about the dangers of an ‘unlearned’ clergy, but by ‘learned’ she usually meant ‘conformist’.109 She does not seem to have internalised his religious preferences. Cyndia Susan Clegg has tried to argue for continuities between Ascham’s theology and Elizabeth’s religious policy, but her argument depends on repeatedly downplaying Elizabeth’s longstanding opposition to Zwinglian definitions of the Eucharist as merely ‘memorial’110 Simultaneously, Clegg downplays the radicalism of Ascham’s Apologia pro Caena Dominica contra Missam, which as the title suggests, advocates for the Eucharist as ‘the Lord’s Supper’ rather than a ‘Mass’. To nudge Ascham closer to Elizabeth’s own position, Clegg terms the seeming virulence of Ascham’s pro-memorial position ‘highly rhetorical’ and claims Ascham’s purpose is not to reject the Mass entirely, but merely to argue that ‘only the Lord’s Supper has Biblical authority’, such that ‘any learned theological disputation on transubstantiation becomes irrelevant’.111 In fact, Ascham’s Apologia ferociously insists that the Eucharist is a *sigillum* [sigillum] & *monumentum* (‘a sign and memorial’).112 Doran has demonstrated that Elizabeth was always committed to the ‘real presence’, ‘although whether she understood that presence to be corporeal or spiritual in nature cannot be determined with any certainty’.113

---

108 Shenk implies a similar point in *Learned Queen*, p. 2.
109 *CW*, ‘Speech 15’, pp. 177-81. The best starting point on Elizabeth’s approach to religious issues, especially on the royal supremacy, remains Susan Doran, ‘Elizabeth I’s Religion: The Evidence of Her Letters’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 51 (2000), 699-720. It is, however, undermined by references to the ‘Book of Devotions’, which Woudhuysen has since established was not penned by Elizabeth.
Ascham also seems to have been a supporter of the queen’s theological bête noir: clerical marriage. In a letter to Sturm of June 1551, Ascham praises Martin Bucer’s wife as an example of a good marriage contracted by a man in holy orders. Both Medine and Kennerley note that Ascham ran into trouble in 1543 by seeming to affirm the existence of married bishops in the early Church. Ascham himself, although not in orders, was required by his marriage in 1554 to leave Cambridge, where academic celibacy was still enforced. In August 1561, the queen issued an injunction against married clergy, in which the Crown also complained that the universities had seen ‘the quiet and ordely profession of studye & lerninge’ disturbed by the presence of wives and children, a distraction from their stated purpose: ‘to sustayne & kepe societies & lerned men professing studie & prayer for the edification of the churche of god & so consequently to serve the common weale’.

Neither sacred nor civic vocation, the Crown insisted, could best be served by married students; whether clergy or academic, ‘no manner or person beinge either the hedd or member of any colledge or cathedral churche’ was permitted to cohabit with a woman or be regularly visited by her. The copy was sent to Cecil in his capacity as Chancellor of Cambridge University, to be displayed in every college. No matter that Ascham, who claimed to have taught Elizabeth her concern for a humanist ‘common weale’, had been one of these married dissidents at Cambridge. And where Elizabeth was disdainful of married scholars like Ascham, she was implacable about married clergy like his friend Bucer. For all Ascham’s claims to have been a

114 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, i, 924-5 (‘Letter CXXV’).
116 ‘Proclamation Concerning Married Clergy, 9 August 1561’, in Progresses, i, 197.
shaping influence on the last Tudor queen, on at least two major religious issues of the day – the Eucharist and married clergy – she wholeheartedly rejected his position.

iv. Ascham’s letters

Ascham’s letters about Elizabeth began years before *The scholemaster*. On 4 April 1550, he wrote to Sturm of the beauty of her handwriting – ‘quid Graece Latineve scribat, manu eius nihil pulchrius’ – and named her as a paragon of English humanism.\(^{117}\) In 1551, he wrote again to Sturm, eulogising the deceased William Grindal, whom he had succeeded as Elizabeth’s tutor. Grindal and Elizabeth were a perfect match:

\[
ubi invenio ea utriusque linguae fundamenta iacta, ut dubitaram, an istius ingenium quae didicit, an illius diligentiam qui docuit, magis admirarer.
\]

On seeing the foundations laid in the learning of languages, I was uncertain whether more to admire the wit of she who learned, or he who taught.\(^{118}\)

In 1555, Ascham wrote to Sturm about his recent marriage, but mentioned that he had been able to visit Hatfield, where Elizabeth was now able to recite and simultaneously translate Περὶ Στεφάνου (‘On The Crown’), two rival orations by the Greek rhetoricians Demosthenes and Aeschines.\(^{119}\) In 1562, with Elizabeth now queen, Ascham sent Sturm a sample of her

\(^{117}\) Ascham, *Works*, ed. Giles, i, 191-2 (‘Letter XCIX’). ‘When she writes in Greek or Latin, nothing is more beautiful than her hand.’

\(^{118}\) Ascham, *Works*, ed. Giles, i, 271-8 (‘Letter CXVII’).

\(^{119}\) In her otherwise authoritative essay, Pollnitz observes that this visit followed the public disappointment of Mary Tudor’s false pregnancy, and with it the renewed possibility of Elizabeth one day acceding. For Pollnitz, ‘it seems as though he had begun preparing Elizabeth for government’ (‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 137). This seems unlikely: Ascham’s time at Hatfield was too brief to instil a systematic new programme of education, and Elizabeth’s status remained uncertain. Hooper, Taylor, Rogers and Ferrar had all recently been condemned: Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley would soon follow. The Dudley Conspiracy of December 1555 would cause more trouble. These were not optimistic times for evangelicals. For Elizabeth herself, a diplomatic marriage to a Habsburg had not yet been ruled out, despite Mary’s opposition. If Ascham was indeed trying to intimate to his co-religionist that he had been coaching the queen’s troublesome sister in politics, it went against every signal of obedience and non-intervention that Elizabeth herself was attempting to project.
handwriting, ‘so you may see for yourself with what finesse she writes’. Ascham describes this sample as ‘the word “quemadmodum” written in the queen’s own hand’: he states of two marked hands ‘superius meum est, inferius reginae’ (‘the superior is mine, the lower the queen’s’). This is Ascham’s performance of his own proximity to his royal mistress, manifested in their handwriting sharing a page. As Woudhuysen responds, ‘the sense of presence conveyed by that phrase “the queen’s own hand” includes both a measure of royal or monarchical power and of a more personal and intimate association’. Ascham is not only proximate; he is ‘superius’, the double meaning as heavy in Latin as in the English cognate. As this letter continues, Ascham is eager to emphasise his influence over Elizabeth: he is still the teacher, with enough sway to do favours for his friend. Ascham assures Sturm:

Atque si con tigerit unquam tibi in Angliam venire, ex ipsius ore, credo, intelliges, ROGERUM ASCHAMUM JOANNIS STURMII, apud tantam principem, memorem amicum fuisse.

And should you ever have occasion to come to England, from her own mouth, I believe, you will hear that Roger Ascham has remembered his friend in the presence of this great sovereign.

The queen’s tutor, he promises Sturm, has been talking him up to this potential patron. Ascham appears to have made a habit of pilfering samples of royal handwriting: in late 1553 he wrote to Stephen Gardiner of teaching Edward VI ‘to write as fair a hand, though I say it, as any child in England … as a letter in his own hand doth declare, which I kept as a treasure for a witness of my service’. For all his boasts, these trophies hint at the insecurity of a man who could not rely on always remaining close to aristocratic power.

---

120 Ascham, *Works*, ed. Giles, II, 59-68 (‘Letter XXXIV’). It has been suggested that Ascham took this sample from a draft of Elizabeth’s letter to Henry of December 1545, with which she enclosed a translation of Katherine Parr’s *Prayers and Meditations*. At this point, however, Ascham was not her tutor, although he had sent her ‘an Italian book’ and a silver pen, via Katherine Astley.

121 Woudhuysen, ‘The Queen’s Own Hand’, p. 2.


There has been a recent trend to assume that Ascham’s letters to Sturm are more reliable evidence for Elizabeth’s talents than *The scholemaster*. In an otherwise superb essay on Elizabeth’s knowledge of Italian, Alessandra Petrina is typical in suggesting that these ‘were not meant for public circulation, therefore possibly reliable in terms of his estimation of Elizabeth’s intellectual abilities’.

Bajetta agrees, in his recent book on Elizabeth’s Italian letters. Numerous other scholars are also surprisingly willing to accept Ascham’s word.

A generation previously, David Starkey had affirmed Ascham’s reliability for a generation of popular readers, on the questionable basis that Ascham’s even greater praise for Jane Grey’s aural Greek proves these letters were non-partisan on the subject of Elizabeth. Yet closer study establishes that Ascham could not expect Sturm to keep his letters private, and may not have wished him to do so. In fact, Sturm and Ascham published their first exchange of letters in 1551, only a year after they started writing, as *Epistolae duae de nobilitate Anglica*na.

This included Ascham’s description of Elizabeth as chief of the women who now outshone Thomas More’s daughters:

> Inter quas tamem universas veluti sidus quoddam, non tam claritate generis quam splendore virtutis et literarum, sic eminet illustissima domina mea, D. ELIZABETHA regis nostri soror.

Among all of them, however, the brightest star is my illustrious Lady Elizabeth, the king’s sister; who shines not so much for glorious birth but for the splendour of virtue and letters.

---

124 Alessandra Petrina, ‘Elizabeth Learning and Using Italian’, in *Elizabeth I’s Foreign Correspondence*, pp. 93-113 (p. 110, n. 1).
127 Starkey, *Elizabeth*, p. 81.
128 Included in Conrad Heresbach’s *De laudibus Graecarum literarum oratio* (Strasbourg, 1551).
Very little of this is reliable, from a historian’s perspective. Margaret Roper might have been England’s leading ‘learned lady’ in 1526, but Ascham’s letter to Sturm formed part of a sustained campaign to displace her, thanks to her family’s Catholic loyalties, and replace her with a catalogue of evangelical women. Elizabeth is remembered as the ‘star’, but she was preceded in Ascham’s list by the daughters of the Duke of Somerset, Jane Grey and Mildred Cecil. Contrasting this letter with the Catholic Juan Luis Vives’ 1523 prescription for Mary Tudor, *De institutione feminae Christianae*, Aysha Pollnitz points out that ‘Ascham praised the princess for her facility in subjects that Vives had warned pre-Reformation women off: Greek … classical history, and rhetoric’. Contra the assumptions of scholars like Petrina and Bajetta, Ascham was not writing a private letter in which he might be frank, but a letter for publication. It was shaped by a political imperative to demonstrate that ‘classical learning in the English court was the preserve of reformers’, and naturally it suited Ascham to praise his own royal pupil even beyond her fellow evangelical women.

In fact, it is likely that all of Ascham’s correspondence to Sturm was written with publication in mind. Lisa Jardine’s work has established the importance that letter-writing played in Erasmus’ careful cultivation of his own ‘public image’. In this, as in so much else, Ascham followed Erasmus. Jardine writes of the humanist method:

> we uncover a publicity campaign […] we begin to see that a ‘circle’ in the world of Erasmus is precisely a collection of named individuals, linked and cross-linked by exchanges of letters and allusions within letters.

---

129 Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 136. Vives later expanded his vision for Mary’s education: see Chapter 2, section iii.


We should read Ascham’s letters to Sturm as a product of the same intellectual and political approach. From his first letter to Sturm, Ascham was attempting to build a new link in a ‘circle’ which would promote and publicise its own ideas. His letter to Sturm holds out the promise of royal Tudor woman forming part of their shared familia – if Sturm chooses to share in their amicitia. In emphasising the learned persona of his royal pupil, Ascham is fashioning himself as a supremely connected man of letters.

The key figure in this Sturm–Ascham circle was their mutual friend Martin Bucer. Bucer had put the two in touch after he arrived in Cambridge to serve as Regius Professor of Divinity in 1550. Ascham’s letter to Sturm that April was his letter of self-introduction, which gave him even more reason to trumpet his royal pupil. Nicholas notes that ‘Ascham considered and presented himself as the junior partner, at least in his initial letters, to Sturm’. Sturm and Ascham formed a genuine friendship, despite never meeting in person. They bonded over the unexpected death of Bucer in 1551, sharing plans for commemorative volumes of their friend’s life. Bucer and his friends regularly published their own letters, or shared copies within a wide reformist circle. Throughout their correspondence, both Ascham and Sturm show a keen understanding of their place in Bucer’s wider familia, a circle that widened its reach as far as possible by writing in Latin, rather than vernacular languages.

The letters make repeated reference to the use of mutual friends as couriers. Sturm mentions in his first reply to Ascham that his letter will be carried to England by Bucer’s wife, who was leaving Strasbourg for Cambridge. Sturm had taken swift advantage of Ascham’s vaunted connections: he informs Ascham that, inspired by Ascham’s praise of Elizabeth, he has

134 Ryan, Ascham, pp. 143-9, 244-5.
dedicated a new book on rhetoric to her, *De periodis unus libellus*. Bucer had excellent connections to Elizabeth’s household: it is likely his wife brought Elizabeth a copy of Sturm’s book. Rachel McGregor suggests that Ascham may have hoped his initial praise of Elizabeth might make its way back from Strasbourg to Hatfield through the gossip of Bucer’s wife, and it may even have been a ploy to regain her favour after his dismissal as tutor. Certainly, all the figures involved understood themselves in a network of patronage, in which Elizabeth occupied a high rank. They could not rely on letters remaining private. In both December 1550 and January 1551, Ascham writes letters to Sturm which he describes as coming by the hand of Christopher Mount (or Mundt), an ambitious diplomat who had learned his trade under Cromwell. In the latter letter, he explicitly states that Sturm should not assume their letters will remain unread by spies. It is this letter which includes his second paean for Elizabeth, along with his posthumous praise of Grindal. Historians should make no pretence that Ascham had a reasonable expectation of privacy in writing this letter, or that such an expectation made it ‘reliable’.

**v. Ascham, Elizabeth and Isocrates**

Aspects of Ascham’s stories about Elizabeth are clearly rooted in truth. As I have discussed, Ascham repeatedly mentions working with Elizabeth on the orations of Isocrates. Isocrates was by then a mainstay of the English humanist curriculum: his works are traditionally termed ‘orations’, but many are formal letters. At the foundation of Corpus Christi College in 1517,
Isocrates was one of fourteen authors the Greek lecturer was obligated to teach.138 Around this time, Erasmus had introduced Isocrates to the curricula for princes across Europe. In 1507, with Erasmus’ encouragement, his student Giovanni Boerio had sent a Latin-language translation of Isocrates’ *Ad Nicoclem* to the future Henry VIII; a decade later, Erasmus followed up with his own Latin translation, bound together with a presentation copy of his *Institutio principis christiani* for the young king.139 In April 1548 Edward VI wrote a schoolroom Latin essay on the same text. Isocrates was particularly popular among English scholars, like Ascham, who sought new vernacular modes for translating the Greek Gospel. When in 1533 Thomas Elyot presented to Henry VIII his own translation of *Ad Nicoclem*, which he titled *The doctrinall of princis*, he explained that he was testing ‘if our English tunge mought receive the quicke and proper sentences pronounced by the greekes’.140 In the 1520s, Tyndale produced a translation which is now lost: Rhodes suggests that ‘the combination of counsel to kings, stylistic purity and the broader proto-democratic culture of which Isocrates was part exactly suited Tyndale’s purpose’.141

An oration to the Cyprian King Nicocles, *Ad Nicoclem* was a suitable text for educating princes. Pollnitz writes that the *Ad Nicoclem* taught that ‘good government depended on a prince’s learning, reason and control of his passions’.142 Isocrates’ letters to Nicocles were also a double model of political counsel. Each letter is framed as an act of counsel in itself – but in each, Isocrates also advises his prince on how to choose his other counsellors. Mears summarises its lessons thus:

> A good prince should gather around him the wisest men as councillors and listen to them even when their advice was unpalatable or contradicted his own ideas. He

---

141 Rhodes, *Common*, p. 32.
should love his subjects and rule in their interests, honour the gods, ensure the laws were fair and just, husband his revenues but not fail to make a display of royal magnificence. He was to be war-like but never too belligerent. Conversely, subjects were exhorted to fulfil their appointed tasks diligently, be loyal and do all they could to preserve the order and security of the state.\textsuperscript{143}

Confusion can occur in studies of Isocrates between \textit{Ad Nicoclem} and another oration to the same king, known in English as \textit{Nicocles or the Cyprians} and in Latin as \textit{Nicocles aut Cyprii} or simply \textit{Nicocles}. To confuse matters further, several of Isocrates’ other orations discuss the person of Nicocles. In 1559, Laurence Humphrey prefaced his treatise on translation, \textit{Interpretatio linguarum}, with an encomium to England’s learned women, rejoicing at its climax that Elizabeth had already translated two orations by Isocrates from Greek into Latin.\textsuperscript{144} Humphrey had spent the years of Mary’s reign on the continent, and his information will not have been first-hand, but he was a correspondent of Ascham, Bullinger and the Portuguese humanist Jeronymo Osório, from whom this information may have come.\textsuperscript{145} The translations, if they existed, are lost. According to Humphrey, one is the \textit{Ad Nicoclem} and one was titled \textit{Symmachicon seu Nicoclem}, a rare title which can cause confusion. Yet with a little digging, it becomes clear that it refers to what we now call \textit{Nicocles or the Cyprians}. Bale, in 1559, would include Elizabeth in the second volume of \textit{Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae}, the catalogue of authors in the British Isles with which he endeavoured to build a literary pedigree for English Protestantism.\textsuperscript{146} Bale lists as Elizabeth’s works \textit{The godly medytacyon}, \textit{Ad Nicoclem} and something he terms ‘tertiam orationem eiusdem Isocratis’.\textsuperscript{147} As the catalogue’s modern editor notes, in early modern listings Isocrates’ third oration was indeed what we call

\begin{footnotes}
\item[143] Mears, \textit{Queenship and Political Discourse}, p. 77.
\item[144] There is an excellent thesis on Humphrey and this period by Eleanor Kathleen Merchant, “‘Doctissimus pater pastorum’: Laurence Humphrey and Reformed Humanist Education in mid-Tudor England” (unpublished PhD thesis, Queen Mary University, London, 2013).
\item[146] The two volumes together are published as John Bale, \textit{Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae quam nunc Angliam & Scotiam vocant catalogus} (Basel, 1559).
\item[147] Bale, \textit{Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae}, p. 112.
\end{footnotes}
Nicocles or the Cyprians. It was not always published under this name. The Aldine edition of 1546, published in Basel, prints a Greek version of this text under the title Νικόκλῆς η Σωμβούλευσκος – according to the Lumley Library Catalogue of 1609, this was likely the text Jane Lumley used to translate her version, which I discuss in Chapter 2. In 1553, Johannes Oporinus published a combined edition of Isocrates and Demosthenes in which he refers to Nicocles or the Cyprians as Nicocles aut Symmachicus. A century earlier, Guarino Veronese had translated the text as Nicocles seu symmachicus, in a manuscript copy recently digitised at the Vatican archives. Clearly Symmachicon and variants on this title were used in the early modern period for the text we now call Nicocles or the Cyprians. If we believe Bale and Humphrey, Elizabeth translated both Nicocles texts.

Isocrates may have been a respected author for many early modern humanists, but for Ascham he was much more. Isocrates was his personal role model, not only as a counsellor to kings, but also as a schoolmaster. He was the source of a motto which, as Lazarus has recently discovered, Ascham inscribed on several of his books: Εάν ης φιλομαθής, ἐσῃ πολυμαθής. Ascham explained his affection for this tag in The scholemaster, defining φιλομαθής for the reader:

ΦΙΛΟΜΑΘΗΣ

Given to love learning: for though a child have all the giftes of nature of wishe, and perfection of memorie at wil, yet if he have not a speciall love to learning, he shall never attaine to moch learning. And threfore Isocrates, one of the noblest scholemasters, that is in memorie of learning, who taught Kinges and Princes, as Halicarnassaeus writeth, and out of whose schole, as Tullie saith, came forth, mo noble Capitanes, mo wise Councilors, than did out of Epeius horse at Troie. This Isocrates, I say, did cause to be written, at the entrie of his schole, in golden letters, this golden sentence, Εάν ης φιλομαθής, ἐσῃ πολυ which excellentlie said

149 BL, Royal MS 15 A IX.
150 Isocratis & Demosthenis (Basel, 1553).
151 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.lat.1778.
Not only did Ascham commend Isocrates to his readers as a paragon of φιλομαθής, but he cherished Isocrates in his own library. Hatfield House holds a copy of Isengrin’s 1550 dual Greek–Latin edition of Isocrates’ orations.\textsuperscript{154} This was Ascham’s copy, likely acquired by William or Robert Cecil: Ascham annotated the titlepage ‘R. Ascham καὶ τῶν φίλων’ (‘Roger Ascham and his friends’). Annotations are liberally scattered across the book, in a hand which Lazarus describes as ‘recognisable as Ascham’s but less elegant than usual, suggesting perhaps infirmity so close to the end of his life’.\textsuperscript{155} Most exciting, however, is an annotation by Ascham above the oration by Isocrates now known as \textit{Ad Antipatrum}. At the top of the page, Ascham has written: ‘An Epistle most worthie for a Prince to reede.’ Just below, he has added: ‘\textit{hunc elegantiss. Epistolam Legi, una cum Regina Elisabeta}. Hampton courte. 1568. 14 nov’ (‘I read this most elegant epistle together with Queen Elizabeth. Hampton Court, 14 November 1568’).\textsuperscript{156}

For all that Ascham may have elsewhere exaggerated his importance to Elizabeth, there is no reason to doubt that the inscription attests to an actual occasion on which he and Elizabeth read together from \textit{Ad Antipatrum}. Although no other hands appear in this text, dated inscriptions in known hands of Ascham’s friends do appear in other books from the library at Hatfield on plausible dates. 14 November 1568 was six weeks before Ascham would die, which adds pathos to the shaky handwriting.

\textsuperscript{153} Ascham, \textit{Scholemaster}, Diili\textsuperscript{ii}.
\textsuperscript{154} Isocrates, \textit{Δόγματα καὶ επιστολαί} (Basel, 1550, USTC 668343), Hatfield House, 8366.
\textsuperscript{156} All of the information in this passage is drawn from Micha Lazarus, ‘Ascham’s Bookshelf’. I am grateful to Dr Lazarus for corresponding with me generously on this material. Images of Ascham’s annotations are available in the recorded version of his recent talk: Lazarus, ‘Elizabeth, Isocrates, and Roger Ascham’s Last Tutorial’, unpublished paper delivered at the Renaissance Society of America Virtual 2021 conference (13 April 2021), which is still accessible for RSA members.
The two were evidently on decent terms. Just a year earlier, in October 1567, Ascham had written an affectionate letter to Elizabeth as ‘my both highest sovereign and greatest friend’, in which he imagines asking her advice, as his private friend, on how to solicit the queen.\(^{157}\) (As so often in writings for or about Elizabeth, she is split into a male persona – Ascham’s fellow courtier – and a female.) Contra the denials in Grant’s oration that Ascham had ever asked for money, in 1567 he was of course asking for money. Financially strained by a protracted battle over his claim to a sinecure at York, he asked if he might exchange the pensions he drew from the Crown in return for a direct grant of property to each of his sons.\(^{158}\) He may have known he was dying. In the letter, an imagined friend warns Ascham concerning his financial affairs:

> You are not sure yourself, nor very like, by wise men’s judgment, to live very long; but sure I am of this, wheresoever you die, if you die thus, you shall die an ill husband to your wife, and a worse father to your children.\(^{159}\)

Grant modelled much of his own oration on this letter, even though it would include the claim that Ascham had made no such financial request to Elizabeth.

Ascham’s lessons on Isocrates bore fruit for Elizabeth. The oration annotated as her set text, *Ad Antipatrum*, is a letter to the statesman Antipater recommending a young man named Diodatus. Isocrates’ early modern editors read this as an epistle sent directly to Antipater’s own master, Philip of Macedon, and it is printed in Ascham’s text as ‘to Philip’.\(^{160}\) Isocrates includes much detail specific to fourth-century Macedon, but this letter was valued in humanist circles both as a model recommendation letter and as a description of the ideal servant for a prince. Ascham annotates it in his own copy as ‘amici elegans commendatio’ – ‘an elegant letter of


\(^{160}\) Isocrates, *Λόγοι Ἀπαντῶς, καὶ Ἑπιστολαί* (Basel, 1550, USTC 668343), Hatfield House, 8366.
recommendation for a friend’. If we look back at Ascham’s 1567 letter to Elizabeth, we see Ascham writing playfully to his queen about the need any good courtier has of a suitable intercessor who might recommend him to a prince. He had claimed in his first letter to Sturm to have read Isocrates regularly with Elizabeth – although it cannot then have been from the Hatfield volume, as Isengrin’s edition was published in Basel in 1550. But Isocrates’ letter to Antipater/Philip was well circulated in earlier texts.\textsuperscript{161} Given his longstanding interest in traditions of patronage, there is no reason Ascham should not have introduced Elizabeth to this work previously. It was in his interests to provide her with every good example of a patronage tradition to follow.

Ascham’s annotations in the Hatfield volume also shed light on what most resonated with him from Isocrates’ lessons. Diodatus is described as eloquent, practical, sober and sensible with money. But not only is Diodatus ‘inferior to none in eloquence and counsel’, his excellence lies in possessing ‘frankness in the highest degree, not that outspokenness which is objectionable, but that which would rightly be regarded as the surest indication of devotion to his friends’.\textsuperscript{162} Ascham annotates this with a hybrid Greek/Latin inscription, ‘παρ’ ρησία vera’ (‘true frankness’; the conventional humanist term was parrhesia). As Isocrates continues: ‘This is the sort of frankness which princes, if they have worthy and fitting greatness of soul, honor as being useful, while those whose natural gifts are weaker than the powers they possess take such frankness ill.’


Frankness in counsel is a quality Elizabeth would claim to value throughout her reign, from well before the date of Ascham’s Isocrates annotations. When in 1563 she allowed the publication of her *sententiae*, a series of Latin commonplaces collected under her name, they included a maxim by Demetrius of Phalerum which Erasmus had made famous in his *Institutio* as a model of *parrhesia*:

\[
\text{Rex libros de regno scriptos emat ac legat, nam de quibus amici reges admonere non audent, ea in libris sunt descripta}
\]

Let the king procure and read books and writings about his kingdom, for things about which their friends do not dare to admonish kings are written down in books.\(^{163}\)

A later entry in a similar vein, sourced from Erasmus’ edition of Ambrose, reads:

\[
\text{Nec imperatoris est, libertatem dicendi negare, nec sacerdotis, quod sentiat non dicere.}
\]

It is not for a ruler to deny liberty of speech, nor for a priest not to say what he feels.\(^{164}\)

As Mueller and Scodel acknowledge, these *sententiae* ‘fit somewhat uneasily with Elizabeth’s emerging political practice’, meaning the slew of injunctions she passed against ‘slanders’ and ‘seditious books’.\(^{165}\) Her choice of two more nuanced maxims, however, is slightly more consistent with her policy of limiting free expression only to *worthy* counsellors. Elizabeth hints at a theory of more intimate counsel, as Mueller and Scodel note, in an appropriate quotation from Isocrates:

\[
\text{Viris prudentibus dicendi libertatem concedat princeps, ut de quibus dubitaverint cum princepe [principe] communieat [communicent].}
\]

Let the ruler allow liberty of speech to prudent men, so that they may communicate with the ruler concerning matters about which they harbor doubts.\(^{166}\)

\(^{163}\) *TI*, ‘sententia’ 22, p. 349.

\(^{164}\) *TI*, ‘sententia’ 34, p. 352.

\(^{165}\) *TI*, p. 333.

\(^{166}\) *TI* ‘sententia’ 23, pp. 349-50.
These entries noted by Mueller and Scodel all fall under the section Elizabeth has headed ‘de Regno’ (‘On Rule’). We can go further by adding another maxim which Elizabeth included under the section ‘de Consilium’ (‘On Counsel’), a section seemingly aimed at counsellors rather than princes. Number 145 is a saying attributed to Solon: ‘principi consule non dulciora, sed optima’ (‘Give the ruler not the sweeter, but the best, counsel’). Not only is this an invitation to the ideal counsellor, but it is adapted from a chapter on frank speech (‘De fiducia dicendi’) by the Hellenistic writer Stobaeus.¹⁶⁷ But four entries later, Elizabeth adds a telling caveat from Demosthenes: ‘Prava consilia statim reprehendi maxime expedit’ (‘It profits greatly for bad counsels to be censured immediately’).¹⁶⁸

When it came to her closest counsellors, Elizabeth made a show of recognising the importance of parrhesia, at least at the opening of her reign. In the famous oath of office she administered to William Cecil on her accession, Elizabeth told him:

This judgement I have of you: that you will not be corrupted by any manner of gift, and that you will be faithful to the state, and that without respect of my private will, you will give me that counsel that you think best, and if you shall know anything necessary to be declared to me of secrecy, you shall show it to myself only.¹⁶⁹

Elizabeth begins by praising Cecil for his incorruptibility and loyalty. But the climax is her expectation that Cecil is capable of handling sensitive information with the correct balance of honesty and secrecy. Crane shrewdly observes of this passage that it stresses both ‘his moral authority and her ability to keep silent and accept advice’.¹⁷⁰ She adds, ‘her choice of Burghley and her careful public maintenance of the appearance that she took his advice were vital strategies for the young queen’, which is true, although we might add that Elizabeth stresses

¹⁶⁷ *TI*, ‘sententia’ 145, p. 372.
¹⁶⁸ *TI*, ‘sententia’ 149, p. 372.
¹⁶⁹ *CW*, ‘Speech 1’, p. 51.
¹⁷⁰ Crane, *Framing Authority*, p. 119.
her own ‘judgement’ as the criterion for his elevation and thus reserves her own prerogative. Mears, discussing this passage, is unnecessarily dismissive of Crane’s feminist approach – the fact that, as both she and I have shown, Elizabeth was drawing on conventional humanist tropes of counsel is not sufficient reason to reject the reading that she was also manipulating gendered expectations of queenship. Richard Helgerson has traced the ways in which Cecil was perceived by his contemporaries in the role of the ‘archetypical father’. We should also read in this scene, however, the influence of another older male adviser: Ascham with his lessons from Isocrates. Yet if Ascham’s intellectual influence lingered, his political influence was minimal. Despite Ascham’s close friendship with Sir William Paget, Elizabeth did not retain Paget in the Privy Council on her accession, although, as Ralph Houlbrooke has shown, Paget did continue to offer counsel in an informal role.

Isocrates crops up in Elizabeth’s writings throughout her lifetime. As Susan Frye has noticed, one passage from Ad Nicoclem seems to have become a personal motto. As a prince, Isocrates advises his ruler, ‘throughout all your life show that you value truth so highly that your word is more to be trusted than the oaths of other men’. Frye points out that Elizabeth would begin her 1563 reply to the Lords’ petition that she swiftly marry with these words:

There can be no duer debt than princes’ word, to keep that unspotted for my part I would be loath that the self thing which keepeth the merchants’ credit from craft should be the cause that princes’ speech should merit blame, and so their honor quail.

171 Crane, ‘Video et Taceo’, p. 6.
172 Mears, Queenship and Political Discourse, p. 81. Mears’ work is invaluable and she provides a useful precis of the terrain on ‘counsel’, but she misrepresents the positions of feminist scholars, notably A. N. McLaren, Carole Levin and Mary Thomas Crane.
176 CW, ‘Speech 6’, p. 79, drawn from BL, Add. MS 32379, ‘Discourses of Sir N. Bacon’, fol. 21. The editors argue that, like many such speeches, this speech was drafted by Elizabeth but in fact delivered for her by Nicholas Bacon in his role as the Speaker of the House. A heavily amended version in Elizabeth’s own hand is preserved at BL, MS Lansdowne, 94. art. 15B, fol. 30. The only significant variation in the section I have quoted is the attestation in BL, MS Lansdowne for ‘craze’ where BL, Add. MS 32379 has ‘craft’. I discuss this speech again in Chapter 3.
Elizabeth had already promised the Commons on January 28 that she who ‘in other matters have had convenient care of you all’ would not ‘in this matter touching the safety of myself and you all be careless’ – although she had not promised to marry.\textsuperscript{177} Suggesting that she has already committed herself as much as possible, Elizabeth expresses a revealing loathing at the idea of her word becoming ‘spotted’ in a matter of marriage. The chastity of her word, as well as her sexual status, is at stake.

Frye also finds traces of Isocrates’ motto as far apart as Elizabeth’s ‘Tide Letter’ to Mary Tudor in 1554, and a letter of advice to the young James VI of Scotland in 1583. In the first, Elizabeth implores her sister:

\begin{quote}
If any ever did try this olde saynge that a kings worde was more than another mans othe I most humbly beseche your Majestie to verifie it in me.\textsuperscript{178}
\end{quote}

Thirty years later, Elizabeth was putting pressure on another monarch, but this time she was in a stronger position. She admonishes James, who was proving an unreliable partner:

\begin{quote}
Among your many studies, my dear Brother and Cousin, I would Isocrates’ noble lesson were not forgotten, that wills the Emperor his sovereign to make his words of more account than other men’s oaths, as meetest ensigns to show the truest badge of a Prince’s arms.\textsuperscript{179}
\end{quote}

Arguments about the legal force of a prince’s word had followed Elizabeth throughout her reign. When in 1563 she reminded the Lords that there was ‘no duer debt than princes’ word’, she was responding in part to a petition in which they had expressed fear over the instability in common law that could be caused by a contested succession: ‘for every prince is anima legis,'

\textsuperscript{177} CW, ‘Speech 5’, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{178} CW, ‘Letter 22’, p. 41; ACFLO, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{179} The Letters of Queen Elizabeth I, ed. by Harrison, p. 159.
and so reputed in law. And therefore upon the death of the prince, the law diest.\(^{180}\) In her letter to James, the words of a prince have the same semiotic power as the visual symbols of his authority. Like an ‘ensign’, ‘badge’ or coat of royal arms, they can act as legal imprimatur, although the double meaning of the phrase ‘Prince’s arms’ may be intended as a warlike pun and even a threat.\(^{181}\) Frye rightly identifies this letter as another occasion on which Elizabeth’s identity becomes split, ‘occupying two male roles at once’. She is both ‘the schoolmaster reminding James of his lessons’ and simultaneously a prince who in standard formulations of ‘advice to princes’ would here be expected to take counsel – except that unlike James, she is the idealised prince who serves as example, her word infinitely more trustworthy than her shifty correspondent.

Following Frye, I have identified two further occasions when Elizabeth’s language was informed by this motto from Isocrates. In a speech delivered to the House of Lords in 1566, after they had yet again pressed the issue of marriage, an angry Elizabeth rehearses recent events:

I did send them answer by my Council I would marry, although of mine own disposition I was not inclined thereunto. But that was not accepted or credited, although spoken by their prince. And yet I used so many words, I would never speak them again. I will never break the word of a prince spoken in a public place for my honor sake […] A strange order of petitioners that will make a request and cannot be otherwise ascertained but by the prince’s word, and yet will not believe it when it was spoken.\(^{182}\)

Elizabeth’s anger stems from the Lords’ inability to credit her word – it undermines not merely her position in this particular fight, but her fundamental authority. If this ‘strange order of

\(^{180}\) CW, p. 84. In articulating the concept of *anima legis* thus, the Lords were at odds with Edward Plowden’s formulation that ‘the King is a name of continuance … and in this name the King never dies’, which forms the basis for much of the work of Ernst Kantorowicz and Marie Axton on ‘the King’s two bodies’ and ‘the Queen’s two bodies’ respectively.

\(^{181}\) On the semiotics of heraldry, its functions as a language and as a ‘face’ of the queen, see Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship*, pp. 28ff.; Riehl, *Face of Queenship*, pp. 101-21.

\(^{182}\) CW, p. 95.
petitioners’ cannot accept a prince’s word as binding, the polity crumbles. But a clearer reference to the same motto is found in Elizabeth’s Latin oration during her visit to Cambridge in 1564. The only problem is that – unless we are to disbelieve the separate reports of two listeners who independently took down aural transcriptions of her speech – the queen muddled up the name of the author from whom she took inspiration. Apologising for her lack of feminine modesty, Elizabeth condemns the ‘rudem et incultum sermonem’ (‘rude and uncultivated language’) of her own Latinity, but justifies her boldness in speaking nonetheless by stressing her desire to propagate a Cantabrigian love of learning through her own example. She continues:

*Quod ad propagationem attinet, verba superiorum, (ut inquit Demostenes) pro libris sunt inferiorum, et vim legis exemplar principis habet.*

(BL MS Sloane version)

Regarding what pertains to propagation, the words of superiors as Demosthenes said, are as the books of their inferiors, and the example of a prince has force in law.

(Translation: *CW*, p. 87, ‘Speech 7’)

or

*Quod ad propagationem spectat, unum  ullud apud Demosthenem memini: superiorum verba apud Inferiores librorum locum habent, et Principum dicta legum autoritatem apud subditos retinent.*

(FSL version)

As Jaime Goodrich points out, Elizabeth cites a Greek author immediately after her recitation of a standard feminine modesty topos, to signal that she was in fact every bit as erudite as the occasion demanded. But it seems evident to me that Elizabeth got this one wrong. Marcus, Mueller and Rose have been unable to find a matching reference, suggesting in their footnote

---

183 Nicholas Robinson was likely responsible for transcribing a version of this speech for the university’s records, preserved at FSL, MS V. A. 176, fol. 87r. This forms the copy-text for *Progresses*, I, 429. The version in Rudolph Wilkinson’s commonplace book at BL, MS Sloane 401, fol. 38, is used in *CW*, ‘Speech 7’, p. 87, and *ACFLO* p. 123, where there is a useful discussion of textual variants found in later versions.

184 Goodrich, *Faithful Translators*, p. 130.
that ‘the sense if not the wording’ may be found in an exhortation to the Athenians ascribed until the twentieth century to Demosthenes:

You need not go abroad for examples to teach you what you should do. Take Themistocles, who was your general in the sea-fight at Salamis, and Miltiades, who commanded at Marathon [...] No one would dream of speaking of Themistocles’ fight at Salamis, but of the Athenians’ fight, nor of Miltiades’ battle at Marathon, but of the Athenians’ battle.185

This is unconvincing. As Marcus, Mueller and Rose concede, the language of the pseudo-Demosthenes in no way matches that of Elizabeth’s speech.186 The sense is equally disconnected. The point being made in On Organisation is that the achievements of a leader are indistinguishable from those of their people. Elizabeth, by contrast, cites a classical author to assert the superior significance of her words and deeds from those of her ‘inferiors’. In Isocrates’ maxim, we are told that the very word of a ruler has more binding force than the ‘oaths’ – ὅρκους – of lesser men; his words are more binding than speech acts that would usually be considered to have legal force. In Cambridge, Elizabeth adapts this maxim and applies it to a new hierarchy of verbal forms: her words have more legal force even than others’ books. Spoken in a city of books, this construction is clearly framed as an erudite assertion of Elizabeth’s authority over even her hosts and their own bookish forms of learned authority – despite her lip service to the expectation of her ‘foeminilis pudor’. One can only speculate on what her listeners made of this double-edged display of erudition – and the mistake in the middle of it. Fortunately, Ascham was not there to see it.187

---

186 Shenk also notes the unlikeliness of Demosthenes as a source of this quotation, but tentatively offers instead a maxim from the Institutes of Justinian, 1.2.6: quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem (‘what has pleased the prince has force of law’). This is not quite right: Elizabeth is not in any sense talking about her ‘pleasure’ here, or asserting the power of tyrannical whim, but about the relationship between two forms of speech: the books of princes (which are as oaths), and the law. Shenk, ‘Learned Authority’, p. 83.
187 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, ii, 103 (‘Letter LIX’); Ascham tells Leicester he will be unable to join the visit to Cambridge as his wife is due to give birth.
In adapting the maxim of Isocrates to the topical needs of her visit to Cambridge, Elizabeth was herself participating in the circulation, condemned by Ascham, of wisdom ‘lerned, borowed, or stolne, from some one of those worthie wittes of Athens’. Perhaps she simply made a mistake by crediting Demosthenes, or perhaps she chose to disguise just how far she had adapted the content from Isocrates’ original, wrestling it into relevance, by cloaking the source. Yet Ascham, whatever he may have said in The scholemaster about the shallowness of such appropriation when it was done by foreigners, littered his own writing with crudely applied quotations: as Crane observes, under different regimes he used the same quotation from Sophocles to flatter both Stephen Gardiner and William Cecil.188

In my next chapter, which examines Elizabeth’s early translations and other evidence for her education, I will touch again on Ascham’s claim to reject common-placing. In this chapter, I have asserted that Ascham’s account of Elizabeth’s education is inconsistent, self-interested and unreliable; perhaps it is no wonder that his writing practices also show their share of inconsistencies. Ascham never ceased in his efforts to attach himself to the coattails of Elizabeth’s posterity and his indefatigability became a self-fulfilling prophecy. In another financial plea, he wrote to the Earl of Leicester in 1566 of his equanimity in poverty:

> for if I die, all my things die with me, and yet the poor service that I have done to Queen ELIZABETH shall live still, and never die, so long as her noble hand and excellent learning in the Greek and Latin tongue shall be known to the world.189

This letter makes remarkable reading, given the extent to which Ascham achieved his wish. Our cultural myths of Elizabeth Tudor’s ‘excellent learning’ still place Ascham at their centre, however unreliable his evidence turns out on close analysis to be. Yet the unreliability of Ascham’s account is not reason itself to dismiss Elizabeth’s attested educational achievements.

---

188 Crane, Framing Authority, p. 99.
189 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, ii, 128 (‘Letter LXXV’).
In my next chapter, I discuss the fascinating translations she undertook in her youth and explore the wealth of evidence beyond Ascham for the nature of her youthful ‘learning’. Although the learned persona of Elizabeth Tudor’s youth was heavily shaped by Protestant men so keen to deploy it for partisan purposes, in these same years Elizabeth was mastering the intellectual tools that eventually enabled her to deploy for herself the trappings of an educated and ‘wise’ queen.
Chapter 2: ‘Languages, Lernynges and Vertues’

i. Introduction

As we have seen in Chapter 1, much of the posthumous perception of Elizabeth’s education can be traced back to the mythmaking of Roger Ascham. Yet it was John Bale who introduced print readers across Europe to the ideal of Elizabeth as a precocious princess, when he published *A godly medytacyon* in Germany in April 1548.¹ Ascham had then only been Elizabeth’s tutor for a few months, and the translation with which Bale celebrated the young woman’s learned persona had taken shape years earlier, without Ascham’s involvement.

The young Lady Elizabeth – restored to the succession in the spring of 1544, but still debarmed by bastardy from the title of Princess – had initially prepared her translation as a New Year’s gift for her stepmother Katherine Parr. She organised the manuscript in the manner of a printed book, embroidered the cover with Parr’s initials (KP) and dated her dedicatory letter ‘the lasted daye of the yeare of our lord god, 1544’.² If this was 31 December 1544, she was eleven years old. Elizabeth’s title read simply: ‘The Glasse of the Synnefulle Soule’.³

*Le Miroir*, ‘The Glasse’ and Bale’s *A godly medytacyon* are now familiar terrain to scholars of early modern humanism and queenship. Feminist critics, among them Anne Lake Prescott, Maureen Quilligan and Jaime Goodrich, have demonstrated that Bale’s publication made visible a network of relationships between three royal women, a network which serves as one elite model of ways that women might collaborate on translation and devotional texts in order

---

¹ See Chapter 1, section i.
² Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Cherry 36, fol. 4v. For a useful facsimile edition, despite its anachronistic commentary, see Marc Shell, *Elizabeth’s Glass* (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska UP, 1993).
³ Shell, *Elizabeth’s Glass*, fol. 6v.
to negotiate collective religious identities amid the theological upheaval of the mid-sixteenth century.⁴ Some have sought to add a fourth woman to this network, noting that Marguerite had been a correspondent of Elizabeth’s mother Anne Boleyn and conjecturing that Elizabeth may have worked from a copy of Marguerite’s text inherited from Boleyn.⁵ There is no evidence for this conjecture, although it lies behind much of the recent interest in this translation.⁶ Nonetheless, the language Elizabeth chooses to render Marguerite’s discussion of disgraced wives is significant and I will discuss it at this chapter’s close.

All this is well-trod ground. But however well-trod, Bale’s work is an essential text for any study of the uses and abuses of Elizabeth’s learned persona. In his dedicatory letter, Bale promises to amplify her voice; yet as I will demonstrate, he shapes her image and reworks her text to co-opt her into his own evangelical campaign. But neither Bale nor Ascham were spinning gold from straw. In this chapter, I demonstrate that Elizabeth was indeed a talented linguist, although my assessment of the textual evidence from the course of her life – particularly of her sententiae and her translation of Plutarch’s De Curiositate – shows that her grasp of Greek was shakier than we have seen Ascham claim. As one point of comparison, she was apparently less confident in Greek than Jane Lumley. I also argue that Bale’s emphasis on Elizabeth’s scriptural knowledge – an emphasis repeated on Elizabeth’s accession by the many evangelicals who sought to claim her as their own – served the agenda of a religious group to

---


⁵ This tradition can be traced to Percy Ames, The Mirror of the Sinful Soul, facs. of 1544 ms (London: Asher, 1897), p. 31. Quilligan claims that ‘The text that Elizabeth translated was [one] Anne Boleyn had brought home from the court of Marguerite de Navarre’, but we know from work by Mueller and Scodel, building on Renja Salminen, that Elizabeth worked from an edition published in December 1533. Quilligan, Incest and Agency, p. 47. Ellis, ‘The Juvenile Translations of Elizabeth Tudor’, p. 160: ‘Elizabeth’s evangelically-minded mother Anne Boleyn owned a copy’, asserted without citation.

whom her ‘languages, lernynges and vertues’, in Bale’s words, were at their most highly prized in the service of solascripturism.\textsuperscript{7}

Throughout her lifetime and beyond, Elizabeth’s youthful reputation for erudition was burnished by hagiographers who framed her as an icon of a providential evangelical narrative: this religio-nationalist agenda has also been behind historic efforts to discredit the intellectual hinterland of her sister Mary. In fact, a superb cadre of contemporary scholars – chief among them Aysha Pollnitz – have in recent years drawn attention to the sophisticated education received by Mary and to her own translations.\textsuperscript{8} In the years before Edward VI’s accession, the sisters shared an erudite engagement with Erasmian ideas. In the same year that Mary collaborated with Parr to translate Erasmus’ \textit{Paraphrase of the Gospel of St John}, Elizabeth was probably translating his \textit{Enquiry Concerning Faith}. The construction of Elizabeth as a linguistic warrior for the propagation of the English Gospels, which we can trace from 1548 onwards, was by contrast a symptom of the Edwardian extremism that would push the English Reformation in a more radical direction. In 1550, the year Ascham began writing to Sturm about Elizabeth and two years after Bale’s text was published, Bishop John Hooper would write to Bullinger that Elizabeth would play a central role in his own project to quash ‘the many-headed monster’ of English Catholicism:

\begin{quote}
She not only knows what the true religion is, but has acquired such proficiency in Greek and Latin, that she is able to defend it by the most just arguments and the most happy talent; so that she encounters few adversaries whom she does not overcome.\textsuperscript{9}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{7} A godly medytyacon, F1'.
\textsuperscript{9} Hastings Robinson, \textit{Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation} (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1846), 1, 76.
When in her own reign she attempted to steer a middle ground, Elizabeth’s most anti-Catholic subjects would chide her to reclaim the gospelling persona men like Bale, Hooper and Ascham had first crafted for her.

As Karen Cunningham has noted, in *The scholemaster* Ascham erases from his narrative ‘the women who had tutored and mentored the young princess, some of whom Ascham himself had negotiated with – Lady Bryan of Hatfield Place, Kate Champernowne of Devonshire, Catherine Parr’.10 In recent decades, feminist scholars have sought to correct this, rereading Elizabeth’s education against advances in our understanding of Parr’s intellectual life. But Elizabeth was also, by her early teens, beginning to shape her own persona. In this chapter, I attribute to Elizabeth the selection of a Greek line of text printed in *A godly medytacyon* and identify its source, which Bale failed to recognise and Parr, who did not know Greek, could not have edited. Mentored by women, publicised by men, Elizabeth was taking her first steps in an intellectual landscape which she would later navigate with confidence.

ii. Women and translation: a literature review

In Britain and the United States, the emergence of the organised women’s movement in the 1970s gave new impetus to feminist scholarship in the humanities. 1977 saw the publication of Joan Kelly-Gadol’s pivotal essay ‘Did Women Have a Renaissance?’, with its argument that a shift from feudalism to capitalism, in what we now call the ‘early modern’ period, ensured that ‘the exercise of political power by women was far more rare than under feudalism’.11

---

11 Joan Kelly-Gadol, ‘Did Women Have a Renaissance?’, in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. by Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koontz (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 137-64 (p. 148). Kelly-Gadol’s essay looked in detail only at Italian city states and elite women, stretching this as far as to include
Scholars of humanism responded with questions about the extent of sixteenth-century women’s education. Most were pessimistic. In 1983, Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine asked the question: ‘women humanists – education for what?’ Using the Italian aristocrats Isotta Nogarola and Cassandra Fedele as key case studies, Grafton and Jardine answered their own question with evidence that the education of women caused profound anxiety among their own mentors. Italian humanist men such as Lauro Quirini, Leonardo Bruni and Guarino Veronese imposed limits on their female interlocutors in the interests of preserving feminine chastity, which could not survive engagement with ‘the public sphere’. Unlike their brothers, these women could not draw utility from their education ‘to marshal the morality of humanism in the service of the State in the fifteenth century’ – although like needlework, literary pastimes might keep them out of trouble. In 1998, Diane Purkiss applied a similar approach to English women, suggesting that ‘perhaps the very fact that a girl could not use her elaborate humanist education enhanced its value as conspicuously useless, like buying a banquet in order to throw it away uneaten’.

Margaret Hannay’s work was pivotal in extending this pessimistic paradigm to studies of early modern women’s translation. In 1985, Hannay edited a ground-breaking collection, Silent but

---

‘lesser aristocratic women as well as the great’. It also relies heavily on courtly love literature as real-life evidence for women’s sexual freedom under feudalism.

12 Grafton and Jardine, From Humanism to the Humanities, pp. 29-57.
13 Grafton and Jardine, From Humanism to the Humanities, p. 41. When Grafton and Jardine describe the ‘public sphere’ here, they are primarily talking about the republic of letters into which a humanist education might give an ambitious man access. The definition of the ‘public sphere’ has, however, been a fraught locus for historical debate since the translation into English of Jürgen Habermas’ The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, trans. by Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity, 1989). Habermas defines the public sphere quite differently and locates it later, in the early eighteenth century. The key text is Amanda Vickery, who in a wide-ranging essay warns in part against the inclination of period specialists to identify their own era as unique in constructing a (usually masculine) public sphere. Vickery also deconstructs a range of assertions by historians that their own specialist period constituted the point where ‘women’s status had deteriorated from a past golden age’, Vickery, ‘Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women’s History’, HJ, 36 (1993), 383-414 (p. 405). See also Natalie Zemon Davis, “Women’s History” In Transition: The European Case’, Feminist Studies, 3 (1976), 83-103.
14 Grafton and Jardine, From Humanism to the Humanities, p. 44.
for the Word. In her introduction, Hannay writes that, ‘Tudor women rarely violated the boundaries set for them unless their very lives were at stake’; her contributors do not set out to find explicit expressions of autonomy in their female subjects, but pioneer a model of criticism which is alert to subtle acts of resistance, particularly by female translators.\(^{16}\) This approach underlies Anne Lake Prescott’s analysis of ‘The Glasse’, in which she claims Elizabeth ‘toned down the religious fervour’ of Marguerite’s text to conform to Henrician norms but nonetheless, in an act of resistance against the father who had executed her mother, subverted Marguerite’s analogy of God as a loving father.\(^{17}\) In another important essay, Mary Ellen Lamb highlights John Florio’s 1603 formulation that ‘all translations are reputed femalls, delivered at second hand’, and introduces the phrase ‘degraded activity’ – sometimes attributed to Hannay herself – to describe this feminine and inferior form of literary production.\(^{18}\) For most contributors to this volume, evidence that a Tudor woman had been provided with an education sufficient to translate devotional work did not indicate that she had been intended or prepared for engagement in political life.

With the turn of the twenty-first century, scholarly attitudes towards women’s education have become more optimistic, yet have stressed the importance of class distinction. Many researchers have emphasised translation as a mode through which elite women actively participated in contemporary debates. In 1997, Jonathan Goldberg argued that early modern female writers were often comfortable with articulating ego and desire, and lambasted ‘the recovery of morally pure, suffering subjects’ by feminist critics.\(^{19}\) In her pivotal 2005 book,

---


\(^{17}\) Prescott, ‘Pearl of the Valois’, p. 68.


Women Latin Poets, Jane Stevenson demonstrated that European women had long been active participants in early modern Latinity as a point of access to the ‘public sphere’, even as this invited them to grapple with and undermine Latin as ‘the language of authority […] “masculine”, because of its order, logical structure, fixedness, permanence’. Brenda Hosington’s vital work has clarified the long legacy of aristocratic female translators – not least among them, Margaret Beaufort – from which Mary and Elizabeth could draw models. Building on Gibson, Chris Laoutaris has argued of Roper, Mary Sidney Herbert and the Cooke sisters that ‘the ambitious political reach of their endeavours challenges the preconception that translation was a “degraded activity” […] religious translation was not a second-best alternative to secular or “original composition”, nor a means of softening the provocative edge of their forays into print and manuscript circulation’. Similarly, Micheline White has perceptively suggested that feminist critics who ‘tended to focus on authors’ apparent resistance to patriarchal attitudes’ had ‘minimised the cultural significance of women’s religious activities’ and the active interventions women could make in a dominant culture through the translation of religious texts. White, like many contemporary feminist scholars, continues to explore the networks of peers and family connections through which early modern women developed their translations and devotional work. This approach also builds on previous advances in our understanding of the ways in which early modern literature was


generally collaborative. In the same time frame, as Marcus, Mueller and Rose write, ‘boundaries between what previously were rigidly demarcated as literary and non-literary texts have become more fluid’, encouraging new scrutiny of supposedly ‘female’ genres like letters, printing paratexts, and translations.

In her comprehensive 2013 book, *Faithful Translators*, Jaime Goodrich establishes that by Edward VI’s reign, the name of a translator often took precedence on titlepages over that of the ‘original’ author – at least in the case of prominent male translators. The idea of translation as necessarily ‘female’ or ‘second hand’ does not appear to have by then been entrenched, nor by Florio’s pronouncement in 1603. Goodrich lists numerous examples of books by women where paratextual evidence suggests that ‘the female translator often had credibility as a source whose authority was as important as the original author’ – or sometimes more so. They were not only aristocrats. In 1557, Thomas More’s granddaughter Mary Basset became the first gentlewoman to publish a translation under her own name. By 1582, Thomas Bentley was praising ‘Sundrie right famous Queenes, noble Ladies, virtuous Virgins and godlie Gentlewomen’ for their work in translation. Translation had become a contribution that women of many classes could make to public life, alongside men.

---

25 CW, p. xii.
iii. Royal women and translation

Like many of the women whom Hosington, White and Stevenson have highlighted, Mary and Elizabeth Tudor were both products of a shared educational network and their early devotional work was nurtured in collaborative exchanges. This shared engagement was most visible when Parr involved both in her project to translate the Gospel paraphrases of Erasmus. The resultant text would eventually be propagated by the Edwardian regime, with a preface by Nicholas Udall which hailed Erasmus’ achievement in sifting out ‘the trashe and bagguage stuffe that through papistical tradicions had founde a waye to crepe in’. 29 In his dedication to Parr, he praised her as a patroness of ‘godly studies’, who employed ‘learned men’ in ‘the furtherance of godly knowledge’. 30 The concept of ‘godly learning’ was by this period just beginning to gain currency as a code for Protestant approaches to text, even though, as John Morgan has carefully elucidated, among Puritans and Calvinists, the wrong type of ‘learning’ would eventually be seen as a threat to the ‘enthusiasm’ and ‘direct apprehension’ of the conversion experience. 31 The term ‘godly’ was not yet policed in exclusively confessional terms and its specific association with Puritanism was far in the future: Mary Tudor herself wrote to the Bishop of London in March 1553 of her dismay at heresy’s growth under her brother and of her determination to enforce instead ‘all virtue and godly living’ – that is, Catholicism. 32 But we can see the association between scripturalism, Protestantism and ‘godliness’ already emerging when in 1544, submitting her manuscript of ‘The Glasse’, Elizabeth praised Parr’s

29 Nicholas Udall, ‘The preface unto the King’s Majestie’, in Erasmus, The first tome or volume of the paraphrases (London, 1548), Bii.
zeal ‘towards all godly learning’. A year later, she wrote to Parr that her work translating Calvin’s *Institutes* had reminded her that ‘the invention of letters’ surpassed all other modes of representation; neither ‘the art of painting, sculpting or engraving’ could capture His Word and Scripture’. She was adapting a classically scripturalist and iconoclastic trope, appropriately for a translator of Calvin.

Yet the content of Elizabeth’s adolescent translations, as I argue below, did not commit her to a fully reformist position, especially on the Eucharist. Nor does Parr’s work with her stepdaughters seem to have had such a divisively confessional aim. As Pollnitz and Goodrich have each painstakingly argued, when the *Paraphrases* project first developed in 1545, the Edwardian retrenchment was three years away, and in the event translating Erasmus did not particularly compromise Mary’s longstanding religious position. Although she apparently became ill, and her translation of the Gospel of Saint John was completed by her chaplain Francis Mallet, Goodrich’s analysis reveals that the resulting text still hinted at the apostolic succession of Peter, celebrated the sacramental nature of the Mass, and sided with More over Tyndale in the vexed question of whether to translate *poenitentia* as ‘penance’ or ‘repentance’. Had Mary feigned illness to drop the project, it seems unlikely the work would have been completed in a theological style that still risked confrontation with the ‘hotter’ reformers involved. Pollnitz persuasively advises us to accept the *Paraphrases* as evidence ‘of the broad allegiance to Erasmian ideas, such as the *verbum dei* and the critical importance of faith and clerical diligence, in sixteenth-century England’.

---

36 Goodrich, *Faithful Translators*, pp. 84-7.
Elizabeth acted as secretary for Parr at least once, writing to Mary on her behalf to chivvy her gently about completion.\textsuperscript{38} Elizabeth was not assigned a Gospel to translate, being perhaps too young, but in recent years it has been suggested that in 1544 she translated one of Erasmus’ \textit{Colloquies}. The German traveller Paul Hentzner reports that in 1598 he had seen at Windsor a French translation of ‘Dialogus Fidei ex Erasmus Roterodamo’, dedicated by Elizabeth to her father.\textsuperscript{39} Some early modernists have theorised that this translation might have been made for Henry the same New Year that Elizabeth gifted ‘The Glasse’ to Parr.\textsuperscript{40} Yet most are happy to look no further than Hentzner’s mangling of Erasmus’ title: only Jonathan Gibson has identified it as the work known better as \textit{Inquisitio de fide}.\textsuperscript{41} This is a dialogue staged between Aulus, a Roman Catholic, and Barbatius, a Lutheran. Although Erasmus indicates his reader should identify with Aulus, Aulus increasingly finds he has no real differences with Barbatius, who satisfies him by being able to affirm the Apostles’ Creed.\textsuperscript{42} The tone is extraordinarily ecumenical, even more so for being published a mere six months before Erasmus turned on Luther completely in \textit{De libero arbitrio diatribe sive collatio}. It would have made a fitting pair with Marguerite’s poem. Both works express reformist but conservative religious sentiment; both are translations into French. In 1544-5, therefore, we have evidence of Elizabeth and Mary both translating Erasmus, both engaging in the same humanist educational practices, following similar curricula to those seen in Catholic courts around Europe.


\textsuperscript{39} Paul Hentzner, \textit{Itinerarium} (Nuremberg, 1612), Q4.


As both sisters became regnant queens, however, the status of each in turn was radically elevated and their opportunities to participate in collegiate exchanges became constrained by new political dynamics. Elizabeth in particular, as her reign gradually extended over decades, became increasingly intellectually isolated. As I suggest in my Epilogue, by the 1580s and 1590s the only people with whom she could engage on anything like terms of equality were fellow monarchs. Back in the 1540s, Elizabeth’s shared intellectual hinterland with Mary would soon be fragmented by the forces of religious polarisation.

Both Mary and Elizabeth Tudor produced translations which remain among our best evidence for the quality of their education. But what was their education for? The childhoods of both women were marked by disruptive shifts in their legal and political status, which complicate any attempts to delineate the ‘intended’ futures for which their various educational programmes were drafted. One prospect that floated at times before each of them was a diplomatic marriage – for this, a grounding in languages was essential. In his first plan for Mary’s education, *De institutione feminae Christianae* (1523), the conservative Juan Luis Vives had echoed the Italian humanists’ concern for female chastity, advocating needlework, the New Testament, and poetry in translation. Qualifications for the ‘public sphere’ were off-limits: a woman should ‘appear in public on occasion, but as rarely as possible’, for fear of polluting her chastity.43 Even in *Epistola I de ratione studii puerilis*, the expanded curriculum Vives probably produced the following year in response to Catherine of Aragon’s greater ambition for her daughter, the study of Greek and political history was still ‘marginalised’.44 Nonetheless, Pollnitz has shown

43 Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, ed. and trans. by Charles Fantazzi (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2000). See also p. 85: ‘For many things are required of a man: wisdom, eloquence, knowledge of political affairs, talent, memory, some trade to live by, justice, liberality, magnanimity etc. … But in a woman, no one requires eloquence or talent or wisdom or professional skills or administration of the republic or justice or generosity; no one asks anything of her but chastity.’ See also Betty S. Travitsky, ‘Reprinting Tudor History, the Case of Catherine of Aragon’, *RQ*, 50 (1997), 164-74.
44 Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 131.
that in the case of Mary, Catherine of Aragon took clear steps to prepare her daughter for princely rule, whether as a regent, a regnant queen, or simply as a politically active magnate.\textsuperscript{45} Constance Jordan, drawing on Stanford E. Lehmberg, has even suggested that Thomas Elyot’s \textit{Defence of Good Women} was originally drafted with the encouragement of Eustache Chapuys as a coded proposal that Catherine should prepare to act as a regent for a future regnant Mary.\textsuperscript{46} Both Pollnitz and Alexander Samson remind us that Catherine of Aragon’s own family provided Mary with several models of ‘active participation in government’ by royal women, including Catherine’s mother Isabella of Castile.\textsuperscript{47}

\textit{iv. Elizabeth Tudor’s early education}

Elizabeth had no such figure who could champion her education, at least until Katherine Parr’s arrival as her stepmother. Anne Boleyn had been executed before her daughter began formal instruction.\textsuperscript{48} Nonetheless, despite what Pollnitz aptly terms his ‘relentless self-promotion’, Roger Ascham was by no means her only tutor.\textsuperscript{49} Woudhuysen has established that the earliest attested versions of Elizabeth’s hand show the influence of the French Huguenot tutor, Jean Belmain (sometimes Belmaine or Belleman).\textsuperscript{50} Belmain’s influence is evident as early as Elizabeth’s presents to Parr and Henry VIII of 1544/45, which may make him her first tutor

\begin{multicols}{1}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{45} Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’; Pollnitz, \textit{Princely Education}, pp. 199-263.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Pollnitz, ‘\textit{Princely Education}’, p. 229; Alexander Samson, ‘Power Sharing; The Co-Monarchy of Philip and Mary’, in \textit{Tudor Queenship}, pp. 159-72 (p. 161); Alexander Samson, \textit{Mary and Philip}, p. 204.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Rayne Allinson quotes Latymer’s memoir of Anne Boleyn to suggest that Anne Boleyn ‘mapped out’ a ‘robust humanist education’ for Elizabeth. However, in the passage to which she refers, Latymer only claims that Boleyn ‘vowed to almighty God that if it wolde please hym to prolonge her dayes to see the trayninge upp of hir younge and tender babe prince Elizabeth’, she would provide a fine education in languages and statesmanship. This anecdote, with its ironic pathos, was not evidence that a formal programme existed, merely an opportunity for Latymer to praise Elizabeth, his dedicatee, for attaining these goals despite her mother’s death. Allinson, \textit{Monarchy of Letters}, p. 13; ‘William Latymer’s Chronicille of Anne Bulleyne’, p. 63.
\item \textsuperscript{49} Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 137.
\item \textsuperscript{50} Woudhuysen, ‘The Queen’s Own Hand’, pp. 2-4.
\end{itemize}
\end{multicols}
beyond her longest-serving governess Katherine Champernowne (later Astley or Ashley). The role of John Picton, whom Mary’s council claimed in 1554 not to have heard of, is unclear.\footnote{Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 133; David Loades, Elizabeth: A Life (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2003; repr. 2006), p. 105.} Building on Woudhuysen’s work, Jonathan Gibson has established that Elizabeth’s Italian tutor, Giovambattista Castiglione (or Giovanni Battista Castiglione), likely developed her later hand based on templates by Giovambattista Palatino.\footnote{Jonathan Gibson, ‘The Queen’s Two Hands’, in Representations of Elizabeth I, pp. 47-65.} Belmain had certainly arrived in England by 1544. He had been promoted to tutor Prince Edward by 1546, when William Grindal began his tenure as Elizabeth’s primary tutor. It is not quite the case, as Pollnitz suggests, that Elizabeth’s education developed in isolation from Edward’s, nor, as per the Protestant hagiographic tradition, that they were educated together as the great white hopes of anti-Catholicism.\footnote{Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 133; compare Ames, The Mirror, pp. 30 ff.} The career of Belmain provides us with a different model for thinking about Edward and Elizabeth: he appears to have been tested out on Elizabeth, a child on whose education the governance of the nation did not rest, before being promoted to serve the child whose education really mattered.

Grindal appears to have been a trusted member of Elizabeth’s household. Katherine Astley was interrogated in February 1549 about Elizabeth’s chastity and Thomas Seymour’s behaviour. Astley confessed that on one occasion her alarm had been raised by a complaint from Parr that Seymour had looked into an internal window to Elizabeth’s quarters and seen ‘my Lady Elizabeth cast hir armes about a mans neck’. After questioning Elizabeth’s other women, Astley was satisfied that the event had been invented, ‘for ther cam no man but gryndall the Lady Elizabeth’s scholemaster’.\footnote{Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, vol. 150, fols 85r-86r. Printed as ‘What famyliaritie Kateryn Ashyly hath Known betwixt the Lord Admyrall & the Lady Elizabeths grace’, in Progresses I, 44-6. See also CW, pp. 25-30.} Astley hypothesised that a jealous Parr had invented the
story as an excuse to increase surveillance of Elizabeth. There may be a relationship between this allegation and Thomas Parry’s recollection of an incident when Parr herself found Elizabeth and Seymour, ‘he having her in his Armes’.\(^{\text{55}}\) What is clear is that Katherine Astley saw Grindal’s intimate position in Elizabeth’s domestic space as safe and habitual – there is no suggestion that he could have been the mystery man taking liberties with her charge.

Grindal died around the first few days of 1548 and Ascham took over soon after, even though Parr and Seymour had preferred their lawyer Francis Goldsmith.\(^{\text{56}}\) But Ascham was not teaching her alone. Simon Adams and David Scott Gehring have recently established that the diplomat Johannes Spithovius was also a tutor in the house at this time and might have exposed her to German Lutheran thinking.\(^{\text{57}}\) Edmund Allen, as her chaplain, appears also to have been a significant religious influence. Allen, a reformer who had travelled in Germany, had been one of the team of translators recruited by Parr to work on the Paraphrases. In February 1548, Elizabeth used her influence to ensure that Seymour provided him with a benefice at Welford in Berkshire.\(^{\text{58}}\) Answering questions later about her relationship with Seymour, Elizabeth would insist to Robert Tyrwhit and the Duke of Somerset that she and Parry had kept their main discussion of the subject to her financial dealings with Seymour, among them ‘Allen’s matter’. In their commentary on this letter, Marcus, Mueller and Rose gloss this reference as ‘obscure’, but it seems clear that she was referring to their shared patronage of Allen.\(^{\text{59}}\) In defending her virtue, it would be appropriate for Elizabeth to stress her promotion of reformist clerics – especially in a letter to the reformist Somerset. Astley employed a similar manoeuvre

\(^{\text{55}}\) Cecil Papers, as above. Printed as ‘Thomas Parrye Coffurer to the Lady Elizabeths Grace confession’, in Progresses, 1, 43-4.

\(^{\text{56}}\) Susan E. James, Kateryn Parr: The Making of a Queen (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1999), p. 322.


in her own testimony, when she stated ‘her grace never sent to him, but for the letter for Allen’.  

Elizabeth may have gone further in her support for Allen. On 31 December 1547, when Grindal was dead or dying, the fourteen-year-old Elizabeth wrote to Cecil to ask that he help obtain a licence to preach for Hugh Goodacar (or Goodacre), ‘knowen unto us […] of honest conversation and sober living, as of sufficient learning and Judgement in the Scriptures to preache the worde of god’. Elizabeth mentioned that Cecil had already helped her obtain licences ‘for diverse other honest men’; the editors of this newly discovered letter suggest Allen was one of them. The request for Goodacar appears to have been unsuccessful, but he was close to John Bale and this letter suggests one connection between Elizabeth and Bale, shortly before he published her translation of ‘The Glasse’. As for Allen, Doran persuasively argues that throughout her reign, Elizabeth’s views on the Eucharist ‘hardly moved on’ from a catechism Allen had written in 1551, in which he rejected the Zwinglian view of the Lord’s Supper as purely memorial, or ‘a bare sygne and an unfruitfull token’. In rejecting this view, Allen was also implicitly rejecting the approach of Ascham, who as I have outlined above would describe the Supper as ‘sigillum [sigillum] & monumentum’ (‘a sign and memorial’). Instead, Allen described it as ‘the verye true Communion and participation of the true bodye and bloude of Christ’, but avoided direct reference to the ‘real presence’ or the terminology of the ‘ubiquity of Christ’. This was a via media Elizabeth would pursue throughout her lifetime.

---

61 TNA, SP 10/2/34, fols 116r, discussed in Bryson and Evans, ‘Seven Rediscovered Letters of Princess Elizabeth Tudor’.
63 See Chapter 1, section iii.
64 Edmund Allen, A cathechisme (London, 1551).
Ascham always stressed Elizabeth’s capacity for Greek, his favourite language. Yet the
evidence of Elizabeth’s youthful compositions suggests her strongest linguistic suits were
French and Italian. When in December 1545 she translated Parr’s Prayers and meditations into
three languages for Henry VIII, it was her French translation that Mueller and Scodel term
‘most confidently free and idiomatic’. Mueller and Scodel have demonstrated that each
translation, into Latin, French and Italian, bears an independent relationship to Parr’s text. She
was not lifting prose from similar devotional texts in the same language or using one translation
as a model for another. Despite the reliance on cognate forms she would show in other
translations, the Italian and Latin versions rarely share cognates.65 Throughout her life,
Elizabeth handled correspondence regularly in those three languages, with holograph letters
surviving in each.66

Prayers and meditations was drawn from the first work published under Parr’s name, although
she was also responsible for the Psalms and prayers published as a model for national prayer
as Henry left for war in 1544.67 Although it mutes the ‘ecstatic’ and erotic qualities of its
medieval models, Prayers and meditations is, as Mueller has elucidated, a lyric expression of
the devotion necessary to submit to God, which also expresses the embrace of submissive
techniques likely required to survive as Henry’s wife.68 White has taught us to understand
Psalms and prayers as the model for a new kind of ‘royal collaboration’ between Parr and
Henry: authorised and inspired by the king, ‘penned’ and ‘set forth’ by the queen, distributed
by Parr at court with images of Henry’s arms, rather than hers.69 I therefore suggest that

65 TI, pp. 129-33.
66 Inter alia, Allinson, Monarchy of Letters, pp. 17-35.
67 James, Kateryn Parr, p. 206; Kimberly Coles, Religion, Reform, and Women’s Writing in Early Modern
68 Janel Mueller, ‘Devotion as Difference: Intertextuality in Queen Katherine Parr’s “Prayers or Meditations”
(1545)’, HLQ, 53 (1990), 171-97.
69 Micheline White, ‘Katherine Parr, Henry VIII and Royal Literary Collaboration’, in Gender, Authorship and
Elizabeth, in choosing to translate for Henry a text to which his wife had put her name earlier that year, was equally embracing this model of ‘royal collaboration’. Her presentation text lists first Catherine’s titles, then Henry’s in formal address, and finally appends her own name – not in the main text of the dedicatory epistle, but incorporated into the staging of Henry’s own name. This is a visual as well as textual attempt to incorporate herself into the heart of a literary family. Notoriously, Elizabeth describes herself as ‘quae non modo virtutum tuarum imitatrix, sed illarum etiam haeres esse debeam’ (‘one who should not only be an imitator of your values, but an inheritor of them’). Hosington is extreme when she suggests that Elizabeth was ‘daringly’ pulling rank over Parr, to whom she was always affectionately deferential, but it is clear that Elizabeth was at pains to assert her place as Henry’s daughter.

Hosington notes that Elizabeth’s translation of Prayers and Meditations and her accompanying epistle to Henry were intended ‘to portray herself as pious and learned’. Yet for a woman who would negotiate shifting definitions of learning and wisdom throughout her life, Elizabeth is imprecise and inconsistent in the terms she uses to translate Parr’s words about pious learning – especially when translating into Latin. When Parr calls on ‘Lord Jesu’ to raise her above earthly things, rejecting worldly vanities such as ‘cunning and policie’, Elizabeth translates the Latin as ‘scientia’ and ‘prudentia’ (CW&C, p. 401; T1, p. 143). As Mueller and Scodel note, her French and Italian terms for ‘policie’ are ‘engin’ and ‘astutia’ respectively, which ‘do capture the negative possibilities’ more fully (T1, p. 143). I have noticed that Elizabeth otherwise uses ‘prudentia’ to express a range of more positive meanings, both earthly and

---

73 For Parr’s writings, I have used Katherine Parr, Complete Works & Correspondence, ed. by Janel Mueller (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2011), pp. 396–421. Further references here to this (CW&C) and to T1 are given in-text. Parr’s text does not have versicle numbers, although Elizabeth superimposes them.
divine. In Elizabeth’s dedicatory epistle to her father, she begs for him to use ‘regia prudentia’ (kingly prudence) in judging her composition fairly (T1, p. 139). At versicle 72, ‘prudentiam celestem’ is used where Parr uses ‘heavenly wisdom’ – the opposite of the sense in which Parr had used ‘policie’ earlier (T1, p. 146; CW&C, p. 406). As Mueller and Scodel have also observed, ‘prudentia’ crops up at v. 91 where Parr again refers to the ‘wisdom’ of God (CW&C, p. 408). But in the poem’s climax, Parr’s language expands to cover a union between her human capacity and God’s capability: in this transcendent union, ‘thou art all my wisdom and cunning’ (CW&C, p. 418). Again, Elizabeth is unable to respond with a stable set of linguistic equivalents. Where ‘prudentia’ had previously represented sinful ‘policie’ and ‘heavenly wisdom’, here it expresses a more human ‘wisdom’. But ‘cunning’, for which Elizabeth had at first chosen the word ‘scientia’, shifts to become ‘peritia’: ‘nam tu prudentiae, et peritia mea’ (T1, p. 156). In Elizabeth’s Italian, God becomes ‘sapientia mia, et ingegno’; in her French, ‘mon engin et sapience’ (T1, p. 177, p. 198). The use of cognates in reverse formation suggests Elizabeth did not see a real distinction between ‘wisdom’ and ‘cunning’ in the English. To confuse matters further, Elizabeth introduces another Latin term, ‘sapientia’. When Parr on another occasion refers to the grace which God provides ‘seasoned with the spice of Thy wisdom’, Elizabeth renders it ‘conditum sale sapientiae tuae’ (CW&C, p. 407; T1, p. 148). Elsewhere in Elizabeth’s Latin corpus, ‘sapiens’ tends to turn up in the sense of human, proverbial wisdom: in her book of sententiae Elizabeth quotes from Proverbs: ‘Qui sapiens est, audit consilia’ (T1, p. 370).

These are the instabilities in vocabulary that mark a young person’s first translations, rather than choices on which we should hang significant psychological claims. They are also not good

74 T1, p. 148.
75 ‘He who is wise listens to counsels.’ Translation from T1. See also Chapter 1, section iii.
reasons to dismiss a twelve-year-old’s achievement. They do, however, suggest that even as the young Elizabeth experimented with a learned persona, she had not developed an understanding of the terminology necessary to engage fully in a Latinate discussion of the semantics of wisdom. ‘The Glasse’ was primarily devotional. Notwithstanding its powerful display of language learning – including in the ‘authoritative’ language of Latin – her gift would have gladdened Vives’ heart with its exhibition of needlework. Bound in crimson silk and embroidered in gold and silver thread, the presentation copy had white pansies in each corner – as Lisa Klein suggests, a play on ‘pensées’ – and various combinations of Henry’s and Katherine’s initials. It was every bit a traditional demonstration of conservative femininity as it was a venture into court life.

Elizabeth would never become famous for her needlework, unlike her ‘feminine’ rival Mary Stuart. But it would be well into her reign before Elizabeth’s hagiographers jettisoned all mention of such domestic arts. Although Ascham touted her preparation for political craft in the posthumous 1570 edition of The scholemaster, Pollnitz has recently reminded us that in an earlier version of 1562-3, Ascham had described Elizabeth as ‘a Mistres of womanhood to all women, & a mirror of cumlie & orderlier lyvinge to all her court […] ridingge most trimlie […] dancing most comlye, in playing of Instrumentts most excellentye in all cunninge needlework, & finest portraiture’.

Pollnitz, following the nineteenth-century editors Charles Henry Cooper, Alfred Katterfeld and George B. Parks, describes this version as a ‘draft’. But in a careful analysis of the original,

---

77 BL Royal MS 18B.XXIV.2, fol. 70r†, quoted in Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 137.
Fred Schurink has shown that it was a manuscript made for court circulation. Furthermore, the existence of a separate manuscript of a dedicatory letter by Ascham to Elizabeth, dated 29 October 1566, adds further evidence that Ascham circulated his pedagogical works at court, perhaps including *The scholemaster*. I have not seen the existence of this manuscript letter referred to by any modern Ascham scholar, although Giles knew and published a version, which Nicholas suggests indicates that *The scholemaster* ‘was packaged within a reforming context’. Giles published this as a dedication to *The scholemaster*, although the only gift-book explicitly mentioned in his version of the text is Ascham’s translation of Peter Martyr Vermigli’s commentaries on Samuel (albeit Ascham emphasises King David’s talent as a ‘teacher’, perhaps linking the two books). The MS indicates that the gift-book includes an unnamed treatise on learning alongside the commentaries.

However, Giles’ version cannot have been derived exclusively from this MS – though it is likely they shared a common source. Not only are there differences of sentence order – with the same biblical citations listed in a different sequence – but at p. 70 of his text Giles’ version includes a Greek quotation purportedly (and unverifiably) from Euripides. In the MS, a large space has been left instead for someone to add the Greek script, though they never completed the task. Greek scholarship was not the purpose of this copy. James Daybell, in passing reference to the letter-book which constitutes Add. MS 33271, describes it as ‘a utilitarian compilation of letters […] which represents a grouping of ‘real’ letters collected as models and arranged under various rhetorical headings’. Most of these, including copies of Thomas

---

79 BL Add. MS 33271, 35r-36r.
Wyatt’s famous letters to his son, follow the ‘Advice to a Son’ mould; intriguingly Schurink, although he does not cite this letter, has described *The scholemaster* as being ‘closely related to the Advice to the Son tradition’, which ‘was essentially a manuscript genre’.\(^{82}\) As Schurink observes, the extant manuscript version of *The scholemaster* is described as written for Ascham’s son, making no mention of Richard Sackville. In his 1567 letter to Elizabeth, Ascham describes *The scholemaster* ‘as a book for the bringing up of [my] children’, as if she was already familiar with it.\(^ {83}\) Clearly the text had circulated at court well before Ascham’s death, and it was packaged in ways that tied it closer to established manuscript genres.

It is therefore possible that the praises of Elizabeth’s more courtly achievements were not, as Pollnitz suggests, scrubbed from the record chiefly to emphasise her training in statecraft and that Ascham ‘had cultivated her for rule from childhood’.\(^ {84}\) While Ascham did switch from one ‘humanist template’ to another, praise for Elizabeth’s courtly virtues may have been considered more suitable for a courtly setting than for the readers of print. Such praise may also have been more appropriate to a marriageable woman of twenty-nine than one of thirty-seven. Ascham may even have belatedly remembered the dangerous legacy of Anne Boleyn, whose musicality and aptitude for dancing haunted Elizabeth’s performance of these talents.\(^ {85}\) But decisions by Ascham and his editors about when to include references to courtly accomplishments should primarily be read in terms of the genre in which the text was circulating at any one time. And while the 1570 version no longer directly links Elizabeth to dancing or riding, its author stresses that he has no opposition to ‘good pasttime’.\(^ {86}\)

\(^{82}\) Schurink, *The Intimacy of Print*, p. 673.
\(^{84}\) Pollnitz, ‘Christian Women or Sovereign Queens’, p. 137-8.
\(^{86}\) Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Gii\(^{2}\)-Giii\(^{2}\).
and courtly sports go together, ‘for the Muses, besides learning, were also ladies of dauncinge, mirthe, and minstrelsie’.  

Whatever the truth of Elizabeth’s dancing abilities, the evidence for her competence in French, Italian and Latin is clear. The evidence regarding Spanish is more slight. No holograph letters in Spanish survive. In his letter to Sturm of 1555, Ascham mentions only Elizabeth’s Greek, Latin, Italian and French; he adds Spanish in The scholemaster. This is our first flimsy clue that she may have begun tuition in Spanish between 1555 and the composition of The scholemaster. The only extant compositions in Spanish attributed to Elizabeth in her lifetime are the ‘Spanish Versicles and Prayers’ published in 1569 as part of Christian prayers and meditations. The prayers were a public assertion of Elizabeth’s piety, and not everyone accepts that she played a direct role in crafting them, although as Marcus, Mueller and Rose note, with her name, image and arms appearing on the frontispiece, ‘it would have been impossible to publish such a volume without Elizabeth’s knowledge and approval’.

Better evidence comes from three ambassadors who actually dealt with Elizabeth in Spanish. In a dispatch of 1566, Diego Guzmán de Silva informs Philip II of Spain of an audience he had been given by the queen on 2 February, in which they discussed the wording of a letter written to her in Spanish by the Emperor Ferdinand, ‘with his own hand’. Elizabeth admitted she had concerns about the letter, which laid out the Austrian conditions for her proposed marriage to Ferdinand’s brother, the Archduke Charles. Guzmán de Silva offered to parse Ferdinand’s language and Elizabeth agreed, ‘ordering a desk in which she kept the letter to be brought to

---

87 Ascham, Scholemaster, Giiiv.
89 Christian prayers and meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke and Latine (London, 1569). This publication is discussed extensively in Chapter 5.
91 Calendar of State Papers, Spain (Simancas), Volume 1, 1558-1567, ‘4 Feb 1565/6’, pp. 519-20.
her’. She then read the letter aloud. The strong implication of the ambassador’s report home is that Elizabeth had sufficient Spanish to navigate Ferdinand’s letter without the support of a secretary – none being present – but benefited from Guzmán de Silva’s help in understanding tone and nuance. Of the content, he writes: ‘the substance of it is similar to the Italian memorandum which I mentioned Sussex had sent me although the words are somewhat different in Spanish, in which language the letter is written’. Elizabeth does not appear to have butchered the Spanish pronunciation. Guzmán de Silva, who was quite capable of passing waspish judgement elsewhere, makes no negative comment about her spoken Spanish.

Elizabeth’s own letters to the Emperor were written in Italian, the language in which she also chiefly communicated with ambassadors from Spain.92 Yet the Flemish Habsburg envoy François de Halewijn, Lord of Zweveghem, seems to have left an extraordinary account of a meeting with Elizabeth in 1574, which I have encountered through the French-language summaries of Philip II’s correspondence by the nineteenth-century Belgian archivist Louis Gachard.93 The only English-language scholar I have found who is aware of this exchange is G.D. Ramsay, writing in 1975.94 In this version of their conversation, Zweveghem delivered a letter from Philip in Spanish and was pleasantly surprised to find Elizabeth ready to entrust her own letter in ‘Castilian’. Moreover, ‘with a gay countenance’ (‘une lye contenance’) Elizabeth seems to have offered a coy self-criticism (‘elle s’excusa modestement’) that she was sorry for only coming to Spanish late, but that she had obliged herself to learn it ‘with good reason such

92 Bajetta, Elizabeth I’s Italian Letters, pp. 21-62.
that she hoped never to forget, that she might be understood by his Majesty when she was his prisoner’ (‘à sy bonne occasion quelle espéroit ne l’oublier jamais assçavoir pour povoir estre entendue de S. M. lorsqu’elle estoit sa prisonnière’). Elizabeth was evidently referring to her confinement under Mary, though the claim she was ever Philip’s own prisoner is hyperbole. Given the convoluted transmission of this summary, we cannot be sure how closely it represents Elizabeth’s language, but the flirtatious intimacy of the exchange feels characteristic, as does Elizabeth’s final comment that improving her Spanish had been necessary to avoid stuttering basic phrases in the presence of her brother-in-law ‘comme le perroquet’ (‘like a parrot’).95

During Mary’s reign, Elizabeth does seem to have been sensitive to the politics inherent in the choice of language with ambassadors. When Guzmán de Silva’s predecessor the Count de Feria visited her at Hatfield on 10 November 1558, seven days before her accession, he reported that Elizabeth claimed he could speak freely to her in front of her ladies, ‘who could speak no other language than English’. He did not, however, identify the language in which she implied they should speak.96 At Guzmán de Silva’s first audience on 22 June 1564, he reports that Elizabeth spoke with him in a mixture of Latin and Italian.97 Zweveghem’s account, however, does match up with Ascham’s timeline, and the relatively late addition in The scholemaster of Spanish to his ever-fulsome list of Elizabeth’s attainments. The safest interpretation of all this evidence is that as a young adult Elizabeth did obtain some education in Spanish, beginning in the late 1550s or early 1560s, but that her competence was never of the standard of her French, Latin or Italian.

95 Gachard, iii, 188.
Elizabeth was particularly proud of her Italian: her first surviving letter to Parr was written in this language in July 1544. Castiglione had not provided Elizabeth’s first Italian lessons – he is only known to have been in her service from October of that year. Yet Alessandra Petrina points convincingly to Elizabeth’s contacts with a broader network of Italian exiles in London who shared Castiglione’s hardline sympathies, arguing that ‘there was a network of books and readers around her’. We should, I suggest, reconsider against Petrina’s research the famous remark of de Quadra about Elizabeth’s Italian that ‘her language (learnt from Italian heretic friars who brought her up) is so shifty that it is the most difficult thing in the world to negotiate with her’.

De Quadra may partly have been thinking of Elizabeth’s relationship with the firebrand Bernardino Ochino. Ochino, who spent Edward’s reign in London, dedicated a treatise to Elizabeth in 1560, reminiscing in his dedicatory epistle about a time she had asked him to explain ‘some ambiguities’ in predestination. She also translated into English his sermon ‘Che cosa è Christo, & per che venne al mondo’ as a gift for Edward. The dating of this gift has been the subject of some controversy: Starkey attributes it to 1552, on the questionable basis that it was an appropriate gift for a king who ‘was already mortally sick’; Woudhuysen, with more authority, attributes it to this date on the basis of Elizabeth’s handwriting. Gibson agrees with Woudhuysen that by the time of ‘Che cosa è Christo’, Elizabeth ‘had completely left the Belmain hand behind’, yet elsewhere in the same essay he notes that this ‘Palatino’ hand first emerged in 1547, so we should perhaps not rule out an earlier date. As Hosington

98 CW, ‘Letter 1’, pp. 5-6; ACFLO, pp. 5-6. This is the famous letter lamenting ‘exile’, which probably refers only to the necessities of the 1544 regency, rather than a serious contretemps.
100 Alessandra Petrina, ‘Elizabeth Learning and Using Italian’, in Elizabeth I’s Foreign Correspondence, p. 108.
102 Bernardino Ochino, Prediche (Basel, 1561).
103 Starkey, Elizabeth, p. 86; Woudhuysen, ‘The Queen’s Own Hand’, p. 11.
104 Gibson, ‘The Queen’s Two Hands’, pp. 56, 51.
observes, Elizabeth’s preface gives Ochino and his history of exile a detailed introduction, which by 1552 would be redundant, for he was by then established in Edward’s own regime.105 Marcus, Mueller, Rose and Scodel link this translation to a Latin-language letter to Edward, dated 2 February 1547/8, in which Elizabeth apologises for her delay in producing an ‘opusculum’ (‘a little book’) as a gift.106 Where all critics concur is that in choosing this text Elizabeth was conforming with the Edwardian shift to a confrontational, solefideist Protestantism. Ochino is particularly dismissive of the Catholic doctrine of salvation by ‘good works’. Elizabeth faithfully translates:

There are some others who imagine that Christ came into the world as a kind of tax-gatherer, sent by the Father, to assess and collect payment from our good works, and for this reason they cannot perfectly love Him. But [...] He came not on account of our good works (since without Him, we would have been altogether lacking).107

In the next section of this chapter, I will discuss Elizabeth’s earlier translations of Marguerite de Navarre and Calvin in more detail, but she had toned down references in these to predestination and other controversial topics. She had softened numerous references in Calvin to the importance of a church ‘encores plus ségrégée’ (that is, of the elect), imagining instead a church ‘more at large’ (that is, expansive and inclusive). By contrast, by the time she tackles Ochino, she is happy to translate ‘eletti’ in straightforward terms as ‘electi’.108 Doran has demonstrated that throughout her life, Elizabeth maintained a distaste for clerics who made a sticking point of predestination.109 Ochino may have been wrong to interpret her probing questions on the subject as evidence of positive engagement, but as the Edwardian regime set in, she found in translating ‘Che cosa è Christo’ a useful occasion to show conformity.

105 Hosington, ‘The Young Princess Elizabeth’. See also M. Anne Overell, Italian Reform and English Reformations, c. 1535–c. 1585 (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).
107 T1, p. 315.
108 Hosington has also observed this: ‘The Young Princess Elizabeth’, p. 35.
109 Doran, Elizabeth I’s Religion, p. 711.
Bajetta and Petrina have both assembled comprehensive evidence of Elizabeth’s interest in Italian throughout her life. This evidence further troubles Ascham’s construction of Elizabeth as the exemplum of his ideal of education. Thomas G. Olsen aptly describes the closing section of Book 1 of The scholemaster as ‘a sixteen-page diatribe against Italy, Italians and “Italianate Englishmen”’. Yet Elizabeth would become the ultimate Italianate Englishwoman, whose courtiers by 1584 were begging the Italian expatriate Giacomo Castelvetro to get hold of Tasso’s latest writing for her. Castelvetro would write to the Duke of Modena’s secretary that Elizabeth was the consummate fan of Tasso’s chivalric romances and ‘already knows many stanzas by heart’. Although the translation once ascribed to her of Petrarch’s Trionfo dell’ Eternita is almost certainly spurious, references to Petrarch and Ariosto litter her letters. In a verse that would have horrified Ascham, the Anglo-Italian lexicographer John Florio would frame a bilingual dialogue about Elizabeth:

Amela i stranieri? Adirvi la verita, ella li ama quasi troppo.

Doth shee love strangers? To tel you the truth, shee loveth them almost too wel.

Although Florio went on to list eight languages the English queen supposedly spoke, the royal welcome was chiefly extended, implicitly, to speakers of the Italian language of this very text. As late as 1603, Elizabeth would boast to the Venetian Ambassador Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli: ‘I do not know whether I have spoken this Italian language well; yet since I learned it as a child, I believe I have not forgotten it’. She proved her point by speaking it in Italian.

110 Bajetta, Elizabeth I’s Italian Letters; Petrina, ‘Elizabeth Learning and Using Italian’.
111 Olsen, ‘Ascham’s The Scholemaster, Italianate Englishmen, and the Protestant Circe’.
112 Discussed in Bajetta, Elizabeth I’s Italian Letters, p. xxiii.
113 Tj, pp. 459-69.
114 John Florio, Firste Fruites (London, 1578), C3v.
But although Elizabeth may have remembered her Italian to the end, the evidence of her use of Greek provides further evidence that Ascham exaggerated when constructing her reformist, classicist persona – or at least, that by old age she had forgotten his Greek lessons. Elizabeth’s grounding in Greek had begun young. In a letter to Edward in 1548, she was able to include a pun on the Greek words κόλαξ (flatter) and κόραξ (crow), although she Latinised the orthography, which may be the sign of an uncertain Greek hand. The joke itself was proverbial, attributed to Diogenes by Athenaeus in the third century: when Elizabeth visited Oxford in 1566, the Greek scholar Nicholas Baglay would make the same pun in his Greek oration to her. Elizabeth does seem to have managed some Greek during her visits to universities although she did not deliver orations in Greek, as she did in Latin. During her 1564 visit to Cambridge, Matthew Stokys tells us that ‘she rendred thankes in greeke’ for an oration delivered in Greek. Intriguingly, two accounts of the 1566 Oxford visit report loyally that Elizabeth was capable of delivering brief thanks in Greek to the oration which Laurence Humphrey delivered on her arrival, but another account by Nicholas Robinson records that she was saved from responding by a stampede which ‘carried away’ her litter to Christ Church.

But by 1598, when Elizabeth came to translate De Curiositate, drawn from Plutarch’s Moralia, she was, as Mueller and Scodel have shown, working purely from a Latin intermediate text by Erasmus.

As part of the 1563 Precationes privatae, Elizabeth included 259 sententiae, short Latin maxims in the tradition of ‘wisdom-literature’. In doing so, as I have suggested in Chapter 1,

---

118 ‘Queen Elizabeth at the University of Cambridge’, ed. by Elisabeth Leedham-Green and Faith Eales in Progresses, i, 420.
119 Nicholas Robinson, ‘Of the Actes Done at Oxford When the Queenes Majestie was There’, ed. and trans. by Sarah Knight in Progresses, i, 519-531. Compare the accounts at i, 473 and i, 666.
120 T2, pp. 369-88.
she was rejecting Ascham’s vision of her as a student, for he had written to Sturm in his very first letter, ‘ineptos illos Erasmi imitatores qui Latinam linguam in miseris proverbiorum compedes illigant, ferre non potest’, insisting in a clear reference to Erasmus’ *Adages* that Elizabeth shared his scorn for ‘those wretched imitators of Erasmus, who have tied up the Latin tongue in those wretched fetters of proverbs’.  

John Considine has tied the fashion for *sententiae* to the popularity of the ‘wisdom books’ of the expanded biblical canon: Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom. Elizabeth, like most writers of *sententiae*, lifts many of her maxims directly from these books. Mueller and Scodel argue that when Elizabeth draws her *sententiae* from supposedly Greek sources, she always uses a Latin intermediary, with the ‘possible exception’ of 147, seemingly a quotation from Euripides’ *Phoenicians*.  

Having carefully gone over and checked each of these myself, I have come to the conclusion that not only are Mueller and Scodel correct, but that 147 – ‘Victoria tota posita est in bona consultatione’ – is clearly drawn from Caspar Stiblin’s Greek/Latin edition, as they tentatively suggest. Stiblin’s version is ‘omnis victoria sita est in bono consilio’ (‘the whole of victory is predicated on good counsel’). Throughout the *sententiae*, Elizabeth makes a habit of drawing word order from her Latin sources, just as in her own translations from French, her word order often follows French format.  

The fact that Elizabeth used Latin intermediary texts to aid with Greek does not mark her as unusual for her time. By the standard of modern classicists, the level of Greek language learning in mid-Tudor England was rudimentary. Rhodes, Crane and Morini, among others, support R. B. Bolgar’s assertion that at university level, ‘no important school of Greek studies had developed’ by the 1550s, although Lazarus has recently challenged us to look outside the

---

123 *TI*, p. 338.
124 *TI*, p. 372.
universities for evidence of rising Greek literacy. But we do have evidence of one elite young woman whose translations from Greek outshone Elizabeth’s. In the early 1550s, Jane Lumley produced a version of Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis* and she is now routinely referred to as ‘the first person to translate a Greek play into English’. Like Elizabeth, Jane worked on her Greek translation using a Latin intermediary, Erasmus’ translation of 1506. But she also checked her text against an original Greek version – unlike Elizabeth.

The talented daughter of the powerful Earl of Arundel, himself a member of both Edward VI’s and Mary Tudor’s Privy Councils and a game-changing defector in the 1553 succession crisis, Lumley was born into the heart of English Reformation politics. Her father would even briefly become a suitor for Elizabeth’s hand in 1559. The questions critics have frequently asked about Jane Lumley concern the literary tropes of obedience versus resistance; some, most recently Alison Findlay, have framed Lumley’s choice of text, the tale of a young woman’s life sacrificed by her ambitious father, as a disgruntled commentary on Arundel’s role in the execution of her cousin Jane Grey. These questions are beyond the scope of this thesis; my purpose in introducing Jane Lumley here is to serve as a comparator to the quality of Elizabeth Tudor’s Greek. Nonetheless, I have elsewhere expressed the view that Lumley’s life and work show no signs of such ‘resistance’.

Like Elizabeth, Jane was encouraged in her studies by

---


128 Kate Maltby, ‘“The Boldness of Her Mind”: How Sharp was Lumley’s Greek?’, unpublished paper delivered at ‘Greek Tragedy’s Renaissance Inflections’, a conference at UCL’s Centre for Early Modern Exchanges (12 March 2014).
her father – who received New Year’s gifts each year throughout the 1550s of translations by
his children – and by her husband John, a Cambridge contemporary of her brother Henry. John
Lumley would later grow his father-in-law’s collection into what has been termed ‘the largest
private library of the Elizabethan period’.\textsuperscript{129} Arundel’s practice of requiring New Year’s gifts
of translations from his children may even have been a homage to the efforts of Katherine
Parr.\textsuperscript{130} The \textit{Iphigenia} manuscript survives in a commonplace book, signed but not dated. As
David Greene demonstrated in 1941, Jane largely worked from Erasmus’ Latin version.\textsuperscript{131} This
is clear from her ‘argument’. No editor in antiquity appended an argument for this play:
Lumley’s is a word-for-word version of the one Erasmus invented.\textsuperscript{132}

Yet Lumley clearly referenced a Greek text against Erasmus’ Latin. She seems to have worked
from Froben’s 1524 dual-language edition of Erasmus’ text.\textsuperscript{133} In line 9 of Lumley’s English
translation, answering a question from Agamemnon, his slave sets the scene at night: ‘it is not
yet midnight, as may be judged by the course of the Seven Stars’. The Greek 1524 text gives
us ‘Σείριος, ἔγγυς τής ἑπταποροῦ Πλειάδος ἀσσῶν ἕτι μεσσήρης’; Erasmus’ Latin: ‘Sirius,
ardens qui Pleiadibus Septemgeminis vicinus adhuc medio rapidus fertur caelo’. Both Lumley
and Erasmus make errors, but classicists for centuries have struggled to understand this
passage. The modern classicist Heather White has suggested that Euripides uses ‘ἔγγυς,
normally translated as ‘near’, to instead ‘denote similarity’, thus the best English version might

\textsuperscript{129} The \textit{Lumley Library; The Catalogue of 1609}, ed. by Anthony Alcock and Sears Jayne (London: Trustees of
the British Museum, 1956), p. 12. On Arundel’s education of his children and stepson, see Marion Wynne-
Golden Stage}, ed. by Rina Walthaus and Marguerite Corporaal (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2008), pp. 111-29;
Roger Ellis, ‘Translation for and by the Young in 16th-century England: Erasmus and the Arundel Children’, in
\textit{Thou Sittest at Another Boke: English Studies in Honour of Domenico Pezzini}, ed. by Giovanni Iamartino,

\textsuperscript{130} James, \textit{The Making of a Queen}, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{131} David Greene, ‘Lady Lumley and Greek Tragedy’, \textit{Classical Journal}, 36 (1941), 537-47.

\textsuperscript{132} BL Royal MS 15 A IX; Purkiss, \textit{Three Tragedies}, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{133} \textit{Euripidis tragoediae duae... Erasmo Roterodamo} (Basel, 1524).
be, ‘It is Sirius, still moving in the mid-sky, like the Pleiades on their seven-tracks’. Lumley and Erasmus get it wrong, but they get it wrong in different ways, and each respond, in error, directly to the Greek text and its problems.

The word μεσήρης (‘middle air’), which Lumley gives as ‘midnight’, is extremely rare, attested only here, in Euripides’ Ion, and in Eratosthenes the astronomer (known only to early modern scholars through Strabo, who does not appear in the 1609 Lumley Library catalogue). ‘Medio caelo’, on the other hand, which Erasmus uses, is a common phrasing; it is far more likely that Lumley would be confused by μεσήρης than by ‘medio caelo’, especially as she translates caelum accurately several times elsewhere. The qualifier ‘not yet’ seems to come from stretching the Greek ’έτι rather than a misreading of the Latin ‘adhuc’. Unlike Erasmus, she effaces the presence of Sirius, the dog-star, to simplify things, but also unlike Erasmus, she does get the translation of ‘επταπορου right. The πορου suffix here after ’επτα (seven) means ‘tracks’ or ‘courses’ – της επταπορου Πλειάδος’ are the Pleiades on their seven courses. Erasmus, on the other hand, gives us Septemgeminis – ‘seven-twinned’. Lumley does not seem to have been affected by Erasmus’ error: she gives ‘the course of the seven stars’, not ‘the seven-twinned stars’. This is a messy translation, but it is a much closer mess to the Greek than it is the Latin. Where Lumley eradicates Sirius, she may have been guided by her well-established interest in astronomy, attested by the astrological table presented to her as a New Year’s gift by Richard Forster in 1569. Sirius, after all, is nowhere near the Pleiades. Any astronomer, as Jane was, should know this; her translation, while inaccurate, at least simplifies Euripides’ notorious confusion.

Ascham would never have celebrated Jane Lumley’s Greek as he did Elizabeth’s: she came from a devout Catholic family. Yet for all the tendency of men like Ascham – and some modern scholars – to frame early modern education through confessional differences, Jane’s curriculum was not so different from Elizabeth’s. They both studied Euripides: Elizabeth quotes him twice in her *sententiae*, and even attributes an extra quotation to him erroneously. But the shared meat of their diet was Isocrates. Before the Euripides translation appears in her manuscript, Jane has written out five translations of Isocrates, along with two dedicatory epistles to her father. Like Ascham and Elizabeth, Jane draws attention to Isocrates’ suitability as a model for princely education. Goodrich, who has studied this text closely, observes that at one of her dedications to Arundel, Lumley notes ‘hac regis atque magistratus officium […] sapientissime, brevissimeque docet’ (‘in this he teaches most wisely and briefly the office of the king and the magistrate’). Therefore, she goes on, ‘eas auctoritati tuae et prudentiae aptissimas esse judicavi’ (‘I judged them most fitting for your authority and wisdom’). Goodrich has traced in detail a specifically Erasmian language of commonwealth theory throughout the translations themselves.

v. **Elizabeth and John Bale**

Like that of Jane Lumley, Elizabeth’s youthful work shows the deep influence of Isocrates, even beyond her work with Ascham. Not only did Humphrey and Bale credit Elizabeth with translating Isocrates’ two Nicocles orations, but when Bale came to publish *A godly medytyacyon*, either Elizabeth or someone else appended a further quotation from Isocrates. After her main text, Bale attached paraphrases in Latin, Italian and French of the opening of

---

137 Royal MS 15 A IX, fols 4r–v.
138 Royal MS 15 A IX, fol. 62v; Goodrich, ‘Returning to Lady Lumley’s Schoolroom’.
Psalm 14 (Vulgate Psalm 13); on the final page he also appended an English metrical paraphrase of the full psalm. David Scott Kastan has established that the metrical paraphrase was in fact by Bale: he published it again in 1552 under his own name, misnumbered as Psalm 23.\textsuperscript{139} The author of the phrases, however, still seems to be Elizabeth: they are explicitly described as hers, unlike the metrical psalm – which is in a separate part of the text – and they display what we know were her chief languages. But Bale also attached a Greek phrase – transliterated, as his printer had no Greek fonts (Fig. 1). This was not a biblical phrase, although Bale packages it with the psalm paraphrases as if a piece of scripture. He even adds the word ‘Christiane’ as a marginal annotation to the English translation. Instead, I have ascertained that it is a quotation of Isocrates from \textit{Ad Demonicum} 1.16, a moral treatise purportedly written by Isocrates for the son of a deceased friend. The Greek phrase ‘τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς φοβοῦ, τοὺς δὲ γονεῖς τίμα, τοὺς δὲ φίλους αἰσχύνου’ is, as Bale accurately ‘Englished’ it, ‘Feare God, honoure thy parentes, and reverence thy fryndes’.\textsuperscript{140} The transliterated version reads ‘ton theon phoboû, tous de goneis tima, tous de philous aeschynou’. This is appropriate for a young woman who had just dedicated a devotional work to her father’s wife. But Isocrates’ original continued: ‘τοῖς δὲ νόμοις πείθου’ (‘obey the laws’). Truncating this particular dictum seems less in keeping with Elizabeth, than with a combative polemicist whose books had been banned by her father in 1546. Although by 1548 Bale was already preparing the ground for his rehabilitation by the Edwardian regime, encouraging Englishmen to read his books within the same text as ordering them to obey the law might have seemed a contradiction too far.\textsuperscript{141} Nonetheless, as we shall see, Bale did not appear to know the source of Elizabeth’s quotation, so we cannot assume decisive editorial intervention on his part. It is, however, possible that


\textsuperscript{140} Bale, \textit{A godly medytacyon}, Fi\textsuperscript{i}.

\textsuperscript{141} On Protestantism and civic obedience, see Chapter 3, section i.
Elizabeth initially submitted the full verse from Isocrates and he truncated it without understanding the source.

Bale’s attempt to Christianise the text stuck: when James Cancellar republished a version in praise of Elizabeth in 1568, Bale having died four years previously, he printed the Isocrates quotation as if it were a fourth, Greek translation of the Psalm 13 verse (see Fig. 2).[^142] Cancellar had been a chaplain to Mary Tudor, for whom he had written *The pathe of obedience* and defended the executions of Hooper, Rodger, Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer: like many Tudor survivors, he appears to have been an equal opportunities encomiast.[^143] Clearly, he had insufficient Greek to understand Elizabeth’s text. By the time Cancellar printed a second edition in 1580, the error had been corrected (see Fig. 3).[^144] But Bale’s eagerness to Christianise the Isocrates verse prefigured Cancellar’s confusion: Bale’s epistle had cited John 4, Ephesians 6 and Peter 2 as Elizabeth’s possible inspirations for this short ‘sentence’.[^145]

A few years earlier, Bale had published the purported testimony and examination of Anne Askew, who had been burned at the stake for heresy, in part for refusing to acknowledge the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Krista Kesselring has detailed the ways in which *The examinations* and *A godly medytacyon* functioned as a pair, establishing both Anne and Elizabeth as ‘worthy of participation in the affairs of the Commonwealth … learned in the Scriptures, living a life of humble virtue, but willing to assume a public stand in defence of the word’.[^146] Goodrich rightly observes that *The godly medytacyon*’s frontispiece image (which

[^142]: *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle* (London, 1568), A4^.
[^144]: *A godly meditation of the soule* ed. by James Cancellar (London, 1580), Avii^.
[^145]: The epigraph on this page was taken from Proverbs 14 and elided Elizabeth’s roles as a domestic model for women and a Solomonic king: ‘A wyse woman upholdeth hir householde, and who so feareth the Lord, walketh in the right path’. (See Chapter 5, below).
recurs on the final page) shows Elizabeth kneeling before the resurrected Christ, and indicates visually that ‘pious reading is a prerequisite for Elizabeth’s contact with Christ’ (see Figs. 4 and 5).\textsuperscript{147} Bale wrenches Elizabeth’s text out of an educational family context and repositions it in the middle of fierce Reformation debates. With her literary and familial heritage, she is one of the ‘gloryouse champyons’ descended from ancient British kings, roused to oppose the ‘pontyfycall lords’ and pretended nobility of the Roman Catholic clergy.\textsuperscript{148}

Bale inveighs against the Mass and Catholic doctrines of the Incarnation all at once: ‘a priest maye every day both byget him and beare hym, where as hys mother Marye begate hym (beare him they wolde saye) but ones’.\textsuperscript{149} For evangelicals, the question of whether the Virgin ‘begat’ or ‘bore’ Christ was a serious matter. In her text, Elizabeth had translated an incident when the narrator compares herself to the Virgin, telling Christ: ‘through love i have begotten the’. During the revision process, someone reworded this as ‘I conceyve the and beare the by love’, but given Bale’s stated preference for the term ‘begate’, it may have been Elizabeth herself.\textsuperscript{150} Elizabeth’s sensitivity to this issue may be another clue that she had indeed worked on a translation of Erasmus’ \textit{Inquisitio de fide} a few years earlier; that text includes a Latin digression on the semantics of the incarnation, and translating it into English would have raised the same issues.

In fact, Elizabeth’s own translation seems to express a theological position hovering in balance between evangelical and conservative theses. English-language feminist critics have paid attention to this text ever since Prescott, in her essay for \textit{Silent but for the Word}, attempted to draw lines between Elizabeth’s faltering handling of the complex family dynamics imagined

\textsuperscript{147} Goodrich, \textit{Faithful Translators}, p. 95.
\textsuperscript{148} Bale, \textit{A godly medytacyon}, Fi
\textsuperscript{149} Bale, \textit{A godly medytacyon}, A4v.
\textsuperscript{150} \textit{TI}, p. 60.
within Marguerite’s poem, and the violence that marked Elizabeth’s own parentage. In Marguerite’s imagining of her soul’s relationship with Christ, he is simultaneously her soul’s father, husband, brother and son – a layering of family relationships that may have seemed an awkward subject for a gift-translation in a family scarred by multiple accusations of incest. But the most detailed work on Elizabeth’s translation has been done by Renja Salminen in French and therefore not fully integrated into English scholarship. Salminen makes a convincing case that Elizabeth had help from an adult while preparing the text, not least because of her discreet but adult expressions of sexual terms. She also slides over contentious theological problems using standard, widely circulated paraphrases, notably when handling verses by Marguerite which seem to be lifted from the antitheses of Guillaume Briçonnet, Bishop of Meaux. This is convincing evidence to reject Prescott’s case that Elizabeth’s decision to translate the work represented a failure of adult supervision, and likely caused problems with her father. On the contrary, Henry appears to have felt no shame at his righteous decision to punish unchaste wives. As Carley has revealed, Henry’s annotations to his own Books of Solomon show a preoccupation with ‘the contrast between the harlot and the loving wife’; more recently White has suggested that Parr’s annotations to a sermon of John Chrysostom indicate her willingness to conform to this discourse of good and bad wives. When Bale published A godly medytacyon, he attributed to Elizabeth the selection of four sentences from Ecclesiasticus which he suffixed to the main text. These effectively constitute two pairs: the first sentence of each condemns the bad wife, while the second sentence upholds the example of the virtuous wife. Whether or not Elizabeth selected these herself, adults around her evidently considered it normal that a teenage girl should be the locus for conversations about the model of a good or

151 Prescott, ‘Pearl of the Valois’.
bad woman. Bale’s framing of Elizabeth against these sentences should remind us that marriage was still the chief expectation of her; it reads like an entry onto the European Protestant marriage market. If Parr had a hand in it, it came just as crisis erupted over her own husband’s interest in Elizabeth; she certainly had every reason in the spring of 1548 to find another husband for her stepdaughter. From Henry with his customised Catholicism, to the ‘hot’ Protestant Bale, condemnation of harlot wives was a cultural norm. After all, Elizabeth does not suggest that her father would be exceptional in failing to forgive an unfaithful wife – ‘I never saw it, or else it was kept wondrous secret’ – and she does not condemn mortal men who execute sinful wives. She merely states by contrast that God’s capacity for forgiveness is ‘the perfect example of love’: his grace is exceptional. Prescott’s assertion that ‘no one who looked closely at this manuscript would feel comfortable about it while Henry lived’ perhaps betrays a touch of presentist feminism.

That said, Prescott gets much right and it is not the case that ‘eye-skips’ account for many of Elizabeth’s variations from Marguerite, as Pollnitz reads Mueller and Scodel as suggesting. The section of the translation where Elizabeth seems to be under pressure is not the point at which she imagines a relationship with Christ as father, but in the section in which she imagines herself as a wife, guilty of disobedience and adultery, miraculously forgiven by Christ when earthly husbands might have killed or imprisoned her. This section runs from line 581 to line 880 of Elizabeth’s text, and is responsible for most of her departures from Marguerite’s version, which frequently shift descriptions of poor marital relations from the specific to the general. At line 593, Marguerite writes of how a justly offended husband might place his wife in a ‘tour’ (tower). Elizabeth, perhaps aware of her mother’s last days in the Tower of London, writes

---

155 TL, p. 77.
156 TL, p. 79.
‘prison’ instead.\textsuperscript{159} Elsewhere, Salminen tells us, Elizabeth’s departures from her source are usually so that ‘les délayages du texte français sont simplifiés au possible’ (‘the wordiness of the French text is simplified if possible’). In general, these simplifications are made with ‘beaucoup de bon sense’, although Salminen does find examples of outright error.\textsuperscript{160}

For the purposes of this thesis, however, a more important question than whether Elizabeth makes mistakes is whether Elizabeth’s text justifies the persona that Bale creates for her. She does share some of his religious concerns. As Goodrich has pointed out, Elizabeth intensifies Marguerite’s criticism of excessive veneration of the Virgin Mother and removes a reference to the power of saints.\textsuperscript{161} The project is a celebration of justification by faith and has much in common with Protestant devotional texts about conversion experiences. Elizabeth’s sense of God’s power to redeem even the most flawed human beings runs throughout the text. Much has been made of the expression in her dedicatory letter to Parr that there is ‘nothing done as it should be’. But this phrase immediately precedes Elizabeth’s confident assertion that ‘I hope that after to have been in your grace’s hands, there shall be nothing in it worthy of reprehension’. Parr, should she deign to ‘rub out, polish, and mend’ Elizabeth’s text, is invited not only to take part in an act of literary collaboration but to show the power of redeeming grace (there is a possible pun on her style of address), just as the soul in Marguerite’s narrative has her flaws erased by the grace of God.\textsuperscript{162}

Elizabeth’s attitudes in this translation are not always so reformist. At line 124 of her original, Marguerite writes:

\[\textit{En me donnat tant d’advertissementz}\]

\textsuperscript{159} Mueller and Scodel also reference this at \textit{T1}, p. 78.
\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Le Miroir: Édition critique}, p. 267.
\textsuperscript{161} Goodrich, \textit{Faithful Translators}, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{162} \textit{T1}, p. 43.
Par parolle, par Foy, par sacramentz.\textsuperscript{163}

Or in my translation:

\begin{quote}
You have given me so many warnings,  
By word, by Faith, by sacraments.
\end{quote}

But Elizabeth omits a key word, \textit{parolle}: ‘giving so many warnings by faith and sacraments’.\textsuperscript{164}

For a princess praised for her sense of \textit{sola scriptura}, this is a serious intervention. She did know the meaning of \textit{parolle} and its theological significance: at line 182, she translates it correctly in a sentence rendered as ‘thou hast written in her heart the roll of Thy Spirit and Holy Word, giving her true faith to receive it’. In fact, Elizabeth translates \textit{parolle} accurately on every other occasion it occurs: six times in the human sense of ‘speech’, once more in a spiritual sense. Why did she reject it at lines 124-5? Part of the answer may lie in the context: the ‘warnings’ referred to in line 124 are of the apocalypse. Marguerite’s verse points us to Revelation 3. Elizabeth would resist the apocalyptic fervour of millennialism throughout her life, and while Bale was long dead when it became a major political problem in the 1580s, he was one of the key architects of the apocalyptic movement in Tudor England.\textsuperscript{165} Perhaps even in her first longform piece of writing, this was one Protestant movement to which she resisted lending her learned persona.

Elizabeth lacked the personal familiarity with Bale that she enjoyed with Ascham, and their relationship did not involve the same negotiations of patronage and power. Bale, in exile since 1540, could not have met Elizabeth between her infancy and his publication of \textit{A godly medytacyon} in 1548. Nonetheless, this publication does show her beginning to intervene in the contested shaping of her learned persona. The presence in the printed text of a quotation from

\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Le Miroir: Édition critique}, p. 171.

\textsuperscript{164} \textit{TI}, p. 53.

Isocrates, which I have identified here for the first time, indicates that Elizabeth herself played a role in editing the text of her original manuscript for publication. Bale attributes authorship of the Greek maxim to her, which would not in itself prevent him from being its true author, but he does not even seem to have been sufficiently aware of its true provenance to avoid an embarrassing slip. Fawning over Elizabeth’s capacity to come up with new words of wisdom, he writes:

Your seyd sentences, they saye farre passeth the Apothegmes of Plutarchus, the Aphorismes of Theognis, the Stratagemes of Isocrates, the grave golden counsels of Cato & the manyfolde morals of Johan Goldeston the great allegoryser, with soche other lyke.\(^{166}\)

If Bale or a close colleague had supplied the Greek text, one might expect he would have avoided praising it as superior to ‘the stratagems of Isocrates’. It is therefore my contention that critics of *A godly medytacyon* would benefit from renewed attention to Elizabeth’s own role – or that of her household – in the broader revisions of the text between manuscript and print.

Bale’s depiction of the learned young Elizabeth, packaged in both text and frontispiece image, was for many contemporary readers the first adolescent persona they encountered for Elizabeth, then known mainly for her controversial parentage. There is scope for further study of how the circulation of this text intersected with the construction in rumour and gossip of another persona over the next year: Elizabeth as the unchaste, complicit and possibly pregnant lover of Thomas Seymour. But Bale’s learned persona already had an artistic pedigree. A portrait, sometimes known as ‘Elizabeth when a Princess’, still hangs at Windsor Castle, where the Royal Collection attributes it to William Scrots: famously, this portrait shows Elizabeth

\(^{166}\) *A godly medytacyon*, Avii\(^{v}\).
standing beside a large open book and holding another small volume in her hands (Fig. 6).\textsuperscript{167} A ribbon marks one place in the pages, her index finger another, suggesting a committed act of reading requiring active cross-referencing. As this is not a thesis in art history, I have not studied this portrait in technical detail – those who have seem unable to agree on which texts the two volumes represent, although contemporary norms suggest both should be religious texts.\textsuperscript{168} (Small volumes, like the one in Elizabeth’s hands, were often prayerbooks.) What is striking to me is that the pages in the large volume are blank. The lack of detail identifying these texts may reflect a deliberate caution by painter and sitter given the risks of future changes of religious regime. There is no writing implement: in this image Elizabeth is an avid consumer of texts, but not an author of them.

Brushwork indicates that the image probably formed a pair with a well-known portrait of Edward VI.\textsuperscript{169} The Whitehall Inventory of 1547 lists a pair of such pictures in which Elizabeth’s is described as: ‘A table with the picture of the ladye Elizabeth her grace with a booke in her hande her gowne like crymsen clothe of golde withe works.’\textsuperscript{170} Edward, in his portrait, holds a jewelled dagger over his prominent codpiece, indicating martial strength matched with dynastic virility. Elizabeth holds her book over what Montrose calls her ‘lower torso […] an apt biblio-genital visual metaphor’ for the power of biblical learning to guard and safely direct women’s reproductive lives.\textsuperscript{171}


\textsuperscript{168} Montrose, Subject of Elizabeth, p. 28, assumes that the large volume is a bible; the Royal Collection’s online catalogue asserts that this is ‘probably’ the Old Testament, while the smaller volume is the New.

\textsuperscript{169} Janet Arnold, ‘The “Pictur” of Elizabeth I When Princess’.

\textsuperscript{170} Oliver Millar, The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Royal Collection (London: Phaidon, 1963), i, 64-5.

\textsuperscript{171} Montrose, Subject of Elizabeth, p. 31.
Although the Windsor painting invites many questions, what it makes clear even to non-art historians is that the image of Elizabeth Tudor as a girl best found among her books has a pedigree that pre-dates Ascham and Bale. Even before the summer of 1547, Elizabeth was represented with ‘booke in her hande’. In Bale’s frontispiece, she is kneeling at the feet of the resurrected Christ, her prayerbook closed and her pose submissive. In the painting, she confronts the gaze of the viewer on equal terms, a royal Tudor. The intended audiences are different: her portrait will have hung in an elite space, while Bale’s text was intended for a much wider but less glamorous circulation. Nonetheless, they both speak to an understanding among the adults in Elizabeth’s life that she should be represented as a lover of books.

Elizabeth will have had little say in the creation of either image. Yet my identification of the quote from Isocrates in *A godly medytacyon* – an author taught by Ascham to Elizabeth, but not recognised by Bale – indicates that she did play a role in the revision of her manuscript for Bale’s publication. Elizabeth was still a minor agent in the production of her own image, but she was beginning to intervene in the construction of her own myths. In time, that would allow her to craft an image of philosopher-kingship which moved away from the evangelical schoolgirl persona and from the partisan constraints that came with it.

---

Chapter 3: Elizabeth’s Contested Accession

i. Introduction

From November 1558, Elizabeth Tudor was no longer a learned lady: she was now a learned queen. The myths of an impeccably educated Protestant princess, which I have traced over the past two chapters, would be useful as Elizabeth sought to establish her legitimacy as a new monarch. Yet the learned persona pushed by Ascham and Bale, and now by Thomas Blundeville and John Aylmer, caused as many problems for the queen as it solved. Fortunately for Elizabeth, their sola scriptura approach was not the only possible model for celebrating a queen’s intellect. Indeed, many of the ways in which Elizabeth deployed the language of ‘wisdom’, ‘wit’ and ‘learning’ were not unique to her, nor were they delimited by confessional differences. Traditional badges of wisdom imagery were applied generically to early modern European rulers, and as I will show at the end of this chapter, neo-Latin verses used to praise Elizabeth’s wisdom at her pre-coronation pageants were even recycled from those used to greet Philip of Spain.

If Elizabeth’s image was, as Susan Frye has termed it, the site of a ‘competition for representation’ between queen and subjects, the competition to define her intellectual personae began with the first political challenges of her reign. To understand why and how Elizabeth needed to bolster her legitimacy, and how ‘learned authority’ could help her do so, we must look first at these challenges. It has sometimes been assumed that Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558 against a headwind of opposition to the principle of female rule.1 The 1550s did see a

---

fraught public conversation about the consequences of gynocracy, drawing in part on the existing *querelle des femmes* tradition.\(^2\) Of the many public interventions on the topic, John Knox’s *First blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* holds a grip on the popular imagination four hundred and fifty years later, although his resonance in England was limited.\(^3\) Yet as Carole Levin aptly summarises, ‘in 1558 the country had a surprisingly smooth transition to Elizabeth’.\(^4\) For this, Elizabeth had her half-sister Mary Tudor partly to thank, who had in 1553 overcome armed opposition to her own accession and over the course of five years established a firm precedent as England’s first crowned regnant queen.\(^5\) True, Mary had endured attacks on female rule during her own reign, mainly from religious opponents.\(^6\) But we should not forget that the initial threat to Mary’s inheritance came from

---


\(^6\) Notoriously, Knox wrote his pamphlet before Elizabeth’s accession. Robert M. Healey, ‘Waiting for Deborah: John Knox and Four Ruling Queens’, *Sixteenth Century*, 25 (1994), 371-86. For other Protestant attacks on female rule during the reign of Mary Tudor, see Thomas Becon, ‘An humble supplication unto God for the restoring of His Holy Word unto the church of God (1554)’, in *Prayers and Other Pieces of Thomas Becon*, ed. by Rev. J. Ayre (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1844); Christopher Goodman, *Howe superior powers ought to be*
men who sought to crown another woman, Jane Grey. Opposition to Mary’s accession did not, at this stage, coalesce around a male candidate. Meanwhile, Grey’s sex both did and did not matter in the attempt to win her a crown. Central to the Duke of Northumberland’s pitch to crown her was the fact that, unlike Mary, she was already safely married to an Englishman, his son Guildford. The ‘Letters Patent for the Limitation of the Crown’ signed by Edward VI in June 1553 justified the disinheritance of both Mary and Elizabeth lest either:

should then happen to marry with any stranger borne out of this realme, that then the same stranger, havinge the governemente and the imperiall crowne in his hands, would rather adhere and practice to have the lawes and customes of his or their owne native countrey or countreyes to be practised or put in use within this our realme.  

Here, Edward’s language echoed that of his father. In 1532, Henry VIII had published A glasse of the truthe, which put the case for his divorce and voiced concern that his daughter Mary could not rule: ‘if the female heyre, shall, chaunce to rule, she can nat continue longe without an husbande. whiche by goddes lawe, muste than be her governour and heed, and so finally shall directe this realme’. A key factor in assessing any woman’s suitability to rule was the loyalty of her husband: by June 1553, Jane was in this respect a known quantity. Mary and Elizabeth were unknowns. As early as 8 March 1549, Hugh Latimer had preached before Edward VI:


obeyd (Geneva: John Crispin, 1558). For Myles Hogherde’s rebuttal on behalf of Mary, see Hogherde, Certayne questions demanded and asked (London, 1555); with context in J. W. Martin ‘Miles Hogarde: Artisan and Aspiring Author in Sixteenth-Century England’, RQ, 34 (1981), 359-83. By contrast, the Protestant John Ponet also attacked Mary’s legitimacy in 1556, but did not explicitly do so on the grounds of her sex. Ponet, A shorthe treatise of politeke power (Strasbourg, 1556).


A glasse of the truthe (London, 1532), A3'. I am grateful to Joanne Paul for pointing me to this text.
the king's Grace hath sisters, my lady Mary and my lady Elizabeth, which by 
succession and course are inheritors to the crown, who if they should marry with 
strangers, what should ensue? God knoweth. But God grant, if they so do, whereby 
strange religion cometh in, that they never come unto coursing nor succeeding.  

For Latimer and his faction, the chief danger of female succession was a foreign and likely 
Catholic husband: the situation could be rectified by a husband (like Guildford Dudley) 
expected to sire an English and Protestant son. As Judith Richards writes of Edward’s Letters 
Patent, ‘a suitably married queen, as English history taught in the case of Maud and perhaps of 
Elizabeth of York, was a safe means of transmitting royal blood’.  

Yet the convention which licensed royal women’s inheritance as a vessel for male kingship 
would pose a particular threat to female authority: like Henry VII’s mother Margaret Beaufort, 
she might live to see any son she raised to adulthood demand the crown in his own name. 
Spain offered the example of Joanna of Castile, who in the words of Alexander Samson had 
‘ruled in her own right for a period of five years, before being slowly deprived of political 
authority in a conspiracy of her closest male relatives, including her father, husband and 
nephew’. Joanna’s son Charles V would eventually be crowned as her co-monarch and hold 
full executive power, while Joanna remained imprisoned on grounds of insanity. Early in her 
reign, Elizabeth showed herself fully aware that royal sons could usurp a parent, telling the 
Scottish ambassador William Maitland in October 1561: 

Princes cannot like their own children, those that should succeed unto them. Being 
witness, King Charles VII of France, how liked he his son Louis the XI, Louis the XI 
his son Charles the VIII, King Francis his son Henry?  

10 The fyrste sermon of Maister Hughe Latimer (London, 1549), Bvii’. Latimer’s long-term animosity towards 
both Mary and Elizabeth is also visible in his sermon on the execution of Thomas Seymour: The seconde 
[seventh] sermon of Maister Hughe Latimer (London, 1549), Mii’.  
11 Richards, ‘To Promote a Woman’, p. 106.  
12 Although Henry VII was proclaimed by right of conquest, not only did his Beaufort blood matter, but Mary 
Hill Cole reminds us that he took parliamentary steps to revoke the bastardisation of Elizabeth of York: he 
clearly valued the claim she was transmitting to their children. Cole, ‘The Half-Blood Princes: Mary I, Elizabeth 
I and Their Strategies of Legitimation’, in The Birth of a Queen, pp. 71-8 (p. 73).  
13 Samson, Mary and Philip, pp. 23-36.  
14 CW, ‘Speech 4’, p. 65.
Although Elizabeth did not mention specific vulnerabilities she might face as a female parent, she referenced Charles VIII, who after being kept at arm’s length by his father Louis XI had successfully pushed aside the regency of his powerful sister Anne de Beaujeau. In listing the ‘witness’ of these names from French history, Elizabeth was, of course, displaying her capacity to deploy historical knowledge in an impromptu form of disputatio, acting as her own learned constitutional lawyer.

It is therefore by no means my argument that royal women like Mary Tudor, Elizabeth Tudor and Jane Grey were somehow free of the constraints imposed by the sex/gender system underpinning the Tudor political imaginary. They faced numerous challenges and threats their male relatives did not: both Mary and Elizabeth endured sexual slander throughout their reigns – even Mary’s impeccably chaste reputation at court was not enough to save her from rumours that she had become pregnant by Stephen Gardiner. The question of marriage was complicated for regnant queens marriage for a king was not – not least because the very act of producing an heir imposed a tangible risk to a female sovereign’s own life, a biological reality which made men’s pursuit of dynastic continuity considerably easier. Though like all students of this field I have made use of Susan Doran’s scholarly and exhaustive book on Elizabeth’s courtships, it is impossible to agree with Doran that ‘Elizabeth did not reject marriage from

16 A century and a half after the alleged event, John Strype recorded this rumour in his ‘memorial’ of Thomas Cranmer, but regardless of Strype’s reliability, speculation about Mary’s secret offspring clearly had some currency in Tudor England. In December 1592, a woman named Anne Burnell who likely suffered from mental illness was whipped through the streets for claiming to be a secret daughter of Philip II and, whether or not she consistently claimed Mary as her mother, to have been born with the ‘Armes of England’ marked upon her back. In 1558 Anthony Gilby also claimed that Mary had been Gardiner’s mistress. Memorials of the Most Reverend Father of God Thomas Cranmer (1694), ed. by Strype, 2 vols (Oxford: OUP, 1840), i, 456; Levin, Heart and Stomach, pp. 105-11; Anthony Gilby, ‘An Admonition to England and Scotland, to Call Them to Repentance’ in The Works of John Knox, ed. by David Laing (New York, NY: AMS, 1855, repr, 1966), iv, 5. See also my Introduction, n. 10.
either psychological motives or political reasons associated with her gender’. In fact, almost all of the ‘political reasons’ which constrained Elizabeth’s decision-making were qualified by issues of sex. What I do acknowledge, however, is that the sex of Mary and Elizabeth was not considered a major bar among English elites to the nominal inheritance of the English throne by each in turn, as suitable conduits for Henry’s bloodline. These questions matter, and I have spent time on them because we cannot analyse the persona of a learned queen without deciding how much it matters that she was a queen and not a king. If, as I argue, ‘learned authority’ became a site through which the Elizabethan Crown negotiated power, it is important to understand why Elizabeth’s authority faced particular challenges at her accession.

On the accessions first of Mary, then of Elizabeth, the men who took it upon themselves to discuss the subject of female rule spilt most of their ink not on the question of whether a woman could inherit a crown at all, but on the limitations as to how she might rule, and who should really wield power. The answers to these questions touched on yet another raging area of contention in the contemporary polity: the question of obedience to civic order and when, if ever, it could be set aside. Thus, religious dissenters wrestled with their obligations to monarchs of a different persuasion; evangelical women sought guidance on whether they were bound to obey heretic husbands; and in 1566, the University of Oxford tested Elizabeth’s indulgence of debate by staging for her a ‘disputation’ on the question: *Non licet homini privato arma sumere contra Principem etiam inustum* (Should a private citizen be allowed to take up arms against a bad ruler?).

---

17 Outright opposition to female rule, of course, still lingered, often with military explanations: in 1553, John Colwyn complained that England ‘ought not to have a woman to bear the sword’. Samson, *Mary and Philip*, p. 42.

described the rule of a woman as a collective punishment that God might send to a sinful nation, ‘just like slavery’, but sidestepped further discussion by stressing the sinfulness of disobedience against any monarch, male or female. Bullinger, publishing his answer to Knox, affirmed that ‘the gospel does not unsettle or abrogate hereditary rights, and the political laws of kingdoms’. He condemned civic disobedience against a queen, provided she had lawfully inherited and ‘is married to a husband, or in the meantime holds the reins of government by her councillors’.

Fears about the wrong kind of husband lingered. Samson has convincingly demonstrated that Mary Tudor’s marriage to Philip II of Spain by no means permitted Spanish domination of England: Mary’s protection of her own privileges, notably through the Act for the Queen’s Regal Power, ensured an equitable and efficient power-sharing agreement. Yet the myth of Spanish domination set in early after Mary’s death, and opponents of a foreign consort for Elizabeth were among its most fervent proponents. As early as 1559, John Aylmer attempted to rebut Knox and to defend Elizabeth’s right to rule in the influential pamphlet *An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subjectes*. In his list of suitable female models for Elizabeth, Aylmer wrote approvingly of the legendary Scythian queen Tomyris, who rejected a foreign suitor because:

> she knew his meaning was to mary hir kingdome, and not hir [...] which answer, if Quene Mary had gyven to Philip: Calles, Hams, and Guisnes, had not bene lost, nor [...] hir subjectes so flesed, that they must scrape nere the boones that will get any more.


22 John Aylmer, *An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subjectes* (London, 1559), E2. Ironically, Tomyris was one of the warrior women who represented Mary Tudor on her own entry into London in 1553, alongside Judith and Pallas Athene. Paulina Kewes follows Sydney Anglo in noting that both Judith and Tomyris ‘decapitated the enemy’, and may have featured as an allusion to the execution of Northumberland. I would add that Pallas...
Aylmer, as I discuss below, outlined a highly circumscribed vision of legitimate queenship. He assumed that Elizabeth’s education had taught her to limit her own power, to listen to counsel, and to select a doctrinally sound husband.

**ii. Praise and the philosopher-king**

As I will demonstrate in this chapter and the next, the literary material which greeted Elizabeth’s early public appearances repeatedly indicated anxiety about the continuation of her bloodline – anxiety that would become more visible after her near-death from smallpox in 1562. In turn, Elizabeth resorted to iconographical strategies to stress her commitment to a Protestant and nativist establishment. Elizabeth’s persona as a learned queen well versed in doctrine would be essential. So too was her pose as a humanist prince who understood the value of counsel, and who could fulfil the functions of government with a humble and informed sense of the limitations on her role. For Elizabeth’s cautious apologists, chief among them Aylmer, the persona of the learned Protestant princess which had been so burnished by Ascham and Bale was central to the case that she was an acceptable sovereign, despite the disabilities of her sex. Such descriptions, however, often cloaked attempts to assert ownership of the new queen.

Humanist ideals of kingship drew heavily on Plato’s concept of the philosopher-king, imagined in Book Six of his *Republic*.23 In previous chapters, I have touched on the influence of Erasmus’ *Institutio principis christiani*, a mirror for princes which drew knowingly from Plato’s model.

---

In the first century AD Plutarch had also adapted Plato’s original, producing *Ad principem ineruditum* (*To an Uneducated Ruler*).\(^{24}\) To many early modern readers Plutarch, not Plato, was the point of access to this tradition; as Fred Schurink has demonstrated, Erasmus’ translation of *Ad principem ineruditum* was often printed in dual editions with his *Institutio*, affirming their relationship in a shared tradition.\(^{25}\) Both Greek writers described the prince as the moral pattern for his subject’s behaviour – in Plutarch’s terms, ‘one who is falling cannot hold others up, nor can one who is ignorant teach […] nor can he rule who is under no rule’.\(^{26}\) For Plato, the philosopher-king was a literal *philosoph*er, a lover of wisdom. His court depended not only on his own learned authority, but his willingness to surround himself with wise counsellors. To Plutarch, a truly learned ruler must be both ‘wise’ and ‘educated’ – neither alone would do, but with both he might attain ‘the wisdom of god’.\(^{27}\)

Two years after Elizabeth’s accession, Thomas Blundeville dedicated to her his English translation of Plutarch, which he published with the antonymous title ‘The Learned Prince’. The work was packaged with two other Plutarch translations: ‘The Fruits of Foes’, which had already been dedicated to Elizabeth in manuscript, and ‘The Port of Rest’. Naturally, the dedication extolled Elizabeth as Plutarch’s ideal – yet it held a hint of moral blackmail.\(^ {28}\) Blundeville appears to have been a member of the Ascham/Astley circle who had dominated Elizabeth’s education. He dedicated ‘The Port of Rest’ to John Astley and John Harington the elder: both had loyally served Elizabeth through the Seymour and Wyatt crises, enduring the Tower. Ascham provided a prefatory verse praising Blundeville’s translation. As Schurink

---


\(^{26}\) Plutarch, *Moria*, section 2.

\(^{27}\) Plutarch, *Moria*, section 3.

\(^{28}\) Thomas Blundeville, *Three morall treatises* (London, 1561), A2'.


writes, ‘the collection presents Blundeville and his Protestant humanist “frendes” as Queen Elizabeth’s natural counsellors’. But not only did these “frendes” share the values of Elizabeth’s education – they had instilled them. Blundeville, in the guise of praise, mentions his knowledge of Elizabeth’s education in Plutarch’s Greek original. He had probably been speaking to Ascham. In Ascham’s letter to Elizabeth of October 1566, Ascham refers not only to their lessons about Xenophon and Isocrates, but to Elizabeth’s knowledge that ‘yet was he a very wise man, that made this the very figure of an unlearned, and of an unruly prince’ – a reference to Plutarch. Blundeville’s translation marries intellectual exhortation and domestic intimacy:

\[
\text{The Kynge of Pearce was wont to have } \\
\text{A chamberlane whome day by day} \\
\text{When mornyng came he strayght charg gave} \\
\text{That he to him these wordes shoulde saye.} \\
\text{Aryse thou Kynge and slepe no more} \\
\text{But carefull be to do ryght sone} \\
\text{Suche nedefull thynges as heretofore} \\
\text{Mesoromasdes woulde have done.}
\]

After this passage, Blundeville includes Plutarch’s qualification that a great king needs no daily reminder to aspire to greatness. The flattering interpretation is that Elizabeth falls into this category. Nonetheless, we can read Blundeville’s text as an admonition that Elizabeth should literally be taking counsel from the Ascham/Astley set in her privy chambers each morning. John Astley, as Blundeville’s dedication notes, was now ‘mayster of the Queenes Majestyes Jewell house’; more importantly, his wife Katherine was now ‘Chief Gentlewoman of the Bedchamber’. On many nights this role would entail sleeping in the truckle bed in the queen’s own bedchamber, making Katherine the first person Elizabeth saw in the morning, much like

30 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, iii, 66. See also Chapter 2, section iv.
31 Blundeville, Three morall treatises, A4. ‘Mesoromasdes’ (or ‘Mesoromades’) was an exemplary God-king of Persia.
the poem’s ‘chamberlane’. When we add this reality to Schurink’s existing reading of the poem for ‘counsel’ and emotional pressure, it becomes clear Blundeville was using the ‘learned prince’ model to advocate for a conciliary role for the young queen’s domestic and pedagogic circle. Katherine herself was not shy in giving advice – and would soon, with her husband, be intriguing to have Elizabeth marry Eric of Sweden.32

Blundeville’s text exposes the ways in which the image of the learned prince could be used to undermine rather than bolster the queen’s authority. As Shenk has shrewdly written in her own work on Elizabeth’s learned persona:

> The image of the learned prince surrounded by similarly educated advisors presented a complicated political scenario for the absolutist monarch. When humanists used education as the foundation of their ideas for political reform, they made learned credentials the primary criterion for all governors. This principle created no inherent distinction between a learned advisor and his learned prince and thus blurred the boundaries between royal and lay authority. The humanist paradigm presented the educated, absolutist prince with a double-edged sword. Educated status showcased royal authority, but it also threatened to diminish the monarch’s exclusive right to that authority.33

We can add that this problem was, like most things, more complicated for an educated queen than for a king. The humanist models of men like Ascham were predicated on male networks of mentorship, in which Elizabeth could never fully participate. Meanwhile, the justifications of Elizabeth’s right to rule were led by men like Aylmer, schooled in the same emerging tradition. Jacqueline Vanhoutte observes that in Aylmer’s model, ‘the management of a female monarch leads to the development of a self-governing male élite’.34 Although Vanhoutte stresses that this body of male participants in the political nation even included commoners who served on juries, her observation applies equally to the core institutions of governance

---

34 Jacqueline Vanhoutte, ‘Queen and Country?: Female Monarchs and Feminized Nations in Elizabethan Political Pamphlets’, in *Elizabeth I: Always Her Own Free Woman*, pp. 7-19 (p. 11).
discussed in Aylmer’s pamphlet: institutions such as Privy Council and parliament, increasingly stocked by men who claimed a share of Elizabeth’s humanist education. When we combine this with Shenk’s analysis, we see that the vulnerability of a queen to male interference was magnified by the pretensions of humanist pedagogues to be building a new hierarchy which, to quote Linda Bradley Salamon on Ascham, ‘verges on meritocracy’.\(^{35}\) We should be cautious about anachronistic terms like ‘meritocracy’ – not least because humanism was a network, and often a closed one – but Salamon’s reading of Ascham is valuable. If an education could elevate someone as unpromising as a woman to be a worthy leader, what more could it do for a man?

One solution was for Elizabeth to fall back on older, medieval models for asserting royal exceptionalism: genealogy, magnificence, physical courage and the construction of charisma. No acquired quality could truly trump her lineage from Henry VIII and from the conjunction of York and Lancaster. She was celebrated for her learning by the educational institutions which valued it, but panegyric tacitly authorised by the Crown increasingly praised the queen’s intellect as divinely inspired ‘wisdom’, combining old traditions of spiritual kingship with new Protestant models of princely authority over the Church.\(^{36}\) I explore this point further in Chapter 5. Yet even at the opening ceremonies of her reign, Elizabeth’s access to ‘wisdom’ was consistently represented as interchangeable with religious truth.


\(^{36}\) As Carole Levin has investigated, ‘Elizabeth continued a number of rituals of medieval kings that demonstrated the continuing power of the aspect of sacred monarchy. We can see, however, the gendered nature of the way she approached such ceremonies.’ Levin, *Heart and Stomach*, p. 16.
iii. Humility and advice

As Marie Axton has written of Elizabeth, ‘during her first untried years, outspoken political advice proliferated’. In the first months of her reign, Elizabeth was also at her most constrained by the condescension of the male conciliar model. Both Aylmer’s *An harborowe* and the pageants staged ahead of Elizabeth’s coronation depended on a rhetorical tradition we have already met in Chapter 1: *laudando praecipere*. Paulina Kewes detects Elizabeth’s recognition of this tradition in her reply to the Speaker’s petition of 25 January 1559, when the Lord Keeper reported that the Queen ‘giveth you most hartie thankes as for a good exhortacion made to her Highness to become such a one as ye have commended her for’. Kewes conflates here the men behind the coronation pageants with the parliamentarians, although it is true that both were engaged in early rhetorical experiments as part of the same contest to establish a new poetics of counsel. Elizabeth addressed her first parliament through the Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Bacon, who actually delivered the speech. Looking closer at this exchange, we see that it comes with a ritualised expression of *humilitatio* which temporarily subordinates the new queen:

> The Queen’s Majestie giveth you most hartie thanks as for a good exhortacion made to her Highnes to become such a one as yee have commended her for, but not acknowledging those virtues to be in her Highnes, marye, confessing that such as she hath be Gode’s giftes and graces; and therewithal her Highnes wisheth (as she trusteth you all doe) that for Englande’s sake there were as manye virtues in her as would serve for the good governmente of this her realm committed to her royall chardge, and desireth you all with her to give God daylie thankes for those that she hath, and to

---

38 Chapter 1, section ii.
39 Kewes, ‘Godly Queens’, p. 56.
40 For discussion of who ‘authored’ these speeches, and how the texts were preserved, see CW, pp. xxi-xxii. On Bacon and Elizabeth, see Patrick Collinson, ‘Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan via media’, *HJ*, 23 (1980), 255-73.
make humble peticion to graunte such increase of the rest as to his devine providence shalbe thought for his honour most meete.\textsuperscript{41}

Elizabeth’s self-abasement in the face of ‘Gode’s giftes and graces’ recalls \textit{A godly medytacyon}. Yet not only does Elizabeth indicate her theological and rhetorical education, but she ultimately asserts herself as an instrument of ‘devine providence’. It is for her virtues and skill as a governor that this Parliament must pray, and only her virtues can serve ‘the good governmente’ of England, which has been committed to ‘her royall chardge’ and nobody else’s. She is not inviting her parliamentarians to pray for God to guide their own deliberations, and she invites them to ‘give thanks’ for the excellent qualities she already brings to the table.

Earlier the same day Elizabeth, through Bacon, had appealed to her parliamentarians to use their ‘learnings and wisdom’, but only in so far as it would teach them to:

\begin{quote}
clearly forbeare, and as a greate enemie to good councell, flee from all contentious reasoninges and disputacions and all sophisticall, captious and frivolous argumentes and quiddies, meeter for ostentation of witt then consultation for weightie matters, comelyer for schollers then for counsellors, more beseeminge for schooles then for Parliament howses.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

In the battle for authority, Elizabeth and Bacon proposed to banish the levelling structures of ‘schollers and ‘schooles’, offering instead a more conservative model of governance.\textsuperscript{43} They stressed Elizabeth’s descent from providential figures, both male and female. Bacon dropped his pose as conduit for the queen’s voice to comment on her directly:

\begin{quote}
I thinke I may affirme that the good king Ezechias had noe greater desire to amende that was amisse in his tyme, nor the noble queene Hester a better harte to overthrowe
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{42} Discussed in Daniel Ellis, ‘Free from Any Other Meaning: Truth and Politics in the Rhetoric of Elizabeth I’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Temple University, 2009). I have quoted this edition of the text for ease of comparison with Kewes, who does the same. 
the mightie enemye to Gode’s elect, then our soveraigne Ladye and Mistris hath to
doe that that may be just and acceptable in Gode’s sight.44

As Levin has observed, from these earliest moments of her reign Elizabeth’s interlocutors
recognised her capacity to function as both ‘king and queen’ – a duality she exploited to
deliberate effect. In this passage, Bacon proposed two models of spiritual king and queenship.
On other occasions, comparisons of Elizabeth to Ezekias (or Hezekiah) could be double-edged,
an invocation of the Old Testament’s most iconoclastic king against a queen who was
notoriously reluctant to strip the altars.45 Meanwhile, Hester (or Esther) was celebrated for the
use of her beauty to sway a husband, which could also be problematic. The biblical Book of
Esther relates how she won the heart of King Ahashverosh after a beauty treatment of ‘six
months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odors’ in a harem-like facility, a detail
which early modern writers understandably dropped from their retellings.46 But Hester’s beauty
still mattered to Christian writers. For all the martial tenor of Hester’s will to ‘overthrowe the
mightie enemye’, she was fundamentally an ultra-feminine model of queenship, and Bacon
cites her here in balance with an ultra-masculine model of kingship. Though such biblical
figures might later be used to admonish Elizabeth – most notoriously in Nicholas Udall’s 1564
play Ezekias – in Nicholas Bacon’s loyal speech, these two providential models came as a
convenient weapon in the fight against a new model of democratised counsel.47

The theme of Elizabeth as an instrument of God’s providence would emerge in the first months
of her reign and recur throughout her lifetime. Barbara K. Lewalski has traced to the writing

44 Hartley, Proceedings, p. 35.
46 Book of Esther, 2:8-12; Saralyn Ellen Summer, “‘Like Another Esther’: Literary Representations of Queen Esther in Early Modern England” (unpublished PhD thesis, Georgia State University, 2006).
47 Aston, The King’s Bedpost, pp. 120 ff.
of Luther and Calvin the development of ‘correlative types’: biblical models for comparison felt by their proponents not only as literary analogues, but as ‘genuine recapitulations of God’s providence’. Part of Lewalski’s project is to stress the Protestant nature of this model and its relationship to Calvinist models of salvation, but when Elizabeth was praised as Deborah, Judith or Esther, her interlocutors were also recycling tropes previously associated with Mary Tudor – or in Kewes’ words, ‘responding to the tremendous power of the Marian example’.

In his invocation of Mary as a warrior for the Catholic cause, Leonard Stopes had written:

Marie, the mirrour of mercifulnesse,
God of his goodnesse hath lent to this lande;
Our jewell, our joye, our Judeth, doubtlesse,
The great Holofernes of hell to withstande.

Full well I may liken and boldly compare
Her highnesse to Hester, that vertuous Quene;
The envious Hamon to kyll is her care,
And all wicked workers to wede them out.

The Judith and Esther on display here are militant and victorious in Christ’s battle, just as they would be when serving as models for the Protestant Elizabeth. Later, Stopes even hails Mary as ‘our princely Mynerve’ in her wise and martial mission ‘our holy Churche in state to restore’ – an identification that, as I show further in Chapters 4 and 6, many of the country’s most obstreperous Protestants would apply to Elizabeth and the battle against Rome. The simplest explanation, as Walsham writes, is that:

Calvinist theology merely intensified a cluster of assumptions which had long been part of the machinery of pre-Reformation minds. In this sense early modern Catholics and Protestants shared the same frame of reference: providential beliefs cut across the invisible iron curtain which contemporary polemic erected between Geneva and Rome.

---

49 Kewes, ‘Godly Queens’, p. 47.
As we trace the early iconography of Elizabeth herself, in the context of contemporary anxieties about a queen’s marriage, education, intellect and religious leadership, we should recognise continuities with Mary’s iconography and the Catholic tradition.

In the remainder of this chapter, I offer readings of Aylmer’s pamphlet, An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subjects, and of the pageantry staged at Elizabeth’s pre-coronation procession through London on 14 January 1559. Although Aylmer’s text was published in April 1559, I discuss it first because it explicates the political anxieties which greeted Elizabeth’s accession. With each text, and in each of the following chapters, I am asking the same questions: how did Elizabeth and her apologists use ideas about ‘learning’ and ‘intellect’ (or ingenium) to defend her capacity to rule? And how did some of her subjects engage with that imagery to limit and constrain her?

iv. John Aylmer’s harborowe for faithfull and trewe subjectes

John Aylmer’s defence of female rule is now best remembered among political historians for defining England as a ‘mixed monarchy’, functioning neither as ‘meere Monarchie […] nor a meere Oligarchie, nor Democratie, but a rule mixte of all these’.52 A. N. McLaren provides a useful exegesis:

as a corporate body politic, one in which the wisdom of the many (a contested, but gender-specific identity during this period) ‘bridled’ and imparted grace to a female prince, and thereby preserved both Protestantism and national autonomy. It conjoined the three estates – now queen, lords and commons, or queen-in-parliament – in a mystical marriage effected at the queen’s coronation.53

---

52 Aylmer, Harborowe, H2v-H3r. All further references will be given in-text.
53 McLaren, Political Culture, pp. 3-4.
This concept of ‘mixed monarchy’, in conjunction with the growing understanding of England as a ‘commonweal’, would influence centuries of political debate. But in Aylmer’s context, ‘mixed monarchy’ was primarily an excuse to argue that a female monarch could not do much damage, hemmed in by other male-dominated organs of the state. Aylmer insists on ‘obedience’ as the highest civic good: his titlepage centres the phrases ‘FAITHFULL AND TREWE SUBJECTES’ and ‘breife exhortation to OBEDIENCE’ as twin visual foci (A1r). Obedience, he argues throughout, is owed to Crown institutions regardless of the sex of one particular figure in that corporate body. Constance Jordan has shown that most contemporary opponents of female rule based their arguments on universal systems of order, ‘supported by an appeal to authority, chiefly scripture and Aristotle’. Its defenders appealed to ‘the evidence of experience’ and expose ways in which the meaning of scripture must be ‘historically contingent’: ‘they attack the notion that a woman’s place is a feature of the hierarchy of creation and instead show it to be subject to social and historical forces’.

Aylmer takes this ‘historically contingent’ approach, guiding readers through a sweeping history of classical, biblical and English history, setting anti-gynocratic rulings in social context, and presenting against them a litany of exceptional women – a process which allows Aylmer to showcase his own learning. Referring to the need for an English Protestant to rebut Knox, Aylmer tells us:

I wished that some notable learned man, wold have answered it, that, like as those which be stonge of Scorpians use to fetch remeady of the same: so this cause being wounded, or rather a little scratted with som shewe and apparance of learning: might be again healed with suche plaisters as through the truthfe of the matter, true lerning ministreth. (A3r-v)


Aylmer, of course, identifies himself as the man for the job and buttresses his credentials by littering his text with Greek words. In his first few pages, Aylmer coins the term πολιφθάρματα for ‘multi-abominations’, from the term φθάρματα in the Greek Septuagint (Leviticus, 2:25, ‘δι’ φθάρματα ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς’). Aylmer uses πολιφθάρματα to refer to what he calls the ‘ugglie monsters and brodes of the devils’ which originate from the ‘Satan’ of the Rome but now are infecting Protestants like Knox (A3r). Aylmer’s very manipulation of the Greek language to insult Knox is an attempt to fix him on the page in an inferior position, Knox’s ‘shewe and apparance of learning’ outclassed by the real thing.

Meanwhile, Aylmer launches on his historical project to put scriptural prohibitions on female rule in their proper, contextualised and limited place. At the outset, he accuses Knox of swerving ‘from the ‘υπόθεσις to the θεσις, that is from the particular question to the generall’ (B2r). Aylmer accepts that some women have made for poor rulers – not least among them Mary Tudor – but the Scriptures and antiquity can be harvested for exceptions. Aylmer has a sustained interest in female bodies as sites which negotiate the gap between aberration and nature: the normal course of human life is for a woman to produce a single child in each pregnancy, he tells his readers, but without any crime against ‘nature’ she may still occasionally ‘bringe furth twoo children or three at a burden’ (D1v). Without parallel exceptionalism, God’s people would be left with the void of ‘No Deborahes, no Judiths no Hesters, no Elyzabethes’ (G3v).

These three biblical examples—Deborah the judge and prophetess, Judith the vanquisher of the tyrant Holofernes, and Queen Esther (or Hester) who intercedes with her gentile husband to save the Jewish people from genocide – would recur frequently in the Elizabethan mundus
significans as precedents for Elizabeth, as they had for Mary.\(^{56}\) One reason we see these names so frequently together is that all were biblical women who successfully defended Israel against a violent threat where men had failed. They are also – Deborah and Esther in particular – figures of eloquence: Esther had long been a model of female intercession and political persuasion, primarily for consorts.\(^{57}\) Their power was verbal and, particularly in the case of Deborah, intellectual, rendering them useful models of ‘wise queens’. Michele Osherow writes, ‘the practice Deborah routinely performed was a discursive one; speech is at the heart of her experience [...] in her role as prophetess, judge, and poet, Deborah’s history is distinguished by her articulate wisdom and the people’s reliance upon it’.\(^{58}\) But these articulate biblical women were not without complications. Throughout the Christian era, the figure of Deborah had been a site at which biblical scholars could negotiate the limits on women in leadership. In the years preceding Elizabeth’s accession, theologians of all stripes had fretted over two questions: what was Deborah’s marital state, and did her authority extend to the spiritual sphere, the temporal, or both?\(^{59}\)

Deborah is described in Judges as the ‘wife of Lapidoth’, but she also issues orders to the Israeli commander Barak. Barak is denied the glory of killing the opposing commander Sisera when another woman, Jael, beheads him. Some commentators justified Deborah’s command over a


\(^{59}\) Schroeder, *Deborah’s Daughters*, pp. 70-115.
man by suggesting Barak must have been another name for her husband, and Deborah merely a useful domestic influence or a symbolic model for partnership between different branches of the Church.\footnote{Schroeder, Deborah’s Daughters, pp. 29-69.} In 1558, Peter Martyr Vermigli wrote to Elizabeth urging marriage: ‘Play the role of holy Deborah for our times. Join yourself to some godly Barak.’\footnote{David Gunn, Judges (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), p. 60.} Luther, by contrast, had insisted that the biblical Deborah must have been a widow, and only thus could be free of subservience to a man:

Where men and women have been joined together, there the men, not the women ought to have authority. An exceptional example is the case where they are without husbands, like Huldah and Deborah who had no authority over their husbands.\footnote{Schroeder, Deborah’s Daughters, p. 77.}

Meanwhile, Knox had emphasised Deborah’s role as a prophet to deny Mary Tudor the right to civic office:

Debora did usurpe no such power nor authoritie, as our quenes do this day claime [...] all this, I say, she did by the spirituall sworde, that is, by the worde of God, and not by any temporall regiment or authoritie, which she did usurpe over Israel.\footnote{The Works of John Knox, ed. Laing, iv, 407-8. See also King, Tudor Royal Iconography, p. 225.}

For Knox, Deborah’s spiritual wisdom was limited to unmediated transmission of God’s word.

All of these issues – Deborah’s marital state, her fitness for peace versus war, the limits to her sphere of authority – would be at stake each time she recurred as a figure for the new queen. But as King writes, it was Aylmer’s version of Deborah which would set ‘the normative model for later apologists’.\footnote{King, Tudor Royal Iconography, p. 226.} What mattered for Aylmer was firstly that, like Judith, Deborah was an example of the exceptional measures God might take to demonstrate his providence; secondly, she was able to hold military authority over Barak. She is one of a number of such figures of providence:
He saved his people by the hande of a woman poore Deborah. He advaunced them and overthrewe the enemies by a poore shepherde and his sling [David]. He cut of the head of the proude captayne Olophernes by the hande of a weake woman [Judith]. (B3v)

Meanwhile, claiming Barak as Deborah’s husband allows Aylmer to assure his readers that in war the new queen will obey no foreign husband:

This woman is counted of some of the Hebrues to be Barakes wife, and yet sent she him to the warre, gave him his commission and made him the generall, whereby apeareth that to be true, which we saide before: that a woman as a wife must be at commaundement but a woman as a magistrate may lawfullye commaunde. (D3v)

Absent here is any vestige of the early medieval commentators’ view that Deborah had unique access to spiritual ‘wisdom’ or might offer a precedent for the activities of female mystics.65 As I will show below, Aylmer stressed Elizabeth’s ‘learned persona’ in the rest of his text. But in figuring her as Deborah, Aylmer is primarily interested in proving that she can act as a vessel for God’s providence and will not be politically subverted by a foreign husband. He is not interested in a model of ‘wisdom’ as an innate quality. As Osherow has established, Deborah was otherwise celebrated in this period for her prophetic song, an act of speech. When she appeared as a figure for Elizabeth at Norwich in 1578, who was by then long established in power, she would recite a version of her biblical song which was twenty-four lines long.66 Similarly, when in 1626 John Wilson came to include the defeat of the Armada in his long list of providential English escapes from papistry, he imagined an Elizabeth who could echo Deborah’s song to the Lord, as part and parcel of her martial leadership:

Our VIRGIN-QUEEN with holy dance, unto her Timbrel sang,  
Our Land for this Deliverance, with shouting-Echoes rang.  
Her Soul had marcht (like Deborah) amidst the armed Train,  
Her Faith had scorn’d with holy laugh the bragging Hoast of Spain.67

65 Schroeder, Deborah’s Daughters, p. 30.  
66 Progresses, II, 796-7.  
67 John Wilson, A song of deliverance (London, 1626), B3v. I recognise that the reference to Elizabeth on the ‘timbrel’ also carries resonances of the poem’s earlier reference to the Miriam. Like Susan Frye, I also detect ‘the tone of Deborah’s thanksgiving’ in the song attributed to Elizabeth herself on the defeat of the Armada: Frye, Pens and Needles, p. 155.
By contrast, despite all Aylmer’s praise for Elizabeth as Deborah in *An harborowe*, he never quotes her voice directly.

v. **Aylmer’s Ascham**

The female voice held an uneasy place in the contemporary religious landscape, as Aylmer knew. In *An harborowe*, he identifies the scriptural verse which every opponent of female leadership trotted out, St Paul’s injunction at 1 Corinthians 14: ‘Let your women keep silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but *they ought* to be subject, as also the Law saith.’ Aylmer mocks the quotation’s ubiquity – ‘this is the Hercules clubbe that beateth all downe before it’ – and counters that Paul’s instruction governed church, not state: ‘Saynt Paule, nor none of the rest of Christes garde, meddle not with Cyvill pollycie, no further then to teach obedience’ (G4). This was a tricky case to make when defending the rule of a Protestant queen who would also assume spiritual power, and other writers adopted every possible position as to which of Deborah’s prophetic and judicial roles Elizabeth could combine.68 Yet the appeal to scriptural authority on ‘obedience’ is characteristic of Aylmer. Aylmer’s own ‘learning’ becomes a reader’s guide to unlocking the historical context of Paul’s letter: supposedly a response to a specific complaint about women ‘jangling and tatlinge in the church when thei met, so that the congregacion was thereby disturbed’ (G4). 69 Aylmer admits that women are not ideally made to preach – or to prophesy – but lists precedents for exemptions (H1). Above all, Aylmer insists, prohibitions on women preaching only exist with


69 Similar arguments that St Paul’s injunction refers only to feminine ‘gossip’ continued to be made during the late twentieth-century debates over the ordination of women in the Church of England, e.g. Michael Green, *To Corinth with Love* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982), p. 158.
regard to unexceptional, conventionally feminine women. They might equally apply to men who are ‘not women in sexe, but in feblenes of wit’ (G4v). Preaching requires ‘gravitie, learning, and eloquence […] courage and sounde judgemente […] memorye and muche science’ (G4v). To most women these qualities have not been granted, although Aylmer invites his readers to question whether this is because ‘nature’ has framed them so or whether it be because ‘the bringinge uppe of womenne, is commonlye suche […] as they bee not brouughte uppe in learnynge in Scholes, nor trayned in disputacions’ (G4v). He trusts his audience to recognise from their own lives that there are men who lack these qualities and a few women who possess them. ‘Are there not in Englande women thynke you, that for their learnynge and wysdome, coulde tell their housholde and neighbours, as good a tale as the best Sir Jhon there?’ (H2r). Learned and wise women are rare, but they can be found even in the ‘housholde’ and local sphere.

From this basis, Elizabeth’s own learning emerges as her passport to the pantheon of exceptional women capable of leadership. Unlike most women:

she hath bene trained in learning, and that not vulgare and common, but the purest and the best which is most commended at these dais, as the tonges, artes, and gods word, wherein she so excedingly profited, as I my selfe can wytnes, that. vii. year past, she was not in the best kind of learning inferior to those that al theyr lyfe tyme had ben brought up in the universities, and were counted jolly felowes. (N2v)

It is not hard to recognise here the language of Ascham, who would describe Elizabeth in *The scholemaster* as beyond ‘rare wits in both the universities’, and ‘wyth soch a judgement, as they be fewe in nomber in both the universities’. Just a few lines later, Aylmer gives his source for this passage: ‘Her first scholemaster with whome I was familiar, a man very honest and learned’ (N2v). This is surely Ascham, who tutored Elizabeth while Aylmer tutored Jane

---

70 Ascham, *Scholemaster*, Hi*, Liii*.
Grey: Katherine Parr was responsible for the education of both girls and the two men knew each other well. Aylmer’s approbation of his source’s ‘witty saying’ is probably a nod to Ascham’s pre-eminent concern for style. We also hear from an Italian tutor, who was probably Giovanni Battista Castiglione:

> In like maner, an Italian, which taught her his tongue (thoue that nacion lightely praise not out of their own country) said once to me that he founde in her. ii. qualities, whiche are never lightly yock fellowes in one woman, whiche were a singular witte, and a meravelous meeke stomacke. (N3’)

Castiglione, although not Elizabeth’s sole Italian tutor, suits the part: he was esteemed by Protestant martyrologists as a purported survivor of torture under Mary, and is known to have parlayed his connection with Elizabeth into lifelong employment at her court. Whoever Aylmer’s Italian source was, he cites Elizabeth’s ‘meravelous meeke stomacke’ to reassure readers that education had not in any way endangered her chastity. Throughout *An harborowe*, Aylmer is at pains to make the same point. The anonymous ‘scholomaster’ is quoted: ‘I teache her the tongues to speake: and her modest and maidenly life, teacheth me workes to do’ (N3’). But if she occasionally ‘teacheth’, Elizabeth more often takes instruction. Aylmer reminds his reader that the education of women functions so that ‘then learnyng and the conversation with such as be wyse and honest, fashioneth and frameth the mynde (as Plato sayth) and maketh it tractable as waxe, to prynt in good images of vertues and modest maners’ (N2’).

As *An harborowe* reaches its climax, Aylmer brings all these values together and makes their connection to Elizabeth explicit:

> are your eyes so dulle? or your myndes so malycious? that you cannot or wyll not see those Jewelles, wherwith I have decked hir? is that rare learning, that singulare

---

modestie, that heavenly clemencie, that christiane constancie, that love of religion, that excellent wysdom with many more of my graces, nothing in your sight? (I2r)

This is the Elizabeth created by Aylmer and Ascham: ‘tractable as waxe’ thanks to her ‘conversation’ with her tutors, clothed with ‘singulare modestie’ to match her ‘excellent wysdom’. As a model of the English evangelical woman, she is also a weapon to be deployed in what Helen Hackett terms Aylmer’s ‘strongly nationalistic thrust’, with his famous annotation that ‘God is English’.

Although An harborowe is much-studied, little attention has been drawn to Aylmer’s reliance on the learned persona that had already developed around Elizabeth, and to Ascham’s role as Aylmer’s collaborator in this image. A partial exception is Carole Levin, who highlights Aylmer’s praise for Elizabeth’s ‘maidenly apparel, which she used in kyng edwardes tyme’, which ‘made the noble mens daughters and wyves, to be ashamed, to be drest and paynted lyke pecockes, being more moved with hir most vertuous example: then with all that evr Paule and Peter wrote’. Aylmer continues here with the story of another nameless noblewoman, persuaded to reject a lavish garment sent as a gift by Mary Tudor, because ‘that were a shame to followe my lady Mary against Gods woorde, and leave my lady Elyzabeth, which foloweth Gods woorde’ (N1r). Elizabeth’s sober dressing and commitment to ‘Gods woorde’ were not only linked for Aylmer, but stemmed from a devotion to the Gospels: for his Elizabeth, contact with ‘worldlye pomp’ and specifically with money was ‘to defile hir pure handes consecrated to turne over good bookes, to lyfte up unto God in prayer, and to deale almes to the pore’ (N1v). Biblical study was, as ever, the guard of chastity.

---

74 Shenk touches on this passage briefly in Learned Queen, p. 6.
75 Hackett, Virgin Mother, p. 51.
76 Levin, Heart and Stomach, pp. 11-12, quoting Aylmer, Harborowe N1v.
Some of Aylmer’s readers may have recognised the tale of Elizabeth’s noblewoman disciple as a story in circulation about Jane Grey; a few years later John Foxe would repeat it. Aylmer, Ascham and Foxe all agreed that modest dressing was the mark of a girl well schooled in reformed doctrine: back in 1551, Aylmer had written to ask that Grey’s mentor Bullinger use his influence to instruct her in ‘what embellishment and adornment of person is becoming in young women professing godliness’. Grey was taking too much interest in fine clothing for Aylmer’s liking, which he linked to her dangerous new interest in music ‘for the sake of ostentation’, and the implicit neglect of her books. He suggested Elizabeth as a worthy example: ‘who goes clad in every respect as becomes a young maiden; and yet no one is induced by the example of so illustrious a lady, and in so much gospel light’. Whether Jane ever did consider Elizabeth a role model, Aylmer certainly wished she would, and after Jane’s death he and Foxe were free to weave a narrative in which she conformed.

If we look beyond these contemporary moralising tropes, we recognise that Elizabeth’s own display of sober apparel in the later years of Edward’s reign perhaps owed less to spiritual ascetism and more to the need to rehabilitate her image after the Seymour scandal. Revisionist Marian historians have also pointed out that Mary’s reputation for sumptuary luxury should be read against the political exigency of affirming her much-challenged royal status. As Sydney Anglo affirms, ‘the utility of princely magnificence – those splendid appearances which served as the external sign of intrinsic power’, was understood by each Tudor monarch, and it also informed the iconography of Elizabeth as King Solomon, which I

79 Maria Hayward, ‘Dressed to Impress’, esp. p. 83.  
80 Hayward ‘Dressed to Impress’; Richards, ‘Examples and Admonitions’, pp. 34-5; Samson, Mary and Philip, p. 203.
discuss in Chapter 5.\textsuperscript{81} But long before he was quoted by Aylmer as an authority on Elizabeth’s modesty, Ascham had shared Aylmer’s concerns about the relationship between a young woman’s intellectual style and her spiritual aesthetic. In his 1550 letter to Sturm, he had written of Elizabeth:

> She likes a style that grows out of the subject; chaste because it is suitable, and beautiful because it is clear. She very much admires modest metaphors, and comparisons of contraries well put together and contrasting felicitously with one another. Her ears are so well practised in discriminating all these things, and her judgment is so good, that in all Greek, Latin, and English composition, there is nothing so loose on the one hand or so concise on the other, which she does not immediately attend to, and either reject with disgust or receive with pleasure.\textsuperscript{82}

As Grafton and Jardine write of this passage, “‘chastity’, ‘modesty’, ‘discriminating’ are unselfconsciously deployed here by Ascham to imply that Elizabeth’s Protestant devotion and female decorum are directly linked to her outstanding ability in humane letters”.\textsuperscript{83}

Ascham, however, is doing more than simply reiterating the need for a modest aesthetic to cut across all aspects of female life. In his letter, this passage follows his attack on the ‘imitators of Erasmus who have tied up the Latin tongue in those wretched fetters of proverbs’, and the fashion for books of aphorisms which would excerpt the matter of ancient authors’ writing rather than preserve their style.\textsuperscript{84} Ascham is claiming Elizabeth’s endorsement for his prejudices as a stylist, and does so, as Grafton and Jardine rightly note, in heavily gendered fashion. In his Latin original, he describes Elizabeth poised between ‘fastidio’ (‘disgust’) and ‘voluptas’ (‘pleasure’), terms carrying particular sexual resonance. The association of Elizabeth with ‘voluptas’ troubles Ascham’s attempt to affirm her chastity.

\textsuperscript{81} Anglo, Images of Tudor Kingship, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{82} Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, i, p. lxiv (Giles’ translation); Latin at i, 192 (‘To Sturm’). Grafton and Jardine quote from the English, which is why I have reproduced it here. The Latin originals of the terms they highlight are ‘casta’, ‘verecundas’ and ‘animadversio’, the last of which carries associations with pedagogical chastisement.
\textsuperscript{83} Grafton and Jardine, From Humanism to the Humanities, p. 144.
\textsuperscript{84} See also Chapter 2, section iv.
Yet pleasure in humane letters could, for both Aylmer and Ascham, offer sublimation of dangerous female appetites. In an anecdote from The scholemaster which has had a long afterlife, Ascham reported visiting Jane Grey and finding her reading Plato’s Phaedo in Greek, having rejected her family’s pursuit of hunting. In keeping with the emphasis he had placed on Elizabeth’s ‘voluptas’, Ascham stresses that Grey had made her leisure choices based not on duty but on pleasure: Jane tells him, ‘I wisse, all their sporte in the Parke is but a shadoe to that pleasure, that I find in Plato: Alas good folke, they never felt, what trewe pleasure ment.’

Corey McElaney writes of this passage: ‘pleasure, for Ascham, is the means by which the pupil will not only be allured to education, but also thereby gain the judgment to distinguish honest pleasure from dishonest pleasure’. We can also recognise in this anecdote, with its opposition between the frivolity of hunting and the joy of bonae litterae, a phenomenon identified by Aysha Pollnitz, who has argued that humanists at the court of Henry VIII drew an anxious opposition between the value of the education they provided and an earlier model of education that was ‘predominantly chivalric’ and drew heavily on Burgundian court culture. In this context, Ascham approvingly reports that Grey reads Plato ‘with as moch delite, as som jenteleman wold read a merie tale in Bocase [Bocaccio]’. Ascham had form for adapting the Phaedo anecdote to fit the needs of a moment. In the 1550s, he referenced it in letters both to Grey herself and to Sturm, but by The scholemaster, it had been embellished with comments attributed to Grey that she had come to love learning because her tutor Aylmer, unlike her parents, never physically beat her – a convenient detail likely added in support of the anticorporal punishment thesis which underscores The scholemaster. This version of the tale,

85 Ascham, Scholemaster, Ciii².
87 Pollnitz, ‘Humanism and Court Culture’.
88 Ascham, Scholemaster, Cii³.
89 Ascham, Works, ed. Giles, i, 239-41 (‘To Jane Gray’); i, 227-8 (‘To Sturm’); iii, 118-9 (‘The Scholemaster’).
with its lead role for John Aylmer as ideal tutor, also speaks to the reciprocity with which Ascham and Aylmer were willing to burnish each other’s reputations as suitable tutors of elite young women. This reciprocity and sense of a shared project is further evidence that Ascham was a source for the learned persona of Elizabeth which we see politically leveraged in *An harborowe*.

Throughout *An harborowe*, Aylmer is anxious to affirm that Elizabeth’s exceptionalism does not overturn the natural order of things – that is, she is no threat to patriarchy in its essence. This underscores another key theme of *An harborowe*: the biblical thesis that God’s providence is shown at its greatest when it uses ‘weak vessels’ for His work. As such, Aylmer writes:

   Placeth he a woman weake in nature; feable in bodie, softe in courage, unskilfull in practise, [not terrible to the enemy no shilde to the frynde, wel, Virtus mea (saith he) In infirmitate perficitur. My strength is most perfight when you be moste weake, if he joyne to his strengthe: she can not be weake. If he put to his hande she can not be feable, if he be with her who can stande against her? [...] It is as easy for him to save by fewe as by many, by weake as by strong, by a woman as by a man. (B2v-B3r)\(^90\)

One page later, Aylmer cites Gideon, whom God instructs in the Book of Judges to fight with only 300 men of an army previously numbering 33,000: ‘lest you thinke to overcome your enemies by your own strength, and proves, and not by my wurking and might’ (B3r).\(^91\) In his margin, Aylmer also cites 2 Corinthians 12, which reads at verses 9-10:

   And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfite through weakenes. Very gladly therefore wil I rejoyce rather in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

   Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproches, in necessities, in persecutions, in anguish for Christs sake; for when I am weake, then am I strong.


\(^{91}\) Gideon’s story is told at Judges 7:4-7. Aylmer’s marginal note cites ‘Jud. 17’, presumably as a copying error.
If Elizabeth was to be England’s providential salvation at a moment of crisis, after the ‘persecutions’ and ‘anguish’ of Mary’s reign had left Protestant Englishmen at their weakest, her subjects were being invited to celebrate her ‘infirmities’ and ‘weakness’. As such, the ‘learning’ and aptitude for good governance celebrated elsewhere in Aylmer’s text must be limited. As Collinson has pointed out, Laurence Humphrey struck a similar note when he told Elizabeth in 1563: ‘we advaunce not your might, not your army, not your wisdom, but wonder at your weakness and infirmity’. (Later in the same epistle, he requested that Elizabeth ‘furnishe your courte’ with ‘men famous for commendacion of Justice, godlynes, and learning’, which rather suggested that her own ‘learning’ was insufficient.)

The theme of providential salvation by a ‘weak’ woman recurs throughout the early years of Elizabeth’s reign, but Aylmer’s specific language seems to prefigure the text we now know as the ‘Tilbury speech’. Elizabeth here is ‘weak’, then ‘feeble’, ‘not terrible to the enemy’ and yet martially capable and ready to ‘oercome enemies’ when joined with God’s strength. A fuller analysis of the relationship between An harborowe and the Tilbury speech is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is not my suggestion that Aylmer played a part in writing the 1588 speech. By then Aylmer was long out of favour, despite holding onto the bishopric of London through which he had at one point functioned, in the words of Peter Lake, as the ‘de facto episcopal leader of the national church’. In a fraught confrontation with her bishops in 1585, Elizabeth singled

---


93 The most popular textual tradition of the Tilbury speech stems from a report in a letter by Dr Lionel Sharpe (BL, MS Harley 6978, art. 18, fol. 87), reproduced in Anonymous, Cabala, mysteries of state (London, 1654), pp. 259-60. Susan Frye has highlighted an alternative version reported in a sermon printed in 1612: William Leigh, Queene Elizabeth, paraleld in her princely vertues (London, 1612). Janet M. Green has made an authoritative case that Elizabeth did play an authorial role in crafting the speech, although Frye has persuasively dismantled the tradition that Elizabeth wore armour – or, in Sharpe’s words, appeared ‘as armed Pallas’. Green, ‘“I My Self”: Queen Elizabeth I’s Oration at Tilbury Camp’, Sixteenth Century, 28 (1997), 421-45; Frye, ‘The Myth of Elizabeth at Tilbury’, Sixteenth Century, 23 (1992), 95-114. See also Teague, ‘Queen Elizabeth in her Speeches’, p. 77; Neale, Essays, pp. 105-6; and Chapter 6 below.

94 The only other person I have found take note of this echo is Helen Castor, Elizabeth I: A Study in Insecurity (London: Allen Lane, 2018), p. 33. I am grateful to her for correspondence on this point.

him out for failing to enforce regulations against unlicensed preaching in domestic households.96 Nevertheless, Aylmer left some trace of his intellectual influence on the words that would come to be indelibly associated with his queen.

By the 1580s, the model that Aylmer had drawn up in 1559 for Elizabeth’s queenship was no longer applicable. The last of her marriage prospects had evaporated, and by any calculation, Elizabeth’s status as ‘virgin queen’ was now a leading iconographical mode. But in 1559, it appeared inevitable to Aylmer that she would marry and he repeatedly laid out how this would work. In one typical formulation, ‘I grante that, so farre as perteineth to the bandes of mariage, and the office of a wife, she muste be a subjecte: but as a Magistrate she maye be her husbands head’ (C4v).97 In these repeated efforts to separate Elizabeth’s domestic and constitutional roles, we can detect the outline of the legal idea that in 1977 Marie Axton famously termed ‘the queen’s two bodies’: the division of Elizabeth into ‘a body natural and a body politic’.98 Unlike the ‘body politic’, Axton writes, ‘the Queen’s natural body was subject to infancy, infirmity, error and old age’. To this, one might add that in Aylmer’s formulation, it could also be subject to a husband. Aylmer’s dedicatory epistle to his fellow reformists Robert Dudley and Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford even begins with an initial woodcut ‘T’, which depicts an image of king and queen in seeming co-monarchy (Fig. 8). The king sits on the dominant right-hand position with the queen on the left, but her pedestal is larger, a tension reminiscent of the subtle visual strategies employed to map co-monarchy in joint portraits of Mary Tudor and Philip of Spain.99 A cloth of honour stands behind his throne, but in front of hers. The only clear difference between the two figures is that the female figure is demarcated with breasts, although it may be that we are supposed to read a crown on her head and not on that of her

96 CW, ‘Speech 15’, pp. 177-81; see also Chapter 1 above.
97 Also discussed in Montrose, Subject of Elizabeth, pp. 17-19.
98 Axton, The Queen’s Two Bodies, p. 12.
husband. There are no clues to the identity of the husband, but perhaps Aylmer recognised that one of his dedicatees was already a strong candidate for such a role.

In fact, choosing a husband seemed to be the most important application of Elizabeth’s much-praised education:

Wherfore let us leave of to dispute, and beginne to praye, that it maye please hym to stablyshe hir seate amonge us, and to sende hir longe lyfe and quiet reigne, to defende hir and us from invasions abrode and conspiracies at home, to geve hir grace to secke his honour, and maynteine the truthe, to guide hir harte in the choise of hir husbande, and to make hir frutefull, and the mother of manye children, that thys Realme maye have the graftes of so goodly a tree, That oure chyldren and posterite maye see hirs occupying hir throne, with honour, joye, & quietnes. (I2r)

Elizabeth’s job was to ‘maynteine the truthe’ and to choose a husband who would provide ‘the graftes of so goodly a tree’.

vi. The pre-coronation entry

Extensive studies have analysed the public spectacles which marked Elizabeth Tudor’s coronation in January 1559. Most scholars have rightly stressed the conditionality with which London’s most prominent citizens greeted their young queen, although their focus ranges widely over themes such as the purpose of social ritual, the city as text, and the tension between image and idolatry. We know more about Elizabeth’s pre-coronation procession than

---

her coronation ceremony, in part because the former was witnessed by far more people. As William Leahy complained in 2003, modern critics have lavished attention on the ‘living emblem’ which formed a constituent part of the display at Little Conduit in Cheape, at which the figure of ‘Old Father Time’ brought forward his daughter ‘Truth’; at this point, Elizabeth was given a ‘Byble in Englishe’ and made a display of kissing it. As Anglo, Kewes and others have noted, the entire scene was a restaging of a motif from the joint entry of Philip and Mary into London in 1554. Veritas filia temporis had been Mary’s motto, which Kewes cites as her ‘attempt to wrest the device from the reformers’. After her death, the pageant’s depiction of Truth emerging from a rock whence ‘this many yeres she durst not once out look’ and Elizabeth’s ‘highly theatrical acceptance of the “book of truth”’ both ‘finalised her displacement of Mary as the only legitimate daughter of Time (and of Henry VIII)’. But beyond this well-known topos, the pre-coronation procession incorporated three elements which indicate that Elizabeth’s ‘learning’ was already a locus for the contest of her representation: the pageantry which presented humanist conceptions of ‘counsel’ as models for wise but limited female rule; the queen’s own demonstrations of her capacity to listen to and understand such counsel; and the two Latin speeches by pupils of St Paul’s School and Christ’s Hospital which set the tone for the queen’s later visits to schools and universities.

To understand these three elements in context, we need an overview of the sources for the event and the scholarship that has framed our conception of it. We know that the procession, punctuated by pageants and orations, took place on 14 January 1559. Its official description

103 Anglo, Spectacle, p. 357.
was printed a week later by Richard Tottel.\(^{105}\) This was an occasion for teaching, and the question of who was giving allegorical instruction to whom is at the heart of most scholarly studies of this text and the event it documented. As David Bergeron revealed in 1978, Elizabeth had instructed her Master of the Revels, Sir Thomas Cawarden, to make costumes available to the representatives of the City of London which were normally reserved for ‘our maskes and Revelles’ and were now to be repurposed for her ‘passage’.\(^{106}\) From Bergeron’s perspective, ‘Elizabeth is thus not only recipient of the pageant, spectator of and “actor” in it, but also the provider of the costume. She is accordingly part patron of this drama.’\(^{107}\) But for all that the Crown clearly played a role in approving the festivities, Frye has demonstrated comprehensively that this event functioned in large part for the mercantile interests of the City to assert the terms on which they were prepared to respect the monarch’s authority. The conditions were both economic and gendered: in accepting Elizabeth ‘as compliant, malleable, and grateful – in short, as their metaphoric wife’, the aldermen of the City described ‘the values which they considered conducive to social stability and financial gain’.\(^{108}\) In April 1559 the City’s Court of Aldermen paid Richard Mulcaster for makyng of the boke conteynynge and declaryng the historyes set furth in and by the Cyties pageauntes at the tyme of the Quenes highness commyng thurrough the Citye to her coronacion xls. which boke was gevyn to the Quenes grace.\(^{109}\)

---

105 During my time on the Yale–UCL collaborative exchange I was fortunate to be able to inspect the only extant copy of the first edition: Richard Mulcaster, *The quenes majesties passage through the cite of London to Westminster the daye before her coronacion* (London, 1559), STC 7589.5, property of the Elizabethan Club of Yale University, New Haven. Germaine Warkentin’s edition of the *Passage* reprints useful details of other contemporary narratives and documents detailing the event: *The Queen’s Majesty’s Passage and Related Documents*, ed. by Warkentin (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2004). The edition from which I give in-text citations, however, is by William Leahy: ‘The Coronation Procession of Queen Elizabeth, 14 January 1559’, in *Progresses*, i, 112-39. The reports by Aloisio Schivenoglia, Richard Grafton, Henry Machyn and Charles Wriothesley are particularly important complements.


This is the book which would become *The queen’s majesty’s passage*, a text in which, per Frye, Mulcaster repeatedly distils ‘the entry’s diverse sponsors and authors’ into ‘a single speaker with a readily identifiable civic ideology’. The surviving record of Mulcaster’s payment in April neatly delineates the competing powers he needed to satisfy: he was paid by the Court of Aldermen for a text they had commissioned, but only after Elizabeth had received a presentation copy and had presumably shown approval. The pre-coronation procession, in conception, performance and textuality, marked a covenant between the queen and aldermen of the City – a covenant which could be ratified only when both had affirmed their consent.

The pageants would provide opportunities for Elizabeth to showcase her learning. But they depended on her remaining within the bounds of her assigned role. Critics such as Anglo, who emphasise the queen’s personal agency, stress Elizabeth’s acts of speech and her proactive engagement with the crowd: ‘the Queen was a true heir to her father in crowd-pleasing showmanship’. It is true that Elizabeth engaged more co-operatively than James VI/I at his own coronation procession in 1604: the City of London attempted ‘to display him seeing and hearing’ their lesson, as they had so successfully displayed his predecessor taking their counsel, but as Stephen Orgel has demonstrated, James’ reaction was instead ‘delayed, reserved and grudging’. In Elizabeth’s language of January 1559, we also see the first examples of a rhetorical trope to which she returned throughout her reign: the stress on her personal love for her subjects (p. 118). Yet for much of the pre-coronation procession, Elizabeth kept silent and listened to the lessons her city’s pageants had to teach her. Her voice is termed ‘princelike’ (p. 118), but rarely quoted directly. Mulcaster imagines her face as a text of which he is the

110 Frye, *Competition*, p. 31.
111 Anglo, *Spectacle*, p. 351.
privileged interpreter: at the first major stop of the procession, a child’s welcome, we are thus told:

Here was noted in the Quenes majesties countenance, during the time that the childe spake, besides a perpetual attentiveness in her face, a marvelous change in looke, as the childe words touched either her person or the peoples tongues and hertes. So that she with rejoysing visage did evidently declare that the words tooke no less place in her mynde, than they were moste heartely pronounced by the chylde, as from all the heartes of her most heartie citizeins. (p. 119)

The second of these sentences does not appear to be a report of direct speech, so much as a ‘reading’ of Elizabeth’s ‘rejoysing visage’ which did ‘evidently declare’ itself as a signifier. As Hackett writes of another passage, ‘as monarch she is the image of God, but at the same time she is to be read for confirmatory signs that she is a true godly ruler, and not an ungodly ruler sent as punishment’.113 This void for interpretation – in which, per Hackett, ‘the Queen, the pageant-devisers and the pamphleteer can be seen as colluding in an act of propaganda’ – depended on Elizabeth’s strategic silence.114 It was the queen’s job to read correctly the symbolic language of the pageants for the lessons the City was giving her; in turn, the crowd were required to read her. The City provided a child ‘interpreter’ at each pageant stop, to ensure the queen got her hermeneutics right, while in his pamphlet Mulcaster took on this interpretative role for his readers, parsing the queen as a text. Throughout Elizabeth’s reign, both written texts and live performance played a role in shaping her representation: but in written texts, the preferred relations between different signifiers could more easily be clarified and delimited.

The noise of the crowd is a major character in the drama of Mulcaster’s text. The pageant-makers repeatedly expressed the hope that ‘quietness might be maintained’ and that Elizabeth

113 Hackett, Virgin Mother, p. 46.
114 Hackett, Virgin Mother, p. 48.
might rule ‘to everlasting continuance of quietnes and peace’, not least due to the innately pacific nature of a female ruler (p. 122, p. 124). The genealogical pageant at Cornhill stressed Elizabeth’s connection with her namesake Elizabeth of York, for both had a role to play in ‘the knitting up of concorde’, while an adjacent Latin passage read, ‘Dissidentes principes sulditorum lues. / Princeps ad pacem natus non ad arma datur / Filia concordiae copia, neptis quies’ (pp. 121-2).115 Yet in the same paragraphs, Mulcaster emphasises that civic ‘quietness’ is nowhere apparent: the noise of the crowd constantly threatens to disrupt the interpretative acts. Calming this noise is the first test of Elizabeth’s ability as a peaceable ruler, and simultaneously offers proof of her ability to listen deliberatively. Thus at the genealogical pageant:

Now the Queenes majesty drewe nere unto the sayde pageant, and forsomuch as the noyse was great by reason of the prease of people, so that she could skarce heare the childe which did interprete the sayde pageant, and her chariot was passed so farre forward that she could not well view the personages representing the kinges and Queenes abovenamed: she required to have the matter opened unto her, which so was, and every personage appointed, and what they signified, with the end of unitie & ground of her name, according as is before expressed. For the sight wherof, her grace caused her chariot to be removed back, & yet hardly coulde she see, because the children were set somewhat with the farthest in. (p. 121)

The same scenario repeats itself throughout the text, with even less emphasis on sight and more on noise. Among other examples, Elizabeth asserts her authority ‘to require the people to be silent for her majestie was disposed to heare all that should be said unto her’ (p. 122); she reacts to the ‘noyse of loude instruments […] because she feared for the peoples noyse, that she should not here’ (p. 123); and she gives ‘most attentive eare, and requiring that the peoples noyse might be stayde’ (p. 125). In emphasising her need for silence every time a child appeared to interpret the pageants, Elizabeth was giving an exaggerated performance in the role of diligent student, while simultaneously asserting her judicious control of the event.

115 ‘Warring princes are a disaster for their subjects. / A prince born for peace is not bestowed for war / The daughter of concord is plenty, and rest [quies] is her granddaughter’ (trans. by Leahy, emphasis mine).
Although Elizabeth largely followed the script written for her, Leahy suggests that the events recapped in Mulcaster’s final section of The passage constitute her unexpected interventions, which Mulcaster had to append to a pre-written draft.\(^{116}\) This cannot be quite true: it does not account for Elizabeth’s evident improvisation when accepting a purse (p. 128), or receiving the gift of the English Bible (p. 129), whereas some of the additions here reflect generic literary tropes. The tears of an old man at seeing the dawn of a new era may even recall the biblical Simeon.\(^{117}\) But this appendix also includes the much-quoted moment when the new queen departed from the Tower of London where she had once been imprisoned, gave public praise to God, and presented herself as a new Daniel, ‘whom you deliveredst out of the denne from the crueltic of the greedy and rageing Lyons’ (p. 139). Levin draws attention to Elizabeth’s use of a male biblical persona here and indeed, as Levin writes, ‘there were female Biblical references she might have used’.\(^{118}\) One model of providential salvation frequently applied to women in the period was Susanna, and in the Spanish Prayers published under her name in 1569, Elizabeth would include Susanna as the only woman and the coda in a long list of biblical men who prefigured her salvation:

Thus Thou hast freed Noah from the flood, Abraham from the Chaldeans, Lot from Sodom, and Jacob from the bloody hands of his own brother Esau, Daniel from the den of lions, and Susanna from the false testimony of those two accursed men and unjust judges.\(^{119}\)

The story of Susanna had applications to a woman whose youthful letters reveal sheer fury at how her sexual reputation had been imperilled following the Seymour scandal – though as a

\(^{116}\) Leahy, ‘The Pre-Coronation Procession of Queen Elizabeth’, p. 137.
\(^{118}\) Levin, Heart and Stomach, p. 131.
\(^{119}\) CW, ‘Prayer 20’, p. 115. Spanish original at ACFLO, p. 141. See also the prayer to Elizabeth in Thomas Garter’s The commodity of the moste vertuous and godlye Susanna (London, 1578) and for context on Susanna, see Ephraim, Reading the Jewish Woman, pp. 69-88. On these prayers, see Shenk, Learned Queen, pp. 21-54 and Chapter 5 below.
public identification, she may have been too close to the bone.\textsuperscript{120} Instead, at this key moment Elizabeth chose to be Daniel, an identification that recurred throughout her life and well into her afterlife under the Stuart dynasty.\textsuperscript{121} Not only was Elizabeth choosing to identify with a male figure, but she choose a prophet, not a biblical king. Doran suggests that in Daniel Elizabeth was choosing an ‘essentially passive’ figure, who would not commit her to a militant religious stance – and perhaps taking inspiration from the lions in the Tower’s zoo.\textsuperscript{122} But on the contrary, Elizabeth appears to have claimed for herself the power of a biblical figure known for his speech acts. Despite Deborah’s example, the legitimacy of women as prophets would remain contested for decades to come, yet here was a queen laying claim to spiritual leadership and prophetic voice.\textsuperscript{123} This prayer is one of only two occasions where Mulcaster claims to record the queen’s words as direct speech, and he may have checked with a representative of the regime before he published them under her name.\textsuperscript{124} In keeping with St Paul’s dictates for female prophecy at 1 Corinthians: 11, Elizabeth’s head was covered in ‘a coif of cloth of gold’ beneath her crown.\textsuperscript{125} Dressed as befits a female prophet, but echoing the words of a male prophet, Elizabeth was performing her first act of religious leadership.

The aldermen of the City had also chosen a prophet with whom to compare Elizabeth: Deborah. The procession’s final pageant showed ‘Debora with her estates, consulting for the good

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{120} CW, pp. 22-4, 33-5.
\textsuperscript{124} The other occasion is at p. 128, where Elizabeth accepts a purse of gold: her words ‘truely reported’, a promise ‘not to esteme the value of the gift’ but the mynd of the gevers’, are reminiscent of her letter to Edward VI at \textit{CW}, ‘Letter 17’, pp. 35-6.
\end{flushleft}
government of Israel’ (p. 133). Almost everyone who has written about this pageant points out that the ‘estates’ which Deborah was here required to consult were an imposition with no biblical precedent: as Osherow writes, ‘in the Bible, Deborah never receives advice, she only offers it’. But this English Deborah was provided with ‘vi. personages: two representing the nobilite, two the clergie, & two the commnalitie’, a legislative format culturally specific to early modern Europe (p. 133). The Italian Aloisio Schivenoglia, less interested in specific legislative models for England, simply wrote home that Deborah was seated ‘with the Council of the Jews’. Yet lest there be any misunderstanding, Mulcaster reports the explanation to the queen that ‘she might by this be put in remembrance to consult for the worthie government of her people’ (p. 134). Richard Grafton expanded his commentary on this pageant between the 1563 and 1570 editions of his Chronicle. The 1563 version notes only that the pageant depicted ‘the politic government of the worthy Deborah’ as a model for Elizabeth, but the 1570 version described Deborah ‘having about all her counsellors to talk and consult of the state of the realm and benefit of the commonwealth’. This was, Grafton adds, ‘to encourage the Queen not to fear though she were woman; for women by the spirit and power of Almighty God have ruled both honourably and politiquely’.

There was evidently a shared approach behind this pageant’s framing of queenship and Aylmer’s conception of an English Deborah reigning at the apex of a ‘mixed monarchy’. Hoak surmises that Aylmer may have arrived back in London from exile ‘in time to witness the pageant or obtain Mulcaster’s pamphlet’. But we should also read the Deborah image against

---

127 It is not necessarily the case, as Bergeron suggests in ‘Elizabeth’s Coronation Entry’, p. 7, that the queenly ‘kirtell … of your yelowe cloth of gold’ loaned by Elizabeth was worn by the figure of Deborah so that ‘symbol and reality would have fused’. It could easily have clothed one of the queens in the Cornhill genealogical pageant.
129 The Queen’s Majesty’s Passage, ed. by Warkentin, p. 66.
130 Hoak, ‘A Tudor Deborah’, p. 79.
the much-stressed conditionality of the City’s support for Elizabeth. As the procession ended, Elizabeth encountered a pageant at which a child delivered an oration recapping the lessons of the event. As he expressed his wishes for the queen’s reign – largely a variation of the instruction that she should ‘trueth restore agayne’ – the word ‘hope’ featured six times; the Latin verses displayed alongside featured ‘spero’, the equivalent, seven times (pp. 136-7). Mulcaster instructs us to read the Deborah scene in combination with the third pageant, which depicted two trees representing two Commonwealths. The first, a critique of Mary’s regime, was ‘cragged, barreyn and stonye’, whereas the second was ‘fayre, freshe, grene, and beawtifull’ (p. 128). The child tasked with interpreting this scene instructed Elizabeth ‘we trust welth thou wilt plant, and barrenness displace’. It was against this backdrop that the tableaux of ‘Truth, the Daughter of Time’ emerged, shamelessly appropriated from Mary’s coronation celebrations – a religious elaboration on the image of the two trees which clearly suggests that Elizabeth’s purported fertility was in part a metaphorical expression expected to ‘plant’ true religion. Yet the scene also gave an airing to early modern prejudices against ‘barren’ women which would prove just as dangerous for Elizabeth as they had been for her sister. In 1569, Mary Stuart would send a gift of embroidery to the Duke of Norfolk, showing an emblem of a knife pruning the unfruitful branch of green vine. The emblem’s motto *virescit vulnere virtus* usually encouraged religious stoicism, but Mary’s message to her co-conspirator held a different sense: as Peter Daly writes, Norfolk was to ‘cut down the unfruitful branch, Elizabeth’, to make way for a queen who had already proved she could bear a son.131 The disdain the city’s representatives showed for Mary Tudor’s infertility was a preview of the ways Elizabeth’s own bodily agency would soon be critiqued and circumscribed.

Yet *The queen’s majesty’s passage* contained one other vision of queenship which was less constricted. This fantasy forms one of the procession’s least studied episodes, in part because Mulcaster records its content only in Latin. The queen was the recipient of two orations by representatives of the city’s schools, although the text of only one survives. As the queen passed St Paul’s Cathedral, she was greeted by a representative of the school founded there by the humanist John Colet in 1510: a child who recited an oration in Latin, which Mulcaster recorded in full. When Elizabeth was later greeted with a similar oration by the children of Christ’s Hospital, no text was preserved by Mulcaster, perhaps because Christ’s Hospital had only opened its doors as recently as 1552 as a charity school for the poorest of children.\(^{132}\) Unlike St Paul’s, a node in Elizabeth’s own humanist network showcased here to speak to her own intellectual achievements, the role of Christ’s Hospital in Mulcaster’s narrative is to demonstrate Elizabeth’s capacity for charity. For that we do not need to hear their voices, but to see only the reaction he infers from Elizabeth:

> her grace […] did cast up her eyes to heaven, as who shoulde saye, I here see this mercifull worke towards the poor whom I must in the middeste of my royaltie nedes remember, and so turned her face towards the childe, which in latin pronounced an oracion to this effecte. (p. 134)

There may also have been an incentive for Mulcaster to ensure St Paul’s received full coverage, as the Lord Mayor who had commissioned him, Sir Thomas Leigh, was a member of the Mercer’s Company, although one might expect Christ’s Hospital to benefit similarly, given that Richard Grafton was then Warden.\(^{133}\)

As a spoken text without images, the oration at St Paul’s was one of the few entertainments which did not involve an official interpreter: for once the queen was able to absorb a lesson

---


\(^{133}\) *Progresses*, i, 111, 134.
without mediation, demonstrating her grasp of Latin while doing so. By contrast, Mary had heard an English version and a Latin when she passed St Paul’s in 1553. Elizabeth’s capacity for unmediated intellectual exchange with the schoolboy was emphasised when, following the speech, he gave her a written copy, ‘which he had there fair written in paper’; where Elizabeth herself had kissed the English Bible at Little Cheape, here the boy kissed the copy of his oration before she gently ‘received it’ from him (p. 132). Despite all the critical attention that has been focused on Elizabeth’s embrace of the Bible, we should not forget that the City of London collectively gave Elizabeth not one but two texts to take home from the procession: the book of scripture which symbolised the religious mission they expected of her, and the trophy which acknowledged her role as a learned queen and patroness of the educational bastions of the new humanism.

What of the oration’s content? Praising Elizabeth’s own education, the boy began by invoking the familiar paradigm of Plato’s philosopher-king: ‘Rempublicam illam foelicissimam forem, cui princeps sophiae studiosa, virtutibusque ornate contigerit’ (that state will be happiest to which is sent a prince who studies wisdom and who is ornamented with virtues) (pp. 130-1). As was frequently the case with celebrations of Elizabeth’s intellect, her sophiae studiosa only had merit if it could be paired with virtutibusque, and the schoolboy would go on to praise her piety as much as her learning. But in emphasising Elizabeth’s education, he also established a kinship between queen and student that would recur as a theme when Elizabeth visited Oxford, Cambridge and Eton later in her reign. Even as the boy demonstrated his own talents as a Latin orator – and one can only imagine the competition to be ‘appointed by the scolemaster thereof’ – he said of his listener, ‘haec literis graecis et latinis eximia, ingenioque prepollens est’ (‘she is exceptional for Greek and Latin letters, and her intellect is outstanding’) (p. 131). Boy and

---

134 Anglo, Spectacle, p. 322.
queen were alike, too, in their lack of physical strength. Like Aylmer’s weak vessels, the schoolboys would be reduced to praying for God’s delivery for their foes, ‘et quoniam pueri non viribus sed precibus officium prestare possunt’ (‘since boys cannot do their duty through feats of manliness, but through prayer’) (p. 131). Of all the incidents in the coronation procession, this speech imposed the least limits on Elizabeth’s absolute authority, with a model of subjects who submitted entirely, rather than offering unsolicited advice: ‘huius imperiis animo libentissimo subditi estote, vosque tali principe dignos prebete’ (‘with the most willing of spirits, subject yourselves to her imperial rule, and prove yourselves worthy of such a prince’) (p. 131). This was the beginning of Elizabeth’s ‘learned authority’ in practice: it is no coincidence that the coronation entertainment which most stressed her learning was also that which acknowledged most fulsomely her qualifications to rule alone. It is true that ‘learned authority’, as Linda Shenk has made clear, could be dangerous territory on which Elizabeth’s own counsellors could compete with her – such that later in her reign she would seek to transcend this model.135 At this stage, however, boy pupils were among the few members of the wider humanist network whose education could not (yet) be used to surpass the queen. Instead, it served to recognise her as one of their own.

We should, however, be cautious about reading this procession for exclusively Protestant possibilities or even problems of gender. By invoking Plato’s philosopher-king, the orator at St Paul’s celebrated Elizabeth as a paragon of humanism in terms which would not have looked out of place in the civic pageants of Catholic kings across Europe. In fact, the ways in which the pre-coronation procession celebrated Elizabeth’s ‘wisdom’ owed much to the panegyric crafted for the arrival of Philip in 1554. Four virtues were depicted supporting Elizabeth’s throne at her pre-coronation procession: Pure Religion, Love of Subjects, Justice and Wisdom.

In his influential study of the pre-coronation pageants, Breitenberg suggests that these were drawn from the traditional ‘four daughters of God’: Peace, Justice, Mercy and Truth. Supposedly, ‘Wisdom’ took the traditional place of Truth, or in Breitenberg’s terms: ‘a chain of equivalence which implies the indivisibility of truth, wisdom and Protestantism’. Breitenberg’s schema is open to question: ‘Wisdom’ might in fact equate to ‘Peace’ and ‘Pure Religion’ to ‘Truth’. But a more interesting story emerges when we look at the Latin verses which were reportedly ‘painted’ next to this pageant. Wisdom (‘sapientia’) and Pure Religion (‘pura religio’) emerge as the dominant virtues and as a matching pair: each is celebrated in a full couplet, while squashed in between them is a single couplet which celebrates the ‘just love of a king’ (‘regis amor [...] justus’), conflating ‘Justice’ and ‘Love of Subjects’ swiftly. The poem concludes with the following couplet, which gives the last word to the ideal of the wise king:

Cum regit imperium sapiens, sine luce sedebunt
Stulticia, atque huius numen inanis honor.

When a wise person rules the empire, Stupidity will sit without light, along with her claim to divinity, a vain honour. (p. 124)

What no one seems to have observed is that this conceit is almost directly lifted from the pageants performed at the entry for Philip in 1554. On that occasion, John Elder’s account tells us, Mary and Philip were depicted flanked by the virtues of ‘Justicia’, ‘Equitas’, ‘Misericordia’ and ‘Veritas’ (with her book, Verbum Dei, naturally). From a height above the pageant,

---

136 Mark Breitenberg, “…the hole matter opened”: Iconic Representation and Interpretation in “The Quenes Majesties Passage”, Criticism, 28, (1986), 1-25, p. 16. Less convincing is Breitenberg’s claim that Mary Tudor’s ‘entry’ saw these figures repurposed as ‘Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance’, for which he gives no source. He may have inferred this from a deleted reference in The Chronicle of Queen Jane to the ‘vii cardinall vertues’ (confusingly, seven instead of four) which possibly appeared at the 1554 entry of Philip and Mary, discussed in Anglo, Spectacle, p. 330. It is also possible he has confused them with virtues shown at Margaret Tudor’s entry to Edinburgh in 1503, which did match his schema (Anglo, Spectacle, p. 355). Breitenberg also fails to acknowledge that these are the ‘Cardinal Virtues’ of the Plato/Aquinas tradition, which has implications for how we map their relationship to the virtues constructed for Elizabeth. In this tradition, ‘Prudence’, not ‘Temperance’ is usually parsed as royal wisdom.

137 Progresses, 1, 124.
‘descended one which signified Sapientia’ and, according to Elder, crowned both figures.

Under the scene was written the following Latin and English verses:

*Qui verax clemensque simul, ac justus et equus,*  
*Virtutisque suam complevit lumine mentem,*  
*Si diadema viro tali Sapientia donet,*  
*Ille gubernabit totum foeliciter orbem.*  
*Et quia te talem cognovimus esse, Philippe,*  
*Nos fortunatos fore te regnante putamus.*

When that a man is jentle, just, and true,  
With vertuous giftes fulfilled plenteously,  
If Wisdome then him with hir crowne endue,  
He governe shal the whole world prosperously.  
And sith we know thee, Philip, to be such,  
While thou shalt reigne we thinke us happy much.138

Even if, as Elder has it, the images of both Mary and Philip were crowned by *Sapientia*, these verses explicitly apply only to Philip. This as Samson has observed, coheres with an Italian account which stated that the crown was only given to Philip.139 Both Latin and English verses conflate and rush through the virtues of ‘clemens’ (‘jentle’), ‘justus’ (‘just’), and ‘equus’ (‘true’), just as the verses celebrating Elizabeth’s wisdom would conflate the virtues of her ‘love of subjects’ and ‘justice’ before moving on to a longer celebration of ‘pure religion’ and ‘wisdom’. The men behind Elizabeth’s pageant were taking a twist to Philip’s verses by restoring ‘pure religion’ to joint top billing in this conceit; if Elizabeth was restoring true religion where Philip had helped to obscure it, her pageant-devisers would mimic the exercise in formal poetic terms. But both Elizabeth and Philip were honoured in similar, gently conditional terms as rulers who had the potential to excel as the ‘philosopher-king’: ‘Cum regit imperium sapiens’ [...] ‘si diadema viro tali Sapientia donet’. Only Elizabeth’s verse, which reacts against Philip’s, presents a negative inverse of the philosopher-king, in the image of the

---

vanquished *Stulticia* and her vain religious pretensions. Either Philip or Mary – perhaps both – were dismissed in an inversion of the same verses which had greeted them just over four years previously.

We have already seen that, well studied as they are, John Aylmer’s *An harborowe* and Elizabeth’s pre-coronation pageants both reward renewed attention to the way in which they deployed and constrained Elizabeth’s established persona as a learned princess. Yet there is one more twist in the tail. The speech at St Paul’s was also the only occasion in the pre-coronation procession which made explicit the widespread expectation – so visible throughout Aylmer – that Elizabeth would marry and bear children. In the closing lines of his oration, the young student prayed that England might see Elizabeth achieve Nestor’s years – a proverbial wish for long life which would recur in her encomia – and that God might soon make her ‘*matremque pignoribus charis beatam*’ (‘the blessed mother of dear heirs’). In the coronation pageants, as in the text Aylmer would publish a few months later, Elizabeth’s learning was a useful tool to demonstrate her potential as a ruler, but never outweighed greater anxieties about the pressing need for her to reproduce. These anxieties would come to the fore when Elizabeth began a series of visits to the nation’s educational establishments, where the rhetoric used to welcome the queen would repeatedly test the limits of a new figure for Elizabeth’s representation: the Roman goddess of intellect and a decidedly child-free virgin, Minerva.

---

140 In classical Latin, the word *pignus* more commonly means ‘pledge’, but given the slippage in meanings between ‘pledge’ and ‘heir’ in early modern English, neo-Latin of the period often uses *pignus* for ‘child’, especially in the legal sense.
Chapter 4: Marriage and Minerva

i. Introduction

As I have shown, in the English polity of the 1550s, a female monarch was not an unthinkable concept. What was unthinkable was the accession of a single woman who would not take immediate steps to find a suitable husband. Elizabeth Tudor’s youthful learned persona was perfectly suitable for adaptation to a married woman: John Bale, as we have seen, published *A godly medytacyon* with a description of the young princess flanked by verses from Ecclesiasticus, which delineated points of a good and bad wife.¹ Englishmen who celebrated Elizabeth’s learned persona on her accession exulted that a young queen well versed in biblical lore would be educated enough to understand her kingdom, yet discerning enough to take counsel from the right male counsellors, including the right sort of husband.

There was, however, one iconographical problem that classically minded Elizabethan panegyrists needed to solve before they could develop a poetics for a nubile learned queen. Minerva, Roman goddess of intellect and a symbol long associated with education, was a virgin goddess. In the first decade as queen, Elizabeth made several visits to universities and schools. Her intellect was also extolled by Robert Dudley at the Inner Temple, a centre for the education of the nation’s lawyers. One of the challenges facing these bodies was how to celebrate Elizabeth as a Minerva – an identification only to be expected given these colleges’ functions, the queen’s existing *docta* persona, and the financial imperative to beg for academic patronage – while they also echoed her wider subjects in urging her to marry. In the case of Dudley, who was Chancellor of Oxford during Elizabeth’s visit in 1566, this meant urging her to marry *him*.

¹ See Chapter 2, section v.
As I will demonstrate in this chapter, even a virgin goddess like Minerva could be reconfigured to advocate marriage. In documenting such occasions, I use Minerva as a case study for a wider issue in Elizabethan iconography: the radical instability of the signifiers used to represent the queen. We have already seen that biblical personae such as Judith and Esther could represent either the queenship of the Catholic Mary Tudor, or hopes for Protestant revival under Elizabeth. In the next chapter we will see that another wisdom figure, the biblical Solomon, could equally be used to encourage the queen to prioritise peace and prosperity or to wreak vengeance on recusant Catholics. In this chapter, I primarily discuss moments when Minerva was used to represent a queen most subjects still hoped would marry and bear children. Chapter 6 returns to the subject of Minerva with a close reading of Thomas Blenerhasset’s *The revelation of the true Minerva*, a text that in 1582 explicitly celebrated the failure of Elizabeth’s last courtship and stressed her identification with Minerva *because* of that goddess’ virginity. Yet until the failure of Elizabeth’s marriage negotiations with François of Anjou, it was quite possible for Elizabeth’s subjects to imagine a marriageable Minerva.

The issue of sexual status was not the only point on which Minerva could be used to represent two mutually exclusive models of queenship. Brumble notes in his authoritative dictionary of early modern classical allegory that although Minerva was traditionally depicted armed and could be as much a goddess of war as of wisdom, when early modern writers wanted to cast her as the goddess only of ‘just war’, or even as a guarantor of peace, they could jettison the warlike attributes. Thus in a peaceable guise ‘she could be distinguished […] from Bellona, the Roman goddess of war with whom she was sometimes conflated’.² We see exactly this

conflation in one of E.K.’s glosses of Spenser’s *Shepheardes calendar*: at October, line 114, E. K. notes of ‘Bellona’: ‘bellona, the goddesse of battaile, that is, Pallas’. In several examples I assess below, Elizabeth is identified with Minerva by writers who urge her towards peace – but in a few, and in the Blenerhasset text that I assess in Chapter 6, Minerva’s militarism instead is stressed. When Elizabeth is Minerva, she is sometimes a queen of peace, sometimes a queen of war; sometimes a queen of marriage, sometimes a queen of virginity – but always a queen with a sophisticated intellect. These are only a few of the ‘meanings of Minerva’ we shall meet in this chapter. Minerva was a flexible and multivalent signifier. Even her name was flexible: when it suited the metrical scheme of a verse form, she could be Pallas or Tritonia. In Greek, she was Ἀθηνά or Ἀθηνή.

I examine here a number of neo-Latin texts which I have transcribed myself, or which have been only recently transcribed by another editor and little studied. Despite centuries of scholarship dedicated to Elizabethan iconography, there is still a rich vein of unexplored material in the anthologies of complimentary verses presented to the queen on her visits to universities and schools. Much of this material is in Latin, although Greek begins to appear at a rate which mirrors the rise in Greek scholarship in England during these years. In the surviving anthology from Elizabeth’s visit to Cambridge in 1564, there were even two verses in Hebrew and one in Aramaic, although my own translation skills do not stretch that far. In recent years, the neo-Latin research community has begun to re-examine the verse book genre,

---

5 Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 8915. Matthew Stoky, in his record of the visit, described the content as ‘in the Romayne hand […] verses bothe of greeke and laten heb. Caldee / and English’; *Progresses*, 1, 417.
led by David K. Money and Sarah Knight. I have also made use of older overviews of neo-Latin poetry by Leicester Bradner and J. W. Binns. For the final section of this chapter, I have benefited from a recent revival of interest in Elizabeth’s visits to the universities, although most studies focus on what Mary Hill Cole has called the ‘ceremonial dialogue’ of civic and royal spectacle. In my analysis, I touch on these public ceremonies, but my interest is in the dedicatory verses given to Elizabeth: although these were not ‘private’ in the modern sense, they were seen by fewer eyes and were couched in a language of intimate exchange.

ii. Minerva in the Elizabethan political imaginary

Throughout previous chapters, I have often referred to the interest sixteenth-century political theorists took in the concept of ‘counsel’. When Elizabeth Tudor was represented as either ‘learned’ thanks to her education, or ‘wise’ thanks to divine inspiration, such imagery was often

---


a locus for latent concerns about how she would handle counsel. Recent decades have seen a revolution in scholarship on counsel: although I have already introduced several, the key scholars include John F. McDiarmid, A. N. McLaren, Natalie Mears and Jacqueline Rose.\(^9\) In an influential essay, John Guy traces how a discourse of counsel ‘underpinned not only the assumptions, but also some of the most important practices and political structures of the Tudor and early-Stuart polity’.\(^{10}\) Then, as today, vocabulary around counsel was ambiguous and in Elizabeth’s early years any verbal distinction was ‘utterly confused’ between ‘the consultative process’ and ‘deliberative institutions’. Only by the turn of the seventeenth century was it the case that ‘“counsel” increasingly denoted advice, and “council” institutions’.\(^{11}\)

Most importantly for our purposes, however, Guy writes that ‘a belief that *imperium* and *consilium* were symbiotic sustained the role of “counsel” as an inspirational myth’.\(^{12}\) To support this claim, Guy quotes Francis Bacon, who ‘hit the nail on the head when he said of antiquity, it “set forth in figure both the incorporation and inseparable conjunction of counsel with kings […] whereby they intend the Sovereignty is married to Counsel”’. This quotation is drawn from Bacon’s 1612 essay, ‘Of counsel’.\(^{13}\) Oddly, Guy omits the specifics of Bacon’s classical reference. Read in full, however, Bacon’s essay makes clear that he specifically saw Minerva as the key figure for understanding his own era’s discourse of ‘counsel’.

Traditionally, Minerva’s father is Jupiter, or ‘Jove’. But Renaissance mythographers who identified Minerva’s mother named her as ‘Metis’ and associated her with various guises of

---


\(^{11}\) Guy, ‘The Rhetoric of Counsel’, p. 293.


‘reason’.\textsuperscript{14} Natale Conti, for example, termed her ‘counsel’.\textsuperscript{15} In such narratives, which draw on Hesiod, Jupiter swallowed Metis whole – ‘for fear that she might bring forth something stronger than his thunderbolt’, or perhaps tired of lectured from ‘reason’ – only to be taken by some surprise when their child Minerva burst forth from his skull.\textsuperscript{16} In ‘Of Counsel’, Bacon writes, ‘Jupiter did marry Metis, which signifieth counsel: whereby they intend that Sovereignty is married to Counsel’, such that the consequences ‘prudence and power, are resembled to Pallas armed’. Bacon’s personal reading of this myth as a ‘secret of empire’ presented the story of Minerva’s birth as a warning to kings that they should not only build partnerships with wise counsellors, but ‘make it appear to the world, that the decrees and final directions […] proceeded from themselves’.\textsuperscript{17} For our purposes, however, what matters is the broader symbolic matrix in which Elizabeth, Bacon, and her educated subjects all operated: a culture which took from this myth, if nothing else, the possibilities for Minerva as an embodiment of \textit{imperium} partnered with \textit{consilium}.

Minerva’s origin myth was thus doubly resonant for Elizabeth’s iconographers: she was a deification of kingly counsel, and the daughter of an awe-inspiring father whose mother could at times be conveniently erased. Fulgentius, the fifth-century Christian mythographer whose catalogues were wildly popular in the early modern period, described Minerva’s sole parent as Jove, from whose head she was born ‘because the intellect is situated in the brain; and she was armed, because she is full of resource’.\textsuperscript{18} Even Minerva’s virginity did not preclude parenthood: Fulgentius transmitted the story of her ‘son’ Erichthonius, born when the god

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{14} Brumble, \textit{Classical Myths}, p. 218.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} \textit{Natale Conti’s \textit{Mythologiae}}, ed. and trans. by John Mulryan & Steven Brown (Tempe, AZ: ACMRS, 2006), section 1.2.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Bacon, \textit{Essays or Counsels}, p. 47.
\end{itemize}
Vulcan attempted to rape Minerva, but only succeeded in spilling his semen on her thigh. According to this tradition, Minerva flung Vulcan’s semen away in disgust, whereupon it fell on the soil where the city of Athens would one day stand: Erichthonius, half-snake, half-man, sprang from the soil and was protected by Minerva. Bacon knew the story and developed from it an essay on the tension between science and art: Lucy Hutchinson also knowingly handles an allusion to it in her translation of Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura*. In his gloss on Bellona in the *Shepheardes calendar*, E. K. erases Metis but mentions the story of Vulcan’s unwanted advances – ‘which the Lady disdeigning, shaked her speare at him, and threatned his saucinesse’ – although Erichthonius’ conception is not mentioned.

Minerva embodied knowledge of the world in its fullest senses, which partially explains why she was rarely described as a patroness of young girls. Contemporary familiarity with the story of Erichthonius may be a further reason why, although technically a virgin goddess, the early modern Minerva generally ceded this role to Diana. In practice, wives and widows could be compared to Minerva. Thus, in his preface to the 1591 edition of Philip Sidney’s *Astrophil and Stella*, Thomas Nashe could salute the married mother Mary Sidney: ‘whom Artes do adore as a second Minerva’, an apt partner to her late brother’s Phoebus Apollo. Yet Mary Sidney’s education, not her chastity, earned this comparison. As Marie Axton writes of the early modern Minerva, ‘chastity was incidental, not central to her identity’.

---

20 *Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, p. 183.
21 The most important study of Diana in Elizabethan iconography remains Berry, *Chastity and Power*.
23 Axton, *The Queen’s Two Bodies*, p. 48.
The incidental nature of Minerva’s chastity allowed writers to deploy her as an ambiguous symbol for Elizabeth’s marital choices and sexual reputation. This was as true when Minerva appeared alone, as when she featured alongside her frequent companions Juno and Venus. Critics from Wilson onwards have observed that Minerva often appears in Elizabethan iconography within the motif of the ‘Judgement of Paris’, as one of three goddesses quarrelling over the Golden Apple of Eris.\(^{24}\) Where the Trojan shepherd-prince Paris had disastrously chosen Venus, panegyrists presented Elizabeth as an alternative victor who surpassed all three: as I touch on in Chapter Six, this idea also drew on medieval and Neoplatonic discourses of the ‘\textit{triplex vita}’, a set of competing schemes for the ideal life that each depended on a balance between three elements.\(^{25}\) As early as the twelfth century, Bernardus Silvestris had represented the choice of Minerva as the life of contemplation, ‘media vel intima cogitatio est, sapientia que in cerebro sedem habet’ (‘the way of innermost thought, or wisdom which resides in the brain’).\(^{26}\) William F. Hodapp has recently traced the deep connections between medieval commentaries on Minerva and the mystic tradition of the feminine figure of \textit{Sapientia}.\(^{27}\) From this convergence of texts, we know that the popularity of the Judgement of Paris story preceded Elizabeth in early modern England and played a major role in establishing Minerva’s pre-eminence as a wisdom goddess. William Caxton’s translation of Raoul Lefèvre’s \textit{Recueil des histoires de Troie} stressed Minerva’s access to elite knowledge when he described Minerva’s offer to Paris: ‘If thou judge for Pallas, she shall make thee the most wisest man of all the world in all sciences.’\(^{28}\)


\(^{27}\) William F. Hodapp, \textit{The Figure of Minerva in Medieval Literature} (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2019), pp. 44-80.

\(^{28}\) William Caxton, \textit{The auncient historie, of the destruction of Troy} (London, 1464, repr 1597), kk‘.
In May 2013 the National Gallery of London announced the discovery of a lost miniature depicting Elizabeth with the three goddesses, which sparked renewed attention to this motif, including a comprehensive essay by Helen Hackett that collects numerous examples of the genre.29 The three goddesses motif could emphasise Elizabeth’s capacity to bring peace – her victory foils the schemes of Eris and avoids the Trojan War – or act as a blazon of Elizabeth’s different capacities, which – as Hackett observes – allowed writers ‘to accommodate the contradictory qualities of ideal ruler and ideal woman’.30 One famous example, which demonstrates both applications, is George Peele’s entertainment ‘The Araygnement of Paris’.31 In this drama, peace is restored when Diana overrules Paris and demands the submission of the three rival goddesses to her nymph Elizabeth, while Pallas gets the last word and admits Elizabeth’s superiority in all Olympian aspects:

So Pallas yields the praise hereof to thee,
For wisdom, princely state and peerless beauty.32

Peele’s drama was performed in the early 1580s, and my focus here is on comparisons to Elizabeth in the early years of her reign. In his study of this text, however, David Grant Moss explicates a point relevant throughout Elizabeth’s reign: unlike male Italian rulers such as Lorenzo di Medici who were praised for ‘striking a balance’ between traits he shared with the three goddesses, Elizabeth’s gender meant she could be ‘said to actually embody’ these goddesses in turn.33 Peele’s play is the climax of a pattern that started in the earliest years

---

following Elizabeth’s accession. In these years, as we shall see, classical goddesses and Pallas in particular were often indicated as the queen’s teachers, patronesses, or examples. By the 1580s, they were frequently depicted in submission to Elizabeth.

Minerva’s multivalence also meant that she could be used to represent different things in different versions of the three goddesses motif. Some of the writers we will meet in this chapter are not so much interested in Minerva as a figure for learning as for marital status. Amongst ‘the three goddesses’, she was the only virgin, although as we have seen this attribute could be smoothed into a reference to the broader idea of ‘chastity’, and hence to ‘virtue’ or just ‘piety’. As Doran has established, as it became unclear whether Elizabeth would ever marry, the contest between these goddesses was increasingly replaced by a contest between Juno and Diana.34 Minerva/Pallas could also be an important free-standing symbol for Elizabeth, unencumbered by comparison to other goddesses. She often appeared in partnership with Apollo, as both were protectors of cultivated arts, or as the patroness of the Muses: Ovid’s Metamorphoses depicts a visit by Minerva to Helicon, home of the Muses, where she explains that their habitat was created by the hooves of her own horse, Pegasus.35 Yet whether Minerva appeared with or without divine companions, her malleability allowed Elizabethans to appropriate her for a shifting range of conciliar messages, under the cover of deploying the comparison to praise the queen’s intellect. For panegyrists, Minerva was an almost endlessly flexible symbol, deployed in all manner of situations. She was, however, consistently a goddess of the mind, and the obvious deity to invoke when a royal patroness visited England’s educational institutions.

---

iii. The Eton Verse Book 1560

Elizabeth was presented by Eton College with books of dedicatory verses in 1560 and in 1563, both on occasions when she was resident at nearby Windsor to avoid a London plague outbreak. The 1563 book runs to seventy-three verses excluding prefatory and valedictory matter, written in Latin with occasional Greek quotations. This second book has been helpfully translated and edited in the modern edition of John Nichols’ *Progresses* by David K. Money, although I have also been able to examine the original manuscript. A much slimmer book, however, had been presented in 1560 and has never been edited. I have worked from the original manuscript.

Money includes a brief mention of the 1560 item in his introduction to the 1563 successor, noting that it is written in a single hand, a clean italic which is ‘perhaps that of a professional scribe’. As he notes, these earlier poems are significantly shorter than those of the 1563 book, the longest being ‘Andrew Trollope’s eighteen-line epode’, and their metrical forms are not labelled. The earlier volume is generally a less complex endeavour and features fewer experiments with form, though Money is wrong to claim ‘there is a not a single acrostic’, since the poem at the top of fol. 9 is an acrostic that spells out: VIVAT REGINA.

Even in the 1560 text, one can see that the queen’s subjects had begun to recognise her as a figure who elicited awe, as much as instruction. The opening verse begins at fol. 3 with a standard injunction to the ‘puerilis Musa’ (‘the Muse of schoolboys’) to inspire the project and to deliver it, unworthy as it is, to the ‘beatam Reginam’ (‘blessed queen’). The author comforts his Muse and tells her that her fears of a powerful and superior goddess are natural, but this

---

36 ‘Verses addressed to the Queen at Windsor by Eton Scholars’, ed. by David K. Money, in *Progresses*, i, 259-368; BL Royal MS 12 A XXX.
37 BL Royal MS 12 A LXV.
38 Money, ‘Verses addressed to the Queen at Windsor by Eton Scholars’, i, 259.
queen is ‘clemens, et facilis, mitis, pia docta[ue]’ (‘merciful and agreeable, mild, pious, and learned’.) Yet even schoolboys were not above making assumptions about the queen’s marital future. Robert Cunney prays that Christ might ‘det tibi sponsum pietate pura pr[a]editum’ (‘give you a husband endowed with pure piety’) and even ‘matri det tibi natos’ (‘make you a mother of sons’).\(^39\) Robert Draper expresses similar hopes: ‘brevi stirpem parias virile […] sub iuga’ (‘that you will shortly birth a virile line of descent […] under the yoke [of marriage]’).\(^40\)

These references to Elizabeth as a potential mother are important because they complicate the dominant association in these books between Elizabeth and Minerva, who appears here as ‘Pallas’. Pallas is the only goddess who is the focus of an entire poem in the 1560 book, which celebrates the queen’s realisation of Pallas’ arts. A boy named Henry Hayes writes:

\begin{verbatim}
O princeps tenerum Pieridum decus,
Quam flagranti animo literulis faves?
Quam docte traheris Palladis artibus?
Fautrix artis enim diceris undique,
Incumbit studiis ergo Britannia.\(^41\)
\end{verbatim}

Oh prince, delicate glory of the Muses
With what a passionate spirit do you favour erudition?
How learnedly are you enthralled by the arts of Pallas?
For you might be said by everyone to be the protector of these arts
And therefore Britain inclines to scholarship.

Elizabeth’s yen for erudition ties together both Pallas’ academic and warlike associations:

\begin{verbatim}
Quod regno removes barbariem feram:
Et passim faciles literulas alis.
\end{verbatim}

For you are removing from your kingdom uncivilised barbarism
And everywhere you nourish agreeable erudition.

\[^39\] fol. 9r. This may have been the Robert Cunney documented in the first years of the seventeenth century as a minister at Sydenham. Arthur Tindal Hart, *The Country Clergy in Elizabethan & Stuart Times, 1558-1660* (London: Phoenix House, 1958), p. 63.
\[^40\] fol. 16r.
\[^41\] fol. 4r. I am indebted to Alison Shell for help with this transcription.
This praise of ‘faciles literulas’ that drives out ‘barbariem feram’ presumably carries the sense of doctrinal truth expelling foreign-backed heresies: Elizabeth is a queen-goddess whose learning is a civilising (i.e. Anglican) influence. It is noticeable, however, that the link with Pallas is not a direct identification: instead, Elizabeth is described as being ‘docte traheris Palladis artibus’. This is a passive use of a verb that already strongly implies subjugation: the queen sits at the feet of the goddess.

The Etonians of 1560 link Elizabeth to Pallas yet pray for her fecundity. One explanation for such seeming inconsistencies is that we cannot attribute a single author to this text – it has forty-four named contributors. This is a generic problem that complicates any attempt to read verse books for meaning: they are anthologies, and even those dedicated to a particular individual often produce a clash of images as competing classical allusions are heaped upon each other. But there is a thematic unity throughout the 1560 Eton book, particularly in the recurrent claim that Elizabeth’s example as ‘princeps studiosa’ will be the boys’ example.\textsuperscript{42} This separation of Minerva-Elizabeth’s studiousness from her virginity points us to a more important truth of Elizabethan classical iconography: Elizabeth could be celebrated for sharing one highlighted attribute with a deity – in this case, learning – without the identification encompassing aspects of the deity. Furthermore, the evidence of this verse book demonstrates a broader trend: the praise of Elizabeth’s virginity, much like the praise of Mary Tudor’s before her own marriage, did not always constitute an expectation of perpetual virginity. Elizabeth is here repeatedly termed a ‘virgo beata’ – with or without theological overtones – but the authors see no potential offence in referring to future marriage.

\textsuperscript{42} e.g. fol. 9r poem 2; fol. 11v.
On some occasions, this tension between virginity and married chastity can be maintained in close proximity. In the only other poem in this book which extensively applies classical associations to Elizabeth, we are told:

Namque, pharetratam superas Regina Dianam,
Penelopen castam virginitate pr[a]eis.43

For, Queen, you surpass quiver-bearing Diana,
You precede chaste Penelope with your virginity.

Penelope is, of course, Homer’s ideal of married chastity. This poem goes on to make the established comparison of Elizabeth to Deborah for her deliberation in judgement, and a comparison of her eloquence to that of Hortensia. Hortensia was a Roman woman famed for giving a speech so eloquent that it persuaded the male Senate to relinquish a plan to fund their macho warmongering by taxing the private wealth of elite women. According to the Roman historian Valerius Maximus, she was the daughter of a senator extolled in his own time for eloquence. Sarah Gwyneth Ross has defined the ‘Hortensian hermeneutic’ as ‘an instinct to situate women’s writing and speech within a father–daughter dyad’.44 Certainly, the Etonians who used this comparison went out of the way to stress that Elizabeth had inherited her leadership attributes from her father Henry, in part because this allowed them to play on the name he shared with their founder, Henry VI.45

Although Diana is mentioned here, she does not outrank Elizabeth as Pallas does in the earlier poem; she is also slightly diminished by her juxtaposition to Penelope, who is a human rather than a divine figure. In 1560, the boys of Eton understood themselves to be welcoming a young queen who was more human than divine, more daughter than parent, and more pupil than

43 fol. 5v
45 e.g. Henrici validi filia splendida at fol. 3r.
teacher. As a scholar enticed by the arts of Pallas (‘traheris Palladis artibus’), she was one of them. By the time of the queen’s next visit, her authority within the nation’s schools had already grown, and her association with Minerva had grown with it.

iv. The Eton Verse Book 1563

When Elizabeth returned to Eton in September 1563, the school was recovering from the scandal documented in the opening of *The scholemaster*, when a number of boys had run away to escape what Money terms ‘excessive flogging’. The verse book presented to her by Eton’s headmaster William Malym makes no mention of such problems, asserting instead the contentment of Eton’s community of bookworms. Elizabeth would be praised twice as Hortensia and five times as Deborah, the latter most notably as a guardian of ‘prudentia’ and ‘justicia’. But the presiding deity of this book is Minerva. It opens with a brief Greek dedication by Malym and a longer Latin prefatory letter from the pupils collectively, who thank the queen for protecting Malym’s lifelong scholarly endeavours ‘tanquam Palladis ægide’ (‘as if under Pallas Athena’s aegis’). The boys offer their book of praises, which they liken to the famous statue of Minerva by the sculpture Phidias, although they acknowledge it must fail to replicate Phidias’ achievement. Lest there be any doubt about the significance of this allusion, it is hammered home in the third and final item of prefatory material. This text is a short meditation on the meaning of the name ‘Elizabeth’, glossed as ‘the oath of God’, and affirms that ‘the capacious world has nothing more learned than you’, continuing thus:

*Quam Charis Ambrosis pavit lepidissima succis,*  
*Quam fovit gremio docta Minerva suo,*  
*Nectareis cui blanda favis os suada rigavit,*

---

46 Money, ‘Verses addressed to the Queen at Windsor by Eton Scholars’, p. 260; *The Scholemaster*, Bii-Biii.  
47 *Progresses*, I, 264. Translations are based on those by David K. Money, but where marked KM I have adapted them slightly.
Most elegant Grace has fed you on the juices of Ambrosia, most learned Minerva has fostered you in her lap. Smooth Persuasion has irrigated your mouth with nectared honeycombs, has formed your tongue and intellect at the same time.

The same poem continues with further exposition of Elizabeth’s learning:

Quæque (quod est rarum) calles idiomata linguæ
Plurima, principibus non bene nota viris:
Romuleam, & Graiam, peregrinas præter et Anglam
Tam bene quam Galli Gallica verba sonas.

And (what is rare) you are skilful in the many idioms of language, which are not well known to male princes: you know the Roman and Greek tongues, besides modern foreign languages and English; you speak French words as well as the French do.

The schoolboys praise Elizabeth here for excelling in the same studies they were undertaking. Like the boy orator at St Paul’s in 1559, they had opened with Plato’s philosopher-prince as a model for both themselves and their visitor. Plato is here ‘summus ille Philosophorum[Philosophorum] magister & Princeps’ (‘the highest teacher and highest prince of philosophers’), and they in turn have learned his precepts from their own teacher: ‘quomodo a præceptore nostro accepimus.’

Elizabeth, Malym, Plato, and the schoolboys are thus fixed from the book’s opening lines in another shared educational network, perpetuating the lessons of intellectual kingship.

Elizabeth’s capacity as a leader is presented throughout this book as more dynamic than in its 1560 predecessor. She steers the ship of state:

tam sapienter divina (quod aiunt) virgula singula moderatur, ut singulari
Naturæ bonitate tuæ morum integritas, ac synceritas omninó respondeat,
moribus purissimis doctrina perfectissima, ac virtus absolutissima hisce
prorsus omnibus.
Your majesty controls each thing with (as they say) a divine rod so wisely that in every respect your uprightness and purity of morals correspond to the singular goodness of your nature, your most perfect learning corresponds to your most pure morals, and in short your most absolute virtue corresponds to all these qualities.

Nonetheless, Elizabeth is at Eton to learn. This ideal harmony between ‘doctrina perfectissima’ and ‘moribus purissimis’ allows the boys to introduce another Greek reference: Socrates’ diktat that a king’s happiness depends on the extent to which he is πῶς ἀρετῆ, καὶ παιδεία (‘how virtuous, or how educated?’). Yet despite – or perhaps because of – its roots in Socratic philosophy, this tradition must be Christianised. Malym’s boys remind Elizabeth that she was educated not for her own pleasure, but so that ‘abiurasque nothi dogmata falsa Dei’ (‘you abjure the false dogmas of an illegitimate God’) and applaud her for using her learning to set up a Protestant haven, ‘Quod pius exilii patria procul exul, asylum / Quilibet inveniat.’ (‘so that any pious exile far from his homeland can find asylum’). This endorsement of the troublesome Protestant exile community may not have suited Elizabeth, who had been criticised for Nicodemism for attending Mass under her half-sister’s reign, by hardliners who had chosen exile instead. If any such criticism is present, however, it is only latent. Elizabeth was not only praised in this passage for her learning as Minerva, and for her grace, but benefited from the sometimes ambivalent rhetorical figure of ‘Persuasion’, here laudatory if used in the service of Protestant statecraft. ‘Persuasion’ recurs later in the verse book. At Epigram 26, the trickster god Mercury claims credit for imbuing Elizabeth with ‘suadela aurea’ (‘golden persuasion’) – his gift has made her ‘facunda, potest altera dicier haec Tritonia commode’ (‘eloquent, such that she can easily be called another Tritonia’). This is typical of early-stage comparisons of

54 Progresses, 1. 276:332.
Elizabeth to Minerva. She is not the superior of a divinity, but rather owes her qualities to Mercury’s generosity, and only thus is the equal of Tritonia [Minerva].

In these early years, the one role in which Elizabeth could surpass the pagan goddesses was that of providential Christian heroine. This becomes clear in Epigram 6, in which the young Giles Fletcher simultaneously deploys one of the most useful attributes of Minerva as a figure for Elizabeth: she has a powerful father, but no mother in evidence. Fletcher writes of Elizabeth:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Consensu unanimi ferunt Poëtæ,} \\
&(\text{Si sit danda sacrīs fīdes Poētīs)} \\
&\text{Prognatam e cerebro Jovis fuisse} \\
&\text{Olim docticanam Deam Minervam.} \\
&\text{Te nunc ipse tamen puto profecto} \\
&\text{Elapsam e gremio Dei fuisse.}\text{55}
\end{align*}
\]

Poets say, unanimous in their agreement (if trust should be given to sacred poets) that Minerva, the goddess learned in singing, was born from the brain of Jove once upon a time. But now I myself think that you have truly slipped from the lap of God.

There is deft footwork here by Fletcher, who would go on to serve his queen as a diplomat.56 With the Minerva reference, he emphasises the learned daughter/powerful father dyad, giving noble pedigree to a less than peaceable relationship between father and mother. Yet in this case, Elizabeth is not equal to Minerva, but superior. Her immaculate conception has sent her to earth ‘profecto / Elapsam e gremio Dei fuisse’: ‘gremium’, which Money has translated as ‘lap’ can also mean ‘bosom’ or ‘embrace’, and with Dei clearly has Christian meaning – we are reading of a divinely sent queen who was nursed in the bosom of the Lord. This sets the stage for Elizabeth to outshine even her earthly father Henry, embodying Minerva’s ‘docticana’ qualities while avoiding any pagan associations.

55 *Progresses*, 1, 268:324.
56 Lucy Munro, ‘Giles Fletcher, the Elder (bap. 1546, d. 1611), Diplomat and Author’, ODNB. 23 September 2004.
A later poem by Thomas Watts handles the dynastic problem more ambitiously, but ultimately less successfully. Elizabeth had been raised, as I have suggested in Chapter 2, with a clear message that her father had every right to punish straying wives like her mother, but at Epigram 65 she was greeted by a comparison between her own looks and the maternal beauty which had supposedly caused so much trouble: ‘o matre pulchra, o filia pulchrior’. Worse, the phrase was a quotation from Horace’s first Ode, often read to refer to Helen of Troy, daughter of beautiful Leda. The comparison of Anne to Helen was in this case positive, the suggestion being that both had been sexually slandered but were in fact chaste. Horace’s poem was known, even amongst early modern classicists, for containing a quotation attributed to the legendary Greek poet Stesichorus, who was blinded after wrongly accusing Helen of being complicit in adultery: the tradition of Helen as victim of slander was encoded in Euripides’ Helen, which depicted Helen as chastely preserved in Egypt while a phantom shared the bed of Paris in Troy. Among the many early modern readers who knew the reference was Baldassare Castiglione. But Horace’s poem in itself diminishes and renders humorous the theme of the slandered woman by placing Stesichorus’ apology in the mouth of a lover trying to resolve a tiff with an angry mistress, whom he lectures morallisingly on the dangers of wrath. Furthermore, in Horace’s poem the ‘filia’ is a woman like Helen; here it is Elizabeth. Even in a poem which suggested both Helen and Anne had been slandered, Elizabeth is unlikely to have welcomed the elision of her persona with theirs.

57 Progresses, 1, 306:358.
60 Horace lectures his mistress on the dangers of furor: Watts’ praise of Elizabeth later in this poem for her ‘temperatam mentem’ (well-tempered mind) is an attempt to position her in opposition to this flawed mistress, a strategy he bolsters with allusions to Horace’s use of sailing as a metaphor for equanimity in Odes, 2.3 and 2.10. Progresses, 1, 358 n. 274; Horace, Odes and Epodes, ed. and trans. by Niall Rudd (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2004).
Watts continued the association between Henry as Jove and Elizabeth as Minerva, with added dissonance:

\[ Fælix tibi est quæ præbuit ubera, \\
Fælix & est qui Palladis artibus \\
Tinxit tuum pectus decenter \\
Hiis igitur mage tu beata es. \]

Fortunate is she who offered her breasts to you, and fortunate is he who imbued your heart elegantly with the arts of Pallas Athena; for in these are you truly happy.

‘Qui’ here is masculine – although it could refer to a schoolmaster, the poem’s Horatian references to parentage and the volume’s wider fixation on Henry VI and VIII suggest that it refers to a male parent. There may be an indication in the phrase \textit{præbuit ubera} that we should read Elizabeth suckling true doctrine from the breasts of the Mother Church, an image which – as Philippa Berry has established – itself is closely related to the Boethian and Neoplatonic motif of Wisdom or ‘Sophia’ suckling humanity.\textsuperscript{61} Nonetheless, the earlier reference to ‘\textit{o matre pulchra}’ indicates a specific human mother, as does her differentiation from the male ‘qui’. References to the marriage of Henry and Anne Boleyn could, of course, be given a positive spin by the hardiest of apologists for the break from Rome, but the elision of Elizabeth, Anne, and Helen of Troy, however slandered, combined with the impossible image of Elizabeth’s parents jointly nurturing her in childhood, results in a particularly uncomfortable poetic moment. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate in section vii below, Minerva/Pallas was also known in this period for demanding the decapitation of Medusa as a punishment for unchastity – which makes her proximity to Anne even more uncomfortable.

Berry expresses a traditional view when she describes Anne’s relationship to Elizabeth as ‘permanently censored’. Nonetheless, as Hackett has recently argued, there may have been an attempt to rehabilitate Anne at the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign by many Protestant figures, including by Malym’s mentor Nicholas Udall. The Etonians’ dedicatory letter to Elizabeth read:

For which of us is ignorant (though in these tender and almost suckling studies of ours) that your most distinguished mother, Anne Boleyn, once our most serene Queen [...] was most celebrated for her fame, beauty, and virtues, most famous for her faith, most praised for her scholarship, and most pious in her religion, as long as she lived here on the earth? (p. 317).

Similarly, in An harborowe Aylmer had compared Boleyn to Esther for her successful persuasion of Henry VIII to break with Rome: ‘whiche God had endewed with wisdome that she coulde, and given hir the minde that she would do it’ (B4v). She had appeared in the genealogical pageant at Elizabeth’s pre-coronation procession, and the hagiographic narrative that William Latymer presented to Elizabeth on her accession included a lengthy comparison of Anne to Plato’s philosopher-king:

The notable philosopher Plato in his booke de re publica sheweth that the manifest token of the prosperous commen wealth is where wisdome haith made the prince her fellow or companione, and where he studieth wisedome that injoyeth governmente. Then what shalbe said of this so rare a patronesse of learning, whoo omitted noo time that might be employed either to the furtheraunce of the purite of scriptures or to the extirping and abolisshinge of the blinde ignoraunce and abuses grown in this lande.

Latymer goes on in this vein at some length. He asserts that Anne understood her role as a Platonic philosopher-king enough to warn her household officers, in an echo of The Republic:

---

62 Berry, Chastity and Power, p. 5.
64 Latin: Progresses, 1, 263.
65 ‘William Latymer’s Chronickille of Anne Bulleyne’, p. 60.
Truly the prince is bounde to kepe his awne persone pure and undefiled, his house and courte so well ruled that all that see it may have desire to follow and do therafter, and all that heare therof may desire to see it.  

As Maria Dowling comments:

Latymer describes Anne as a reigning monarch rather than a king’s mere wife. He calls her a prince and speaks of her reign, acclaming her as a specimen of that Platonic and Erasmian ideal, the philosopher-king.

Part of the reason for this elevation, of course, is that Latymer’s imagined reader was the Elizabeth, to whom he offered a portrait of her mother as a deeply personal ‘mirror for princes’. And while the boys of Eton are unlikely to have been familiar with this text, circulated only in manuscript, Latymer almost certainly knew their headmaster Malym through their joint friend Nicholas Udall. Not only does it share Malym’s interest in rehabilitating Boleyn, as expressed in the 1563 verse book, but it offers a female version of the Platonic philosopher-king. If Minerva is the primary association of this text, the philosopher-king is the second, and Latymer’s narrative is an important precursor.

Hackett has spotted that the Eton verse book features ‘no fewer than three sets of Latin verses on the theme of the Three Goddesses’: Epigrams 17, 46 and 49. Of these, only Epigram 17 features the standard triad of Juno, Minerva and Venus, who appear as Elizabeth’s patrons rather than inferiors. Minerva/Pallas’ gifts are described here by the future clergyman Edward Franckline:

\[
\text{Sapientiam Pallas gravem} \\
\text{Reliquasque virtutes animi} \\
\text{Clarissimas plene dedit}\]

Pallas Athena has given you a full share of serious wisdom and the other most distinguished virtues of the mind.[.]

---

69 Progresses, I, 273:328.
Epigram 46 offers another example of Elizabeth’s association with a Christian symbol being emphasised above her association with the goddesses: Elizabeth is a second Deborah sent by God to rule with ‘prudentia celsa’ (heavenly prudence) to whom the Olympians merely add gifts. Minerva’s gift is simply ‘virtus’. At Epigram 49, Diana is the fourth goddess featured; again, Minerva’s gift is ‘virtus’, and Elizabeth is a ‘Pandora’, ‘the woman of all gifts’. Elsewhere, she is Minerva and only Minerva. At Epigram 60, a boy whose name is given as ‘Drywoodde’ writes of the hold Venus has over artists. He begins this eight-verse poem with the tale of the sculptor Apelles of Cos, who searched the world for beauties to model for his statue of Venus. Unlike Appelles, Elizabeth is an intellectual, as the second half of this poem makes clear:

(Translation)

Tu tibi Princeps petis at disertos,
Qui tuam mentem decorent Mineruæ
Dotibus doctæ, specie venusta
   Elisabetha.

Dii tuis votis simul annuere,
Nempe doctorum studiosa turba
Te virum (tanquam πανοπλία) stipat
   Anglica Rectrix:

Vita sic istis decoratur & mens,
Quisque quod tete putet esse (Princeps)
Palladem claram, tua tanta virtus
   Elisabetha est.

Ergo te (Princeps) tuba nostra semper
Et tuas laudes resonabit alte,
Facta nam insculpet populus Britannus
   Marmore puro.73

But you, O monarch, seek out clever men for yourself, who might adorn your mind with the gifts of learned Minerva in a beautiful fashion,

---

70 Progresses, I, 288:343.
71 Progresses, I, 289:343.
72 Progresses, I, 303, translation KM.
73 On this trope and its application to Elizabeth by her House of Lords in February 1563, see CW, ‘Speech 6, Additional Document A’, p. 86.
Elizabeth.

The gods have simultaneously answered your prayers, for surely a studious crowd of learned men surrounds you (like a panoply),

O English ruler.

Thus your life and mind are so adorned by them that each one thinks that you are famous Pallas Athena (O monarch), so great is your virtue,

Elizabeth.

Therefore (O monarch) our trumpet shall always deeply resound your praises, for the British people will carve your deeds in pure-white marble.

At first glance, this is a simple twist on the three goddesses theme. Elizabeth, as Pallas, defeats and displaces Venus. Yet like the ‘Pallas’ poem in the 1560 verse book, Elizabeth is positioned as student, not teacher. It is not Venus whom she displaces, but the sculptor Apelles. In the first stanza, the name of Apelles had appeared in the first adonic foot, the structural point of the poem occupied by Elizabeth in two later verses:

\[\text{Pictor insignis Veneris decoram}\]
\[\text{Ecce picturus statuam, puellas}\]
\[\text{Vultus insignis petit per urbes}\]
\[\text{Cous Apelles}\]

Look! The distinguished painter, Apelles of Cos, when about to paint a beautiful statue of Venus, sought out girls of distinguished beauty throughout the cities.

Elizabeth’s intellectualism has led her to ‘seek out clever men’ instead of beauties, among them presumably Malym and his pupils. Her court consists of ‘a studious crowd of learned men’, but what matters about Elizabeth herself is her ‘virtue’. There is no question about Elizabeth’s imperial heft: the promise of her deeds carved in ‘marmore puro’ may be an allusion to a popular early modern maxim about Augustus Caesar, who purportedly found Rome built of brick and left it built of marble. Just a few months earlier, the House of Lords had assured
Elizabeth that she would match Augustus’ feat and leave as ‘marmorea’ a nation that had recently been ‘laetericia’ – if only she would only marry and settle the question of the succession.\(^{74}\)

**v. The Eton Verse Book 1563: peace, war and Robert Dudley**

The motif of the three goddesses, as well as providing a format for a litany of Elizabeth’s various qualities, also invited celebrations of peace. The Judgement of Paris, impossible to resolve when three Olympian goddesses refuse to acknowledge a victor, kicks off the most destructive war of classical myth. But as Hackett has observed, in many iterations of this motif the three goddesses willingly acknowledge Elizabeth’s superiority – thus ‘Elizabeth avoids the conflict created by Paris and instead brings peace’.\(^{75}\) War and peace were a key concern for the young men who contributed to the 1563 Eton verse book. Besides the question of Elizabeth’s marriage, the other pressing political concern in September 1563 was the failure of the military expedition to support Huguenot forces in Le Havre.\(^{76}\) The trauma of this humiliation and the smarts from the loss of Calais are visible in Epigram 59, which offers extended parallels between Livy’s narrative of a temporary victory by the Samnite tribe over Rome in 321BC, and this temporary defeat. Elizabeth is reassured:

\[
\textit{Qui nunc est victor, victus cras forsan abibit,}
\]
\[
\textit{Qui nunc est fælix, cras miser esse potest.}\(^{77}\)

He who is now a victor, will perhaps go away tomorrow defeated; he who is now happy, can be miserable tomorrow.

---

\(^{75}\) Hackett, ‘A new image of Elizabeth I’, p. 226.
\(^{77}\) \textit{Progresses}, 1, 295:350.
But these military failures also undermine the possible identification of Elizabeth with Minerva. As a result, with the exception of the lengthy Epigram 59, the Etonians avoid the subject of continental wars entirely. Instead, they praise Elizabeth as a totemic figure who will keep out domestic invasions, holding the ‘clypeo aeneo’ (‘bronze shield’) with which, like Minerva, she can protect her citadel against any javelin. At Epigram 11, Elizabeth is similarly granted Minerva’s defensive weapons:

    Martia sanguinei depellis bella Gradivi
    Nostra ac terra potens, sub vestra est ægide tuta

You push aside the martial wars of the bloody war-god, and our powerful land is safe, under your aegis.

Epigram 35 even frames Elizabeth’s ineligibility to lead on the battlefield as a benefit. Awkwardly handling the Boleyn problem by terming Elizabeth the ‘sboles corusce Palladis’ (‘the offspring of brilliant Pallas’) and of ‘patris potentis’ (‘a mighty father’), this epigram continues:

    Tu domi præsens, remanesque belli
    ( Civibus gratum) quia sis ocellis
    Anglia præsens, acie videnda
    Consilioque

You are present at home, and remain in time of war, which is a welcome thing for the citizens, because you can be present with your eyes here in England, to be seen with your clear sight and your good counsel.

Elizabeth’s unsuitability for foreign adventures ensures she will not be an absent king. Yet she still embodies the ‘clear sight’ and ‘good counsel’ one would expect from a child of Pallas. Aylmer, by contrast, had hedged his bets in answering the question of whether Elizabeth was ‘mete to go to the warres’: between herself and her male commanders, he argued, ‘she hath that bee mete, and some wemen have gonne and sped wel’ (H2’). The Etonian poets anticipate

78 Progresses, I, 294:348.
79 Progresses, I, 272: 326.
80 Progresses, I, 281:337.
the verses published in Edward Grant’s 1576 memorial volume to Roger Ascham, which would praise female monarchs for avoiding violence.\textsuperscript{81} Although these verses were attributed posthumously to Ascham himself, this seems unlikely, as I have explained in Chapter 1. Given his connections to Grant, is even possible that William Malym submitted them.\textsuperscript{82} The previous year, Malym had contributed a dedicatory verse in Greek to Grant’s \textit{Graecae linguae spicilegi}, the ‘revolutionary grammar’ that transformed the quality of Greek education in English schools.\textsuperscript{83} In the 1576 verses, we see the full expression of the possibility that Elizabeth may be a ‘learned Minerva’ and yet limit the dangers of ‘vis’ (violence) and ‘Mars’, thanks to her sex. But the context in 1563 was different. By 1576, the prospect that Elizabeth might marry was fading. It made sense for men like Grant and Malym to start developing new models for praising Elizabeth as a self-sufficient woman, and to reassure England that endless worry about dynastic succession was unnecessary. In 1563, marriage was still very much on the cards.

The Etonians of 1563 were clear about who they expected Elizabeth’s husband to be. Malym had longstanding links to Robert Dudley, who since the death of his wife Amy Robsart in 1560 had been free to marry – despite the questions surrounding her death, and the horror with which his political rivals regarded the prospect.\textsuperscript{84} In their prefatory letter, the Etonians had prayed for the health of the entire Dudley family, and in Epigram 72 both Robert Dudley and his elder brother Ambrose come in for praise. The poem is attributed to Watts, who makes a clear if inaccurate distinction between the two Dudley brothers. Ambrose is said to be known for his military prowess, which - as Money states - ‘probably alludes to his command of the expeditionary force to Le Havre, Sept./Oct. 1562-July 1563’, although Robert had lobbied to lead it himself. In this version of reality, Dudley is ‘\textit{non tam truculentus, & asper}’ (‘not so

\textsuperscript{81} Disertissimi viri Rogeri Aschami, X7; see also Chapter 1, section ii, p. 46.
\textsuperscript{83} Adam, ‘The Introduction of Greek into English Schools’, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{84} Doran, \textit{Monarchy & Matrimony}, pp. 40-72.
belligerent and harsh’); instead he ‘postposito bello pignora Pacis amat’ (‘loves the pledges of peace, having set war aside’).\textsuperscript{85} He is therefore ripe for a life of love, as Watts extensively details in sensual blazon:

\begin{quote}
Quid quod habet forti dignissima brachia Marte?
Quid quod habet pulchra digna labella Dea?
\end{quote}

What that he has forearms most worthy of strong Mars?
What that he has lips worthy of a beautiful goddess?

The blazon of Dudley continues in this vein for some time. Money has already noted that the mythological precedents given for a match with Dudley are ‘not all encouraging’: they include Medea and Helen, which is one reason for attributing a certain naïveté to the young Etonians of 1563 and to Watts’ contributions in particular. But the poem ends with a call for Elizabeth to graft her dynasty onto Dudley:

\begin{quote}
Dii dent idcirco ut tandem sociere marito,
Qui pariat prolem, quae sit imago tui.
\end{quote}

May Heaven grant, therefore, that at last you may be joined to a husband who may beget offspring who are the image of yourself.

Despite the debt owed by Malym and his pupils to Dudley, this poem is careful to position him as a secondary consort, whose job is to facilitate the replication of Elizabeth’s own Tudor \textit{imago}. Thomas Watts put his name to six poems within the anthology – once as ‘Wattes’ – including Epigram 12, which describes Elizabeth as ‘quae potius pacis, saevi quam Martis amatrix’ (‘a lover more of peace than of savage war’).\textsuperscript{86} Presumably this made her the perfect

\textsuperscript{85} Progresses, 1, 309:361. There may also be a pun here in the alternative meaning ‘pignora’ as ‘heirs’ or ‘children’.
\textsuperscript{86} Progresses 1, 271:326.
match for the man he had described as ‘postposito bello pignora Pacis amat’. Elizabeth could be a peaceable, amorous Minerva.

vi. The St Paul’s Verse Book 1573

In his capacity as High Master of St Paul’s, Malym oversaw the construction of another slim book of verses for Elizabeth, marking her visit to St Paul’s in 1573. One topical context was the failure of the Northern Rebellion in 1569: at fol. 4v Elizabeth is praised for pacifying Northumbria and Westmoreland. A few lines earlier she is the ‘diva virago’ who keeps from her lands the conflicts across the borders of Scotland, France, and Flanders.

The St Paul’s book is slim, but it contains four lengthy poems in Greek, with Latin translations. One of these repeats the three goddesses motif: the Latin version describes Pallas’ contribution thus: ‘Pallas conspicui decus pudoris […] Vita, moribus, eruditione’ ‘Pallas, glory of renowned chastity’ […] in her life, in her morals, her erudition’ (fol. 7rv). Later, Elizabeth is the ‘fons doctrinae’ and a cause to celebrate all things ‘docta’ (fol. 14v); she combines the best virtues of Venus, Apollo, and Pallas (‘post Pallada Pallas’ at fol. 15r); and in a final twist on the motif, Pallas leads the other goddesses in offering Elizabeth gifts:

\[
\text{Grandia dona tibi Pallas concessit amoena} \\
\text{Juno, Diana, Venus, pectora rore beant (f.16v)}
\]

Great Pallas grants you pleasant gifts
Juno, Diana, Venus enrich your breasts with dew.

As far as it goes, this volume conforms to the broad iconographical direction of travel throughout Elizabeth’s reign, from student of the goddesses to goddess herself, as indicated by

---

87 BL Royal MS 12 A LXVII. This book has not been edited, but a digital copy is available online at the British Library website.
a major poem at fol. 12v. The opening lines appeal to Elizabeth as an embodiment of Apollo, Minerva, and Jove/God together.

 Protector fuerat dum Troiae delphicus augur
 Novimus Argolicum fulmen abesse procul

 Dum[q]ue, Laertiadem protexit Pallas Ulyssem
 Illum Neptunem non tetigere faces

 Dum[q]ue favet mentemq[ue], regit Deus aetheris author
 Ac tu nostrates Elisabetha regis...

As long as the Delphic prophet [Apollo] was Troy’s protector
We know that the power of the Greeks remained far off

Thus, Pallas protected Ulysses son of Laertes,
So that the torches of Neptune did not touch him.

Thus with a favourable mind, God the Creator rules the heavens
And you, Elisabeth, rule our fellow countrymen.

Both Pallas and Apollo are protectors of the civilised arts; here, they join Elizabeth and the ‘Deus’ as protectors of questing male heroes. The rest of the poem is a lengthy celebration of Britain’s invincibility under the protection of its ‘dignissima virago’. Philippa Berry has traced the influence in this period of the Neoplatonic ideal of the female spiritual guide: the wisdom figure as virgin protector for her male dependents, a ‘bearer of poetic inspiration who can also be extremely practical’. The emphasis here on Pallas’ personal protection of Ulysses points towards the development of this literary phenomenon, which would come to dominate the final decades of Elizabethan panegyric. Realistically, this verse book is too slim and too fragmented in its authorship for us to build strong claims upon it about the evolution of the queen’s iconography across her rein. It is, however, more evidence of Malym’s role in the evolution of this genre.

---

88 Berry, *Chastity and Power*, p. 16.
vii. Pallaphilos

The 1563 praise of the Etonians for Elizabeth as Minerva, even as they promoted Dudley as a husband, may owe something to an entertainment performed at the Inns of Court in winter 1561-2. *Pallaphilos* was the first entertainment to develop a detailed association of Elizabeth with Minerva – or here, ‘Pallas’ – and was backed by Dudley as a promotion of his marital suit. This entertainment has received scholarly attention in recent years for two primary reasons. Firstly, in two shrewd pieces of analysis, Marie Axton put this drama on the map as the case study for her concept of the ‘Queen’s Two Bodies’, which I have introduced in Chapter 3.89 Secondly, *Pallaphilos* formed part of the same programme of entertainment as *Gorboduc*, a play that dramatises a British king’s abdication, warns of anarchy in a land without a clear succession, and has long been recognised as a source for *King Lear*.90 For our purposes, however, it is a remarkable example of Elizabeth being identified by Dudley with the ‘virgin’ goddess Minerva/Pallas, in circumstances when Elizabeth is being encouraged to marry.

Nichols included a version of *Pallaphilos* in his original *Progresses*, which is drawn from Gerard Legh’s book on heraldry, *The accedens of armory*.91 *Pallaphilos* was performed once among Dudley’s supporters on 27 December 1561 at the Inner Temple – Machyn writes in his diary that ‘mony of the conselle was there’ – and again on 18 January 1562 at court, before the

---

89 Axton, *The Queen’s Two Bodies*; ‘Robert Dudley and the Inner Temple Revels’.
90 Mortimer Levine, *The Early Elizabethan Succession Question 1558-1568* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1966), pp. 38-44; Normand Berlin, *Thomas Sackville* (New York, NY: Twayne, 1974), pp. 85-9; Kevin Dunn, ‘Representing Counsel: *Gorboduc* and the Elizabethan Privy Council’, *ELR*, 33 (2003), 279-308; Norman L. Jones and Paul Whitfield White, *Gorboduc and Royal Marriage Politics: An Elizabethan Playgoer’s Report of the Premiere Performance*, *ELR*, 26 (1996), 3-16. Levine and Berlin both read *Gorboduc* as advocacy for the claim of Katherine Grey, as has become traditional. But in his important essay, Kevin Dunn argues convincingly that criticism of *Gorboduc* has been ‘side-tracked … by a preoccupation with the succession question’ and has instead directed our attention to *Gorboduc* as a play that dramatises the dilemmas facing the ‘conciliar class’ that drew from the lawyers of the Temple (p. 296).
queen. The accedens of armory was printed by Richard Tottel in December 1562, further publicising Dudley’s new Minervan mythology for Elizabeth. The text was dedicated to the men of the Inns of Court and of Chancellery.

It can be difficult to reconstruct the narrative structure of these revel from Legh’s text. The first book of The accedens consists chiefly of a series of illustrations of common heraldic devices: its climax is an image of a shield showing the image of a winged horse, to which a lengthy explanatory text is appended that explains how and when this device became the central motif of Dudley’s entertainment. In the narrative that emerges, the Inner Temple is reimagined as a temple to Pallas Athena, maintained by the knights of the Order of Pegasus. Pegasus was known in myth as the winged horse of Perseus, whom Leigh acknowledges as ‘the Palladian knight’ who owed his first shield to Pallas (p. 213). (Dudley was at this point serving as Elizabeth’s Master of the Horse.) Both the ‘Prince’ of the Order, played by Dudley, and his herald ‘the kinge of Arms’ are repeatedly named as ‘Pallaphilos’ or ‘Palaphilos’, which adds to the confusion (e.g. p. 224). We can however discern that the audience were treated to two main narratives. In the first tale, we learn of a gentleman named ‘Desire’ inflamed with love for ‘Dame Beauty’, who eventually wins and marries her in the Temple of Pallas. In the second, we observe the Christmas feast of the Order of Pegasus, watch an initiation presided over by Prince Pallaphilos, and are treated to an encomium on the Prince’s qualities, through a description of his armour.

As one might expect, Elizabeth as the heavenly Pallas and Dudley as her earthly Prince are extolled at length for their wisdom, learning, and sage attitude to counsel. Dudley’s character is introduced as ‘Pallaphilos, prince of Sophie’, i.e. *sophia*, or wisdom (p. 224) – as befits his name, he is also named as the ‘lover of wisdom’ (p. 229). The militarism of his order of knights allows for a convenient separation of Minerva/Pallas’s two main attributes: Elizabeth, as Pallas, embodies spiritual wisdom, while Dudley, ‘a soldiour of Pallas’, embodies with his knights her warrior spirit (p. 215). The knights of Pegasus recite a sonnet in which they recognise Pallas-Elizabeth as the daughter of Jove-Henry and respect her capacity for ‘policie’ – Legh paraphrases it thus:

> Aanswering her nature and condition, where as she is daughter to Mightie Jove, nothing Inferior to her father, So policie to her is proper, That the rather these naturall powers (armed wisdom) working in you her knightes. ye may like soldiers of so mightie a patronesse, continue & advaunce the glorye alreadye gayned. (p. 226)

A closing poem introduces the theme of Pallas-Elizabeth as Neoplatonic guide to the men who venerate her:

> Wisedome the Guyde of Armed strength,  
> Up rayse your Knightlye name.  
> Bycause of Prowes hawle, to clymbe  
> The lofty tower of Fame,  
> Advancen your honours by yours dedes,  
> To lyve for evermore.  
> As Pallas knightes, by Pallas helpe,  
> Pallas serve ye therfore. (p. 233).

Here, Dudley’s knights provide Pallas’ ‘armed strength’ but are nothing without ‘Pallas helpe’ and her ‘wisedome’ – the martial force so often associated with Minerva is subordinated to her intellectual power.

Yet throughout this fantasy, Dudley’s powers inevitably challenge Elizabeth’s. Where Pallas-Elizabeth is a figure self-sufficient in wisdom, but militarily dependent on her men, the male
Pallaphilos-Dudley combines both ‘pollicie’ and martial prowess – or as he boasts, inspecting his knights at arms, the gifts of ‘pollitique gouernment and long tried skyll’ (p. 225). Axton has characterised this shield as ‘a fictitious classical genealogy’ that serves the purposes of ‘effacing his treason-lopped family tree’ and rendering him a suitable consort for a queen.\textsuperscript{94} But it also allows him to displace Pallas-Elizabeth as heir to Jupiter. We are reminded that Perseus was ‘brother to Pallas’, through their shared father Jove, and although Pallas was ‘engendered of his owne braine’, Jove passed his rights to Perseus ‘by naturalle procreacion’, and down to Perseus’ descendent – who is revealed as Pallaphilos-Dudley. He is the embodiment of ‘virtus et scientia’ combining the ‘sapiencia et fortitudo’ of Pallas and the ‘politia et magnanimitas’ of Perseus (p. 229).

Kevin Dunn has characterised the Inner Temple revels as ‘an elaborate fantasy of power, yet not an empty fantasy’.\textsuperscript{95} Dudley constructs himself in these entertainments as a suitor powerful enough to both seduce and challenge his queen – as is clear from Doran’s chronology of his courtship, it may have been the moment in their relationship where the fantasy came closest to reality.\textsuperscript{96} As Axton points out, Dudley was playing the role of ‘Christmas Prince’ at the Inner Temple, which gave him some carnivalesque excuse for airs and graces.\textsuperscript{97} Yet in Legh’s praise for ‘his court’ (p. 215), there is a sense of a rival power centre. Under Pallaphilos-Dudley, the court of the Inner Temple is a haven for ‘solace of minde, by helpe of all the liberall Sciences flowing so abundantly, as it semed in dead the Muses had ther abidyng’ (p. 215), and to it young men flock ‘to learne to rule, and obay by law, to yeld their fleece to their prince & comon weale. As also to use all other exercises of body & minde’ (p. 217). This is a training ground for conciliar service to Elizabeth, but it is also a counterpoint to the feminine temple over which

\textsuperscript{94} Axton, \textit{The Queen’s Two Bodies}, p. 40.
\textsuperscript{95} Dunn, \textit{Representing Counsel}, p. 294.
\textsuperscript{96} Doran, \textit{Monarchy & Matrimony}, pp. 45-6.
\textsuperscript{97} Axton, \textit{The Queen’s Two Bodies}, p. 40; ‘Robert Dudley and the Inner Temple Revels’, p. 373.
'Dame Bewtie’ prevails in the first narrative. A female ‘portres’ guards the door instead of a porter before ‘Dame Conguitie’ guides ‘Desire’ through the ‘tower of Doctrine’. ‘Counsell’ advises the suitor ‘tacquainte youre selve with wisdom. whose swaye is such in thus courte’ and offers a handy motto: ‘whoso will pleasure winne, let him with wisdom first beginne’ (p. 219). Eventually Desire finds male comradeship in the ‘howse of Chivalrye’ (p. 220), dons mythic armour, slays a nine-headed serpent, and sacrifices to the goddess Pallas in her temple, who rewards him by joining him in marriage with Dame Beauty (p. 221).

Axton persuasively reads this tale as Dudley’s promise to make himself worthy of both the queen’s ‘body politic’ – Pallas – and her ‘body natural’ – Lady Beauty, whom Axton perhaps unnecessarily associates with Perseus’ lover Andromeda.98 Equally important, however, is the position of Pallas as guardian of chastity, particularly in her own temple. Throughout Legh’s text, we are bombarded with references to the sins of Medusa, slain by Perseus after she ‘committed adultery in the Temple of Minerva’ (p. 214). This defilement of a temple is clearly a metaphor for Catholic heresy: Medusa’s head becomes a trophy for ‘a pure Prince […] whose zelous affeccion preseruith religion’ (p. 230). But we can also read a warning to Elizabeth herself of the dangers of unchastity. The description of Medusa’s transformation from beautiful princess ‘into louthesome annoyaunce of a beutifull Queene’ is the only time in the text when the word ‘queen’ is used. This section is also the occasion for the recurrence of the phrase ‘Dame Beauty’ – previously a personification of Elizabeth, here a description of Medusa’s transformation ‘berefte of all dame Bewties shape’ (p. 230). While the accusation of unchastity towards Elizabeth might seem odd coming from Dudley, another classical allusion provides a clue to its meaning. After his marriage to Dame Beauty, Desire faces the inevitability of death, meeting on the way ‘horned Diana in the wane’. In a melancholy scene that foregrounds

98 Axton, The Queen’s Two Bodies, p. 40.
mutability, Diana complains of the lies spread by Fama, or ‘rumour’, who retorts that in time
‘he would not onely deface all her honor, but all thinges on earth’ (p. 221). The authors of
Pallaphilos appear to warn Elizabeth that her pose as virgin goddess could not survive the
inevitability of gossip that she was a Medusa in disguise. She may present herself to the world
as Diana, but even Diana’s virginity is slandered by Fama. Honourable marriage to the man
already associated publicly with her sexuality, consummated by their shared devotion to
wisdom, might be Elizabeth’s best chance of asserting her chastity. Pallas in Dudley’s version
of events may be a chaste goddess, but she is fundamentally in opposition to Diana. Her
blessing of the marriage between Dame Beauty and Desire demonstrates that she represents a
more practical alternative to perpetual virginity.

viii. Visits to Cambridge in 1564 and Oxford in 1566

In 1564 Elizabeth visited Cambridge University, where on her accession William Cecil had
succeeded Cardinal Pole as Chancellor. As Mary Hill Cole notes, Elizabeth planned to visit
Oxford on the same progress, but was thwarted by plague. In 1566, Elizabeth finally made it
to Oxford, where Dudley was Chancellor. In a detailed analysis of these visits, Paulina Kewes
demonstrates that the context of each was quite different: Cambridge remained a ‘fount of the
evangelical movement, where […] the regime sought to restrain the clamour for further
reform’; by contrast in Oxford, ‘where the Catholic resurgence under Queen Mary had been
more vigorous’, the Crown was concerned ‘to eradicate the pockets of crypto-Catholicism that
had survived previous purges’. This divide was not absolute: there were some religious
conservatives still at Cambridge, while at Oxford the hot gospeller Laurence Humphrey was

99 Cole, The Portable Queen, p. 139.
100 Kewes, ‘Plesures in lernyng’, p. 335.
now President of Magdalen, where he had recently been a ringleader in the Vestments Controversy. Nonetheless Kewes rightly draws a general distinction between the politics of the two universities and reminds us that, ‘beyond the obvious task of promoting learning, in the 1560s the primary purpose of Elizabeth’s progresses to the universities was to enforce religious conformity’. It was unsurprising that each university, an exclusively male community of learned scholars who were preparing the next generation of civic and ecclesiastical leaders, would use such occasions to remind the young queen that it was an indispensable source of counsel. But the performance of graciously receiving counsel was a necessary price paid by the queen for her friendly reception; it was not the primary purpose of her visit.

The most explicit demonstrations Elizabeth gave of her own ‘learning’ during these visits were her orations in Latin, which Linda Shenk and Sarah Knight have already admirably dissected. I have argued throughout this thesis that as Elizabeth’s reign progressed, she gradually asserted more control of her learned image and, although her imagery remained contested and unstable, we see some shifts in this period from the image of Elizabeth as a pupil receptive to education, to that of the queen as a regal or divine figure who imparted wisdom. Both Shenk and Knight chart a similar shift in Elizabeth’s own orations, although as I have discussed in Chapter 1, I do not share Shenk’s reading of Elizabeth’s pseudo-quotation from ‘Demosthenes’ in her Cambridge oration. Yet Shenk’s work on Elizabeth’s 1592 visit to Oxford establishes that, by this point, Elizabeth was asserting her royal authority without apology at the universities, not only in her speech but in the Crown’s demands for English-

103 Shenk, ‘Learned Authority’; Knight, ‘The Latin University Orations of Queen Elizabeth I’.
language court performances of academic drama, ‘treating its university subjects as entertainers who can be called upon to provide diversion simply for amusement’.¹⁰⁴ Knight agrees:

In 1592 we see a less rhetorically bashful queen: the oration seems more determined, even admonitory, and while Elizabeth might allude to being out of practice as a Latinist, she presents herself as much more rhetorically practiced and politically experienced as queen.¹⁰⁵

A full analysis of the 1592 visit is, however, well beyond the chronological parameters of this chapter. Moreover, both the 1564 and 1566 oration were short, given ex tempore, and recorded in a range of unreliable texts that contain major variants, so I am sceptical of efforts to draw from these texts any solid conclusions about Elizabeth’s self-representation.¹⁰⁶ Nonetheless, as Shenk highlights, when Elizabeth was formally solicited to address the University of Cambridge in 1564, she was ‘flanked’ in what was likely a pre-rehearsed staging by Richard Cox and William Cecil, ‘a royal tutor and a trusted counselor’, both of them Cambridge men.¹⁰⁷

In a coded acceptance of the university’s authority to counsel her, Elizabeth acknowledged her limitations compared to the learned scholars around her. Francis Peck quotes her apologising for her ‘foeminitis pudor […] in tanta doctorum turba’; in Rudolph Wilkinson's account she uses instead the phrase ‘in tanta doctissimorum hominum turba’, stressing the male sex of her learned audience and acknowledging them more explicitly as a conciliar court.¹⁰⁸ These variations demonstrate the dangers of reading too closely into second-hand records of Elizabeth’s speeches – but the difference is intriguing.

¹⁰⁵ Knight, ‘The Latin University Orations of Queen Elizabeth I’, pp. 74-5.
¹⁰⁶ On the difficulty of the texts, Progresses, I, 429; CW, pp. 87-9.
¹⁰⁷ Shenk, ‘Learned Authority’, p. 81.
Two years later at Oxford, Elizabeth again was ritually persuaded to speak, this time flanked by Cecil and Dudley. According to the scholar John Bereblock, Elizabeth condemned herself as a ‘terra tam sterilem et infecundam’ ‘barren and unfruitful ground’ for her teacher’s efforts.109 Shenk observes that even though ‘in 1566 she was hardly the young schoolgirl’, Elizabeth was here using a metaphor conventionally applied to children, which ‘infantilises her [and] diffuses her power as a mature royal intellectual’.110 Yet although Bereblock is the basis for the Collected Works text, the metaphor does not appear in all versions of the speech: Miles Windsor instead records Elizabeth lambasting herself as speaking ‘indocta doctos, rudis eruditos’ (‘an unlearned woman to learned men, as an ignoramus to the erudite’).111

Whichever of these ritual self-abasements best reflects the words Elizabeth delivered, we can recognise the significance of a different moment in this oration, when Elizabeth advertises her indulgence of the political theories staged in disputationes throughout her stay, but reserves her authority to clamp down in the future as necessary. In Bereblock’s version, Elizabeth says of these: ‘quatenus sum Regina probare non possum’ (‘since I am queen, I cannot express approval’).112 Windsor’s text goes further, adding religious heft to the queen’s pronouncement: ‘neque authoritate mea probare ut Regina, neque iudicio ut Christiana potuissem’ (‘I neither approve them either under my authority as Queen, nor according to my judgement as a Christian’).113

The overall tone in both versions is indulgent; Elizabeth acknowledges that the disputations, on topics such as the right to rebel against tyrants or whether kings should be elected, were

111 Progresses, I, 486-7.
113 Progresses, I, 486.
intellectual exercises, caveated by apologetic prologues. But in both versions she leads up to this moment by announcing that she will deploy a classic of neo-Latin epideictic rhetoric, a judgement on where best to place ‘laus’ and ‘vituperatio’, or praise and blame.\textsuperscript{114} Although the queen immediately avows that ‘laus’ is due to her audience, and ‘vituperatio’ to herself, she makes a point of detaching the honour of ‘laus’ from the offensive disputations. The possibility of ‘vituperatio’, with all its force, still hovers. The queen’s deployment of this formal rhetorical device, a fundamental tool of the disputatio genre itself, also asserts that she is indeed qualified to judge and engage in the formal rhetorical exercises she has just witnessed. All the intellectual self-abasement that follows is undercut by Elizabeth’s clear message that her lessons in rhetoric have not fallen on barren ground at all, despite her \textit{pro forma} pretence otherwise.

Although the entire thing was carefully manipulated, the queen’s display of ‘learning’ was useful fodder for the assertion of her authority, despite the limitations of her sex. In a poem on queenship written for the event by William Lane, the link was made explicit:

\begin{center}
\textit{Nil ualet hic sexus, regem sapientia reddit,}
\textit{Et sane merito, qui ualet arte, regit.}
\end{center}

Sex counts for nothing here, it is wisdom that makes a king, And it is certainly right that the one who is strong in art should reign.\textsuperscript{115}

In the same collection, Humphrey praised the eloquence Elizabeth had displayed, writing

\begin{quote}
\textit{Regnat iam prudens Princeps, sed foemina regnat} (‘she rules wisely, although she is a woman’).\textsuperscript{116}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{115} \textit{Progresses}, 1, 562:595.
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Progresses}, 1, 439:591.
A full analysis of Elizabeth’s university visits would constitute a doctoral thesis of itself. My interest is in the specific comparison of Elizabeth to Minerva, which intersected at times with the ideal of the ‘learned prince’. Comparisons of Elizabeth to Minerva appear from the opening lines of the Oxford narratives: Bereblock writes of the new Masters of Arts awaiting her first arrival ‘sapientiae studiosi [...] tanquam alteram adventatem minervam expectabant’ (‘eager for learning [...] as if another Minerva were coming’).\(^{117}\) Only a few lines later, she has arrived and is borne aloft ‘tamquam Minerva quaedam, inter medias musas’ ‘as though she were a second Minerva among the Muses’. Roger Marbeck’s speech marking the queen’s departure praised her Latin oration with reference to both the learned prince ideal and Minerva: ‘non tam literatam principem in terris loquentem quam minervam ipsam e coelo tonatem audiuisse videretur’ ‘we seemed to have heard not so much a learned prince speaking on earth as Minerva herself thundering from heaven’.\(^{118}\)

There are no references to Minerva in the records of the Cambridge visit, although Elizabeth was frequently invoked as the learned prince. In one sermon the religiously sinuous Andrew Perne referenced Plato’s vision and declared with newly found Protestant zeal:

\[ Si divinus ille Plato illam Rempublicam beatam esse affirmabat, in qua aut philosophi regnabant, aut Reges philosophabantur, quam sumus Nos ter quaterque foelices iudicandi, qui principem habemus, non solum optimarum scientiarum et linguarum cognitione praeditam sed etiam quae omne suum ocium [otium] in divinarum literarum sanctissimo studio collocat. \]

If that divine Plato maintained that that state is blessed in which either philosophers ruled, or kings were philosophers, how indeed are we to be judged three and four times happy to have a ruler endowed not only with understanding of the greatest knowledge and languages, but who also focuses all her spare time in a most holy eagerness for Holy Scripture.\(^{119}\)

\(^{117}\) *Progresses*, I, 615: 640.
\(^{118}\) *Progresses*, I, 610.
Yet Minerva was largely absent from the public presentations at Cambridge. When we turn our attention to verse books commemorating the occasion, we find a similar pattern. Although Minerva (or Pallas, ‘Ἀθηνή’, or Tritonia) crops up in both, she appears frequently in the Oxford verses, and rarely in the Cambridge verses.

We know of three gift volumes that were presented to the queen’s party during her time at Cambridge. Add. MS 8915, which I have mentioned briefly in this chapter’s introduction, contains verses submitted by almost every Cambridge college. This has been hardly studied, although in 1993 Elisabeth Leedham-Green produced an index to the contributors.\textsuperscript{120} As Leedham-Green and Faith Eales have observed, its gold vellum binding was not to Elizabeth’s tastes, and may explain why according to Stokys’ narrative, she handed it immediately to Cecil ‘in whose possession it remained’ until it was sold in 1687 by the Burghley estate.\textsuperscript{121} King’s College insisted on creating their own volume, ‘a fayer boke covered with red velvet’, which has since disappeared. A third book containing the names of benefactors of the college is now at the National Archives, but does not contain verse.\textsuperscript{122} Abraham Hartwell published a well-known Latin verse account of the visit in 1565 entitled \textit{Regina Literata}, but this was not a dedicatory volume and the poems mainly served a narrative purpose.\textsuperscript{123}

In Add. MS. 8915, Elizabeth does occasionally figure as Minerva. In an unsigned piece at fol. 33’ by a fellow of St John’s, Phoebus Apollo is her companion:

\begin{quote}
\begin{flushright}
\textit{Phoebus adest, Pallasque suas invisit Athenas}

[...]

\textit{Elizabetha venit Pallas nova}
\end{flushright}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{120} Elisabeth Leedham-Green, \textit{Verses Presented to Queen Elizabeth I by the University of Cambridge, August 1564: Cambridge University Library MS Add. 8915} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1993).

\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Progresses}, 1, 417.

\textsuperscript{122} National Archives, SP 12/32.

Phoebus is here and Pallas visits her Athens

[...]

Elizabeth comes as a new Pallas.\textsuperscript{124}

Over a decade later, this language would be echoed at the Norwich pageant, where Apollo was called upon to pay escort to Pallas:

\textit{Innuba Pallas adest, splendide Phoebe, redi.}

Unspoused Pallas present is, O Phoebus bright return.\textsuperscript{125}

The link between these lines may be William Goldingham, who, as Shenk observes in her essay on these pageants, was the only contributor from outside Norwich, and a fellow at nearby Cambridge – although he is not listed among contributors to the Cambridge verses.\textsuperscript{126} Shenk places great stress on the Norwich pageants as a moment when Elizabeth was praised as Pallas, and she is right that both Elizabeth’s learning and her virginity were emphasised throughout the visit. Nonetheless, the poem that praises her as Innuba Pallas was a conditional component of the visit, written down as a lament because the weather was poor and the sun-god appeared to be ‘\textit{sub nube recondis}’ (‘in shadowing clouds [...] closed’. There is a pun on ‘\textit{nube}’ and \textit{innuba’}). We cannot know if another Pallas poem was prepared for a sunny day. What we do know is that this praise of Elizabeth as Innuba Pallas was immediately followed by a conventional three goddess motif poem that did not depend on the weather, in which Elizabeth is Juno, Minerva, and Venus all at once, without distinction. Elizabeth was also praised during her entry to this city as Deborah, Judith, Hester, and Martia (Martia, as a legendary British queen, trumps the traditional biblical triad), immediately before a conclusion in which Jove recognises her as the superior of various Olympian goddesses, including the split form of Pallas

\textsuperscript{124} The referent of \textit{suas} is ambiguous here.

\textsuperscript{125} B[ernard] G[arter], \textit{The joyfull receyving} (London, 1578), G1\textsuperscript{1}, G2\textsuperscript{2}.

\textsuperscript{126} Shenk, ‘Praising Elizabeth I in Latin at Norwich (1578)’, p. 90; Leedham-Green, \textit{Verses}.  

prudence’) and Minerva (‘eloquence’).\textsuperscript{127} At moments when Elizabeth becomes such an overdetermined symbol, we should be cautious before highlighting a single element. As Shenk herself acknowledges, when Pallas is invoked, it may have as much to do with her patronage of weaving, a speciality of the Dutch Protestants of Norwich, as her intellect or virginity.\textsuperscript{128}

Back in Cambridge, Minerva is not prominent in the verse book given to Elizabeth in 1564. She does feature as part of a revolving cast of combined deities: Juno, Diana, the Muses, Lucina, Apollo.\textsuperscript{129} Yet she is everywhere in the books of verses created for the Oxford visit. One possible explanation is that the ferocity of the Vestments Controversy discouraged the Oxford verse-makers from making religious or biblical allusions when a classical alternative was possible.

There is another alternative. The Pallaphilos masque had established a connection between praise of Elizabeth as Pallas and the campaign for her marriage to Dudley. Siobhan Keenan, in her own study of these visits, notes that each university responded differently to Elizabeth’s marital dilemmas.\textsuperscript{130} At Cambridge, in a major set-piece oration at the door of King’s College Chapel, William Master had the good sense to deliver an oration which praised Elizabeth’s virginity; by contrast, ‘Dudley was arguably using the Oxford entertainments to present himself as would-be royal consort and solution to the succession issue.’\textsuperscript{131} As Chancellor, Dudley acted as Elizabeth’s host during the visit and his own erudition was repeatedly praised.\textsuperscript{132} Thomas Cooper of Magdalen extolled Dudley’s governance of the university, as a model for how he

\textsuperscript{127} Garter, \textit{The joyfull receyving}, G2\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{129} Add. MS. 8915, e.g. 12\textsuperscript{r}, 7\textsuperscript{v}, 62\textsuperscript{r}, 165\textsuperscript{r}.
\textsuperscript{130} Keenan ‘Spectator and Spectacle’, pp. 88-9.
\textsuperscript{131} Keenan ‘Spectator and Spectacle’, p. 99.
\textsuperscript{132} e.g. \textit{Progresses}, I, 557:588-9.
might govern a nation. Humphrey did not go so far as to name Dudley as his candidate, although the two men had a close relationship, but did offer public prayer for God in which he expressed his concern about the queen’s recent illnesses and declared ‘I am afraid because she is without a husband’. A decade later, Humphrey would deliver an adapted version of this poem for Elizabeth’s visit to Woodstock, at Dudley’s invitation. In his accompanying oration at Woodstock, alongside his hint at the need for marriage, Humphrey again praised Elizabeth as an acolyte of Minerva, while also comparing her to Solomon, and he was accompanied by Walter Haddon, who also included a prayer for her marriage.

The direct association between Elizabeth’s representation as Minerva and her relationship with Dudley is made in Thomas Neale’s famous ‘Book of Oxford’. Neale presented two volumes to Elizabeth: one of these, a series of translations from Hebrew, made the case for continued patronage of Hebrew scholarship at the university. The other, Topographica Delineatio, consists of an imaginary dialogue between Elizabeth and Leicester during which the two visit every college. This book is also concerned with promoting Hebrew. In the first lines of the dedication, Elizabeth is told that students of Oxford are now enjoying the opportunity for scholarship awarded by a secure government ‘haud aliter ac sub Minervae cuiusdam clypeo tuti’ (‘just as if they were all safe under the shield of some Minerva’). The word ‘Minervae’ is emphasised in the text with bold lettering and a few lines later the name of the goddess recurs as a synonym for the author’s own literary efforts, which – though unworthy – serve to codify

133 Progresses, I, 548-52:76-81.
134 In the opening poem of the dedicatory verses in BL Royal 12 A. XLVII, Humphrey defined Elizabeth in terms of the conventional qualities of the Christianised Minerva, although he did not make the comparison explicit: ‘altera doctrinae est, pietatis at alte ra merces / tertia virtutis nomen & omen habet’. Cf. Progresses, I, 547.
135 Progresses, II, 435-74 (pp. 460-462).
136 BL MS. Royal 2 D. xxi.
his relationship to the queen as a patron: ‘cuius quidem delineandae ratio tametsi crassiore quadam Minerva & impolitiore tum stilo’. Afterwards, we meet Leicester and the Queen together, who immediately begin a conversation about Leicester’s relative merits as a commander in war or a Chancellor of the University. Leicester concludes proudly of himself ‘Non minor est studiis, quam castris, fama praesse’ (‘it is no less glorious to have governed learning than war’.) In Dudley’s promise to embody the values of both academia and warfare, there is a suggestion that he too is a student Minerva, and therefore a suitable partner for Elizabeth. Together, they will rule the worlds of war and academia.

ix. Conclusion

Throughout Elizabeth’s visit to Oxford, the comparisons to Minerva continue to indicate a varying range of meanings. The bursting plurality of texts that shaped the queen’s visit to Oxford was a deliberate feature, or as Sarah Knight writes of both early university visits:

Entering the precincts of the university town on progress must have felt like stepping into the pages of a book […] orations were transcribed, verses circulated, and poetic wall-hangings collected and presented […] The conspicuous acts of writing emphasised the institution’s polyglossia.\footnote{140}

The result was a multiplicity of readings, on every subject. Thus Thomas Cooper and Samuel Cole could rail against the iniquities of Mary’s recent regime in their orations, while Neale and Marbeck praised her lavishly as the deceased patroness to the public schools and a model for her sister.\footnote{141} Henry Bust defined Elizabeth’s learning only in relationship to the male scholars

\footnote{139} Book of Oxford, p. 41.
\footnote{140} Knight, ‘Texts Presented to Elizabeth I on the University Progresses’, p. 22.
\footnote{141} Progresses I, 576-81, 605, 513, 611.
she nurtured – ‘like the mother of the Gracchi’ – but Edward Wotton by contrast stressed Elizabeth’s direct encounters with academia:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Non labris summis leviterque musas} \\
&Imbibit, plenis quasi devorauit \\
&Faucibus libros, bene perpolita}\end{align*}\]

She does not drink in the Muses superficially, with the edge of her lips But swallowed books as if with wide-opened mouth, Thoroughly refined.

Perhaps wearied by the recent French wars, William Lane exhorted Elizabeth to peace in her guise as Minerva:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Arma nunc cessant Violenta Martis,} \\
&\text{Nunc iacent prorsus truculenta tela,} \\
&\text{Sanguis ac caedes miseranda cedunt,} \\
&\text{Splendida Princeps,} \\
&\text{Castra tu castæ sequeris Minervæ,} \\
&\text{Et quies per te venit huc sacrata,} \\
&\text{Pax viget tandem nivea atque sancta,} \\
&\text{Splendida princeps.}\end{align*}\]

Now the violent weapons of Mars cease, Now savage swords lie completely still, Bloodshed and pitiful slaughter stop, Magnificent Queen, You have followed the campaign of chaste Minerva And sanctified rest comes here through you, Radiant and holy peace at last thrives, Magnificent Queen.

Throughout this chapter, we have seen that the authors who celebrated Elizabeth in neo-Latin or by using classical iconography in English verse had no problem representing her as a Minerva despite calling upon her to guarantee an era of peace. They also had no problem with the idea of a Minerva who might soon marry. Nonetheless, verse books like those made at

\[142\text{ Progresses I, 587.599.}\]
\[143\text{ Progresses I, 563, translation KM.}\]
Oxford, Cambridge and Windsor are multi-authored, and although they are governed by a basic strategy of praise, they allow for significant variation in approaches to the contest over the queen’s representation. I have emphasised the limitations on any effort to draw broad, cohesive lines through the imagery dreamed up at the university visits, because one lesson that we should draw is the fact of the inconsistencies themselves. The queen was an overdetermined symbol: Minerva an unstable referent.

Yet amid all these uncertain meanings of Minerva, we have also seen in this chapter that during the early years of her reign, Elizabeth gradually found ways in which to assert her own learned authority. The increasing confidence with which she performed the role of learned prince was essential to this success, as was her subtle deployment of rhetorical devices like the *laus/vituperatio* dichotomy during her Oxford oration to remind her interlocutors that modesty was only ever a pose. The growing intellectual confidence of the queen was essential to the development of the next persona I will explore in this thesis: the image of Elizabeth as the biblical King Solomon.
Chapter 5: The Wisdom of Solomon

i. Introduction

While Minerva was a leading classical symbol of wisdom in the Elizabethan *mundus significans*, the ultimate biblical example of royal wisdom was King Solomon. In Chapter 4, I have already mentioned one occasion when both symbols were used in conjunction: Laurence Humphrey’s 1575 oration at Woodstock. Humphrey’s oration demonstrates some conventional uses of Solomon in royal encomia. The comparison to Solomon is an occasion to praise Elizabeth above all her other virtues for her love of ‘prudentia’ (Humphrey also lists ‘pax’ and ‘pieta’), one of the four cardinal virtues, which was associated frequently with wisdom in royal judgement.¹ Humphrey was a man who always had an agenda – in this case, shoring up Dudley and pushing for further confrontation with ‘papistici’ – but this comparison was conventional and usefully introduces many of the associations with Solomon that I shall explore below.²

In this chapter, I first discuss the role Solomon played in early representations of the Church of England. Later, I examine authorised or semi-authorised royal publications such as *Precationes privatae* and the prayerbooks published by John and Richard Day, alongside the efforts of a private citizen, Thomas Bentley, whose mammoth 1582 anthology of writing by and for women envisages Elizabeth in overdetermined union with herself as both Solomon and the Bride of the Song of Solomon (Canticles).³ While remaining alert to dialectic, it is my argument that these prayerbooks primarily praise Elizabeth as a peaceable devotee of the

---

¹ *Progresses*, I, 442. Note the annotation in the published edition describing Elizabeth as *prudentis literata*. In ² *Progresses*, I, 443.
³ Thomas Bentley, *The monument of matrones*, ‘Lamps 1-5’ (London, 1582); Bentley, *The monument of matrones*, ‘Lamps 6-7’ (London, 1582). Later references given in-text. The complex printing arrangements for this work are discussed in section v below.
Gospel, promoting biblical prayer for domestic use. By contrast, another work published in 1582, Thomas Blenerhasset’s *A Revelation of the True Minerva*, presents a very different view of Elizabeth as a transnational warrior for divine truth and is examined in Chapter 6. As we have seen throughout this thesis, wisdom imagery was a flexible tool in the hands of Elizabethan literary agitators, whether drawn from classical or biblical sources.

For the ‘hottest’ Protestants, Humphrey not least among them, the chief function of a godly monarch’s relationship with texts was to fit her as a champion of the vernacular Gospel. In this context, wisdom could only be understood as adherence to revealed truth. By the 1570s, confessional divides had been clearly established between Anglican ‘conformists’, who supported Elizabeth’s religious settlement, and those who pushed for further reform, often anti-episcopal in nature. Political confrontations included the Vestments Controversy of 1566, the Crown’s injunction against prophecy in 1576, and Elizabeth’s consequent suspension of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Grindal. Yet though these groups demanded different things of their queen, both emphasised knowledge of the Scriptures as the *sine qua non* of godly learning. Both could wield the same verses of scripture to assert their expectations of spiritual kingship. Proverbs 9:10 read: ‘The beginning of wisdom is the feare of the Lord, & the knowledge of holy things, is understanding’. (Humphrey, in his praise for a Solomonic Elizabeth at Woodstock, had also urged her to bear this verse in mind, parsing ‘fear of the Lord’ as ‘pietas’.) Whatever their factional affiliations, the Protestant writers who mused in public on their queen’s need for wisdom all resorted to this verse from Proverbs: with it they could celebrate the queen’s existing ‘knowledge of holy things’ or demand that she be more God-fearing. They also looked to the purported author of Proverbs: Solomon himself.

---

5 Susan Doran, ‘Elizabeth I’s Religion’.
6 *Progresses*, 1, 447.
A key Old Testament figure, Solomon had long associations with sacred wisdom. 1 Kings 3 recounts the story in which the God of Israel offered the new king any gift of his choosing: Solomon begged the gift of greater wisdom, showing himself to be wise already. Understanding his obligations as a ruler to administer justice, Solomon requests, ‘Give therfore unto thy servaunt an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discerne betweene good & bad: for who is able to judge this thy mighty people?’ (1 Kings 3:9). His God, after praising Solomon for his choice, confirms: ‘Beholde, I have done according to thy wordes: lo, I have given thee a wise & an understanding heart, so that there hathe bene none like thee before thee, nether after thee shall arise the like unto thee’ (1 Kings 3:12). The model for kings was obvious: according to one report of her speech to parliament in November 1586, lamenting the difficulty of handling Mary Stuart, Elizabeth cited her deference to the four cardinal virtues and reassured listeners that ‘as Solomon, so I have above all things desired wisdom at the hands of God’. Yet not only was Solomon recognised by early modern theologians for his ‘wise & understanding heart’, but he was also credited with the authorship of an extensive range of biblical ‘wisdom books’, including Proverbs itself. The success of Erasmus’ Adages – which, as we have seen, Roger Ascham mocked – and the introduction of numbering for biblical verses in the Vulgate (1555) and Geneva Bible (1558-60) were part of a broader trend which reverenced pithy aphorisms as an elevated form of wisdom, and Solomon as their originator. The phrase ‘as Solomon saith’ became a conventional introduction to any aphorism.

Aside from his intellectual credentials, however, there were four key elements of the Solomon story that lent themselves particularly well to identification with Elizabeth. First and foremost,
Solomon was the son of the illustrious biblical King David, who was a favourite identification of Henry VIII. The section below explores the significance of this association in detail, but as we shall see, there were positive and negative aspects to the legacy of David which could be deployed as either encouragement or admonition to Henry’s children.

Secondly, David and Solomon had been confronted by the rebellion of a close relative, Solomon’s half-brother Absolom: Susan Doran has written of this point, ‘many Protestants found in Mary Stuart a highly suitable candidate for the role of Absolom’.\(^{10}\) Parliamentary advocates of Mary’s execution reminded Elizabeth that David had nearly lost his own crown due to ‘excessive tenderness and pittie’ towards his incorrigibly treasonous son; later writers such as George Peele and Thomas Morton introduced Solomon into retroactive justifications of Mary’s death, pointing out that David’s wise successor had shown more backbone than his father when faced by the rebellion of a second half-brother, Adonijah.\(^{11}\) In Morton’s reading, Solomon’s zero-tolerance for troublesome priests had also been key to reasserting the Davidic dynasty’s control.\(^{12}\)

Thirdly, Solomon was recognised as an exemplar of kingly magnificence. The God of Israel had added ‘both riches and honour’ to Solomon’s requested gift of wisdom, such that we are repeatedly told in the 1 Kings narrative that Solomon’s contemporaries would travel from afar to wonder at the wealth of his court (1 Kings 3:13; 4:31-34). These included the Queen of Sheba, whose visit is recounted at 1 Kings 10 and 2 Chronicles 9. Her visit also featured in a range of apocryphal tales which by the later medieval period were making their way from the

---
\(^{10}\) Susan Doran, ‘Elizabeth I: An Old Testament King’, in *Tudor Queenship*, pp. 95-110 (p. 102).
\(^{11}\) For a discussion of this phenomenon in 1590s drama, see Annaliese Connolly, ‘Princes Set on Stages: Royal Iconography on the Early Modern Stage’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Sheffield Hallam University, 2008), Chapter I.
Jewish Talmud into Christian religious art.\textsuperscript{13} The Queen of Sheba’s visit was another episode which demonstrated the power of kingly magnificence. Readers of 1 Kings are treated to descriptions of both characters’ luxurious entourages, then told at verse 13: ‘King Salomon gave unto the quene of Sheba, whatsoever she wolde aske, besides that, which Salomon gave her of his kinglie liberalitie’. But the Queen of Sheba’s visit also provided a fourth opportunity for competing parties in the struggle over Elizabeth’s image to invoke the Solomon narratives: it allowed them to play with a wider configuration of gender roles. As I will show, in some cases this meant elevating Elizabeth into the masculine position, as when Princess Cecilia of Sweden visited London in 1565 and was reimagined as the Queen of Sheba paying homage to a superior ruler. But it also allowed Elizabeth to take a dual role as both king and queen – a ‘splitting’ technique which, as Levin and others have shown, recurs throughout Elizabeth’s representation and self-representation.\textsuperscript{14} Given the theological tradition which read Solomon and Sheba as a type for Christ and his Church, this was also an opportunity to smooth the difficulties inherent in representing female ‘headship’ in the Church of England. As Solomon to Sheba, Christ to his Church, and the lover of the Solomonic ‘Song of Songs’ to his beloved, the monarch had long been represented as bridegroom to a feminised nation. A queen who could be both Solomon and Sheba was a monarch who could simultaneously inhabit each of these heaped binaries in one unified person.

In my first and second chapters, I have described the determination of mid-Tudor English evangelicals to claim scriptural expertise as a uniquely Protestant phenomenon. In the third and fourth chapters I have examined the anxieties about female rule expressed by even supportive writers such as John Aylmer. These two areas of background are also essential for

\begin{footnotes}
\end{footnotes}
understanding the context of the 1570s and 1580s, including the struggle over how the queen might best be represented in relation to ‘wisdom’ and to Solomon. Aylmer’s patron had been the puritan-sympathising Robert Dudley, and early Elizabethan texts like An harborowe had stressed the importance of such male commanders who could be prevailed upon to stiffen Elizabeth’s militant defence of Gospel propagation where her womanly resolve might be weak. By the late 1570s, the queen of two decades had amply demonstrated her commitment to the vernacular, particularly through her patronage of the 1568 Bishops’ Bible. Elizabeth appeared on the titlepage as an explicitly evangelising monarch. Nonetheless, rising tension with Spain and Protestant pressure for Elizabeth to intervene in the Netherlands led to a resurgence of cautiously critical discourse, propagated particularly by clients of Philip Sidney and of Dudley, now Earl of Leicester, who called upon Elizabeth to inhabit fully her destined persona as militant champion of the Gospel, and propagator of divine wisdom in an error-infested Europe.

By contrast, Elizabeth and her proxies appear to have embarked on a sustained campaign throughout the 1570s and 1580s to present an alternative image of the ideal Protestant queen at her books. This Elizabeth, while still a scholarly and committed reader, drew on her study of the Gospels as inspiration for private contemplation rather than international combat. As we have seen, in 1563 the Crown had approved publication of a collection of prayers attributed to Elizabeth, Precationes privatae, which give thanks for her recovery from smallpox. This collection also included Precatio pro sapientia, ad regni administrationem (‘a prayer for

---

15 I recognise that Dudley’s commitment to Protestant causes may have wavered during his mysterious attempt to win Spanish support for a marriage to Elizabeth, but he remained publicly identified as a fellow-traveller of the Puritan movement. Doran, Monarchy & Matrimony, pp. 40-72.

16 Gordon Campbell, Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611-2011 (Oxford: OUP, 2010), pp. 7ff, also section iii below.


wisdom in the administration of a kingdom’).\textsuperscript{19} In this prayer the queen compares herself explicitly to Solomon, in a text which I will discuss further in section iv. below.

\textbf{ii. David and Solomon; Henry and Elizabeth}

To understand the iconographical relationship between Elizabeth and King Solomon, it is necessary to understand the iconographical relationship between her father Henry and the biblical King David, Solomon’s father. John N. King has comprehensively demonstrated that the tendency of English monarchs to claim the model of Davidic kingship long preceded Henry’s break with Rome.\textsuperscript{20} Richard III had been depicted as a new David suffering the rebellion of Absolom in his personal book of hours; Henry VII in turn was depicted in pageants as a David triumphing over Richard’s Goliath.\textsuperscript{21} David is a key figure in Christian imagery as the ancestor of the prophesied Christ; Solomon, as the first ruling ‘son of David’, becomes a type for Christ, the ultimate ‘son of David’. European monarchs who chose to be anointed with oil did so in imitation of David’s anointing by the prophet Samuel.\textsuperscript{22} In many medieval images of David, he wears two crowns to denote both his spiritual and secular authority; images of Charlemagne adopted the same pattern.\textsuperscript{23} Therefore, as King notes, ‘to praise a king as another David or Solomon is not distinctly reformist’.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{19} CW, ‘Prayer 9’, pp. 142-3; ACFLO, pp. 122-3.
\textsuperscript{20} King, Tudor Royal Iconography, pp. 8 ff.
\textsuperscript{22} 1 Samuel 1:16. Most English kings also swore in the coronation oath to follow the example of David. We do not know the words of the coronation oath sworn by Elizabeth, because it remained the subject of theological haggling up until the moment it was administered. But we know that the queen was anointed with oil, because she complained about the smell. Janette Dillon, ‘The Monarch in the Ceremony of Coronation’, in Representations of Elizabeth I, pp. 125-39 (p. 135).
\textsuperscript{23} King, Tudor Royal Iconography, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{24} King, Tudor Royal Iconography, p. 56.
In fact, Christian princes had long claimed literal descent from David and Solomon. The most famous Old Testament prophecy concerning the ancestry of Christ is found in Isaiah and refers to David’s father, Jesse: ‘But there shall come a rod forthe of the stocke of Ishai [Jesse], and a grase shall growe out of his rootes.’ (11:1) ‘Trees of Jesse’, which could depict both the descent of Christ from David and a worldly monarch’s own descent from the same house, were a fixture at processions and pageants for coronations and royal weddings. Nonetheless, after the Reformation Parliament of 1534, images of Henry as David begin to diverge from medieval tradition and to appear as part of a programmatic schema to bolster the biblical credentials of Henry’s rebellion from Rome. Following King, White, Carley and Sharpe have drawn further attention to this shift. As White notes, ‘David’s status as a king who was anointed directly by God and who ruled over the secular and religious spheres made him an ideal figure for promulgating the royal supremacy after the break with Rome.’

Elizabeth was not the only Protestant child of Henry who would be cast as the biblical son of David. Her brother Edward was praised at his own coronation as ‘after old David, a Yonge kyngg Salomon’. Yet this did not make Solomon the exclusive property of Anglican monarchs. Catholic kings across Europe were also praised as Solomon, notably Philip II of Spain, for whom it was a frequent identification in the context of his completion of the palace of El Escorial and his claim to the title ‘King of Jerusalem’. Nor is it quite accurate to affirm with Doran, in her own essay on

---


28 White, ‘Psalms, War and Royal Iconography’, p. 554.


Elizabeth’s associations with Solomon and David, that of the Tudor monarchs ‘only Mary I was not connected to the Old Testament kings’. John Standish, in his 1554 critique of vernacular Scriptures, had praised Mary thus: ‘Therefore if queene Saba justlye sayde it was a signe that God loved his people, for sendynge them Salomon to raygne over them, maye not we as justly now say the same to Englande?’ In a text that would prefigure many prayers for Elizabeth, the Marian apologist John Christopherson had adapted Solomon’s prayer to ask that the gift of ‘suche perfite and excellent wisedome, as thou vouchesafed to give unto Salomon’ might be bestowed upon ‘thy most humble hande mayde Quene Marye’.

Thus we should again be cautious before exclusively assigning particular imagery to a distinct confessional lexicon. But it is true that the figure of Solomon was particularly suitable for monarchs who saw themselves – or whose subjects wished to see them – as building a new church. This would be true for Edward and Elizabeth, as it was later true for James VI/I, who was eulogised at his funeral as ‘Great Britain’s Solomon’. On James’ accession to the English throne, and even beforehand, hardliners had occasionally suggested that Elizabeth herself had failed in her evangelical mission and would need to be succeeded by a ‘Solomon’ – despite, in the words of one such complainant in 1586, her promising early work ‘fostering Colleges and Schooles, the nurseries of the ministrie’. Yet more even-handed panegyrists managed to find in the Solomon story ways to honour both monarchs. On Elizabeth’s death, Oxford University sponsored a book of verses in which the medical student William Paddy told the new king

---

32 John Standish, A discourse (London, 1554), B1v-B2r.
33 John Christopherson, An exhortation to all menne (London, 1554), eeviii.
34 John Williams, Greate Britains Salomon (London, 1625); this identification is discussed at length in Maurice Lee Jnr, Great Britain’s Solomon: James VI and I in His Three Kingdoms (Urbana, IL: Illinois UP, 1990) and Graham Parry, The Golden Age Restor’d: The Culture of the Stuart Court, 1603-42 (Manchester: Manchester UP), pp. 26-9.
35 Leigh, Queene Elizabeth, paralelled in her princely vertues; John Rainolds, A sermon upon part of the eighteenth psalm (Oxford, 1586), B4'.
‘Solus eris Solomon, Austri regina recessit’ (‘Solomon, you will be alone, since the Queen of the South has departed’).\textsuperscript{36} John Young of New College compared Elizabeth to David because both monarchs had achieved at least forty years of kingship and survived alleged attempts by a predecessor to take their life. He concluded in praise of James:

\begin{quote}
Denique Davidi Solomon successerat hæres:
Et Solomona Anglo liquit Elisa throno.
\end{quote}

And finally, Solomon succeeded as heir to David
And Eliza left Solomon on the throne of England.\textsuperscript{37}

Just as Solomon’s heirship to David had been used to bolster the questionable legitimacy of Elizabeth as a daughter to Henry VIII, panegyrist who avowed a biblical affinity between Elizabeth and James were participating in a much broader project to erase the awkward memory of Mary Stuart and impose Elizabeth as a substitute parent.\textsuperscript{38}

Crucial to the resonance of this English Reformation analogy, particularly with respect to the iconographical relationship between Elizabeth and Henry, was David’s role in initiating the building of the Temple of Jerusalem. The promise in Revelation 21:2 of a ‘newe Jerusalem come downe from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride trimmed for her housbande’ had been read from the earliest days of Christianity as an image of the Church prepared for union with Christ her bridegroom.\textsuperscript{39} A new King David who built a New Jerusalem was a convenient model to Henrician commentators for a king building a new Church of England. Both Edwardian and Elizabethan commentators, however, were aware that David was fated never to

\textsuperscript{37} ‘Oxoniensis Academiæ Funebre’, IV, 483:661.
\textsuperscript{38} On the efforts by both monarchs to develop this idea in their correspondence, see Allinson, \textit{Monarchy of Letters}, pp. 167-83.
\textsuperscript{39} For the pre-history of this analogy, see \textit{Revelation: The Apocalypse of Christ}, ed. by Judith Kovacs and Christopher Rowlands (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003).
complete his temple, in part as divine punishment for the adulterous sins and murderous rages that marred his otherwise blessed and musical reign. The resonance was clear. In one of his first sermons before Edward VI, Latimer alluded scathingly to the questionable attempts of theologians to justify David’s polygamy, before exhorting the new king to live in higher standards of virtue than his father and pray for godly wisdom, ‘so your Grace must learn how to do, of Salomon’. 40 Well into the reign of James I, the clergyman George Hakewill would look back on Henry VIII and assess that

> the secret working of Gods holy providence which disposeth all things after his owne wisedome and purpose, thought it good, rather by taking that King away, to reserve the accomplishment of that worke (as he did the building of his Temple to Solomon,) to the peaceable time of his sonne Edward, and Elizabeth his daughter, whose hands were undefiled with any blood, and life unspotted with any violence or crueltie. 41

The associations of Elizabeth with Solomon, as we shall see, would often depend on suggestions that she might be a more peaceable monarch than her father. But where Edward VI could be hailed as a son of David with few negative implications, the biblical David’s marriage to his former mistress Bathsheba had difficult implications for Elizabeth, as the daughter of a former mistress later executed for adultery. John Prime, in an otherwise loyalist sermon of 1585, warned the queen that rebellions against Solomon had gained traction in part because ‘Salomons mother was a blemished woman’. 42 Nonetheless, redemption was possible, provided Elizabeth transcended the sexual weaknesses of her parents and pleased hardliners like Prime by showing no mercy to Catholic rebels who might undermine the Reformation project. It had fallen to Solomon to crush Israel’s last rebels and complete the work his father started, just as it would fall to Elizabeth to purify England of recusant Catholics and complete the establishment of her father’s church.

41 George Hakewill, An answere to a treatise written by Dr. Carier (London, 1616), Z3r.
42 John Prime, A sermon briefly comparing the estate of King Salomon (Oxford, 1585), A6v.
Henry’s own identification with David was well known in his own court, and may even have influenced Elizabeth’s first steps in her adolescent image-making. The musical talents attributed to the biblical David had made him a tempting model for Henry’s own artistic vanity. The sumptuous Latin psalter of Henry VIII, created by the French poet and artist Jean Maillart (or Mallard), contains sophisticated illustrations of the Psalms, which show David, their purported author, with the distinctive appearance and habitual apparel of King Henry.43 In an early image, Henry is depicted playing the harp, David’s preferred instrument. The appearance beside him of Will Sommers, the court fool, underscores the contrast between the pious Henry and the foolish man described in the first two verses of Vulgate Psalm 52 (modern Psalm 53), which are copied out from the Vulgate immediately next to the fool picture: ‘Dixit insipiens in corde suo: Non est Deus’ (‘The foole hath sayd in his heart: there is no God’).44 Henry indicated his interest in this psalm in an annotation attached to the seventh verse, which celebrates David’s divinely aided military triumph over those who fail to believe his creed.

Almost all but a few words of Psalm 52 are identical in the Vulgate to Psalm 13 (modern Psalm 14) and both psalms draw on ancient Hebrew wisdom motifs.45 They were frequently interchanged. The young Elizabeth may have been inspired by her father’s fondness for Psalm 52/13 when in 1548 she submitted paraphrases of its first two verses in Latin, French and Italian to John Bale. Bale, as I have discussed in Chapter 2, published Elizabeth’s A godly medytacyon, and included these paraphrases as examples of her biblical and linguistic education.46

46 A godly medytacyon, F1'.
iii. The Bishops’ Bible and Solomon as national symbol

The only English Bible grudgingly authorised by the Crown during the reign of Elizabeth was the 1568 Bishops’ Bible, which went through a major reprinting in 1572. The translation was prepared to counter the anti-episcopal leanings of the Geneva Bible, which failed to stress sufficient obedience to secular authorities; bishops dominated the revision committee.⁴⁷

Elizabeth appeared on both the frontispiece and the titlepage of early editions, although these illustrations seem to have been removed in editions published after 1574.⁴⁸ On the titlepage, she is shown seated above the title-inset, just as her father had been in the 1539 Great Bible (Fig. 9). As King has established, ‘the sword and the book’ had featured prominently in Henry’s iconography to represent the balance between temporal and spiritual governance; Elizabeth is similarly flanked here by Justice holding a sword and Mercy holding a book.⁴⁹ In the tier below, intellectual concerns dominate. A gathering of Englishmen and women listen to a sermon, some of them holding their own texts: similar images had appeared in the Coverdale and Great Bibles. Alongside, Fortitude is depicted holding her traditional symbol of Samson’s broken pillar, but Prudence holds a snake twisting around her arm. The snake was associated with spiritual wisdom and with the exhortation of Matthew 10:16: ‘Be ye therefore wise as serpentes, and innocent as doves.’ George Puttenham would later write of Elizabeth: ‘so we commending her Majestie for wisedome […] likened her to the Serpent […] because by

⁴⁹ King, Tudor Royal Iconography, pp. 70 ff.
common usurpation, nothing is wiser than the serpent’.\textsuperscript{50} The serpent was also associated with the theology of justification by faith, in a web of biblical associations which reached back to the story of the Brazen Serpent in Numbers 21, via the story of St Paul’s survival of a snake-bite in Acts 28:1-6. The latter incident was depicted on the reverse of a medallion struck in 1572 to celebrate Elizabeth’s escape from smallpox, ten years after the event.\textsuperscript{51}

In the frontispiece, Elizabeth is presented between the figures of Faith and Charity, which implies she represents Hope. On the cartouche, a quotation from Romans 1:16 asserts her evangelism: ‘Non me pudet Evangelii Christi. Virtus enim Dei est ad salutem omni credenti’ (translated within this Bible: ‘For I am not ashamed of the Gospell of Christ, because it is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe’). The sacrament of the Word is favoured over that of the Mass: the chalice traditionally carried by the figure of Faith is replaced by an open Bible. Nonetheless, the presence of an epigram in the Latin original, opening this proudly English-language text, carries certain ironies. Elizabeth was asserting her commitment to English-language evangelicalism, but rooted her queenship firmly in erudite understanding of ancient languages and biblical tradition. In her own monograph on this subject, Linda Shenk describes the deployment of this Latin passage as using ‘Elizabeth’s learned persona to blend the old and the new’.\textsuperscript{52} Three years after the first edition, Matthew Parker would commission Day and Foxe to publish a parallel text edition of the Gospels which provided the Anglo-Saxon text of the Wessex Gospels alongside the ‘contemporary’ text of the Bishops’ Bible. This was self-evidently a nationalist project, designed to root the new English Church in an ancient


\textsuperscript{51} The image I have used is held by the UK Science Museum and can be viewed at https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/objects/co72125/gold-medal-commemorating-the-recovery-of-queen-elizabeth-i-from-smallpox-1572-medal [accessed 30 June 2021].

\textsuperscript{52} Shenk, \textit{Learned Queen}, p. 29.
textual tradition: Rebecca Brackmann has identified Parker as part of an Elizabethan network which aimed to establish a national memory of Anglo-Saxon ‘antiquity’ which could compete for authenticity with England’s ‘Romano-Celtic’ heritage. The following year, Parker would publish his own *De antiquitate Britannicae ecclesiae*, which, like the Bishops’ Bible, features a titlepage image of Elizabeth above the Latin quotation from Romans.

Such nationalist celebrations of Elizabeth were complemented by tales of Solomon as a biblical monarch reputed to have hosted admirers from lesser, grateful nations. In 1565 Elizabeth entertained Cecilia of Sweden, and the two were treated by the boys of Westminster School to *Sapientia Solomonis*, a play adapted for the occasion from Sixt Birck’s original. Cecilia was explicitly recast in the epilogue as the visiting Queen of Sheba, come to gaze upon the ‘*coruscans*’ (‘glittering’) Solomon-Elizabeth. The prologue invited Elizabeth to see the Solomon on stage as a mirror of herself:

\[Non illibenter par videbit sibi parem, \\
Regina regem, prudens prudentissimum. \\
Solomon aderit hic cum sua sapientia.\]

Not unwillingly like will see like; a queen will see a king, a prudent ruler will see a most prudent. Solomon with his wisdom will be here among us.

The ‘*prudens*’ queen watching a ‘*prudentissimum*’ king could refer to both Sheba/Cecilia watching Solomon/Elizabeth, or to Elizabeth – whom the prologue addressed – watching Solomon. In the latter reading, the appellation of Elizabeth as merely *prudens*, where the

---

57 *Sapientia Solomonis*, p. 53.
biblical example is before her is prudentissimum, is telling. Victoria Brownlee reads conditionality and ambiguity into this play’s praise of Elizabeth, drawing our attention to the misogyny expressed by the play’s comic villain, Marcolph.58 However, as Marcolph is roundly mocked and defeated, it seems an overreach to assume his audience were expected to do anything but scorn and titter at the fool who underestimated the gifts of the two guests of honour in the audience in his dispraise of their sex. As Doran concludes, ‘the tone throughout was laudatory, but the implication was that Elizabeth should keep up the good work’.59 The fact that the play ends the Solomon narrative with the Queen of Sheba, excising any direct depiction of the biblical Solomon’s disastrous adventures with women and dynastic failures, suggests that its object was to avoid dangerous subjects entirely.

The comparison of Cecilia to the Queen of Sheba was clearly current: James Bell, a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, wrote a manuscript narrative of the visit in which he made the comparison explicit four times. Bell would become a prebendary in the diocese of Wells; he was also a future collaborator of Haddon and Foxe, and his instincts were clerical. The manuscript was dedicated to Elizabeth. The tension between Elizabeth-Solomon and Cecilia-Sheba was almost erotic: Cecilia makes her pilgrimage because she is ‘enflamed with the love of wisdom’ and Bell thus tells Elizabeth that ‘your Princes (youres I saye syne wholie she yealdeth to be youres)’ has united with the English queen such that ‘neither your highness in vertue, neither her grace in affecone, maye seeme in oughte to geave place to those Princes Salomon and Saba’.60 Yet in representations of the Queen of Sheba’s visit, Elizabeth did not

60 James Bell, ‘A Narrative of the Journey of Cecilia, Princess of Sweden, to the Court of Queen Elizabeth’, ed. by Margaret Morison, TRHS, 12 (1898), 181-224, p. 185.
always have to take a male role. In his 1576 edition of *Actes and monuments*, John Foxe reprinted a 1559 sermon by John Hales:

> And as the Queene of saba came from farre of, to see the glory of kyng Salomon, a woman to a man: Even so shall the Princes of our tyme, come men to a woman, and kyngs marvell at the vertue of Queene Elizabeth.61

In reprinting Hale’s sermon, Foxe was following the providentialism that defined his editorial practice: as an exceptional woman, Elizabeth was called by God in a mark of his providence, such that with his aid she could even reverse traditional gender roles. Michele Osherow has shown that providential models of David’s kingship could subordinate Elizabeth, especially when they focused on David’s unlooked-for elevation by God as a young boy. John Young, in his poem of 1603, had stressed Mary Tudor’s threat to Elizabeth as he had Saul’s to David, and as Osherow observes even the points of comparison selected in 1559 by Aylmer, who emphasised David’s obedience to God’s greater plan, ‘feature David at his most dependent, most vulnerable and, arguably, most feminine moments’.62 Yet in positioning Elizabeth not as David but as his uxorious and internationally revered son Solomon, Protestant writers were able to show models of strength in both masculine and feminine incarnation. Whether kings marvelled ‘at the virtue of Queene Elizabeth’, as in Hale’s sermon, or a Swedish queen wondered ‘in affecone’ at a masculine Elizabeth, as in Bell’s narrative, Elizabeth’s identification as Solomon always positioned her as the focus of a venerating gaze. This may be one reason why the image of Elizabeth as Solomon recurred even into the latest years of Elizabeth’s reign and long into her afterlife. As court panegyric moved to develop a poetics of the gaze, the story of Solomon and the foreigners who came to revere him blended into the classical pantheon of goddess-worship more easily than did tales of other biblical kings.

---

61 John Hale, original manuscript at BL Harley 419, fol. 148; *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs Variorum Online* (2007), 1576 only, p. 2034, as above.
62 Michele Osherow, “‘A Poore Shepherde and His Sling’: A Biblical Model for a Renaissance Queen”, in *Elizabeth I: Always Her Own Free Woman*, pp. 119-30.
iv. Solomon at prayer

In 1569, four years after Sapientia Solomonis, Richard Grafton would mimic the frontispiece of the Bishops’ Bible for the titlepage of A chronicle at large (see Fig. 10). This image shows Elizabeth flanked by British, biblical and classical worthies, their worthy successor. Shenk makes strong claims for the parallels between Solomon and Elizabeth in this image: certainly, they are the only two figures who carry a sceptre. Nonetheless, it is not the case that Elizabeth, as Shenk claims, carries ‘Solomon’s orb’, or indeed any orb at all. But one of the most explicit titlepage images of Elizabeth as Solomon published during her reign would appear that year, in Richard and John Day’s Christian prayers and meditations.

The Days were a father and son team who produced two anthologies of prayers attributed to the queen, published in 1569 and 1578. Although these anthologies differ in their content – the former includes prayers in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Latin, the latter only in English – the Days reused the title, frontispiece and border woodcuts for both publications. As Samuel C. Chew explains, ‘it is […] customary to speak of 1578 as a “second edition” of 1569 but […] the later work differs so markedly from the earlier that it is better to speak of them both as a separate publication’. The titlepage of both books features a Tree of Jesse, which draws attention to the significance of the House of David for this text (see Fig. 11). The frontispiece consists of an image of Elizabeth in private prayer, positioned above an excerpt of Solomon’s Prayer of Dedication in 2 Chronicles 6:14 (see Fig. 12).

---

63 Shenk, Learned Queen, p. 206.
64 Christian prayers and meditations; A booke of christian prayers, ed. by Richard Day (London, 1578).
Shenk has also drawn attention to the analogy presented between Solomon and Elizabeth in these publications. Shenk’s focus is on the international audience for these prayerbooks, arguing that the arrival of Mary Stuart on English soil in 1568 forced Elizabeth’s England to make ‘a dramatic entrance into the international limelight’. Shenk’s model proposes that, in concert with William Cecil’s contemporaneous prospectus for expanding Protestant alliances abroad and inflaming religious fervour at home, this parallel with Solomon allows Elizabeth to be presented as an international leader in the earthly transmission of Protestant revealed truth, while other admiring Protestant nations take the role of the Queen of Sheba.

Shenk’s analysis of the Protestant conception of revealed wisdom is useful, as is her focus on Elizabeth’s contested representation as propagator of the Gospel. Yet there is little evidence to buttress her assertion that foreign nations should be envisaged in the role of the absent Queen of Sheba, who is not shown in any of these prayerbook images. Shenk does not acknowledge that in the English pictorial tradition, the Queen of Sheba is usually depicted kneeling. The most famous Tudor image of the visit of the Queen of Sheba is a court miniature painted by Holbein circa 1534, which would have remained known in 1560s London. It depicts Solomon with the features of Henry VIII, seated on a raised dais just as Henry would be in Holbein’s frontispiece for the 1535 Coverdale Bible. Like the Elizabeth of the Day prayerbooks, Henry-Solomon sits framed by curtains and columns; unlike Elizabeth, however, he sits front-on to the reader, surrounded by courtiers and clearly engaged in a public performance. By contrast,

---

66 Shenk, Learned Queen, pp. 22 ff.
the Queen of Sheba, like Elizabeth in the prayerbooks, sits kneeling from left to right, performing an act of intercessory prayer. This is the posture she usually adopts throughout medieval and early modern English depictions of her visit to Solomon – another famous example is the stained-glass window of this scene prominent at King’s College Chapel, Cambridge, traditionally associated with Elizabeth’s penultimate stepmother, Katherine Howard.

It is my position, contra Shenk, that in her associations with Solomon, Elizabeth is predominantly depicted in a dual role as both Solomon and Sheba. As we have seen, throughout the iconography which developed around Elizabeth’s claims to wisdom, she and her co-agents in the construction of this imaginative landscape were repeatedly caught in dualistic dialectic. In existing simultaneously as Solomon and Sheba for the readers of these prayerbooks, the queen asserted herself, as throughout her self-fashioning, as playing both male and female roles. She was commanding and yet humble, ruler and yet intercessor. The association with both Solomon and Sheba reminded readers of the Day prayerbooks that their queen could be to them both Christ and his Church, just as the visit of the Queen of Sheba and the Song of Solomon for centuries served as cipher for the same mystical marriage. In a recent essay on the queen’s published prayers, Donatella Montini suggests of this image: ‘although alone and in a private space, the queen’s figure is framed by curtains – as though she were on a stage opening before an audience’. Yet Elizabeth’s gaze is trained on the book before her, which is itself framed for both her view and the reader’s. Again, we see a split role: Elizabeth here is both a public and private figure; spectacle and spectator. As we will see later in this chapter, her role

---

as a leader in the nation’s prayer also allows her to act as both priest-monarch and private worshipper.

Montini’s essay provides a useful summary of the questions these texts throw up about authorship and textual production. Montini points out that the recent renewal of scholarly interest in Elizabeth’s own corpus has not yet been successfully synthesised with ‘the tradition in Elizabethan studies dating back to the 1980s that sought to frame “the historical subject we call Elizabeth I […] as a composite of texts” – as an aggregate, that is, of disparate facts, myths and recollections, even as she is regarded as an author’. Nonetheless, scholars in the earlier traditions clearly need to have some sense of which words may have been written by the queen herself. Montini, in failing to look closely at these questions herself, undermines her otherwise significant contributions: in this essay she places heavy stress on specific language choices in the girdle-book known as ‘Queen Elizabeth’s Prayer Book’, without engaging with Woudhuysen’s convincing demolition of the traditional assumption that Elizabeth took a direct role in its authorship. The 1578 anthology, A book of Christian prayers, contains more material written by Day himself than the 1569 book, including multiple prayers for the queen, to be expressed by a subject. Traditionally, scholars have questioned Elizabeth’s authorship of prayers in both texts, but Marcus, Mueller and Rose have since established that the linguistic footprints of the first-person prayers introduced in the 1569 text show a clear correlation with Elizabeth’s autographed writings. As they write, ‘gendered self-references are feminine throughout, and the frequent anglicisms are characteristic of Elizabeth’s habitual practice’. A preference for cognate words in English–Latin translation is indeed a mark of Elizabeth’s 1593 translation of Boethius’ Consolation of Philosophy, while I touch on in my Epilogue.

72 Woudhuysen, ‘The Queen’s Own Hand’, pp. 18 ff.
73 CW, p. 144.
74 CW, pp. 143-4.
queen’s arms are printed on the first and last leaves of the 1569 text; the frontispiece bears the
banner ‘Elizabeth Regina’. Elsewhere, Marcus, Mueller and Rose add that ‘it is highly likely
that Elizabeth compiled these materials, and quite likely that she authored the prayers’.75 As
Jennifer Clement writes, ‘whether or not Elizabeth scratched out these prayers with her own
hand is less important, ultimately, than the fact that they appeared to be authored by her’, and
certainly, the Days were her authorised agents in this case.76

Christian prayers and meditations is a display of the reigning queen’s intellectual prowess.
Unlike the Days’ 1578 anthology, it includes – or is even dominated by – the queen’s prayers
in Latin, Italian, Spanish, French and Greek. Some had already appeared in Precationes
privatae in 1563, but most had not previously been printed. Precationes privatae is
considerably shorter, consisting of seven prayers, eight verse pastiches, and the 259 classical
and Christian sententiae which I have discussed in previous chapters. The presence of these
sententiae reiterates the queen’s self-identification with Solomon, whom William Kerrigan and
Marina Favila have termed ‘the great maxim-maker of the Old Testament’.77

In the frontispiece image, the queen kneels in prayer before a prayerbook or Bible (perhaps a
representation of the Christian prayers and meditations themselves), the sword of temporal
authority discarded at the very bottom of the frame. There is a clear dialogue between this
image and Henry VIII’s motif of ‘the sword and the book’: or as King puts it, ‘the woodcut
accords with the image of a cautious queen who in her own life adopted the pose of a ruler who
prefers reading the book symbolic of divine wisdom and mercy to wielding the sword of

75 ACFLO, p. 129. See also Chapter 2, section iv, above.
(January, 2008), 11-26
military and judicial power’. When Elizabeth was entertained by the City of Norwich in 1578, the organisers seemed to have got the memo: in a Latin dialogue staged before the queen on the merits of war versus peace, the pacifist character Politicus would reference Solomon alongside another famously judicious king, Minos of Rhodes:


The laws of Minos are more famous than his wars.
Who does not set the kingship of Solomon before that of his father?
God himself places it first, who did not want warlike David
To build His temple with bloody hands.

Politicus wins the debate. And when Elizabeth compared herself to Solomon, she did so in full knowledge that Solomon was known above all biblical kings – and especially above his father – for his ability to maintain peace.

Around the time that her discarded sword was depicted in the frontispiece of Christian prayers and meditations, Elizabeth would adopt this motif in ‘The Doubt of Future Foes’, a poem which responds to Mary Stuart’s flight into England and begins to appear in miscellanies from the early 1570s. The assertion that ‘no foreign banished wight / shall anchor in this port’ expresses explicit dissatisfaction with Mary’s arrival (lines 25-6). The poem concludes:

My rusty sword through rest
Shall first his edge employ
To pull their tops who seek such change
Or gape for future joy. (29-32)

78 King, Tudor Royal Iconography, p. 80.
79 Nichols, I, 826-7:829.
80 CW, pp. 133-4. In the verse quoted below, some MSS give ‘poll’ for ‘pull’, that is ‘cut off’. I am indebted to Helen Hackett for this observation.
The merciful queen’s sword is rarely used, but always available. In ‘The Doubt of Future Foes’, this capacity for equity is directly linked to the advantages of a godly monarch’s wisdom. The second verse affirms that the ‘falsehood’ and disloyalty inspired by Elizabeth’s enemies ‘should not be if reason ruled / or wisdom weaved the web’ (7-8). This hints at another reference to Minerva, who combined her patronage of ‘reason’ with her patronage of weaving, a function I discuss in Chapter 6. But the overwhelming association is with Solomon. He is the biblical king who wields his sword as a threat but rarely uses it – notoriously, in the Judgement of Solomon. Wisdom, in this poem, is manifested by godly fear of authority: disloyalty is punished without shedding excess blood, but by a competent spy network (the ‘worthy wights whose foresight falsehood finds’ (19-20)). Those who have no ‘faith’ are fools. Yet as ever, Elizabeth trades in dualisms and Petrarchan contradictions. It may be Mary who is exiled, but Elizabeth who finds that insecurity ‘exiles my present joy’ (2). For now, Elizabeth sits at the top of Fortune’s wheel, Mary at its lowest point. But even in anticipating her defeat of Mary’s supporters, Elizabeth dwells darkly on the old trope of ‘mutability’ and the circular nature of good fortune: ‘The top of hope supposed / The root of rue shall be’ (13-14). I will touch again on Elizabeth’s lifelong interest in mutability and Fortuna in my Epilogue.

Just as ‘The Doubt of Future Foes’ establishes Elizabeth’s dichotomy with Mary Stuart, the 1569 frontispiece plays on the differences between Elizabeth and her sister Mary Tudor. The carving recalls and critiques an image of Queen Mary consecrating cramp rings intended for her use when offering the Royal Touch to victims of scrofula or epilepsy.\textsuperscript{81} In this image, which was widely copied, Mary kneels as Elizabeth does before a prie-dieu. In Mary’s chamber, however, the scriptural text from which she prays is subordinated to an image of the Madonna and Child, which hovers above her. Her prayer is directed not to the book itself, but to an image

\textsuperscript{81} Reproduced and discussed: Duncan, Mary I, pp. 123-6.
of the crucifixion. When Day reclaims the image for Elizabeth, the queen’s eyeline remains the same, but the object of her gaze becomes the *verbum dei*.

For any early modern reader familiar with the Scriptures, however, Elizabeth’s parallels with Henry and Mary would not be the analogies which first came to mind. The associations of Elizabeth with Solomon recur prominently. The main clue is explicit: the text which lies at the bottom of the frame is 2 Chronicles 6:14:

*Domine Deus Israel, non est similis tui Deus, in coelo et in terra, qui pacta custodis et misericordiam cum servis tuis, qui ambulant coram te in toto corde suo.*

O Lorde God of Israel, there is no god like thee in heaven and in earth, which keest covenant, and mercy unto thy servantes that walke before thee with all their heart.

This is the prayer spoken by Solomon at the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem: the completion of the work his father had commenced. Elizabeth is explicitly a new Solomon, her life’s work a new church. Lest there be any doubt, the final English prayer in the 1569 publication is an almost direct copy of Solomon’s prayer for divine wisdom from the Apocryphal *Book of Wisdom* (or *Sapientia*), supposedly authored by Solomon, modified to make Elizabeth the speaker.

Versions of the prayer for wisdom recur in publications attributed to Elizabeth throughout her lifetime. In the 1563 *Precationes privatae*, the queen penned a Latin prayer entitled *Precatio pro sapientia, ad regni administrationem*, in which she declared her own unfitness correct to rule and compared her plight to the occasion ‘quam regum prudentissimus Solomon [ingenue] fateatur, se parum idoneum fuisse qui regnum administratet’ (‘when the most prudent of kings
who administered a kingdom, Solomon, frankly confessed that he was not capable enough’.

This is an explicit comparison between Elizabeth and Solomon by the queen herself, but Elizabeth acknowledges ‘sexu imbellis, natura foemina’ (in my unwarlike sex and feminine nature’) she is in even more desperate need of providential help than was Solomon. The prayer continues:

.mitte ergo o sapientiae omnis fons inexhauste, de coelis sanctis tuis, et a summa maiestatis tuae throno sapientiam tuam, ut mecum semper sit, mecum in gubernanda republicae excubet, atque laboret, me ancillam tuam doceat, atque instituat, ut queam discernere inter bonum et malum, aequum et iniquum, ut populum recte iudicare...

Send therefore, O inexhaustible Fount of all wisdom, from Thy holy heaven and the most high throne of Thy majesty, Thy wisdom to be ever with me, that it may keep watch with me in governing the commonwealth, and that it may take pains, that it may teach me, Thy handmaid, and may train me that I may be able to distinguish between good and evil, equity and iniquity, so as rightly to judge Thy people...

The integration here of biblical language of kingship and the concept of ‘commonwealth’ is perhaps typical of its era, but it reflects Elizabeth’s humanist and scripturalist education. The derivative version published at the end of both Day publications is more directly drawn from the biblical original than this Latin precursor, which circles the text of the Book of Wisdom without quoting it directly. Although the Days’ texts ventriloquise Elizabeth, both – and particularly the 1578 anthology – are marked by diffidence about attributing to her the trappings of political power, in contrast to the confidence Elizabeth herself expresses in her original.

One of the most striking choices in these anthologies is the decision to reconstruct Solomon’s prayer while excising Verses 7-9. These verses establish the speaker’s royal authority: ‘Thou has chosen me to be a King unto thy people, and the judge of thy sons and daughters. Thou

---

82 CW, ‘Prayer 9’, pp. 142-3; ACFLO, pp. 122-3. As the ACFLO editors note, the printed ‘iugenue’ is a turned letter for ‘ingenue’.
hast commanded me to maintain a temple upon the holy mount and an altar in the city wherein thou dwellest.’ Instead, the anthologised Elizabeth simply prays for the guidance of wisdom personified, ‘that she may be with me and labour with me’, without reiterating her previous affirmation as monarch.\textsuperscript{83} The decision is in line with these texts’ consistent focus on presenting Elizabeth as a humble and domestic figure. Clement has convincingly analysed the 1569 \textit{Christian prayers and meditations} as a text asserting humility; Shenk reads the French and Spanish prayers within it as part of an inclusive political strategy which invited counsel and asserted Elizabeth’s willingness to listen to wise advice. But uncertainty about female rule lurks, particularly in the 1578 volume. Unlike the 1569 publication, this later edition includes a prayer for God to protect Elizabeth’s crown, ‘a burthen to heavy (alas) for a womans shoulders’.\textsuperscript{84} A prayer for Elizabeth, which give thanks that ‘thou hast given her counsellers’, appears next to a woodcut of a female figure of humility.\textsuperscript{85} The overall impression is Elizabeth as student of divine wisdom, rather than teacher – an abject vessel for God’s providence.

Prayers for good counsel feature heavily across both volumes. Where the 1569 publication ends the English prayers with Solomon’s prayer for wisdom, the 1578 anthology closes with a prayer for the realm which positions Elizabeth firmly within a ‘mixed monarchy’ of the sort envisaged by Aylmer back in 1559. Christ is exhorted to ‘preserve our Queen Elizabeth’ as one ‘righteous judge’ looking out for another, but also to ‘blesse […] the wisedome and pollicy of her counsayle […] the Ministers of thy Gospell […] the diligent and careful magistrates’. Taking counsel is not a sign of weakness; Christ himself is envisaged working within a similar political model: ‘thou king of kings, the great counsell and wisedome of the father’.\textsuperscript{86} Nor is the wisdom of Elizabeth herself dispraised in either volume. Wisdom images are a particular

\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Christian prayers and meditations}, Gg3\textsuperscript{v}-4\textsuperscript{v}; Shenk, \textit{Learned Queen}, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{84} Day, \textit{A Booke of Christian Prayers}, Liii\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{85} Day, \textit{A Booke of Christian Prayers}, Miii\textsuperscript{v}.
\textsuperscript{86} Day, \textit{A Booke of Christian Prayers}, Ooii\textsuperscript{v}.
mark of the 1578 version. The book’s most prominent prayer for the queen’s preservation appears next to a border woodcut bearing the banner ‘understanding reacheth the heaven’. It shows a female figure, holding a globe, trampling down the beast of ignorance. On the previous page, a prayer celebrating the queen’s escape from her enemies, which heavily echoes Foxe’s descriptions of Elizabeth’s ‘troubles’, is illustrated with a young woman reading a book, trampling upon the body of ‘Sardanapalus an imprudent king’. ‘Wisedome’, reads the caption, ‘is better than gold’. The Assyrian Sardanapalus, supposedly a bisexual king who gave himself over to physical pleasure, had become a byword for dereliction of duty and the rejection of conventional gender roles – which here become his lack of ‘wisedome’. The presence of a studious, feminine young woman on these pages, in relative proximity to the standard retelling of the young Elizabeth’s adventures, suggests that Elizabeth is being invoked as a queen who manages to be learned without jeopardising her feminine humility.

The Day prayerbooks were not the last appearance of Elizabeth as Solomon in a book frontispiece. As Doran has observed, Thomas Morton’s 1596 Salomon is a treatise solely dedicated to defending Elizabeth’s right to put Catholics to death, citing the examples of Abimelech (executed by David) and Abiathor (executed by Solomon) as models for the treatment of recusant priests and a retroactive justification of the execution of Mary Stuart. To Morton, priests and laity were equally subject to royal authority; David and Solomon had exercised absolute power over worship in the temple, so why should not Elizabeth? Elizabeth and Solomon grace the frontispiece (see Fig. 13). Doran identifies Elizabeth as David, but they both hold sceptres and neither holds a harp, which suggests that Elizabeth rather than David is present here as Solomon’s mirror: both sit under Latin tags describing them as monarchs of

peace (as David was not). By contrast, throughout his 1575 text *A golden chain*, Thomas Rogers favourably compared Elizabeth to both David and Solomon. Doran suggests that Foxe, more disfavourably, appears to have made his decision to reprint Hales’ coronation oration to Elizabeth in the mid-1570s when he felt that the slow pace of Elizabeth’s reforms to the Church indicated that she had failed to fulfil Hales’ Solomonic prophecy. Solomon was clearly an established paradigm for Elizabeth throughout her reign, although often in parallel with comparisons to David.

What gives the Day frontispiece exceptional resonance, however, is that it features in a prayerbook. Both of the Day publications were manuals for prayer at home; Elizabeth herself leads her subjects in the practice of prayer, and is a wise Solomon while she does so. In her work on the *Book of Common Prayer*, Ramie Targoff has comprehensively demonstrated that it was essential to Reformation Protestant theology to see prayer as an imitative practice. Foulke Robartes was typical when he wrote in 1639 of the contagious nature of prayer: ‘How doth the visible and expressive devotion of one Christian, beget and encrease the same in another? And how powerfully shall the reverend behaviours and gestures of an whole Congregation together worke one upon another?’ Over a century earlier, William Tyndale had alleged that the correct physical posture was a necessary prerequisite for productive prayer. In the years separating both men, Protestant reformers had created a consensus that both Tyndale and Roberts were correct. The good Protestant policed his or her own body for

---

physical signs of imperfect prayer posture, and the best way to check you were doing it right was to find someone else to copy.\textsuperscript{95}

Elizabeth’s posture in the Solomon frontispiece sets as much of an example to her subjects as the content of her prayers. Instructions for home prayer were popular publications throughout the 1570s and 1580s, and by the time of the Days’ second prayerbook, they had begun to be targeted at women. In 1574, the first prayerbook aimed exclusively at women had been published by William Seres, who held the Queen’s monopoly on printing psalters and private prayerbooks; in 1584 Henry Denham, who had purchased Seres’ monopoly, published Anne Wheathill’s \textit{A handful of wholesome herbs}, the first prayerbook by a gentlewoman directed to other women.\textsuperscript{96} Two years earlier, Denham had published the first five parts of an ambitious anthology of women’s prayers and writings, \textit{The monument of matrones}. In this text, as in the Day publications, writings attributed to Elizabeth would play a major role. Again, the physical example of Elizabeth depicted in prayer would set an example as imitable as the content of her texts.

\textbf{v. Thomas Bentley and \textit{The monument of matrones}}

Thomas Bentley’s qualifications for compiling \textit{The monument} appear to be limited. The Bentley specialists Colin and Jo Atkinson note that he is described in the book’s pages as ‘of Grais Inn Student’, having been admitted in 1563.\textsuperscript{97} The Atkinsons have identified him as the same Thomas Bentley who in 1574, as churchwarden of St Andrew’s Holborn, published an

\textsuperscript{95} Alec Ryrie, \textit{Being Protestant in Reformation Britain} (Oxford: OUP, 2013), pp. 170-86.
\textsuperscript{97} Colin and Jo Atkinson, \textit{The Monument of Matrones}, 3 vols (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017). The Atkinsons’ introduction is my source for all information about Bentley here not otherwise footnoted; however, this is only a facsimile edition and no modern edition of the \textit{Monument} has yet been produced.
account of that parish’s antiquities. What Bentley achieved in *The monument of matrones* was a sprawling compendium across seven volumes, or ‘lamps’, so named to reflect his central biblical metaphor. Bentley takes as his core texts the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, as told in Matthew 25, and the Seven Lamps of Revelation, which recur four times in that book. Each volume of *The Monument* is therefore termed a ‘lamp’. By the time Bentley reached the final two ‘lamps’, he had run out of money: consequently, the last two ‘lamps’ are printed not by Denham but by his cheaper competitor Thomas Dawson, without the beautiful bespoke woodcuts which form the titlepage of each of the first five ‘lamps’.

In his address ‘To the Christian Reader’, Bentley addresses his publication to female readers, particularly the ‘simple and unlearned […] the simpler sort of women’.98 However, his readers were not exclusively female. The catalogue entry for the British Library’s copy of the complete *Monument* does not contain any notes on provenance or inscription, but I believe I have identified an ownership signature on this copy as that of Robert Wright, a Cambridge graduate who would eventually become tutor to the Earl of Essex’s household (see Fig. 14).99 Wright inscribes his name on the titlepage for the sixth ‘lamp’, along with his Cambridge credentials (by which I have identified him) and the words ‘Sit Lingua mea calamus scribae velociter scribentis’. This phrase is taken from the Vulgate, Psalm 44 (Modern Psalm 45) and is translated in the Geneva Bible as ‘my tongue is as the penne of a swift writer’. With the simple addition of the subjunctive ‘sit’, Wright transforms this line into an exhortation: ‘let my tongue be as the pen of a swift writer’. Given the shadow cast by Elizabeth over *The monument*, the

---


unwritten preceding line ‘dico ego opera mea regi’ (‘I speak my works to my king’) may also have resonance here.

The existence of one copy owned by Robert Wright is not enough to tell us whether he was typical in being a male reader of this text. At least one woman also owned a copy. The British Library’s copy also features an early modern inscription on the titlepage of the first ‘lamp’, which has almost been entirely sliced away by a careless bookbinder later in the volume’s history. Volumes of The monument were sold separately on publication and only bound into collections by dealers centuries later; it is not surprising that two volumes once owned by separate Elizabethan readers are now bound together. Although damaged, the inscription on this page appears to be of a ‘Dorothy Morison’ (see Fig. 15). 100 I have identified this as Dorothy Morison, née Cleke, wife of Sir Charles Morison MP, and an active letter writer.101 She was also a correspondent of William Cecil, whose archives hold a signed letter apologising for missteps in an attempt to wed her son Charles to his daughter, Anne de Vere. She was not a major figure; she does not, for example, boast an entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography or the Biographical Encyclopedia of Early Modern Englishwomen, but she did not constitute ‘the simpler sort’.

Indeed, it is unlikely that Bentley ever really intended to appeal to lower-status women. As King has observed, the ‘considerable expenditure of capital’ involved in the production of The monument of matrones meant that Bentley probably had to charge heavily. Only the wealthiest of women could have collected all seven ‘lamps’. A complete set constituted 816 leaves of

100 I am indebted to Alison Shell for the key breakthrough in this transcription.
paper, formed by folding 204 large sheets; King calculates that the cheapest unbound copies would have cost a full 8.5 shillings.\(^1\) Bentley himself apologises for the cost in ‘To the Christian Reader’, but assures his readers that his high price is worth paying: ‘especiallie in so good paper and faire usuall letter’ (B4\(^v\)). Other prayerbooks are more portable, but Bentley begs prospective purchasers ‘to measure the same rather by the goodnesse of the contents, of the which the godlie can never have enough, than by the bignesse or deerenesse of the volume, which to the willing and desirous mind are ever best cheape’ (B4\(^v\)). Perhaps Bentley could not trust his ideal female reader to be as learned as men, as more basic elements of Christian scripture seem to be glossed in this text than is conventional, but he could certainly count on them having plenty of disposable income.

Elizabeth appears kneeling in prayer in the woodcut that opens each of Lamps 2 to 5; as in the Christian prayers and meditations, she is setting a visual example of prayer. Other biblical figures flank her, but she is the only woman to appear on the opening woodcut to every ‘Lamp’. She is a heavily overdetermined symbol here. Given the anthology’s focus on Matthew 25, Elizabeth must be a type for the Wise Virgins, yet the conflation with the image of the lamps of Revelation also suggests an analogy to the Woman Clothed with the Sun.\(^2\) Like the Wise Virgins, she is a virgin (and by 1582, permanently). Yet the Spouse of Canticles is another prominent manifestation of Bentley’s obsession with the imagery of divine light.\(^3\) A Latin

---


\(^3\) Bentley’s concern with the imagery of divine light is evident throughout the text, but is particularly prominent in the opening woodcut of Lamp 2, which features the Hebrew word הראב (be’ara) in the top inset, which means ‘clarification’ or ‘explanation’. The word is closely related to הראה (He’ara) which means ‘to illuminate’. I am grateful to Shiran Avni for this information.
poem in the prefatory materials addresses the unknown reader as ‘Princeps clarissima’. As the Atkinsons have noted, the persona addressed here is simultaneously Elizabeth and the Spouse of Canticles, who also figures prominently on the titlepage carrying a seven-headed lamp. As the poem continues, the reader is encouraged to mark the example of God’s help to ‘Princeps ELIZABETHA malis’, an echo of Foxe’s popular narrative of the young Elizabeth’s ‘troubles’ (A4v). Elizabeth is implicitly being asked to mark the example of herself. As in the Psalms of David, the royal address shifts constantly in the text between subject and object, distributor and recipient of the sacred text.

In the preface to *The monument*, Bentley again addresses Elizabeth directly and conflates her with Solomon. Elizabeth is blessed as ‘having the principall & heroicall spirit of your holie father good king David, doubled (yea trebled) in your noble and princelie hart’ (A2v-3r). This association is taken much further in Lamp 3, which is constructed as if a prayerbook for Elizabeth’s private use, seemingly giving its commercial audience intimate access into the prayer-closet of the queen.\(^{105}\) Much of Lamp 3 consists of a text called ‘the King’s Hest, or Gods familiar speech to the Queene’, which is a series of biblical promises drawn from Theodore Beza’s paraphrases of the Psalms (Aaii). But where David might be the expected interlocutor of a text from the Psalms, God instead elides Elizabeth with Solomon, continuer of the temple: ‘And I, O Queene, will surelie performe my covenant (begun with thy father David, that chosen man,) unto thee also his Daughter’ (DDviii`). The full text is littered with references to David as Elizabeth’s father, although perhaps in an attempt to reinforce Elizabeth’s conformity to the domestic norms of the Protestant household, Bentley also conflates multiple spiritual relationships to claim, in the voice of God, ‘To conclude, here in

\(^{105}\) In passing, Alec Ryrie points out that Bentley assumes his readers will pray ‘in their closet’, locating his audience in the community of godly households who kept prayer-closets specifically for this use. *Being Protestant*, p. 159.
my house the Church thou shalt see thy children and offspring (who by publishing and promoting my Gospell, thou hast borne after a manner unto thy husband Christ) flourishing’ (Eeiii’).

Bentley also domesticates Elizabeth by ventriloquising her, with a response to ‘the King’s Hest’ entitled ‘The Queenes Vow, or selfe-talk with God’, attributed spuriously to Elizabeth herself (Eeiii’). Here, too, the text describes Elizabeth repeatedly as the ‘daughter of David’. Erzsébet Stróbl has noted that *The monument of matrones* ‘deliberately draws attention to the queen’s sex, changes king to queen in the Old Testament quotations and inserts the feminised phrases of *loving mother, tender nurse* to emphasise God’s glory and might instead of the queen’s achievements’. Even as a new Solomon, she is domesticated.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth is presented in Bentley’s text as the heir to a Davidic Henry VIII, but even this is a troubled legacy. The woodcut titlepage for the second lamp shows three Reformation women – Elizabeth, Katherine Parr and Marguerite d’Angoulême – alongside the biblical Esther, whom as we have seen was long a cipher for intercessory rhetoric among women (see Fig. 16). It is clear why Bentley sought to celebrate this network, given his knowledge of *A godly medytacyon*. However, if these three are an intellectual family, there should be one further figure to complete the circle of relationships: Anne Boleyn, mother of Elizabeth, predecessor of Katherine, correspondent of Marguerite. Esther effectively replaces her.

---

As seen in Chapter 3, comparisons of early modern queens to Esther often formed a triad alongside two other biblical women: Deborah and Judith. But as Esther has already been used in ‘Lamp 2’, she cannot figure alongside Deborah (‘DEBORA’) and Judith when they do appear in the same lattice of sculptural niches at the opening to Lamp 3. Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, takes her place. Notoriously, David had committed adultery with Bathsheba during her marriage to Uriah. It appears that transposing Esther from her usual companions was necessary to avoid placing the sexually compromised Bathsheba alongside a network of women closely associated with Anne Boleyn. In a text that repeatedly identifies Elizabeth as the child of Henry’s David, it would be dangerous to map the House of David quite so closely onto the House of Tudor.

vi. Conclusion

For all these grand allusions to priest-kingship, the Elizabeth constructed in The Monument is a model for private prayer, not a spiritual leader. In the frontispiece images, she kneels as one of many other women on the edge of the frame, in supplication to centrally placed symbols of divinity. Liturgical paratexts depicting her father had presented him front and centre – object of worship, rather than a worshipper. In this chapter, I have drawn attention to the grandeur of Elizabeth’s association with Solomon, but the expansive ambitions of such a symbolic scheme are opposed at every turn by her limitations as a woman. In the prayerbooks, she is explicitly identified as a model for other English women in the domestic sphere. Few English men would have welcomed the ideal of a Queen Solomon taking charge of their home.

Beyond the genre of domestic prayerbooks, however, Solomon could still be employed to extoll Elizabeth as a virile monarch, especially by writers who focused on Solomon’s
magnificence. Richard Hakluyt, in the dedicatory epistle to Francis Walsingham of the book of his *Principal navigations*, justified English expansionism by writing of the mission to spread Henry VIII’s Gospel:

As the purpose of David the king to builde a house and temple to God was accepted, although Salomon performed it, so I make no question but that the zeale in this matter of the aforesaid most renowned prince may seeme no lesse worthy (in his kind) of acceptation, although reserved for the person of our Salomon her gratious majesty, whom I feare not to pronounce to have received the same Heroicall spirit, and most honourable disposition, as an inheritance from her famous father.107

Yet as Matthew Dimmock has observed, Hakluyt was also referring here to the wealth of the Americas, and the possibility of recreating in English domination of the New World Solomon’s ‘golden journey to the Ophir’, a lucrative triennial voyage described in 1 Kings 10 as the source of much of Solomon’s wealth.108 Hakluyt was not alone in making this connection: John Dee made a number of allusions in his navigational texts to the New World as Ophir, and Elizabeth as Solomon.109 Like most of the symbols I have examined in this thesis, the figure of Solomon could be used to advance the concerns of all manner of Elizabethans, whether domestic or international. Consistently, however, Solomon provided opportunities to focus on the divine credentials of the queen’s wisdom, and unlike David he always figured as a monarch who preferred peace to war. In the next chapter, we shall see that when militant sympathisers of Protestants on the continent needed to find instead a warlike figure of wisdom for the queen, at least one of them chose to reclaim the military attributes of a figure we have seen before: the classical goddess Minerva.

Chapter 6: Thomas Blenerhasset and the Gospel Militant

i. Introduction

As I have illustrated in the preceding chapter, prayerbooks such as *The monument of matrones* emerged in response to growing Protestant understanding of prayer as an imitative practice. Ramie Targoff has argued that the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP) constituted ‘the crucial vehicle’ by which uniformity could be imposed between public and private worship, yet a supporting role was played by popular prayerbooks which packaged verbatim components of the BCP into a domestic context.\(^1\) As Supreme Governor of the Church of England, the praying Elizabeth was represented as an image to be replicated bodily by priests and congregants in church, as much as by fathers, mothers, children and servants in the household. Her image sat at the apex of a system of mutual surveillance in which subject and sovereign mirrored each other in private spaces and in public, their external humility in cohesion with the subjection of their interior souls. In this sphere, Elizabeth could be wise and regal, yet feminine and domestic.

To understand the theological climate of the 1580s, however, we must examine the heightening international tensions. In this chapter, I will examine how an iconography of wisdom was used by writers of panegyric who constructed Elizabeth as internationally dominant, masculine and martial. Writers such as Edmund Spenser and Thomas Blenerhasset retained the strong association of prayerbook culture between Elizabeth and the Bride of Solomon or the Woman Clothed With The Sun. Unlike the authors of such prayerbooks, however, they responded to the pan-European context by affirming that God’s revealed wisdom needed a queenly champion abroad as urgently it did within the English home.

---

Leicester’s entertainments and the demand for warlike wisdom

The godly writers of the 1580s were concerned with biblical wisdom, but had no problem invoking classical imagery to make their point. One of the ironies of this sharply internationalist panegyric was that it asserted its militarism within a pastoral mode. Critics from Hallett Smith onwards have read the pastoral mode as a location for poetics of ‘otium’ or ‘leisure’, particularly in the context of the Judgement of Paris motif, which could be repurposed to celebrate the benefits of choosing the ‘vita amoris’ (Venus) over the ‘vita activa’ (Juno) or the ‘vita contemplativa’ (Minerva). Yet few early modern poets pursued quite such a simplistic trichotomy: Brian Vickers and Philippa Berry, among others, have successfully challenged the idea that ‘otium’ was understood as positive, and the assumption that the pastoral mode existed only in opposition to the ‘vita activa’ or the ‘vita contemplativa’. The chief reason poets like Spenser and Blenerhasset turned to pastoral panegyric was that they were developing the motifs that had been associated with their patron, the Earl of Leicester, ever since the extravagant entertainments for Elizabeth at Kenilworth, Woodstock and Wanstead in 1575 and 1578. Blenerhasset’s poem, with its improbable story of a new Minerva weaving flowers in an English meadow and saluted by a ‘Fayrie Queene’, ‘contains allusions to all the major Leicesterian entertainments’.

---

3 For textual records of these entertainments, see Progresses ii, 231-2, 359-476, 542-65.
Critics have disagreed on the exact demands made of Elizabeth in these entertainments. Clearly, however, each spectacle promoted Leicester’s personal charisma, and as he gradually toned down his requests for marriage, his entertainments solicited as compensation a role in international affairs. Berry offers a persuasive reading of the entertainment hosted at Woodstock in 1575 by Sir Henry Lee, one of Leicester’s clients, in which the ‘Faerie Queene’ reunited two star-crossed lovers, only for both to accept that they could not marry. By now there was good reason for entertainments to acknowledge that marriage was a hopeless cause, but ‘since his service could not be rewarded with marriage, Leicester should be permitted to take the military initiatives abroad which he desired, as “a questing knight”’. Orgel has demonstrated that at the Wanstead Entertainment of May 1578, Elizabeth was expected to ‘choose’ for a young female character a suitor who probably represented Leicester – but as Leicester was seriously involved with Lettice Knollys by this stage, and married her by September, it is unlikely that he still thought it a serious prospect.

The Wanstead Entertainment is sometimes known as *The Lady of May*. It figured the queen as a source of transcendent wisdom, but it also featured ‘a schoolemaister […] fully perswaded of his owne learned wisedome’ named Rhombus, who attempted to give judgement himself while uttering mangled Latin commonplaces about wisdom as ‘*Dixi verbus sapiento satum est*’. He is dismissed by the entertainment’s heroine, the May Lady, in favour of the queen on

---


8 *Progresses*, II, 550, 552.
whom he is not worthy to look: ‘much lesse your foolish tongue to trouble her wise eares’.

Rombus is an early example of what Sarah Knight terms the ‘scholar-mountebank’, a literary trope of the imposter academic. Yet as Shenk observes, ‘it is this bookish Rombus who verbalizes that Elizabeth’s efficacious presence stems from innate radiance’ and he gives way before her, affirming the superiority of her God-given wisdom to his institutional learning. Throughout this entertainment, Elizabeth’s ‘wisdom’ is stressed in opposition to Rombus’ ‘learning’, qualified by a feminine beauty which elicits a reverential gaze. The opening ‘Supplication’ hails her:

Whose face doth oft the bravest sort enchaunt
Whose mind is such, as wisest minds appall
[...]  
Your mind is wise, your wisdom makes you mild
Such planted gifts enrich even beggers sight.

This is in many ways the type of ‘wisdom’ imagery we have seen in the comparisons of Elizabeth to Solomon, a figure celebrated as the focus of an admiring gaze. Like Solomon, the queen’s role here is to judge a dispute; like Solomon, Elizabeth is rendered ‘mild’, that is ‘peaceful’, by her wisdom. By contrast, Leicester’s capacity for violence is stressed in the character of Therion, the ‘livelier’ suitor. Yet even the complaint of his beloved that ‘sometimes he strikes me, sometimes he railes at me’ does not seem to have prevented the pageant authors from assuming Elizabeth would award him the beloved’s hand. The queen was instructed to end this ‘blouddie controversie’ and she did, by picking the more peaceable

---

9 Progresses, II, 553.
11 Shenk, Learned Queen, pp. 72-3. I do not endorse Shenk’s unusual identification of the two suitors with Johann Casimir and William of Orange.
12 Progresses, II, 550.
13 Progresses, II, 554.
suiitor Espilus. Yet this by no means ended the agitation of Leicester and his comrades to play Therion on the international stage, pursuing military adventures.

By 1582, opportunities for English military adventurers were increasing. In July 1581, the States-General of the Netherlands published the ‘Plakkaat van Verlatinghe’, which formally rejected the sovereignty of Philip II. François, Duke of Anjou (brother of the French king, acknowledged suitor of the English queen and patron of the Dutch rebels) arrived at Flushing in February 1582 in an abortive attempt to take the leadership of a prospective Dutch monarchy. Although serious negotiations were over, Anjou would attempt until 1583 to keep up the front of his courtship of Elizabeth; with Anjou and the Earl of Leicester both deeply invested in the rebel cause, there was considerable pressure on her to spend English resources on a Dutch proxy war.

That pressure is reflected in the interventionist pamphlets and poems which emanated from Leicester’s circle. Blair Worden, following Collinson, has introduced to literary studies the term ‘forward Protestantism’ to define the ideology of this loose faction; critics such as Alan Sinfield and Andrew Weiner term it simply ‘Calvinist’. While the Anjou match was still a live possibility, ‘forward Protestant’ figures such as Philip Sidney focused their efforts on dissuading the queen from marriage to a foreign Catholic. Sidney made his opposition explicit with his 1579 ‘Letter to Queen Elizabeth’, a nominally private letter which Woudhuysen indicates Sidney in fact had widely circulated by ‘professional penmen’. His hostility towards

---

14 Progresses, ii, 549, 562.
a foreign match was only slightly more veiled in texts such as ‘As I My Little Flock On Ister Bank’ (which critics such as Worden and Doran convincingly interpret as a warning against a French king-consort) or the dangerous matrimonial adventures of Queen Helen of Corinth, told in the *Old* and *New Arcadia*.18

By 1582, however, the Anjou match was for practical purposes dead, and by 1584 Anjou would be also, expiring of malaria contracted during the failure of his Dutch campaign. From opposing Anjou’s marriage suit, Leicester’s circle progressed to pressing the cause for which he had lost his life: the expulsion of the Spanish from the Netherlands. In panegyric, this cause necessitated a poetic vocabulary which established Elizabeth as a queen militant; critics as diverse as Frances Yates, David Norbrook, Linda Shenk and Jessica Malay have all noted that Leicester’s coterie were aided in this goal by a surge of apocalyptic thinking that ran through the 1580s and 1590s and drew deeply from a national imagination drenched in the imagery of Revelation.19 For many of Elizabeth’s subjects, economic failure, domestic instability and the worsening international outlook produced good evidence that the world was coming to an end.20 In such times, the least a good Protestant queen could do to redeem her people was to raise the banners of the Gospel and head out to defeat the anti-Christ. So poets such as Maurice Kyffin, George Peele, Thomas Blenerhasset and – cautiously – Edmund Spenser would insist. All either enjoyed the support of Leicester, Sidney or Essex, or hoped for it.

---

iii. Critical background

*A revelation of the true Minerva* is a piece of Calvinist panegyric which pays homage to Edmund Spenser’s more successful ‘April Eclogue’ from *The shepheardes calender*. It is also one of the most explicit Elizabethan celebrations of the queen as Minerva. As I have discussed in Chapter 4, the schools and universities which made this comparison tended in the earlier period of Elizabeth’s reign to minimise Minerva’s war-like attributes. Blenerhasset’s poem marks a shift to Minerva as a warrior goddess, tempered by the formulation that good rulers make war to enforce peace. Even Minerva’s patronage of the feminine arts of spinning and weaving are rendered militant: Blenerhasset’s latent parallels between Mary Stuart and Minerva’s mythic rival Arachne allow him to present an Elizabeth who even wields her distaff as a weapon.\(^{21}\) Blenerhasset was not alone in using Minerva as a figure for confrontation with Catholic Europe. In the ‘Pallaphilos’ entertainment, assessed in Chapter 4, Minerva/Pallas’ role in the defeat of a snake-like Medusa was a model for confrontation with heresy: in 1602, the motif was revived in the last medal struck of Elizabeth as queen, which depicted her wearing Minerva’s breastplate, trampling on papistry as represented by the motif of a dragon and snail.\(^{22}\)

Although Susan Frye is persuasive that Elizabeth never appeared ‘armed like Pallas’ during her visit to Tilbury Camp, Lionel Sharpe’s famous description of her in these terms indicates the resonance of Minerva as a symbol for a triumphantly Protestant Elizabeth in the post-Armada years.\(^{23}\)

---

\(^{21}\) Montserrat Piera assesses the tension between the spinning Minerva and the learned Minerva in her preface to *Women Readers and Writers in Medieval Iberia: Spinning the Text* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

\(^{22}\) Chapter 4, section vii; Roy Strong, *The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1963), pp. 140-1.

\(^{23}\) See Chapter 3, n. 93 above.
In 1941, Josephine Waters Bennett produced a facsimile edition of *A revelation*, with notes and an introduction. Few other scholars have worked in detail on this text. A handful of critics, however, have mentioned *A revelation* in broader studies of panegyric, notably Shenk, Hackett and Norbrook. Despite referring to it in his own PhD as ‘this execrable poem’, Norbrook describes it as ‘the most complete expression’ of a mood in which Leicester and his allies celebrated the collapse of the Anjou negotiations:

now that marriage was out of the question, even those radical Protestants who had once had reservations about rule by women could celebrate this virgin queen with all the greater enthusiasm, and her virginity became a symbol of national independence.

Harriet Archer’s study of *The mirror of magistrates* provides useful context for Blenerhasset’s career. Archer establishes that the poet remained a fringe character in Elizabethan poetry, despite repeated attempts to break into literary circles. In 1578, Blenerhasset arranged for publication of his misleadingly titled *A seconde part of the mirror for magistrates*, an opportunistic attempt to pass off his writing as part of the broader *Mirror for magistrates* series, led by William Baldwin, John Higgins and Richard Niccols. Unlike texts by Baldwin and Higgins, Blenerhasset’s contribution was printed by the otherwise unknown printer Richard Webster. According to Kathleen Tillotson: ‘Blenerhasset is, so to speak, an unsuccessful applicant for admission to the *Mirror*.’

---

24 Thomas Blenerhasset, *A Revelation of the True Minerva*, ed. by Josephine Waters Bennett (New York, NY: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1941). All in-text references will be taken from this edition. Line numbers are not published.
Linda Shenk is perhaps over-optimistic in her suggestion that Blenerhasset, like Maurice Kyffin, could by the 1580s aspire with reason to address ‘not merely a courtly audience but an entire nation of readers’. Blenerhasset himself gives us an explanation for his exclusion from English intellectual circles. His attempt at a Mirror was composed, in Archer’s words, ‘not within a supportive, metropolitan literary milieu, but without help, while in transit on active service’:

Souldiers […] be not alwayes lurking in our Forte or Castle, but be as time and occasion will permit, here to day, wee knowe least ourselves, where tomorrow […] [T]he most part of these my Princes did pleade their causes unto me, even in the Sea, a place in faith, not meete to penne Tragedies.\(^{30}\)

He had spent much of this time in the service of Sir Thomas Leighton, Governor of Guernsey, to whose wife Elizabeth he would dedicate A revelation.

### iv. A revelation of the true Minerva

In the poem’s central conceit, the Olympian gods, having mysteriously lost Minerva, must seek an earthly woman who embodies her virtues, ‘who must possesse Minervas former place / So all the worlde true knowledge will imbrace’ (A2\(^{v}\)). They find her, predictably, in England’s queen. Her praises are led by Pallas, here distinguished from Minerva. Blenerhasset makes clear in this text his debts to both Spenser and Leicester. Bennett has highlighted the correspondence between Pallas’ song, which commences halfway through The Revelation, and the song of Hobbinol in the ‘April Eclogue’:

Hobbinol, in April, sings the song that Colin made, ‘as by a spring he laye, / And tuned it unto the Waters fall.’ In the Revelation, Pallas bids Apollo ‘Take Lute in hand, tune to the waters fall.’ The three stanzas which follow reproduce the lyrical

---

\(^{29}\) Shenk, Learned Queen, p. 91.

measure which Spenser’s rime at the end of his first stanza (dwell-well-excell) becomes (hell-dwell-excel). 31

As Bennett observes, Spenser’s Eliza wears a ‘Cremosin Coronet’ in a verse which rhymes ‘grassy green’ with ‘green-maiden queen’; in a direct echo, Blenerhasset’s Pallas praises Elizabeth as

A comely Coronet of goodly greene,
which shall right well become a maiden Queene (D1’)

Like Spenser’s work, Blenerhasset’s poem is influenced by the language of emblem books and pageantry: the narrative itself contains two carefully choreographed tilts, which point again to the figure of Leicester. The Lady of the Lake and the ‘Fayrie Queene’ appear together, recalling both the Kenilworth entertainments of 1575 and The shepheardes calender. Ivan L. Schulze notes that a figure named ‘Palaphilos’ oversees the construction of a coronet for Elizabeth-Minerva, which can only be a reference to Leicester’s persona from the 1561-2 Inner Temple entertainments. 32 At Elizabeth’s first appearance in A revelation, in a prophetic image which appears on Neptune’s crown, she stands beside ‘a pransing Pegasus’ (A4’), which also recalls these entertainments and their allusions to Leicester as Master of the Horse.

Blenerhasset signals his Calvinist leanings immediately, taking as the poem’s epigram a paraphrased version of Psalm 82:1: ‘God standeth in the congregation of gods; He is Judge among the gods.’ This verse had featured heavily in Elizabethan debates about the limits of royal authority. Although the Hebrew term rendered here as ‘gods’ is ‘elohim’, a word indicating divinity and often used to refer to God himself, English reformers followed a reading

32 Ivan L. Schulze, ‘Blenerhasset’s A Revelation, Spenser’s Shepheardes Calender, and the Kenilworth Pageants’, ELH, 11 (1944), 85-91. See also Chapter 4, section vii.
by Zwingli, which sidestepped awkward questions about potential polytheist undertones by reading ‘gods’ as ‘magistrates’.\textsuperscript{33} The Geneva Bible had given: ‘God standeth in the assemblie of gods: he judgeth among godes.’ Blennerhasset’s text intervenes in this debate to give an extraordinarily literal response to the Zwinglian interpretation: a gathering of literary figures once recognised as pagan gods becomes a gathering of exemplary magistrates.

The poem’s godly Elizabeth is wary of pagan idolatry, professing ‘I knowe no God but one’ (B3\textsuperscript{v}). Yet she is assured by the Olympians that they are themselves subject to Christian eschatology, elevated only as models of ideal magistrates. The tradition behind this ploy goes beyond the allusions to Psalm 82: as Bennett has noted, Blennerhasset is drawing an assumption current among early modern classicists that the Roman practice of deifying Emperors was a clue to the earlier construction of the entire Roman pantheon.\textsuperscript{34} ‘The Printer to the Reader’ provides yet another explanatory note, in which Blennerhasset outlines his conceit of a world in which literary allegory co-exists with theological orthodoxy, ‘when any one whom the heathen for his woorthinesse worshipped as a god is rehearsed, not the man, but the vertue which made him of so great estimation is to be regarded’.\textsuperscript{35} In his poem, however, the nature of this apotheosis is more ambiguous: these are exemplars who ‘by God and men bee made / Of mortall men immortall gods’ – the former by divine intervention, the latter through literary fame. There are parallels to sainthood: ‘Such live on earth more happie then the rest / Such have in heaven a blisse of al the best’ (A2\textsuperscript{v}).

The absorption of Olympians into a Christian worldview is laboured and inconsistent. As my close reading will show, it is only Elizabeth’s coronation as Minerva that bridges this gap

\textsuperscript{33} Ryan Reeves, \textit{English Evangelicals and Tudor Obedience} (Brill: Leiden, 2013), pp. 36-45.
\textsuperscript{34} Bennett, ‘Introduction’, p. vii.
\textsuperscript{35} Bennett, ‘Printer to the Reader’, Paragraph A, paratextual material not paginated.
between the piecemeal virtues of the classical world and the all-encompassing providence of the Christian God. She does this, as godly women must, through the Gospels. ‘The Heathen had their Gods which nowe bee gone’, Elizabeth tells us, ‘whose Idols I by Gods spell did deface’ (B3’). Similarly, we are told in ‘The Printer to the Reader’, Elizabeth fights off the Pope’s attempt to ‘extinguishe the light of the Gospel’ (Paragraph D). But if we read this poem without acknowledging its pagan element, we risk ignoring its warnings not only about idolatry in a monotheistic universe, but the risks of hubris in a classical setting. It is this danger which surfaces in echoes of another, rival queen whose ‘craft’ suggests a darker form of woman’s knowledge to challenge ‘Sapientia’.

Blenerhasset’s attempt to avoid idolatry in his praise of Elizabeth rests on her equivalence to the pagan gods, and their origin as mortals. Yet this avoidance tactic opens her up to comparisons with the hubristic Arachne, punished for her claim to equal Minerva’s skill in craftsmanship. Blenerhasset’s familiarity with Ovid’s version of this tale allows him to invert the tale of Arachne’s punishment: the classical tradition of _ekphrasis_ is inverted to emphasise not the mortal Arachne’s threat to divine art, but the subjugation of divine and mortal craftsmanship to Elizabeth’s higher purpose. The darker side of the Arachne motif is transposed to the veiled presence of Mary Stuart, identified here with Galathea, daughter of Strife (Alecto), and a celebrated needlewoman.36 When we read Blenerhasset’s text in the context of Ovid, we find a distinctive contribution to the panegyrical tradition of Elizabeth as wisdom goddess, in his clear distinction between earthly learning and Elizabeth’s divinely intuitive wisdom.

---

Blenerhasset’s dedicatory epistle to Lady Leighton affirms her physical proximity to the queen in daily life, and expresses his coyly formulated hopes that a dedication to the Lady of the Bedchamber might make it easy for a copy of the book to fall into the hands of the queen: ‘having your place continually very neere unto her majesties elbow, therefore I have let foorth this first part under your tuition, hoping that the matter therein contained shall please even as many as shall read it’. Whether Blenerhasset genuinely hoped his work might reach the queen, or merely her agents, he clearly expected to find approval.

Throughout A revelation, Blenerhasset is at pains to emphasise that his militarism serves the goal of peace. In the opening scene, an assembly of ‘gods’ is called to lament the disappearance of Minerva. Each relates their own history, each formerly a mortal renowned for extending the march of civilisation in a specific direction. The first to speak is Saturn, honoured for establishing ‘good government’ among men (A1`). But Mars interrupts him. Saturn may have established laws for the promotion of ‘civil life’ but without Mars, we are told, they might never have been enforced. ‘Then might was right, for all thy lawes were lame’, Mars insists, until ‘force perforce, I right againe renude / most quiet peace my bloodie warres insude’. In tones reminiscent of the double-edged sense of modern ‘peace-keeping’ forces, the god of war tells us: ‘My trayned troups of souldiers kept in awe / All such whose lewdnesse made their luste a lawe’ (A2`).

The political message is clear: to make peace, one must prepare for war. Nonetheless, Blenerhasset is careful not to be too didactic: his advocacy of stronger action is limited by praise for his queen’s ability to make her own policy. At the poem’s climax, seven sages pay
homage to the queen’s wisdom, yet there is no praise for Elizabeth’s counsellors.\(^{37}\) When her ‘counsaile grave’ appear in a tilting scene, they recall the demonic Pope’s ‘counsaile’, which ‘in flockes’ overwhelms him with aggressive counsel (E3\(^v\); C2\(^v\)). Elizabeth’s policy men fade instead into the background, mentioned in the queen’s train only after ‘a hundred Ladies beautifull and brave’ and ‘the forraine princes’ waiting upon her (E3v).

Shenk convincingly positions Blenerhasset’s work as a subtly more optimistic, loyalist response to the extremist apocalyptic literature of the late 1570s. Using a close reading of the poem’s references to Proverbs, Shenk suggests that against more pessimistic prophecies of the four horsemen breaking loose in England, Blenerhasset gives thanks for Elizabeth’s preservation of England while the Continent is ravaged (in Europe, ‘the warres hath wipt what worthie was away’ (A3\(^v\)).) She preserves England through her military deterrent and is positioned to usher in ‘an eternity of peace’ when Europe has been reborn.\(^{38}\) I would add that in a brief pastoral interlude which directly references the ‘April Eclogue’, the English shepherd Epizenes regrets leaving the safety of England with its ‘want of warre and quiet rest’ for adventures in foreign lands marked by ‘bloodie men of war’ (B1\(^{cv}\)).

Shenk identifies Elizabeth with Solomon’s vision of Divine Wisdom by identifying a web of images from the Proverbs. These re-emerge in A revelation to depict Elizabeth as not only the millennial Woman Clothed with the Sun, but also the Tree of Life, an exclusive source of Divine Wisdom.\(^{39}\) Throughout the poem, Elizabeth’s wisdom consists of leadership in the model of Solomon: ‘Salomon’s blisse abideth in her braine’ (B4\(^v\)). In a key passage,

\(^{37}\) As I have discussed, the Earl of Leicester is a brief exception in his role as ‘Palaphilos’. However, he appears in this guise not as a counsellor, but as a master of ceremonies.

\(^{38}\) Shenk, *Learned Queen*, pp. 89 ff.

\(^{39}\) Shenk, *Learned Queen*, p. 94. For Elizabeth-Minerva as The Woman Clothed with the Sun, see also Hackett, *Virgin Mother*, p. 121.
Blenerhasset argues, ‘For heavenly wisdome shee exceld eche one / Her knowledge was, the soule from sinne to save’ (A2v). In the Printer to the Reader, Blenerhasset’s schema for distinguishing between divine and worldly wisdom is made explicit: ‘Pallas and Minerva by the authoritie of many Poets woulde seeme to both to bee but one’, but Pallas ‘was compted the goddess of humaine knowledge, and Aristotle calleth her Scientiarum et Prudentia dea’, while of Minerva, ‘all the philosophers [...] do call her Disciplinarum et Sapientiae dea, the great and greatest goddess, even she who hath the knowledge of heavenly wisdom’ (Paragraph B). Blenerhasset is not wrong here. In medieval mystic traditions, Scientia frequently functions as a counterpoint to sapientia, primarily due to the influence of Augustine’s interest in the opposition between the two.\footnote{Joseph W. Koterski, \textit{An Introduction to Medieval Philosophy: Basic Concepts} (Oxford: Wiley, 2009), p. 9-36; Martin Muslow, ‘Ambiguities of the Prisca Sapientia in Late Renaissance Humanism’, \textit{Journal of the History of Ideas}, 65 (2004), 1-13.} Cicero’s famous maxim, quoted by Boethius, had established sapientia as a higher degree of scientia: ‘sapientia est rerum divinarum et humanarum scientia’\footnote{Cicero, \textit{De Officiis}, ed. by Michael Winterbottom (Oxford: OUP, 1994), II.v.2; Boethius, \textit{Theological Tractates, The Consolation of Philosophy}, trans. by H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1973), Liv.3.}. 

Sapiens, in \textit{A revelation}, is firmly associated with Elizabeth. As the opening lines makes clear, ‘for worldly wit dame Pallas did prevaille’, but ‘if Sapiens divine wisdome bee dead [due to Minerva’s disappearance] / then Pallas may with teares consume her bred’ (A2v). Pallas here is Minerva’s younger, lesser sister, and it is she who bemoans Minerva’s disappearance to the council of gods: without divine wisdom, her human learning is meaningless. It is not men’s lack of art or music that she laments in Minerva’s absence, but their lack of civilising grace, in terms that reflect contemporary anti-Catholic rhetoric:

Divinitie is made a masking coate,
To compasse what the divelishe doe devise,
Deceite and craft hath set their force aflote,
All men have wit, and no man nowe is wise. (A2v)
The solution is not a queen learned in the Machiavellian arts, but in the ways of God:

If care of conscience doth not sinne detrude
You must therefore erect divinitie,
And one ordaine of greet and good degree,
Who must possesse Minervas former place,
So all the worlde true knowledge will imbrace. (A2\(^v\))

To the ‘divinitie made a masking coate’ the gods must ‘erect divinity’ in opposition. Shenk correctly points out the undertones of counter-magic in this poem. When rejecting the gods’ initial offer, Elizabeth announces herself wary of ‘Heathen gods […] Whose Idols I by Gods spell did deface’ (B3\(^v\)). As Shenk notes, ‘Elizabeth turns this into a criticism of Catholic iconolatry as witchcraft with the pun on “Gospel”’.⁴² Yet for all Elizabeth’s dependence on the verbal power of the Gospel, there is a hint here of what Marcus has called ‘ritual against ritual’.⁴³

Overt Magic, however, remains the purview of Alecto, ‘the breaker of debate’, who visits the Pope to win the use of his ‘Peterpence’ and ‘holie league’ in her effort to ‘advance’ her daughter Galathea as an alternative candidate for Elizabeth’s throne (C1\(^v\); C3\(^v\)). ‘The breaker of debate’ echoes Elizabeth’s own term for Mary Stuart, ‘the daughter of debate’.⁴⁴ In a key passage, Alecto tries and fails to turn the Wheel of Fortune:

On toppe whereof Minerva hath her place,
A glorious seat by which but one did sit,
and hee not knowne, princes of royal race
about the sides in place for them most fit,
A godly youth and of a worthie wit
Was plast with them, whose mothers due desart
Quite from the wheele had laid her downe apart. (C1\(^v\))

---

Most critics who have touched on this text have struggled to identify the figure of ‘hee not knowne’, who sits beside Elizabeth. Shenk establishes that Blenerhasset was aware of the failure of the Anjou marriage negotiations by this point, making the Duke of Anjou an unlikely candidate.\footnote{Shenk, \textit{Learned Queen}, pp. 98-100.} One might add that the ‘Flower delice’ – i.e. the French \textit{fleur de lis} – is later in the poem rejected as unsuitable for Elizabeth’s wreath, because it ‘representes trouble and cruel thrall’ (D2v). In the second half of \textit{The faerie queene}, Edmund Spenser would depict Anjou as an inept knight named Burbon, trailing hopelessly after his ambivalent partner ‘Flourdelis’.\footnote{Edmund Spenser, \textit{The Faerie Queene}, ed. by A. C. Hamilton (Harlow: Longman, 2007), V xi, 44-65. See also Anne Lake Prescott, ‘Spenser’s French Connection’, in \textit{Edmund Spenser in Context}, ed. by Andrew Escobedo (Cambridge: CUP, 2016), pp. 264-72. The phallic and disruptive nature of the ‘flowr deluce’ also accounts for its relevance to Phaedria’s seduction of Cymochles at II vi, 16.} Blenerhasset’s rejection of Anjou’s flower here is a clear statement of his opposition to a French marriage. It is not impossible that Blenerhasset envisaged a final courtship for the queen, but it seems more probable that ‘hee not knowne’ simply references the matchlessness of Elizabeth. Meanwhile, the young James of Scotland is clearly the ‘godly youth’ sitting with the other princes, his celebrated education enriching the ‘worthie wit’. Galathea, the alter ego of his deposed mother, is denounced as unfit to rise up Fortune’s wheel. The inference is that, instead of marrying a foreigner and begetting a new heir, Elizabeth should rest content in James as a suitable successor. He shares only Pallas’ ‘wit’, rather than Minerva’s ‘wisdom’, but he does at least profess the right religious faith.

Yet for all the Protestant pride of Elizabeth and James, Olympian gods are omnipresent. The Christian heavens exist on a plane out of sight, only to intrude in the closing scenes of the poem, when ‘forth from the slender suttel skies / All Angellike there did a shape appeare’ (F1v). Even this heavenly chorus is led by Euthumia, Aglaia and Clytia, Blenerhasset’s names for the
Graces, joined by the Muses Clio and Calliope. Although Elizabeth has asserted her Protestant credentials throughout, her strongest associations are with the Olympians.

Whatever the identity of ‘hee not knowne’, Blenerhasset’s Elizabeth-Minerva is undoubtedly a virgin goddess. There even seem to be degrees of virginity:

   Most worthie prayse for her virginitie
   Diana never halfe so chaste as she. (C1r)

Her access to divine wisdom is put into relief by Pallas’ presence as the representative of ‘earthly wisdom’, and earthly skills. Pallas here is frequently associated with Apollo. In the opening lines, the two are introduced together:

   Apollo for his learning was renowne:
   For worldly wit dame Pallas did prevaile. (A2r)

This pairing recurs in two later catalogues of the gods (B4r, C4r) and later Pallas leads the Muses and wood nymphs in weaving a woodland garland to crown their queen, assisted by Apollo. He has been associated with ‘learning’ throughout the poem; here, he offers ‘a learned intent’ (E4r) and brings ‘a learned troupe’ to observe the construction of the garland, including his companion Silenus, who offers his woodlands as a source of the necessary flowers (D2r). In this scene, Pallas’ earth-learned skills, comparable as acquired knowledge to Apollo’s intellectual learning and the Muses’ arts, are subordinated to the celebration of Elizabeth’s Solomonic wisdom. Alecto has warned Pluto of Elizabeth-Minerva as a greater danger than Apollo, because her intuitive wisdom is ‘not from Apollo’s learned brain’ (C2r). This is not to suggest that Blenerhasset’s poem rejects education or learned skill: Pallas and Apollo are praised as worthy gods and necessary members of Elizabeth’s commonwealth, defined as it is by the virtues of her new Olympian subjects. In Blenerhasset’s condemnation of ‘the Turke, the Moore, the Prince of Persia’, he writes ‘they learning lothe, they build like beasts their
bower / In ignorance’ (A3'). Mercury’s search for Elizabeth in dark, Catholic Europe leaves him lamenting that its ancient seats of learning have been corrupted – ‘A rude unlearned rowte in Thebs remayne / In Athens nowe there be a beastly band’ – before the even more tragic fate of ‘Parnassus heavenly hie / For learning where the lovly Laurell grewe’, is unveiled:

All Helecon is blacke with moulded bleue:
Pernassus springes be drie, the Nymphes be dead,
The gorgious garlands gone, the Muses fled. (A3')

But the learned arts are here secondary to the greater cause of divinely inspired Protestantism, a Protestantism which, to avoid the charge of idolatry, must emphasise God’s role in endowing Elizabeth’s wisdom. In the depiction of Elizabeth as the Woman Clothed with the Sun, Blenerhasset imagines that ’Before her face the feare of God doth stande’ (B4v). The passage points to Proverbs 2: 1-6:

And cause thine eares to hearken unto wisdom. & encline thine heart to understanding,
For if thou callest after knowledge, & cryest for understanding:
If thou sekest her as a silver, and searchest for her as for treasures,
Then shalt thou understand the feare of the Lord, and finde the knowledge of God.
For the Lord giveth wisdome, out of his mouth commeth knowledge and understanding.

To be wise in God’s presence is to recognise him as the source of one’s own wisdom, and to fear him. In depicting an Elizabeth who understands this, Blenerhasset saves her from the charge of blasphemy, simultaneously elevating her form of learning above the common skills of man.

As the representatives of acquired skills, it is left to Pallas and the Muses to weave the coronet with which Elizabeth is crowned Minerva. This role is a cipher for the poet, as Blenerhasset makes explicit in his ‘Pilgrim’s Post Script’. ‘Evermore my Muse shall magnifie thy name’ he notes, and inserts himself within the text:

    Therewith this curious court brake up, and I in ragged rime
Was made the trumpet to their talk, the touchstone of the time. (G1’)

In his Preface, Blenerhasset had further blended his worlds, claiming that his travels in the mid-1570s led him to discover the true Parnassus, where he found and eventually persuaded the Muses to unlock the tale of Elizabeth-Minerva in ‘this booke which all the Muses did admire’. Blenerhasset may not share Elizabeth’s divine wisdom, but he inhabits the world of Pallas, Apollo and the Muses, and he shares with them the skill to praise her.

v. Blenerhasset and Ovid

As I have shown, Pallas and her Muses occupy an inferior position in A revelation to Elizabeth. Their construction of her garland, however, establishes a complex set of power relations that set an early modern sense of divine kingship against a classical tradition of tension between gods and men. The focus of this passage is on the art of weaving. Blenerhasset describes the Muses’ arrival:

The Muses ix. ix. colours did present
Of sowing silke untwined yet in twist,
To sowe, to weave, to binde was their intent. (D2’)

Although the classical Minerva included weaving among the many human skills she championed, there is only one well-known myth that focuses on this attribute. This myth, the tale of Arachne, is almost exclusively associated with one source text: Ovid’s Metamorphoses.47

---

The influence of the *Metamorphoses* in early modern England is well established, but in the *Second part of the mirror for magistrates*, we find specific evidence that Blenerhasset himself knew it. He is not complimentary to Arthur Golding, the prurient Calvinist clergyman whose 1567 translation of *Metamorphoses* into English ‘fourteeners’ was the era’s most successful.48 In a passage criticising the prevalence of rhyming couplets in English verse, Blenerhasset’s Muse of Memory compares Golding’s couplets unfavourably to the hexameters of Ovid, alongside similar condemnation of the ‘great inequality’ between *Churchyard’s Chippes* and his model Horace, Phaer and Virgil, Turberville and Tibullus, Gascoigne and Seneca.49 What this proves, however, is that Blenerhasset knew this text.

In Ovid’s tale of Arachne, the talented weaver publicly issues a challenge to Minerva to compete for the title of true goddess of weaving. In definitive demonstrations of Latin *ekphrasis*, Ovid describes the scenes each competitor weaves: each weaver depicts the adventures of the gods in tapestry, the one with piety, the other with irreverence. And like Ovid, Blenerhasset liberally employs the practice of *ekphrasis* in *A revelation*, first with the crown of Neptune, upon which an image of Elizabeth is depicted, and then with the complex garland woven around the queen’s totemic pantarbe.

Yet, just as he uses the technique of doubling to separate ‘heavenly wisdom’ and ‘worldly wit’ in Minerva and Pallas, Blenerhasset uses the same method to separate the regal Elizabeth from the more domestic and dangerous ‘craft’ of weaving. Not Elizabeth-Minerva, but ‘Pallas her selfe did worke this worthie wreath’ (D2’). Meanwhile, the presence of Arachne is recalled in Blenerhasset’s echoes of Golding’s rendering of the Arachne–Minerva contest. The positive

49 Thomas Blenerhasset, *The second part of the mirror for magistrates* (London, 1578), fol. 40°.
depiction of Pallas, who leads the demonstration of craftwork, hardly reflects the negative tones in Ovid’s depiction of both Minerva’s and Arachne’s behaviour. In *A revelation*, however, Pallas is a lower version of Minerva, and therefore is not demeaning herself by stooping to an implicit competition with the absent Arachne.

There are clear associations with the Arachne motif. Minerva, in Ovid’s tale, creates tapestries which praise the gods, against Arachne’s scurrilous depictions of their most shameful histories. Similarly, Pallas’ coronet weaves in flowers and jewels which represent Elizabeth’s virtues and her most famous victories, or, as Blenerhasset puts it, her establishment of military peace.

There is a classical precedent:

The Romane Captaines wore
garlandes thereof of yore,
because they did restore
the quiet peace,
and made the warres surecease. (D3°)

Crucially, Blenerhasset describes the commencement of the work in similar terms to that used by Golding as both Arachne and Minerva set up their looms.

They weaved verie much

[…]  
Even like as after showres of raine when Phebus broken beames
Doe strike upon the Cloudes, appeares a compast bow of gleames
Which bendeth over all the Heaven: wherein although there shine
A thousand sundry colours yet the shadowing is so fine,
That looke men nere so wistly, yet beguileth it their eyes:
So like and even the selfsame thing eche colour seemes to rise
Whereas they meete, which further off doe differ more and more.
Of glittring golde with silken threede was weaved there good store.\(^{50}\)

In Blenerhasset’s hands, the mythical artwork is itself wrought into something altogether more truthful and positive. Where in Golding both Minerva and Arachne create mirages that ‘looke

\(^{50}\) *The Arthur Golding Translation*, ed. by Nims, VI.i.35-47.
men nere so wistly, yet beguileth it their eyes [...] of glittering gold’, Blenerhasset’s Pallas uses similarly ‘glittering’ reflections to sharpen men’s perception, not beguile it:

    whose royall rayse were bright like Phoebus beames,
   A triple towred toppe shee ment to make
   Thereon, for well she wist the glittering gleames
   Thereof did shine with goodly stately streams,
   And leand unto the lookers on such light,
   That they might judge of every thing aright. (D4–E)

By teaching men to ‘judge of every thing aright’, Pallas is supplementing the evangelism Blenerhasset attributes to Elizabeth-Minerva, of whom ‘from goodlie lips her learned tongue doth tell / The way to heaven’ (B4'). For all the dark echoes of Arachne present in Pallas’ rainbow, Pallas herself is a positive figure. Why, then, such quotation from Golding’s Arachne story?

If Arachne’s presence hovers in such a jubilant poem, she must have already been vanquished. By this stage in A revelation, a threat to Elizabeth has indeed been vanquished: Alecto, goddess of strife. As we have already seen, when Alecto hears the proposal to crown Elizabeth as Minerva and demands that Pluto inflame the Pope against her, complaining of ‘a maide / Who doth both him, and thee, and mee disdaine’ (C2'). Alecto fails, and Elizabeth is left triumphant. But Alecto wanted the throne for her daughter Galathea, a figure for Mary Stuart, who denounces ‘the Gospel nowe my mortall enemie’ (C3'). Throughout A revelation, Galathea is associated with a third version of female knowledge: craft. As Liz Oakley-Brown has established, the embroidered images of Metamorphoses undertaken by Mary Stuart and Elizabeth Talbot, her custodian’s ambitious wife, were well known at Elizabeth’s court, and included images of Europa and Actaeon suffering under the tyranny of Jupiter and Diana.51 Mary’s hubristic habit of embroidering heraldic claims to the English Crown was also

51 Oakley-Brown, Ovid and the Cultural Politics of Translation, pp. 123 ff.
notorious.\(^{52}\) While the questionable presence of Arachne is not a key element of Blenerhasset’s argument, it is not unreasonable to detect the hubristic Mary-Galathea behind Pallas’ triumphant demonstration of an alternative, loyalist craftwork.

vi. The Nottingham Entertainments

Blenerhasset’s poem was not the only occasion when Elizabeth Tudor’s wisdom was identified as a characteristic that distinguished her from Mary Stuart. Twenty years earlier, the conceit had been approved by Cecil in a masque nonetheless intended to celebrate what Stephen Alford describes as ‘a representation of the British dynastic ideal of two queens ruling separately, but in peace, harmony and love’.\(^{53}\) During negotiations for a concord of amity that marked the hopeful, early years of Mary’s reign in Scotland, plans were made for both queens to meet at Nottingham Castle.

At this stage, the two had much in common. Alison Findlay reads this entertainment as Elizabeth’s attempt to recruit Mary to help ‘establish a more feminised model of monarchy […] reflecting the queens’ common need to sustain female sovereignty’.\(^{54}\) The plan was aborted due to the worsening shadow of the French civil war, but plans developed so far that an order of decorative silks is recorded as already delivered to furnish Nottingham Castle, and designs for the entertainments survive in Cecil’s archives. The proposed masques were to take place over three evenings and feature representations of both queens. ‘Prudentia’ enters on a golden lion, representing England, and ‘Temperantia’ enters on the red lion of Scotland.

\(^{52}\) Rayne Allinson, ‘The Queen’s Three Bodies: Gender, Criminality and Sovereignty in the Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots’, in Practices of Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, ed. by M. Cassidy Welch and P. Sherlock (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), pp. 99-116.

\(^{53}\) Alford, The Early Elizabethan Polity, p. 90.

\(^{54}\) Findlay, Playing Spaces, p. 113.
Temperantia would hardly have been a disparaging term for Nottingham’s Scottish guest, although given Mary’s already emerging recklessness, it suggests some wish-fulfilment on the part of her would-be ally. More significantly, both Prudentia and Temperantia are led in by Pallas, who assumes the role of their intercessor. On the first night, both queen-virtues sit in judgement over ‘Discord and False Report’, punishing them ‘as they thinke goode’. On the following night, Friendship tells Prudentia-Elizabeth that Pallas has reported to the gods ‘howe worthilie the night precedent theis ii virtues, Prudentia, and Temperantia, behaved them selves in Judginge, and contempninge’ these two vices (p. 91). As a result, the gods have sent Peace to live with the queens forever.

Throughout these exchanges, Prudentia is addressed first and Temperantia second. As the elder queen, Elizabeth thus takes the lead, a figurative exemplar to her younger guest. When, during the third night, Discord resurfaces as a threat, it is Elizabeth who affirms to ‘Valiant Courage’ the need for Britain to live at peace (p. 92). Even Elizabeth’s role in promoting peace is positive, Mary’s negative: when arming Valiant Courage, Prudentia gives him a band of gold inscribed ‘Ever’, signifying her wish for eternal amity, whereas Temperantia presents him with a sword inscribed ‘Never’, indicating her abjuration of arms (p. 92). The depiction of Mary in these masques is fundamentally positive. It could not be otherwise: the entertainment is an act of poetic diplomacy presented by an English queen keen to secure a peace with her Scottish cousin. Yet as Sarah Carpenter writes, the instinctive recourse of the masque’s creators to this hortative imagery indicates darker feelings, which may be ‘latent in the congratulatory images’ and would soon emerge in direct conflict between the two icons. The overall action is governed by the opposing forces of Pallas and Discord: already, as Carpenter asserts, ‘tradition

55 Alford, *Early English Polity*, p. 91. All further in-text references are to this edition.
56 Sarah Carpenter, ‘Performing Diplomacies: The 1560s Court Entertainments of Mary Queen of Scots’, *Scottish Historical Review*, 82 (2003), 194-225 (p. 211).
had begun to link [Elizabeth] to Pallas’, as well as to Prudentia.\textsuperscript{57} Mary would only later become ‘the daughter of debate, that discord aye doth sowe’, but even in 1562, only a few months prior to the proposed Nottingham entertainment, snake-haired Furies had presided in the opening dumbshow to \textit{Gorboeduc} as the geniuses of Scottish invasion and discord in the North.\textsuperscript{58} It was in the same sequence of entertainments, we have seen, that Elizabeth triumphed as Pallas, and was first courted by the figure of Dudley as ‘Palaphilos’, while Medusa, a Catholic Mary figure, was destroyed.\textsuperscript{59} Even in 1562, Elizabeth’s association with Pallas could be as oppositional to Mary as it could be benign.\textsuperscript{60} 

In \textit{A revelation}, as in the Nottingham Entertainments, Elizabeth could safely be identified by her admirers as a figure of Minerva. But the image of Minerva as weaver remained a dangerous association for a royal woman and served to emphasise Elizabeth’s obligations to humility rather than to decorative and worldly displays. The Postscript of \textit{A revelation} directs our attention to Blenerhasset’s evangelical role: as the recipient of a divinely-inspired vision in the world \textit{outside} of the poem, he holds knowledge that not even the queen herself possesses.

Within the structure of \textit{A revelation}, Elizabeth reigns as a goddess answerable to none but the True God; in the outside world of 1582, with Mary Stuart still a real presence, war with Spain increasingly likely and the alliance with France \textit{in extremis}, even the most adulatory encomium could provide slight pressures or critiques of her vulnerable reign. In \textit{A revelation}, Elizabeth is elevated from the earthly wisdom of Pallas and Apollo, with its requirement of physical


\textsuperscript{58} Carpenter, ‘Performing Diplomacies’, p. 211.

\textsuperscript{59} Chapter 4, section vii.

dexterity on loom and lute, to the more queenly role of conduit for God’s own inspiration. Yet the conclusion to Blenerhasset’s work demonstrates just how much power this abjuration delegated to more lowly artisans. The tale of Arachne warns Elizabeth off the poetic arts, just when Blenerhasset’s self-conception advertises the extent of the political power they can wield.

vii. Conclusion

I have included a close reading of *A revelation*, the most substantial analysis in this thesis of a single poem, because it demonstrates clearly the multivalence of the figure of Minerva as an image for Elizabeth. This chapter is the shortest in my thesis, because it functions as a case-study, showing how a greater understanding of Elizabethan wisdom-imagery can inform literary criticism. With this poem, Thomas Blenerhasset takes a symbol which had been used earlier in Elizabeth’s reign to define her as a guarantor of peace and renders her instead a mascot for religiously expansionist military adventures. As I have made clear, Blenerhasset’s poem is unusual in many ways. The split of Pallas and Minerva into separate goddesses is a rare move, though not unknown, and while classical and biblical associations were frequently combined in Elizabeth panegyric, the laboured rationalisation of the presence of pagan gods in the same universe as a Christian queen is particularly idiosyncratic. Yet Blenerhasset exemplifies a broader trend in the second half of the reign which saw the panegyric of Elizabeth move from qualified advice given in the form of biblical exempla, towards a pastoral and classical landscape which gave advice only when heavily veiled in the language of adoration. Blenerhasset’s *A Revelation* serves as a striking case-study of ways in which an image of wisdom could become the locus of the struggle to shape the representation of Elizabeth Tudor.
Epilogue: The Consolations of Philosophy

In this thesis, I have argued that wisdom imagery and learned personae were key sites at which Elizabeth Tudor and those around her negotiated the representation of female intellect and authority. Elizabeth could be praised as a Minerva, a Solomon, or a learned prince in the tradition of Plato and Plutarch, but these images could often encode dissent. Furthermore, the discourses of classical wisdom imagery and of humanist learning were often in conflict. Linda Shenk is right to have identified the humanist model of ‘learned authority’ as a concept which could embolden Elizabeth’s counsellors as limits to her power, even as it reinforced her own credentials to rule. Yet even when Elizabeth was praised as a classical goddess, she never escaped lectures about the policy decisions which might prove her wisdom.

In her final decade, Elizabeth seems to have made a renewed effort to inhabit the role of humanist monarch, undertaking a series of translations of Latin texts. These seem to have been undertaken at least in part for private exercise, although their existence was known at court and both John Harington and Francis Bacon claim to have discussed them with her. In 1592, she translated Cicero’s Pro Marcello, an apologia for an ambitious young courtier in which Cicero defends the benefits such disruptive men bring to a respublica, and which Mueller and Scodel suggest may reflect her attitude to the Earl of Essex. In 1598, she revisited Erasmus by translating his Latin paraphrase of Plutarch’s De Curiositate, and in the same year she translated the first 178 lines of Horace’s Ars Poetica. In a spectacular recent discovery, John-Mark Philo has convincingly attributed to her a translation of the first book of Tacitus’ Annales.

1 Shenk, ‘Learned Authority’.
2 TI, pp. 1-10.
3 TI, pp. 5-6; Philo, ‘Elizabeth I’s Translation of Tacitus’, p. 19.
4 T2, pp. 367-80, pp. 451-60, see also Chapter 2, section iv.
held for many years in the Lambeth Palace Library. But the longest work which survives from this decade is the text which engages most directly with traditions of mystic and Christian wisdom: her translation of all five books of Boethius’ *Consolatio Philosophiae*. Boethius’ text is a neo-Stoic dialogue in which a political prisoner is instructed in equanimity by a royal female figure named Lady Philosophy. King Alfred was believed to have translated it also; Foxe had presented this tradition as an example to Englishmen of their literary pedigree and the benefits ‘to have a Prince learned him selfe’.

A full study of this text alone could be the subject of another doctoral thesis. In terms of the broader study of Elizabeth’s wisdom iconography, however, two other things are striking about her choice of this text. Firstly, it allowed Elizabeth to construct in her English-language text two philosophical personae who function as facets of herself. Secondly, Elizabeth’s choice to translate a dialogue, at a time when many of her longest serving counsellors were dead or declining, seems to have been an exercise in a new model of self-counsel. Both these observations, which I will briefly explore now, have something to teach us about Elizabeth’s lifelong tendency towards dualist models for ‘splitting’ her personae, including into female and male roles.

Elizabeth’s life experience shows communalities with both participants in this dialogue: the regal Lady Philosophy and the politically precarious narrator. The figure of Lady Philosophy has much in common with images we have already seen used to represent Elizabeth as a wisdom goddess. Yet Lady Philosophy was also well-established as a figure of global empire in the early modern imagination: Albert Dürer, in a woodcut made for Conrad Celtis’ 1502

---

5 Philo, ‘Elizabeth I’s Translation of Tacitus’.
6 *T2*, pp. 43 ff.
Amores, had depicted her enthroned and ruling over figures of Greek, Egyptian, Roman and German philosophy; she is specifically identified as Boethius’ *Philosophia* by the Ψ and Φ, for *theoria* and *praxis*, woven into her sash (see Fig. 17).\(^8\) Incidentally, the only time Elizabeth varies from the Latin text in her description of Lady Philosophy is when she uses singular, ‘book’, for the plural ‘libellae’. Where the Roman *Philosophia* carried multiple books, drawing her wisdom from a wide canon, Elizabeth’s Lady Philosophy recalls descriptions in Protestant apocalyptic pageantry in which a godly monarch marches into battle with the anti-Christ clutching a single copy of the gospels. The reliance on one book, and one book alone, is deeply Protestant.

Yet if Elizabeth could see Lady Philosophy as her royal persona, she clearly also could see Boethius as a version of her younger self: politically insecure and eventually imprisoned. There were insecurities, too, in her later life and there may have been loneliness: Guy has argued for a dark vision of the 1590s as ‘the second reign’, while Haigh observes that ‘Elizabeth became a much less public queen.;\(^9\) Between 1588 and 1591, Elizabeth saw the deaths of six familiar figures: Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1588), Sir Walter Mildmay (1589), Blanche Parry, her attendant since childhood (1590), Ambrose, Earl of Warwick (1590), Sir Francis Walsingham (1590).\(^10\) Of the twenty-one Privy Councillors from the first year of Elizabeth’s reign, only two were still alive in 1593. They were the queen’s flailing cousin-in-law Francis Knollys, now politically defined by his struggle to control his grandson Robert Devereux, and William Cecil, who had been seriously incapacitated by a probable stroke the previous year. (His wife Mildred was another casualty of 1589). When the queen turned to Boethius for

---

\(^8\) Compare the description at *Translation 2*, p. 77.


consolatio, translating the narrator’s anxieties about his political fate allowed her to give voice to human insecurities; ventriloquising the consoling, ideal female permitted her to perform a more traditional royal role. Living as she now did, without peers, the queen’s most promising intellectual opponent appeared to be herself.

The absence of trustworthy counsel is crucial to understanding the motivation behind Elizabeth’s decision to translate Consolatio Philosophiae. The narrator’s complaints echo the insecurity which haunts her earlier poems. ‘Why me so oft, my friends, have you happy called? Who falleth down in steady step yet never stood,’ he frets in the poem’s first verse section.11 The tone is reminiscent of maxims such as ‘the top of hope supposed, the root of rue shall be’ in ‘The Doubt of Future Foes (line 13)’, or the closing wish of the Fortuna poem, ‘Now Leave And Let Me Rest’: ‘in hope to set my feet in surety to remain’ (line 24).12 Goodrich has provided good evidence for the traditional reading of this poem as Elizabeth’s response to Henri IV of France’s conversion to Catholicism, a tradition which goes back as far as Camden.13 Yet Henri’s conversion is unlikely to have come as a total surprise. Lorenzo Guicciardini, minister to Ferdinando de Medici, had been warning Elizabeth for over a year, teasing her that Ferdinando would offer Henri his daughter in marriage on culmination of the ceremonies.14 Accordingly, Elizabeth had made her concerns explicit nine months before Henri’s formal apostasy and their exchanges soon resumed a friendly tenor, with Elizabeth choosing to pretend Henri’s conversion could not be permanent.15 But what the English queen did lose in 1593 was one of the last worthy rivals in the Protestant republic of letters with whom she could debate as a social and intellectual equal. As Janel Mueller writes, ‘dialogue was her

11 T2, ‘De Consolatione Philosophiae’ p. 75.
12 CW, pp. 133, 306.
chosen mode of dealing with Henri’ from their earliest contact.\textsuperscript{16} The protocol of early modern diplomacy emphasized the unique equality of two crowned princes: Henri was one of few people in the world entitled to receive Elizabeth on horseback; their letters refer to each other as ‘brother’ and ‘royal sister’.\textsuperscript{17} When Elizabeth heard of his conversion, she wrote to Henri that this relationship was over: ‘I will only be a bastard sister, at least not your sister by the Father’.\textsuperscript{18} Now if she wanted to debate a peer, she had to construct personae from a centuries-old text.

I have touched here only briefly on this extraordinary translation. I have, however, argued throughout this thesis that wisdom imagery played an important role in the representation of Elizabeth as a queen called to rule by God and trained to rule by men. I have suggested, broadly in agreement with Shenk, that during the course of Elizabeth’s reign the learned persona of the humanist schoolgirl was gradually replaced by personae through which expressed divinely-inspired wisdom and authority. Elizabeth’s choice to translate a text dominated by the figure of ‘Lady Philosophy’ encapsulates the twin tensions of her learned personae: the project exhibits the legacy of her humanist education, decades after she had left the schoolroom, but it also manifests an image of the Neoplatonic female object of veneration, who teaches men the way to wisdom, rather than being taught by them.\textsuperscript{19}

At the beginning of this thesis, I promised to examine why and how Elizabeth Tudor was associated in her lifetime with images of wisdom and ideals of learning, and to ask who benefited at each turn. As I have shown, in the early years of her life, Elizabeth’s ‘learned persona’ was burnished by Protestant evangelicals like Roger Ascham and John Bale as they

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{16} CW, p. 49. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{17} CW, pp. 363-4, 383-6. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{18} CW, p. 371. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{19} On the importance of Lady Philosophy in this tradition, see Berry, Chastity and Power, pp. 15, 19.}
attempted to claim her as an exemplum of their own ideals in an age of increasing religious polarisation. Katherine Parr also played a key role in developing this ‘learned persona’, although she was less of a self-publicist than either man and had less of a political agenda: John Aylmer and Thomas Blundeville also built on this model to argue for Elizabeth as a queen who should and would be receptive to counsel.

But as I have also argued, in her own reign Elizabeth’s association with wisdom imagery gradually shifted as her authority consolidated and she became associated with more powerful figures such as Minerva and Solomon. In the ‘competition for representation’ poetic descriptions of Elizabeth as a powerful goddess of wisdom often came from Elizabeth’s subjects, rather than the Crown, and could be a challenge to her own self-representation. The image of Minerva was eventually used to demand that the queen engage in aggressive religious confrontation.

As a coda to this project, however, the image of Elizabeth as Lady Philosophy should offer a caveat to any suggestion that Elizabeth was reluctant to be seen as a powerful goddess of wisdom. Elizabeth emerges from this text the same woman she had been throughout her life: a woman sensitive to the vicissitudes of Fortuna, deeply versed in humanist learning and in the meeting of classical and Christian tradition, yet unafraid to represent herself as a powerful divinity of wisdom. Throughout this thesis, I have traced the role of wisdom imagery and learned personae in the ‘competition’ to represent Elizabeth Tudor. From the first years of her life to her last, she was subject to other people’s imaginings, but whether quoting Isocrates or translating Boethius, she never resisted an opportunity to intervene in shaping her own learned image.
Illustrations

Figure 1

Elizabeth Tudor, *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by John Bale (Wesel {Marburg}, 1548) STC 17320, Fi‘-Fi‘.

Figure 2


Figure 3

Figure 4
Elizabeth Tudor, *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by John Bale (Wesel{Marburg}, 1548) STC 17320, Ai'; as Figure 1.

Figure 5
Elizabeth Tudor, *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by John Bale (Wesel{Marburg}, 1548) STC 17320, Fviii'; as Figure 1.
Figure 6

Attributed to William Scrots - Elizabeth I when a Princess (1533-1603)
Royal Collection, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Figure 7

John Aylmer, *An harborowe for faithfull and trewe subjectes* (London, 1559), STC 1005 A2e. (Detail)

Figure 8

The Bishops’ Bible, 1569 quarto edition, titlepage
Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
Figure 9

The Great Bible, 1539, titlepage
Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
Figure 10


Figure 11


Figure 12

As above, A2v.
Figure 13


Figure 15

Signature inscription by Dorothy Morison. As above, titlepage to the ‘First Lamp.’
The central signature of another owner, ‘Henry Cape’, was added much later. (Photo: KM)
Figure 16

As above, titlepage to the ‘Second Lamp’ (Photo: KM)
Figure 17


Copyright, Trustees of the British Museum, released under a Creative Commons licence. BM asset number 1613540362
Bibliography

Primary Sources: Manuscripts and Early Printed Books (pre-1700)

MSS

British Library, London:

Add. MS 33271: Copies of letters, speeches, etc., 1545-1579; collected as models or precedents, and arranged under the heads of ‘Advice,’ ‘Answers to petitions’ ‘Commendatory,’ ‘Consolatory,’ ‘Expostulatory,’ ‘Orations,’ ‘Narratory,’ and ‘Supplicatory’.


Add. MS 32379: ‘Discourses of Sir Nicholas Bacon’, copied by Thomas Mygatt.

fol. 21: Elizabeth I of England: Petition to, from Parliament for her marriage, with answer 1566.

Harley MS 419, papers collected by John Foxe.


Harley MS 6978, art. 18, fol. 87, ‘The Queenes speech at Tilburie camp’, report in letter by Dr Lionel Sharpe to the Duke of Buckingham, 1623.

Lansdowne MS, 94. art. 15B, ‘Burghley Papers’.

fol. 30: ‘Minutes of a second speech of the Queen to her Parliament, by the Lord Keeper, concerning her marriage and the succession to the crown, 1563. In her own hand-writing.’


Royal MS 12 A XXX: ‘Verses addressed to the Queen at Windsor’, 1563, 72 fols bound as a single book, by William Malym (Greek) and members of Eton College (Latin).

Royal MS 12 A. XLVII: ‘Complimentary addresses in prose and verse to Elizabeth I on her visit to Woodstock and Oxford, 31 August 1566, by members of Oxford University’, 27 fols bound as a single book, in Latin and Greek.


Royal MS 12 A LXVII: ‘Complimentary verses given to Elizabeth I by the High Master and boys of St Paul's School’, 1573 (N. B. British Library Catalogue title misleadingly describes these as verses given to the queen ‘at the beginning of her reign’). 8 fols. bound as a single book. Overseen by William Malym. Greek verses, with Latin translations, by Walter Nethercott (ff 5r-5v), Martin Read (ff 7r-7v), John Pratt (ff 8v-9v) and Richard Clerke (ff 10v-11r).

Royal MS 12 A LXIX: ‘SPEECHES, in Latin, at Queen Elizabeth's visit to Cambridge, August 1564’, multiple hands, 6 fols bound together. Includes two speeches: one by Elizabeth 1, Queen of England, and one by William Masters of King’s College Cambridge.
Royal MS 15 A IX: ‘Translations by Joan, Lady Lumley’, 1550s, referred to in this thesis as ‘Jane Lumley’.

102 fols bound as a single book, consisting of five partial translations of Isocrates; translation of Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis* (from fol. 63); legal notes in a second hand on the history of the Lumley family; extract in Jane Lumley’s hand of ‘Pandectae Medicinae’.

Royal MS 18 B XXIV: ‘Four Treatises in English’.

fols. 47-79: Roger Ascham’s *The Scholemaster*, Book 1 only. Begun in December 1563 (date inscribed and confirmed by internal references, e.g. at fol. 7).

Royal MS 2 D. XXI: ‘Commentary on the Minor Prophets’, 1566, originally from Hebrew, ‘translated into Latin by Thomas Nele [Neale]’. Presented to Queen Elizabeth on her visit to Oxford.

Royal MS 12 E II: ‘Tabellae Cardinales… tables of the Right Ascension of about 130 fixed stars’, by Richard Forster, presented to Jane, Lady Lumley in 1569.

Sloane MS 401 Rudolph Wilkinson’s Commonplace Book.

fol. 38: ‘Queen Elizabeth’s Oration at Cambridge’, 1564.

Facsimile MSS:

MS Facsimile 498: presented in 1930 to Eton College, negative rotograph of Hatfield MS. Cecil Papers 277, August 1560. A miniature book made on the occasion of the queen’s visit of Eton, 1560, presented in addition to Royal MS 12 A LXV.

National Archives, Kew:

State Papers Domestic (Elizabeth I) 12/32.
‘Details of benefactors and patrons of Cambridge Colleges, presented to the queen at her visit to Cambridge’, 1564, bound as a single book, gifted by the University of Cambridge.

State Papers Domestic (Elizabeth I) 12/51.

State Papers Domestic (Elizabeth I), 12/289 ‘Queen Elizabeth’s Translations’ in the hands of Elizabeth Tudor and Thomas Windebank.
fols. 13r-57r: Boethius, *De Consolatio Philosophiae*, 1593.
fols. 84r-88r: Horace, *De Arte Poetica*, 1598.
fols. 90r-90v: Plutarch, *De Curiositate*, 1598.

Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC.

MS V. A. 176, Records of the University of Cambridge.
fol. 87v, ‘Queen Elizabeth’s Oration’, 1564, hand of Nicholas Robinson.
MS V. A. 321 ‘Seventeenth Century Letter Book’, c. 1582-1615, possibly compiled by Peter Ferryman

University Library, Cambridge:
Add. MS 8915: ‘Verses for Queen Elizabeth’, around 315 sets of verses by 255 authors, all named and arranged by college, in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic, 1564

Bodleian Library, Oxford:
MS Cherry 36: ‘The Glass of the Sinful Soul’, Elizabeth Tudor, 1544, holograph copy with embroidered book cover

Hatfield House


London, Corporation of London Record Office

Repertories XIV, 1558-1561, fol. 143: Records of payments for the queen’s coronation festivities, April 1559

Vatican Archives (consulted online)

Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.lat.1778, ‘Nicocles seu symmachicus’, translated from Greek by Guarino Veronese
Early Modern Printed Books

Anonymous, *Cabala, mysteries of state* (London, 1654)
Ascham, Roger, *The scholemaster* (London, 1570)
Aske, James, *Elizabetha triumphans* (London, 1588)
Aylmer, John, *An harborewe for faithfull and trewe subjectes* (London, 1559)
Bale, John, *The image of both Churches after the most wonderfull and heavenly Revelation of Saint John the Evangelist* (London, 1570)
---, *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae quam nunc Angliam & Scotiam vocant catalogus* (Basel, 1559)
Bentley, Thomas, *The monument of matrones* (London, 1582)
Blenerhasset, Thomas, *The seconde part of the mirror for magistrates* (London, 1578)
Blundeville, Thomas, *Three morall treatises* (London, 1561)
Bridges, John, *A defence of the government established in the Church of England for ecclesiastical matters* (London, 1587)
Bunny, Edmund, *Certaine prayers and other godly exercises, for the seventeenth of November* (London, 1585)
Cambridge University, *Threno-thriambeuticon academiae Cantabrigiensis* (Cambridge, 1603)
---, *Tomus alter. & idem*, ed. by Thomas Browne (London, 1629)
Campion, Thomas, *Observations in the art of english poesie* (London, 1602)
---, *The alphabet of prayers very fruitefull to be exercised and used of everye christian man* (London, 1564)
Carleton, George, *A thankfull remembrance of Gods mercy* (London, 1624)
Case, John, *The praise of musicke* (Oxford, 1586)
Caxton, William, adapted from Raoul Lèfevre, *The auncient historie, of the destruction of Troy* (London, 1464, repr 1597)
Chaderton, Laurence, *A fruitfull sermon* (London, 1584)
Christopherson, John, *An exhortation to all menne* (London, 1554)
Churchyard, Thomas, *A discourse of the queen’s majesty’s entertainment in Suffolk and Norfolk* (London, 1578)
Dee, John, *General and rare memorials pertayning to the perfect arte of navigation* (London, 1577)
Dousa, Janus, *Nova poemata* (Leiden, 1575)
Elizabeth Tudor (later Elizabeth I, queen of England), *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by John Bale (Wesel {Marburg}, 1548)
---, *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by James Cancellar (London, 1568)
---, *Christian prayers and meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke and Latine* (London, 1569)
---, *A booke of christian prayers*, ed. by Richard Day (London, 1578)
---, *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle*, ed. by James Cancellar (London, 1580)
---, *A Godlie Meditation of the Christian Soule, Concerning a love towards God and his Church* (London, 1590)
Elyot, Sir Thomas, *The boke named the governour* (London, 1531)
---, *The doctrinall of princis* (London, 1533)
---, *The dictionary of Syr Thomas Eliot Knyght* (London, 1538)
Erasmus, Desiderius, *A devoute treatise upon the Pater noster*, trans. by anon [Margaret Roper] (London, 1526)
---, *Institutio Principis Christiani ... Ad Nicoclem* (Cologne, 1529)
---, *The first tome or volume of the paraphrases*, trans. by Nicholas Udall and others (London, 1548)
Erasmus, Desiderius, ed. *Euripidis tragoediae duae* (Basel, 1524)
Florio, John, *Firste Fruites* (London, 1578)
Foxe, John, *Christus triumphans* (London, 1672)
---, *The gospels of the fower evangelistes translated* (London, 1571)
Garter, Bernard, *The joyfull receyving* (London, 1578)
G[rant], Edward, ed., *Disertissimi viri Rogeri Aschami* (London, 1576)
Gascoigne, George, *The spoyle of Antwerpe* (London, 1576)
Goodman, Christopher, *Howe superior powers oght to be obeyd* (Geneva: John Crispin, 1558)
Griffin, Bartholomew, *Fidessa, more chaste than kinde* (London, 1596)
Hakewill, George, *An answere to a treatise written by Dr. Carier* (London, 1616)
*Hakluyt, Richard, Principall navigations* (London, 1589)
Hartwell, Abraham, *Regina literata* (London, 1565)
Hentzner, Paul, *Itinerarium* (Nuremberg, 1612)
Heresbach, Conrad, *De laudibus Graecarum literarum oratio* (Strasbourg, 1551)
Heywood, Thomas, *If you know not me, you know no bodie, or the troubles of queene Elizabeth* (London, 1605)
Hogherde, Myles, *Certayne questions demaunded and asked* (London, 1555)
Howson, John, *A sermon preached at St. Maries in Oxford* (Oxford, 1602)
Knox, John, *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* (Geneva, 1558)
Kyffin, Maurice, *The blessednes of Brytaine: or a celebration of the queenes holyday* (London, 1587)
---, *The blessednes of Brytaine: or a celebration of the queenes holyday* (London, 1588)
Latimer, Hugh, *The fyrste sermon of Mayster Hughe Latimer* (London, 1549)
---, *The seconde [seventh] sermon of Maister Hughe Latimer* (London, 1549)
Legh, Gerard, *The accedens of armory* (London, 1562)
---, *The accedens of armory* (London, 1578)
Leigh, William, *Queene Elizabeth, paraled in her princely vertues* (London, 1612)
Melanchthon, Philip, *De dialectica libri quatuor* (Antwerp, 1535)
Morton, Thomas, *Salomon* (London, 1596)
Mulcaster, Richard, *The queenes majesties passage through the citie of London to Westminster the daye before her coronacion* (London, 1559), STC 7589.5, unique, property of the Elizabethan Club of Yale University, New Haven
Nashe, Thomas, *Have with you to Saffron-Walden, Or, Gabriell Harveys hunt is up* (London, 1596)
Navarre, Marguerite de, *Le Miroir* (Alençon, 1531)
Ochino, Bernardino, *Prediche* (Basel, 1561)
Oporinus, Johannes, ed., *Isocratis & Demosthenis* (Basel, 1553)
Parker, Matthew, *De antiquitate Britannicae ecclesiae & privilegiis ecclesiae Cantuariensis* (London, 1572)
Perkins, William, *A reformed catholike* (Cambridge, 1598)
---, *A warning against the idolatrie of the last times* (Cambridge, 1601)
Petowe, Henry, *Elizabetha quasi vivens, Eliza’s funerall* (London, 1603)
Ponet, John, *A shorte treatise of politike power* (Strasbourg, 1556)
Prime, John, *A sermon briefly comparing the state of king Solomon* (London, 1585)
Robartes, Foulke, *Gods holy house and service* (London, 1639)
Rogers, Thomas, *A golden chain* (London, 1575)
Rainolds, John, *A sermon upon part of the eighteenth psalm* (Oxford, 1586)
Savile, John, *A salutatorie poeme to the magestie of king James* (London, 1603)
Sidney, Philip, Sir, *Syr P.S. His Astrophel and Stella*, ed. by Thomas Nashe (London, 1591)
Standish, John, *A discourse* (London, 1554)
Sternhold, Thomas, *Al such psalmes of David* (London, 1549)
Sternhold, Thomas, and William Whittingham, *The whole booke of psalmes* (London, 1584)
St[ubbes], J[ohn], *Christian meditations upon eight psalmes*, trans. by Theodore Beza (London, 1582)
Traheron, Bartholomew, *A warning to England to repente* (Wesel, 1558)
Vair, Guillaume Du, *Philosophie morale de stoiques* (Paris, 1585)
Vair, Guillaume Du, *Buckler against adversity, or, a treatise of constancy*, trans. by Andrew Court (London, 1622)
Williams, John *Greate Britains Salomon* (London, 1625)
Wilson, John, *A song of deliverance* (London, 1626)
Primary Sources: Modern Editions and Anthologies

Classical and Biblical

---, The Consolation of Philosophy, ed. by Peter Walsh (Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 2000)
---, Consolation of Philosophy, trans. by Joel C. Relihan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2001)
---, The Consolation of Philosophy, ed. by Peter Walsh (Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks, 2008)
Euripides, Helena, ed. by Richard Kannicht (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1969)
Fulgentius, Fulgentius the Mythographer, ed. and trans. by L. G. Whitbread (Athens, OH; Ohio State UP, 1971)
Isocrates, Orations, trans. by George Norlin, 3 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1929)


Medieval, Early Modern and Later

Ames, Percy, *The Mirror of the Sinful Soul, facs. of 1544 ms* (London: Asher, 1897)


---, *English Works*, ed. by William Aldis Wright (Cambridge: CUP, 1904)

---, *The Scholemaster*, ed. by Lawrence V. Ryan (Charlottesville, VA: UP of Virginia, 1967)

---, *Toxophilus (1545)*, ed. by Peter E. Medine (Tempe, AZ: ACMRS, 2002)


Bell, James, ‘A Narrative of the Journey of Cecilia, Princess of Sweden, to the Court of Queen Elizabeth’, ed. by Margaret Morison, *TRHS*, 12 (1898), 181-224


Bohun, Edmund, *The Character of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1693)
Bromwich, David, ed., The Diary and Memories of John Allen Giles (Taunton: Somerset Record Society, 2000)
Brown, Brown, L’archivio di Venezia: con riguardo special alla storia inglese (Venice: Antonelli e Basadonna, 1865)
Bryson, Alan, and Mel Evans, eds, ‘Seven Rediscovered Letters of Princess Elizabeth Tudor’, Historical Research, 90 (2017), 829-58
Carley, James, ed., King Henry’s Prayer Book (London: British Library, 2009)
Calvin, John, Letters of John Calvin, ed. and trans. by Jules Bonnet (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1855, repr, 2007)
Camden, William, ‘Poems by William Camden: With Notes and Translations from the Latin’, SP, ed. by George Burke Johnston, 72 (1975), iii-143
Campbell, Lily, ed., Parts Added to ‘The Mirror for Magistrates by John Higgins (1574) and Thomas Blenerhasset (1578)’ (Cambridge: CUP, 1946)
Chappell, William, ed., The Roxburghe Ballads (London: London Ballad Society, 1869)
Clapham, John, Certain Observations Concerning the Life and Reign of Queen Elizabeth, ed. by C. Read and E. Read (Philadelphia, PA: Pennsylvania UP, 1951)
Clark, Andrew, ed., The Shirburn Ballads, 1585-1616 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907)
D’Ewes, Simonds, Sir, Journals of All the Parliaments (London: John Starkey, 1682)
Dee, John, The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee, and the Catalogue of his Library of Manuscripts, ed. by James Orchard Halliwell (London: Camden Society, 1842)
Dekker, Thomas, Thomas Dekker: The Wonderful Year, ed. by E. D. Pendry (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1868)
Dekker, Thomas, The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. by Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: CUP, 2009)
Dunlop, Ian, Palaces & Progresses of Elizabeth I (London: Jonathan Cape, 1962)
---, Collected Works, ed. by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2002) [CW]
---, Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals, ed. by Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2003) [ACFLO]
---, *Consolation of Queen Elizabeth I: The Queen’s Translation of Boethius’s – De Consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. by Noel Harold Kaylor Jr and Philip Edward Phillips (Temple, AZ: ACMRS, 2009)
---, *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1544-1589*, ed. by Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2009) [T1]
---, *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1592-1598*, ed. by Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2009) [T2]
---, *The Poems of Queen Elizabeth I*, ed. by Leicester Bradner (Providence, RI: Brown UP, 1964)
Gachard, Louis, *Correspondence de Philippe II Sur Les Affaires Des Pays-Bas*, 6 vols (Brussels: Muquardt, 1846-84)
---, trans., *Ovid’s Metamorphoses*, ed. by Madeleine Forey (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2002)
Harrington, John, Sir, *Nugae Antiquae*, ed. by Henry Harrington (London: Vernor and Hood, 1804)
Hayward, Sir John, *Annals of the First Four Years of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. by J. Bruce (London: Camden Society, 1840)


Hopkins, Lisa, ed., *Writing Renaissance Queens: Texts By and About Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots* (Newark, DE: Delaware UP, 2002)


Jones, Elizabeth Frances and Julian Ward, eds and trans, *Commentum quod dicitur Bernardi Silvestris super sex libros Eneidos Virgilii* (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska UP, 2005)


---, *The Chronicle of Queen Jane and Two Years of Queen Mary, and Especially of the Rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyat* (London: Camden Society, 1850)


Parr, Katherine, *Complete Works and Correspondence*, ed. by Janel Mueller (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2011)


Pemberton, Caroline, *Queen Elizabeth’s Englishings of Boethius, Plutarch and Horace* (London, Early English Text Society, 1889)


Plummer, Charles, *Elizabethan Oxford; Reprints of Rare Tracts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1887)


Reilly, Matthew, *Roger Ascham and The King’s Lost Girl* (London: Orion, 2013)
---, *The Tournament* (London: Orion, 2014)
---, *Roger Ascham and the Dead Queen’s Command* (London: Orion, 2020)


Robinson, Hastings, ed., *The Zurich Letters: Comprising the Correspondence of Several English Bishops and Others* (London, Parker Society, 1845)
---, *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1846)


---, *Dazzling Images: The Masks of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. by Alan Hager (Newark, DE: Delaware UP, 1991)

The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia: (The Old Arcadia), ed. by Katherine Duncan-Jones (Oxford: OUP, 1999)


--- *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by A. C. Hamilton (Harlow: Longman, 2007)


Tyndale, William, *Doctrinal Treatises*, ed. by Henry Walter (Cambridge: CUP, 1848)


Unton, Henry, Sir, *Correspondence of Sir Henry Unton*, ed. by Joseph Stevenson (William Nicol for the Roxburghe Club, 1847)


Weston, Elizabeth Jane, *Collected Writings*, ed. by Donald Cheney and Brenda Hosington (Toronto: Toronto UP, 2000)


Willet, Andrew, *Sacrorum Emblematum Centuria Una* (Del Mar, NY: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1984)


Secondary Sources


---, *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002)


Ágústsdóttir, Ingibjörg, ‘Mary Queen of Scots as Feminine and National Icon: Depictions in Film and Fiction’, *Études Écossaises*, 15 (2012), 75-93


Allinson, Rayne, ‘Queen Elizabeth I and the “Nomination” of the Young Prince of Scotland’, *Notes and Queries*, 53 (2006), 425-7


---, ‘“These Latter Days of the World”: The Correspondence of Elizabeth I and James VI, 1590-1603’, *EMLS*, Special Issue 16 (2007), 1-27

---, *A Monarchy in Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012)


Alwes, Derek B., *Sons and Authors in Elizabethan England* (Newark: Delaware UP, 2004)


---, *The King’s Bedpost: Reformation and Iconography in a Tudor Group Portrait* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993)

---, *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (London, Bloomsbury, 1984)

---, *Broken Idols of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: CUP, 2015)


---, ‘The Identity and Life of Thomas Bentley, Compiler of The Monument of Matrones (1582)’, *Sixteenth Century, 31* (2000), 323-48


Axton, Marie, *The Queen’s Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977)


Badir, Patricia, *The Maudlin Impression: English Literary Images of Mary Magdalene, 1550-1700* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame UP, 2009)


Bal, Mieke, *Murder and Difference: Gender, Genre, and Scholarship on Sisera’s Death* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1988)


---, ‘Was Shakespeare an Essex Man?’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 162 (2008), 1-28


Beam, Jacob N., ‘Hermann Kirchner’s Sapientia Solomonis’, *Modern Philology*, 18 (1920), 101-8


---, *English Civic Pageantry 1558-1642* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971)


Berry, Edward, ‘Sidney’s May Game for the Queen’, *Modern Philology*, 86 (1989), 252-64


Berry, Steve, *The King’s Deception* (London: Hodder, 2013)


Bingham, Caroline, *Darnley: A Life of Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, Consort of Mary Queen of Scots* (London: Constable, 1995)


---, A Switch of Language: Elizabeth I’s Use of the Vernacular as a Key to Her Early Protestantism’, *Journal of Anglican Studies*, 2012, 1-14


Bozzay, Anne Hecox, ‘A Dutch Perspective on Sidney’s Elegues’, *Sidney Journal*, 17 (1999), 31-40


---, ‘“...the hole matter opened”: Iconic Representation and Interpretation in “The Quenes Majesties Passage”, *Criticism*, 28 (1986), 1-25


Brennan, Michael G., ‘The Date of the Countess of Pembroke’s Translation of the Psalms’, *RES*, 33 (1982), 434-6


---, *A history of Women’s Political Thought in Europe, 1400-1700* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009)


Butler, Katherine, ‘“By Instruments Her Powers Appeare”: Music and Authority in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I’, *RQ*, 65 (2012), 353-84

---, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2015)


Carpenter, Sarah, ‘Performing Diplomacies: The 1560s Court Entertainments of Mary Queen of Scots’, *Scottish Historical Review*, 82 (2003), 194-225


---, *Readings in Renaissance Women’s Drama* (London: Routledge, 1998)


Chastel, A, ‘La rencontre de Salomon et de La Reine de Saba dans l’iconographe medieval’, *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 35 (1949), 99-114

Chedgzoy, Kate, *Women’s Writing in the British Atlantic World: Memory, Place and History, 1550-1700* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007)


Christy, Miller, ‘Queen Elizabeth’s Visit to Tilbury in 1558’, *EHR*, 34 (1919), 43-61


Clement, Jennifer, “‘The Imperial Votress’: Divinity and Femininity *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*’, *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, 34 (2008), 163-84
Clements, Robert J., ‘The Cult of the Poet in Renaissance Emblem Literature’, *PMLA*, 59 (1944), 672-85
Coatalen, Guillaume, ‘Queen Elizabeth I’s 24 Letters in the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg’, *Varieng*, forthcoming
Coch, Christine, “‘Mother of My Contreye’: Elizabeth I and Tudor Constructions of Motherhood’, *ELR*, 26 (1996), 423-51
Cole, Mary Hill, *The Portable Queen* (Amherst: Massachusetts UP, 1999)
---, *Archbishop Grindal, 1519-1583: The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1979)
---, ‘Elizabeth I and the Verdicts of History’, *Historical Research*, 76 (2003), 469-91
---, *Elizabeth I* (Oxford: OUP, 2007)
---, ‘Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan via media’, *HJ*, 23 (1980), 255-73


Crane, Frank D., ‘Euripides, Erasmus and Lady Lumley’, *Classical Journal*, 39 (1944), 223-8


Crane, Mary Thomas, ““Video Et Taceo”: Elizabeth I and the Rhetoric of Counsel’, *SEL*, 28 (1988), 1-15


Cunningham, Karen, “‘She Learns As She Lies’: Work and the Exemplary Female in English Early Modern Education’, *Exemplaria*, 7 (1995), 209-35

Daly, Peter, *Companion to Emblem Studies* (New York, NY: AMS, 2008)

Danner, Bruce, *Spenser’s War on Lord Burghley* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011)


Davis, Natalie Zemon “‘Women’s History’ In Transition: The European Case’, *Feminist Studies*, 3 (1976), 83-103


Dolven, Jeff, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago, IL: Chicago IL, 2007)


---, *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011)


Duncan, Sarah and Valerie Schutte, eds, *The Birth of A Queen: Essays on the Quincentenary of Mary I* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2016)


---, ‘Much Ado With Red and White: The Earliest Readers of Shakespeare’s Venus and Adonis (1593)’, *RES*, 44 (1993), 479-501


Elliot, Robert, *The Literary Persona* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 1982)

Ellis, Roger, ‘The Juvenile Translations of Elizabeth Tudor’, *Translation and Literature*, 18 (2009), 157-80
---, *England Under the Tudors* (London: Methuen, 1955)


Ephraim, Michelle, *Reading the Jewish Woman on the Elizabethan Stage* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007)


Ferguson, Margaret W., *Dido’s Daughters: Literary, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2003)

Findlay, Alison, *Playing Spaces in Early Women’s Drama* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006)
Findlay, Alison, and Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, eds, Women and Dramatic Production: 1550-1700 (Harlow; Longman, 2000)
Finglass, Patrick, & Adrian Kelly, eds, Stesichorus in Context (Cambridge: CUP, 2015)
Fisher, Will, Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture (Cambridge: CUP, 2010)
---, Triumphal Forms: Structural Patterns in Elizabethan Poetry (Cambridge: CUP, 2010)
---, The Mind of the Book: Pictorial Title Pages (Oxford: OUP, 2016)
Friedman, John Block, Orpheus in the Middle Ages (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1970)
---, ‘The Myth of Elizabeth at Tilbury’, Sixteenth Century, 23 (1992), 95-114


Gent, Lucy, and Nigel Lewellyn, eds, *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, 1540-1600* (London: Reaktion Books, 1990)

Gentzler, Edwin, *Contemporary Translation Theories* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2001)


Gillespie, Katherine, *Domesticity and Dissent in the Seventeenth Century: English Women Writers and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009)


Gordon, Donald, ‘“Veritas Filia Temporis”: Hadrianas Junius and Geoffrey Whitney’, *JWCI*, 3 (1939), 228-40


---, 'Bring Out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation' (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2001)
Jardine, Lisa and Anthony Grafton, "‘Studied for Action’: How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy", Past & Present, 129 (1990), 30-78
Green, Janet M., ‘“I My Self”: Queen Elizabeth I’s Oration at Tilbury Camp’, Sixteenth Century, 28 (1997), 421-45
---, ‘Queen Elizabeth I’s Latin Reply to the Polish Ambassador’, Sixteenth Century, 31 (2000), 987-1008
Green, Michael, To Corinth with Love (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982)
---, Renaissance Self-Fashioning (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 1980; repr, 2005)
---, Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture (London: Routledge, 2007)
Greene, David, ‘Lady Lumley and Greek Tragedy’, Classical Journal, 36 (1941), 537-47
---, The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry (New Haven, CT: Yale, 1982)
---, Poetry, Signs, And Magic (Newark: Delaware UP, 2005)
Grieco, Sara F. Matthews, ‘Georgette De Montenay: A Different Voice in Sixteenth-Century Emblems’
---, RQ, 47 (1994), 793-871
Groot, Wim de, ed., The Seventh Window: The King’s Window Donated By Philip II and Mary Tudor to Sint Janskirk in Gouda (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005)
---, *The Tudor Monarchy* (London: Arnold, 1997)
Hackett, Helen, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995)
---, *Women and Romance Fiction in the English Renaissance* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000)
Hackett, Helen, ed., *Early Modern Exchanges* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015)
Hager, Alan, ‘Rhomboid Logic: Anti-Idealism and a Cure for Recusancy in Sidney’s *Lady of May*’, *ELH*, 57 (1990), 485
---, *Elizabeth I* (London: Longman, 1988)
---, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008)

Hannay, Margaret P., “‘Princes You as Men Must Dy’: Genevan Advice to Monarchs in the Psalms of Mary Sidney”, *ELR*, 19 (1989), 22-41


---, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010)

Hannay, Margaret P., ed., *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women As Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works* (Kent: Kent State UP, 1985)


Harmer, James, ‘Spenser’s “goody Thought”: Heroides 15 and The Teares of the Muses’, *RS*, 22 (2008), 324-37


---, ‘Elizabeth Tudor’s Book of Devotions: A Neglected Clue to the Queen’s Life and Character’, *Sixteenth Century*, 12 (1981)

Hayes, A. M. ‘Wyatt’s Letters to his Son’, *Modern Language Notes*, 49 (1934), 446-9

Hazard, Mary E., *Elizabethan Silent Language* (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska UP, 2000)


---, ‘Queen Elizabeth I and the Persistence of Patriarchy’, *Feminist Review*, 1980, 45-65


Henderson, Judith Rice, ‘Euphues and His Erasmus’, *ELR*, 12 (1982), 135-61


Hodapp, William F., *The Figure of Minerva in Medieval Literature* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2019)


Holladay, Joan A., *Visualising Ancestry in the High and Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: CUP, 2019)


Horbury, Ezra, ‘Early Modern Transgender Fairies’, *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 8 (2021), 75-95


---, ‘Translation, Early Printing and Gender in England’, *Florilegium*, 23 (2006), 41-67


Hunt, Alice, ‘The Monarchical Republic of Mary I’, *HJ*, 52 (2009), 557-72


Iannaccora, Giuliana, and Alessandra Petrina, ‘To and From the Queen: Modalities of Epistolography in the Correspondence of Elizabeth I’ *Journal of Early Modern Studies*, 3 (2014), 68-89


---, *Reading Shakespeare Historically* (London: Routledge, 1996)


Jenkins, Elizabeth, *Elizabeth the Great* (London: Gollancz, 1958)

Johnston, George Burke, ‘William Camden’s Elegy on Roger Ascham’, *SP*, 70 (1973), 160-71

Johnson, L Staley, *‘The Shepheardes Calender’: An Introduction* (University Park, PA: Penn State UP, 2008)
Jones, Marjorie G., Frances Yates and the Hermetic Tradition (Lake Worth, FL: Ibis Press, 2008)
Ingram, Kevin, and Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano, eds, The Conversos and Moriscos in Late Medieval Spain and Beyond: Volume 3, Displaced Persons (Leiden: Brill, 2016)
---, The Birth of the Elizabethan Age: England in the 1560s (Oxford: OUP, 1993)
---, Feminism and the Humanists: The Case of Sir Thomas Elyot’s Defence of Good Women’, RQ, 36 (1983), 181-201
---, Shakespeare’s Monarchies: Ruler and Subject in the Romances (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1999)
---, Philip of Spain (New Haven, CT: Yale, 1997)
Kantorowicz, Ernst H., The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology (Princeton, NJ: Princeton, 1957)
Kastan, David Scott, Shakespeare After Theory (London: Routledge, 1999)
---, Shakespeare and the Book (Cambridge: CUP, 2001)
---, ‘An Early English Metrical Psalm: Elizabeth’s or John Bale’s?’, Notes and Queries, 219 (1974), 404-5
---, “‘She Was a Queen, and Therefore Beautiful’: Sidney, His Mother, and Queen Elizabeth’, RES, 43 (1992), 18-39
---, ‘Early Feminist Theory and the “Querelle des Femmes”, 1400-1789’, *Signs*, 8 (1982), 4-28
Kewes, Paulina, ‘“Plesures in Lernyng” and the Politics of Counsel in Early Elizabethan England: Royal Visits to Cambridge and Oxford’, *ELR*, 43 (2016), 333-75
Kimbrough, Robert, and Philip Murphy, ‘The Helmingham Hall Manuscript of Sidney’s *The Lady of May*: A Commentary and Transcription’, *Renaissance Drama*, 1 (1968), 103-19
---, ‘The Godly Woman in Elizabethan Iconography’, *RQ*, 38 (1985), 41-84
---, ‘Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen’, *RQ*, 43 (1990), 30-74
---, *Foxe’s ‘Book of Martyrs’ and Early Modern Print Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006)
---, *Continental Humanistic Poetics: Studies in Erasmus, Castiglione, Marguerite De Navarre, Rabelais, And Cervantes* (Amherst: Massachusetts UP, 1989)
---, *Shakespeare’s Webs: Networks of Meaning in Renaissance Drama* (London: Routledge, 2004)
Kneidel, Gregory, “Mightie Simplesnesse”: Protestant Pastoral Rhetoric and Spenser’s *Shepheardes Calender*, *SP*, 96 (1999), 257-312
Kilroy, Gerard ‘The Queen’s Visit to Oxford in 1566: A Fresh Look at Neglected Manuscript Sources’, *Recusant History*, 31 (2013), 331-73
Lee Jnr, Maurice, *Great Britain’s Solomon: James VI and I in His Three Kingdoms* (Urbana, IL: Illinois UP, 1990)
---, ‘Paulus Melissus and Jacobus Falekenburgius: Two German Protestant Humanists at the Court of Queen Elizabeth’, *Sixteenth Century*, 38 (2007), 97-110

Leedham-Green, Elisabeth, *Verses Presented to Queen Elizabeth I by the University of Cambridge, August 1564*: Cambridge University Library MS Add. 8915 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1993)


Lentricchia, Frank, *Criticism and Social Change* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 1983)

---, *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001)
---, *Dreaming the English Renaissance: Politics and Desire in Court and Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008)


---, *The Early Elizabethan Succession Question 1558-1568* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1966)

---, *Form & Reform in Renaissance* (Newark: Delaware UP, 2000)


Lombardo, Paul A. ‘The Great Chain of Being and the Limits to the Machiavellian Cosmos’, *Journal of Thought*, 17 (1982), 37-52
Macleman, Ian, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983)
Manzione, Carol Kazmierczak, *Christ’s Hospital of London, 1552-1598: A Passing Deed of Pity* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna UP, 1995)

Martin, Jessica, and Alec Ryrie, eds, *Private and Domestic Devotion in Early Modern Britain* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012)


Masek, Rosemary, ‘The Humanistic Interests of the Early Tudor Episcopate’ *Church History*, 39 (1970), 5-17

Masi, Michael, *Boethius and the Liberal Arts* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1982)


Matheson, Peter, ‘Martyrdom or Mission? A Protestant Debate’, *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte*, 80 (1979), 154-171


Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., ‘Strato and the Musa Puerilis’ *Hermes*, 100 (1972), 215-40


---, ‘George Puttenham’s Lewd and Illicit Career’, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 50 (2008), 143-176


McClure, Peter, and Robin Headlam Wells, ‘Elizabeth I as a Second Virgin Mary’, *RS*, 4.1 (1990), 38-70


McDonald, Tamara Jeffers, *Virgin Territory: Representing Sexual Inexperience in Film* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2010)
Millar, Oliver, *The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Royal Collection* (London: Phaidon, 1963)


---, ‘Eliza, Queen of Shepheardes,’ and the Pastoral of Power’, *ELR*, 10 (1980), 153-82


---, ‘Shaping Fantasies’: Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture’, *Representations*, 1.2 (Spring 1983), 61-94


---, ‘Idols of the Queen: Policy, Gender, and the Picturing of Elizabeth I’, *Representations*, 17.68 (Spring, 1999), 108-61

---, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Author, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2006)


Mueller, Janel, ‘Devotion as Difference: Intertextuality in Queen Katherine Parr’s “Prayers or Meditations” (1545)’, *HLQ*, 53 (1990), 171-97

Mullaney, Steven, ‘Strange Things, Gross Terms, Curious Customs: The Rehearsal of Cultures in the Late Renaissance’, *Representations*, 1.3 (Spring, 1983), 40-67

---, *The Place of the Stage: Licence, Play and Power in Renaissance England* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 1988)


Neale, J.E., *Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1934; repr, 1952)

---, *The Elizabethan House of Commons* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947)


---, *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments*, 2 vols (London: Jonathan Cape, 1953-7)

---, *Essays in Elizabethan History* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1958)


---, ‘Women, the Republic of Letters, and the Public Sphere in the Mid-Seventeenth Century’, *Criticism*, 46 (2004), 223-40

O.B., Hardison, reverse and move up accordingly *Prosody and Purpose in the English Renaissance* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1989)


Oakeshott, W., *The Queen and the Poet* (London: Faber & Faber, 1960)


Ong, Walter, ‘Latin Literature Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite’, *SP*, 56 (1959), 103-24

Ord, Melanie, ‘Classical and Contemporary Italy in Roger Ascham’s The Scholemaster (1570)’, *RS*, 16 (2002), 202-16


Orgel, Stephen, ‘Sidney’s Experiment in Pastoral: The Lady of May’, *JWCI*, 26 (1963), 198-203


---, “‘Give Ear O’ Princes’: Deborah, Elizabeth, and the Right Word’, Explorations in Renaissance Culture, 30 (2004), 111-9
Overell, M. Anne, Italian Reform and English Reformations, c. 1535- c. 1585 (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008
Panek, Jennifer, Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy (Cambridge: CUP, 2004)
Paranque, Estelle, Elizabeth I of England through Valois Eyes: Power, Representation, and Diplomacy in the Reign of the Queen, 1558-1588 (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2018)
Parker, Patricia, Shakespeare and the Question of Theory (London: Routledge, 1985)
Parker, Patricia, and David Quint, Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1986)
Parry, Graham, The Golden Age Restor’d: The Culture of the Stuart Court, 1603-42 (Manchester: Manchester UP)
Pask, Kevin, The Emergence of the English Author: Pre-scripting the Life of the Poet in Early Modern England (Cambridge: CUP, 1996)
Patterson, W. B., King James VI/I and the Reunion of Christendom (Cambridge: CUP, 1997)
Paul, Joanne, Counsel and Command in Early Modern Thought (Cambridge: CUP, 2020)
Peltonen, Markku, Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought 1570-1640 (Cambridge: CUP, 1995)
Pender, Patricia, Early Modern Women’s Writing and the Rhetoric of Modesty (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012)
Petersen, Rodney L., Preaching in the Last Days: The Theme of ‘Two Witnesses’ in the 16th and 17th Centuries (Oxford: OUP, 1993)
Petrina, Alessandra, and Laura Tosi, eds, Representations of Elizabeth I in Early Modern
Culture (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011)
Petrina, Alessandra, ed., Queen and Country: The Relation Between the Monarch and the People in the Development of the English Nation (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011)


---, Images of a Queen: Mary Stuart in Sixteenth-Century Literature (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1964)

Pickett, Penny, ‘Sidney’s Use of Phaedrus in The Lady of May’, SEL, 16 (1976), 33-50

Piera, Montserrat, Women Readers and Writers in Medieval Iberia: Spinning the Text (Leiden: Brill, 2019)


Pincombe Michael (as Mike) and Zsolt Almási, eds, New Perspectives on Tudor Culture (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012)

Pinson, Yona, ‘Connotations of Sin and Heresy in the Figure of the Black King in Some Northern Renaissance Adorations’, Artibus et Historiae, 17 (1996), 159-75

Pitts, Vincent J., Henri VI of France: His Reign and Age (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2009)


Pollnitz, Aysha, Princely Education in Early Modern Britain (Cambridge: CUP, 2015)


Potter, Mary ‘Gender Equality and Gender Hierarchy in Calvin’s Theology’, Signs, 11 (1986), 725-39

Purnis, Jan, ‘The Stomach and Early Modern Emotion’, University of Toronto Quarterly, 79 (2010), 800-18


---, ‘Reading Marguerite de Navarre: An Aged Professor's Meditation’, Criticism, 63 (2021), 87-94

Putnam, Michael, C. J., and Jan M. Ziolkowski, The Virgilian Tradition: The First Fifteen Hundred Years (New Haven, CT: Yale, 2008)


Quint, David, Origin and Originality in Renaissance Literature: Version Versions of the Source (New Haven, CT: Yale, 1986)
Rackin, Phyllis, Shakespeare and Women (Oxford: OUP, 2005)
Radcliffe, David Hill, Edmund Spenser, a Reception History (London: Camden House, 1996)
Ramsay, G. D., The City of London in International Politics at the Accession of Elizabeth Tudor (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1975)
Rankin, Mark, Christopher Highley, and John N. King, eds, Henry VIII and His Afterlives: Literature, Politics, and Art (Cambridge: CUP, 2009)
Raven, D. S., Latin Metre (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1998)
Read, Conyers, Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth (New York, NY: Knopf, 1960)
---, Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth (New York, NY: Jonathan Cape, 1962)
---, Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967)
Reeves, John D., ‘The Judgment of Paris as a Device of Tudor Flattery’, Notes and Queries, 199 (1954), 7-11
Reeves, Ryan, English Evangelicals and Tudor Obedience (Brill: Leiden, 2013)
Reid, Jonathan Andrew, King’s Sister – Queen of Dissent: Marguerite of Navarre (1492-1549) and Her Evangelical Network, 2 vols (Leiden, Brill: 2009)
Reiss, Edmund, Boethius (Boston, MA: Twayne, 1982)
Relihan, Joel C., The Prisoner’s Philosophy: Life and Death in Boethius’s ‘Consolation’ (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame UP, 2007)
Rener, F., Interpretatio: Language and Translation from Cicero to Tytler (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989)
Reynolds, Paige Martin, ‘George Peele and the Judgement of Elizabeth I’, SEL, 50
---, ‘Love and a Female Monarch: The Case of Elizabeth Tudor’, JBS, 38 (1999), 133-60
---, ‘Gender Difference and Tudor Monarchy: The Significance of Queen Mary I’, Parergon, 21 (2004), 27-46
---, ‘Mary Tudor as “Sole Quene”: Gendering Tudor Monarchy’, HJ, 40 (1997)

Riehl, Anna, *The Face of Queenship: Early Modern Representations of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010); see also Ann Riehl Bertoleit


Rose, Mary Beth, *Gender and Heroism in Early Modern English Literature* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2002)

---, ‘The Gendering of Authority in the Public Speeches of Elizabeth I’, *PMLA*, 115 (2000), 1077-82

---, *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Literary and Historical Perspectives* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1986)


---, ‘Changing Places: The Marriage and Royal Entry of Philip, Prince of Austria, and Mary Tudor, July-August 1554’, *Sixteenth Century*, 36 (2005), 761-84


Schleiner, Winfried, “‘Divina Virago’: Queen Elizabeth as an Amazon’, *SP*, 75 (1978), 168-80


---, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven, CT: Yale, 2009)

---, *Reading Authority and Representing Rule in Early Modern England* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013)


---, *Oral Culture and Catholicism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007)

---, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999)


Shenk, Linda, “‘To Love and Be Wise”: The Earl of Essex, Humanist Court Culture, and England’s Learned Queen, *EMLS*, Special Issue 16 (2007)


Sherwood, Marion, *Tennyson and the Fabrication of Englishness* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013)


Skinner, Quentin, ‘Geoffrey Elton and the Practice of History’, TRHS, 6th ser., 7 (1997), 301-16

---, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought (Cambridge: CUP, 1978)


Smarr, Janet Levarie, Joining the Conversation: Dialogues by Renaissance Women (Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan UP, 2005)

Smith, Hallett, Elizabethan Poetry, A Study in Conventions, Meaning and Expression (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1952)


Smith, Lacey Baldwin, Elizabeth Tudor: Portrait of a Queen (Little Brown & Co, 1977)

---, Elizabeth I (St Louis: Forum Press, 1980)

Somerset, Anne, Elizabeth I (New York, NY: Knopf, 1991)


Stanton, Anne Rudloff, ‘La Genealogye Commence: Kinship and Difference in the “Queen Mary Psalter”’, Studies in Iconography, 17 (1996), 177-224

Stapleton, Michael L., Spenser’s Ovidian Poetics (Newark, DE: Delaware UP, 2009)

Starkey, David, Elizabeth (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000)


Staton, Walter F., ‘Spenser’s “April” Lay as a Dramatic Chorus’, SP, 59 (1962), 111-18


Stevenson, Jane, Women Latin Poets: Language, Gender and Authority from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century (Oxford: OUP, 2005)


Strickland, Agnes, Lives of the Tudor Princesses Including Lady Jane Gray and Her Sisters (London: Longman, Green & Company, 1868)

Strong, Roy, Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963)

---, Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450-1650 (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1984)

---, The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth (Oxford, Clarendon, 1963)


---, ‘The Popular Celebration of the Accession Day of Queen Elizabeth I’, JWCI, 21 (1958), 86-103

Stump, Donald, Spenser’s Heavenly Elizabeth: Providential History in ‘The Faerie Queene’ (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2019)


Tate, William, ‘Solomon, Gender, and Empire in Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus’, *SEL*, 37 (1997), 257-76


Tillotson, Kathleen, review of ‘The Mirror for Magistrates. Edited from the Original Texts in the Huntington Library by Lily B. Campbell’, *MLR*, 34:4 (1939), 585-7


Todd, Margo, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge; CUP, 1988)


Travitsky, Betty S., ‘Reprinting Tudor History, the Case of Catherine of Aragon’, *RQ*, 50 (1997), 164-74


---, ‘Epideictic and epic in the Renaissance’, *New Literary History*, 14 (1983), 497-537


---, ‘Counterfeiting’ *Shakespeare: Evidence, Authorship and John Ford’s Funerall Elegye* (Cambridge, CUP, 2002)
---, *Shakespeare, A Lover’s Complaint, and John Davies of Hereford* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007)
---, ‘Leisure and Idleness in the Renaissance: The Ambivalence of *Otium*,’ *RS*, 4 (1990), 1-37 and 107-54 (in two parts)
---, ‘Form and Function in Roger Ascham’s Prose Style’, *Philological Quarterly*, 55 (1976), 5-18
Walton, Kristen Post, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy: Mary, Queen of Scots and the Politics of Gender and Religion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007)

Weir, Alison, *Elizabeth the Queen* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1998)


White, Helen Constance, *The Tudor Books of Private Devotion* (Madison, WI: Wisconsin UP, 1951)

White, Micheline, ‘The Psalms, War, and Royal Iconography: Katherine Parr’s Psalms or Prayers (1544) and Henry VIII as David’, *RS*, 29 (2015), 554-75


Whitelock, Anna, ‘A Woman in a Man’s World: Mary I and Political Intimacy, 1553-1558’, *Women’s History Review*, 16 (2007), 323-34

---, *Elizabeth’s Bedfellows: An Intimate History of the Queen’s Court* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

Whitelock Anna, and Diarmaid MacCulloch, ‘Princess Mary’s Household and the Succession Crisis, July 1553’, *HJ*, 50 (2007), 265-87


---, *All the Queen’s Men: Elizabeth I and Her Courtiers* (London: Cardinal 1972)


Wilson, Charles, *Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt of the Netherlands* (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1980)


Wilson, Jean, ‘Queen Elizabeth I as Urania’, *JWCI*, 69 (2006), 151-73


Winters, Yvor, *Forms of Discovery: Critical & Historical Essays on the Forms of the Short Poem in English* (Chicago, IL: A. Swallow, 1967)


Yates, Frances, ‘‘Queen Elizabeth as Astraea’’, *JWCI*, 10 (1947), 27-82
---, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975)
---, *Ideas and Ideals in the North European Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 1999)
Yewbrey, Graham, ‘‘John Dee’s ‘Brytish Empire’’: “A Laborious Treatise” on Ophir of 1577’’, *JWCI*, 78 (2015), 247-76
Unpublished Dissertations

Alexander, Josephine Mary, ‘The Theme of the Wise and Foolish Virgins as Part of the Last Judgement Iconography in Flanders and Italy in the late 15th and the 16th Centuries’ (unpublished MPhil diss., University of St Andrews, 1981)


Talks


Maltby, Kate, “‘The Boldness of Her Mind’: How Sharp was Lumley’s Greek?”, unpublished paper delivered at ‘Greek Tragedy’s Renaissance Inflections’, conference hosted by the Centre for Early Modern Exchanges, UCL (12 March 2014)

May, Steven W. ‘Textual Criticism and Two Poems by Queen Elizabeth’, presented at the Conference of the Queen Elizabeth I Society, Omaha, Nebraska, 2013

Online Databases and Other Websites

Calendar of State Papers Online:
Calendar of State Papers, Spain (Simancas), Volume 1, 1558-1567 at British History Online, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/simancas/vol1
Calendar of State Papers, Domestic - Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, 8 vols, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/cal-state-papers--domestic--edw-eliz

Collections of the Science Museum, UK:

Early English Books Online (EEBO):
http://www.proquest.com/eebo


Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB):
https://www.oxforddnb.com/

Royal Collection Trust,
‘Elizabeth I when a Princess c.1546’, picture details https://www.rct.uk/collection/404444/elizabeth-i-when-a-princess