QUEENSHIP AND POWER

Elizabeth I in Writing

Language, Power and Representation in Early Modern England

Edited by

Donatella Montini and Iolanda Plescia

Queenship and Power

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To our dear always
Giorgio and Francesco
Giulio and Andrea

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Elizabeth I in Writing

Donatella Montini and Iolanda Plescia

It was in the opening lines of a pamphlet published in the spring of 1558, only a few months before Elizabeth's coronation, that John Knox famously proclaimed: "To promote a Woman to bear rule, superioritie, dominion or empire above any Realme, Nation, or Citie, is repugnant to Nature, contumelie to God, a thing most contrarious to his reveled will and approved ordinance, and finallie it is the subversion of good Order, of all equitie and justice".[1] This first blast of Knox's prophetic trumpet was directed at three Catholic queens, but Elizabeth was involved in the anathema as well. Women were barred from the legitimate exercise of authority by divine order, and rendered incapable of wielding power by the frailty of their nature. Against such a background Elizabeth began her reign, which explains why she had to become particularly skilful in

[1] John Knox, *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, in David Laing ed., *The Works of John Knox*, vol. IV (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1895), 349–422; 374.

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representing herself and her authority as a monarch. Against all odds, she managed to capitalize on early modern societal expectations of womanly behaviour, using them to her particular advantage. Portraits, progresses, poems and much more: Elizabeth made use of all sorts of occasions, and all forms of communication available to her, to fashion herself or, rather, to have herself fashioned.[2]

Surprisingly, however, despite a wealth of publications on Elizabeth and her performances, her writing was neglected for a long time. Only at the end of the 1980s did the *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* include Queen Elizabeth as an author, citing two poems, though one of her portraits had long decorated the book's cover. Even *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* made a similar choice, including only one speech—her celebrated address to the troops at Tilbury—and still omitting her parliamentary orations. And yet, Elizabeth lived immersed in a "culture of writing", as it has been aptly put:[3] she had been given one of the best humanistic educations of her age, William Grindall and Roger Ascham having been her tutors; she was competent in Greek and Hebrew, fluent in Latin and Italian; she studied history, theology and philosophy. She was, to all intents and purposes, "a monarch in writing".[4]

In 2000, finally, a complete modern-spelling edition of Elizabeth's works, prayers, poems, letters and public speeches was published thanks to the work of Leah Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, who presented for the first time a wide selection of her works in one volume, thus allowing students and scholars alike to compare texts and genres

[2] See in particular Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Charles Beem, *The Lioness Roared: The Problems of Female Rule in English History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); the classic and still very relavant point of departure for any reflection on early modern self-representation is of course Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[3] See Peter Beal and Grace Ioppolo, eds., *Elizabeth I and the Culture of Writing* (London: The British Library, 2007).

[4] Alessandra Petrina, "Introduction," in *Representations of Elizabeth I in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Alessandra Petrina and Laura Tosi (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 1–10. See also Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely Education in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 241–61.

from different periods of Elizabeth's life and production. A few years later, in 2003, Marcus and Mueller edited a crucial companion volume that provides verbatim texts of her autograph works and writings in foreign languages.[5] Nevertheless, in that same year, Steven W. May's survey of the state of criticism on Elizabeth still concluded that "despite the recent demand for expanding or rewriting the canon, Elizabeth's writings have been thus far practically excluded from the chorus of new voices".[6]

This past decade, however, has shown a renewed interest in Elizabeth as an author: in 2009, Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel devoted two volumes to Elizabeth's translations.[7] Rayne Allinson, Peter Beal and Grace Ioppolo, Brenda Hosington, Mel Evans, Carlo M. Bajetta, and so many others have dedicated essays, book-length studies and edited important collections that have helped to reposition Elizabeth's writings, bringing them to the fore within the canon of early modern linguistic and cultural studies.[8]

The present collection newly brings together a number of the authors mentioned so far, further illuminating the multifaceted written

[5] Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, eds., *Elizabeth I. Collected Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000); Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus, eds., *Elizabeth I. Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[6] Steven W. May, "Recent Studies in Elizabeth I," in *The Mysteries of Elizabeth I*, ed. Kirby Farrell and Kathleen Swain (Amherst: University of Massachussetts Press, 2003), 279–93; 287.

[7] Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel, eds., *Elizabeth I. Translations, vol. I (1544–1589), vol. II (1592–1598)* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[8] See in particular Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Beal and Ioppolo 2007; Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume Coatalen, and Jonathan Gibson, eds., *Elizabeth I's Foreign Correspondence. Letters, Rhetoric, and Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Carlo M. Bajetta, ed. and trans., *Elizabeth I's Italian Letters* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Mel Evans, *The Language of Queen Elizabeth I: A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Royal Style and Identity* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013); Brenda Hosington, "Tudor Englishwomen's Translations of Continental Protestant Texts: The Interplay of Ideology and Historical Context," in *Tudor Translation*, ed. Fred Schurink (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 121–42; Brenda Hosington, "'How We Ovght to Knowe God': Princess Elizabeth's Presentation of Her Calvin Translation to Katherine Parr," in *Booldly Bot Meekly. Essays on the Theory and Practice of Translation in the Middle Ages in Honour of Roger Ellis*, ed. Catherine Batt and René Tixier (Tournhout: Brepols, 2017), 353–62.

production of Elizabeth I. The aim of the book is to take a closer, updated look at the role that textuality plays in Queen Elizabeth's life as a powerful, ruling monarch. A range of diverse approaches are adopted here to shed light both on the queen considered as an author in her own right, and as someone whose authority is also reflected in, or produced by, the writing of others, with special regard to the important Anglo–Italian connection: linguistic and philological analyses are offered along with literary and cultural-historical explorations, in an eclectic, and, we feel, particularly fruitful perspective. Of course, the queen's agency and the very authenticity and origin of the materials under analysis remain a permanently thorny issue in studies devoted to her intellectual work. However, the contributors to this volume choose not to focus specifically on the problems of authorship attribution, a topic addressed in many previous studies; these new essays largely build upon the acknowledged canon, and in any case do not disregard the importance of cultural constructs of authoriality, so that even some texts of dubious attribution are considered as crucial indications of Elizabeth's status as cultural agent.

The first part of this book is concerned with bringing into relief Elizabeth's ability as an author and a scholar: an investigation that ultimately also turns into a survey of the multi-layered strategies that the queen employed to acquire and hold power, not so much with her political speeches as with her translations, letters, poems and prayers. These are the subjects of the essays in this section, whose main aim is to make a fresh contribution by encouraging both literary and linguistically minded approaches that reflect upon the variety of text types, stylistic registers, discourse strategies, authorial concerns and linguistic attitudes at play in Elizabeth's corpus.

In "The Young Princess Elizabeth, Neo-Latin and the Power of the Written Word", Brenda Hosington develops a rich exploration of the young Elizabeth's relationship to Latin and her involvement with translation. The essay pays special attention to Elizabeth's early Neo-Latin works, which have attracted little critical scrutiny so far: four familiar letters to her brother Edward, two dedicatory letters to her father and brother, the Latin translation of Katherine Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions*, and a Latin translation of Bernardino Ochino's sermon, "Che cosa è Christo & per che venne al mondo". In Hosington's critical reading, these works demonstrate that at a very early age Elizabeth was acutely aware of the power of the written word, and of the possibilities it could offer her as she strove to articulate a certain conception of the monarchy,

reinforce family relationships, and create for herself the persona of a learned and pious young woman, thus ensuring her personal safety and inclusion in the unstable world of the Tudor court. In other words, they testify to Elizabeth's skill in enacting strategies of self-preservation linked to modalities of self-representation.

Alessandra Petrina's investigation similarly considers the linguistic expertise of Elizabeth as translator of Cicero and sheds new light on the circumstances of the production of her English version of *Pro Marcello*, which was probably undertaken in 1592; the translation, Petrina shows, is situated at a juncture that unites the practice of her *cursus studiorum* and the work she undertook on Latin classics in the years of her maturity. This essay would seem to confirm Leah Marcus's well-known suggestion that one of the queen's reasons for translating was to let the public know that she was engaged in the activity, which she invested with a precise political significance:[9] the translation of Cicero was thus "both a linguistic exercise and a meditation on politics", allowing Elizabeth to develop a sort of meditation on a number of "keywords" that were central to her political practice.

Mel Evans and Donatella Montini go on to discuss Elizabeth's written production from a sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspective. In a corpus-linguistic approach, Evans compiles and compares two corpora, one made up of a holograph and the other of scribal letters, drawing attention to keywords and their frequency, but especially to grammatical forms of self-reference that focus on identity construction, as well as interpersonal language. Differences between letter types emerge that have much to reveal about the representation of the royal self and the positioning of the author in relation to the recipient. The final discussion of a 'hybrid' letter, in which scribal and holographic elements are combined, shows how the text exploits the contrastive potential of both letter types.

Donatella Montini's essay examines Elizabeth's devotional writing, in particular a small corpus of four prayers in vernacular attributed to her, which provide a crucial example of the linguistic and discursive strategies used by the queen in her construction of a personal authorial voice

[9] Leah S. Marcus, "Queen Elizabeth I as Public and Private Poet: Notes Toward a New Edition," in *Reading Monarchs Writing: The Poetry of Henry VIII, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, and James VI/I*, ed. Peter C. Herman (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), 135–53.

directly addressing God. As highly interactional text-types that stage a dialogic relationship between two subjects, one mortal and one divine, prayers as a genre lend themselves to be analysed with the tools of pragmatics, which help qualify Elizabeth's pious idiolect and reaffirm her ability to publicly manage her condition as sovereign, Supreme Governor of the Church and woman. A form of 'devotional Petrarchism' is here inaugurated in which even the Heavenly Father is assigned a tributary role in the queen's self-representation.

Cristina Vallaro's essay closes the first section and in a way introduces the second part of the collection, considering Elizabeth both as an author in her talent as a poetess, and as the subject of popular imagination. The queen's unhappy French love affair and her marriage negotiations with the duke d'Anjou, celebrated in poetic terms as a clash of public and private identities in her famous *On Monsieur's departure*, are here connected to the contemporary lute song by John Dowland, *Now O now I needs must part*, which describes the suffering of a heartbroken lover, elaborating on the themes of absence and desire.

Elizabeth I in Writing as a collection also considers a wider web of relations between the public and private display of language in Tudor culture. Thus, a second selection of essays moves beyond issues of production to consider Elizabeth as she is 'authored', in a sense that both precedes and emanates from her, and includes her dialogue and confrontation with foreign-language traditions. The queen is re-considered as reflected in the writing of her contemporaries, with a special focus on the Italian Renaissance and Anglo–Italian relations: in Carlo M. Bajetta and Guillaume Coatalen's contribution, two complimentary Italian sonnets composed by the young Venetian poet, politician and diplomat Celio Magno (1536–1602) and his congratulatory letter are edited and translated, and commented upon as an example of the charm with which Queen Bess seduced her contemporaries. In addition, Celio Magno's writings yield fascinating information on the relationships between the Republic of Venice and the queen at the beginning of her reign, a relatively under-researched period.

Giovanni Iamartino further elaborates on the queen "in the words of others", in his contribution on Gregorio Leti's 1693 *Vita di Elisabetta*. Leti (1630–1701) was an Italian man of letters whose works were widely read in Europe, often reprinted and translated from Italian into a number of other languages: French, Dutch, and even Russian and German. Well after the queen's death, and almost at the dawn of a new century, Leti

shows just how fascinating her political persona remained—fascinating, yes, but still also extremely troubling. A woman in power for forty-four years is something that Leti really cannot explain if not by appealing to well established gender roles, presenting Elizabeth as a political play-actress, *la comediante politica*, dwelling on her outward appearance and painting her in general as an impostor, especially as far as the queen's relations with her Parliaments and her suitors were concerned.

At the end of this section, Iolanda Plescia's essay proposes to reconsider Elizabeth's much commented-upon linguistic and rhetoric achievements by adding to the picture of the multilingual environment she was brought up in. The textual traces of her mother and father's relationship are followed exploring Henry VIII's love letters to Anne Boleyn, which were divided roughly in half between French and English, with French often used to convey more refined sentiments of affection. Years later, Queen Elizabeth's own use of French in her love letters to the duke d'Anjou, selected here for textual analysis, seems to perform a different function, in which intimacy is constantly intertwined with political preoccupation.

The two essays that close the collection take the investigation a step further, by considering other kinds, and other uses, of language intertwined with the dynamics of power involved in gift making and receiving. It is precisely language as a gift that Nadia Fusini considers in her essay, developing a reflection on a present crafted for Katherine Parr by a still "powerless", young Elizabeth as a way to negotiate a complex relationship with her father and his new wife: her translation of Marguerite de Navarre's *Le Miroir de l'âme pêcheresse*—a text that had been given as a gift by Marguerite herself to Anne Boleyn. Fusini delves into Elizabeth's troubled relationship with the adult figures in her life, considering the ambiguous material of the text, which dealt with the theme of incest; and analysing the significance of a number of material errors in translation that reveal some of her preoccupations as to her own status as the daughter of a king who had called her a bastard child.

Finally, Carole Levin's essay on the material objects given and received by Elizabeth takes into consideration a non-verbal, but no less powerful, mode of communication used by the queen as yet another strategy of self-presentation—in other words, the language of the gift. Levin analyses in detail gift exchanges between Elizabeth and her sister Mary I, her cousin Mary Stuart, and the female relatives of the earl of Essex at the end of her reign, focusing on such tangible presents as clothing

and jewelry; but she takes a step further to put forth the suggestion that promises and advice may have been even more important than the material objects offered, asked for, accepted, or refused by the queen: once again, language, used with extreme awareness of its consequences, is presented as a gift in itself.

Collectively, the essays in *Elizabeth I in Writing* rework the theme of royal authoriality by orienting the spotlight on the complexities of texts produced but also inspired by Elizabeth: on the one hand, texts that although conceived as 'private' pieces, have obvious repercussions on the public sphere due to the very nature of the writing subject; and on the other hand, acts of writing explicitly conceived as having political value but that betray the linguistic traces of a personal identity that cannot be erased. It is this constant attention—paid by the queen, but indeed also by an entire age—to the fine details, the pragmatic force and the dynamics of social communication that this collection wishes to bring to the fore and reappraise.

PART I

Elizabeth as Author

CHAPTER 2

The Young Princess Elizabeth, Neo-Latin, and the Power of the Written Word

Brenda M. Hosington

Elizabeth I's writings, both original and translated, are many and dispersed. Most of course are in English but an appreciable number are in Latin. Her official engagement with this language was confined to formal, diplomatic and foreign correspondence, most of which was composed by her various Latin secretaries, although she would presumably have cast a discerning eye on the missives before signing them. Her life-long personal engagement with both Classical Latin and Neo-Latin was very different in nature, involving correspondence, translations, poetry and orations, and spanned a half century: letters to her brother Edward, four of which are extant (1547–1548); one unofficial, private letter to the Emperor Ferdinand I, announcing her accession and intention to maintain England's role as a strong ally, but which is not in her hand (1558); a brief confidential memorandum to William Cecil admitting her indecision in replying to Mary, Queen of Scots concerning an

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undisclosed matter (1564); a Latin translation of Katherine Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions* and a dedication to her father (1545); a Latin translation of Bernardino Ochino's sermon, "Che cosa è Christo & per che venne al mondo", and a dedication to Edward (1547); two translations from Erasmus, his Latin rendering of Plutarch's *De curiositate* into English (1598) and his own *Dialogus fidei* into French, which is the supposed work that Paul Hentzner reported having seen in 1598 and is now lost; a response poem in reply to an epigram by the German humanist Paul Melissus (1580); three extempore speeches (two in 1564, one in 1592); and a brilliant verbal volley rebuking the Polish Ambassador, Paul de Jaline, for his inappropriate speech.[1] She also translated from Classical Latin into English works and partial works by Seneca, Cicero, Boethius and Horace, as well as a section of a choral ode from *Hercules Oetatus.*

Several of the above have received detailed attention but those composed in Elizabeth's early years have received little, other than that found in the current printed editions of her complete works, one article containing an edition of the Ochino translation with some commentary,[2] and another discussing all four childhood translations of works by Marguerite de Navarre, Katherine Parr, Jean Calvin, and Bernardino Ochino.[3] This present essay seeks to rectify this situation by examining Elizabeth's precocious displays of Latinity in all her early Neo-Latin works: the four familiar letters to her brother, two dedicatory letters to her father and brother, and the Parr and Ochino translations.[4]

[1] Elizabeth's written and extempore original Latin compositions, except the dedicatory epistle to Edward and non-autograph letter to Ferdinand, are in Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus, eds., *Elizabeth I. Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003) and translated into English in Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, eds., *Elizabeth I. Collected Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000); her Parr and Ochino translations and dedicatory letters are in Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel, *Elizabeth I. Translations, 1544–1589* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[2] Vittorio Gabrieli, "Bernardino Ochino: 'Sermo de Christo'. Un inedito di Elisabetta Tudor," *La Cultura. Rivista di filosofia, letturatura e storia* 21, no. 1 (1983): 151–74.

[3] Roger Ellis, "The Juvenile Translations of Elizabeth Tudor," *Translation and Literature* 18, no. 2 (2009): 157–80.

[4] Latin quotations from the letters to Edward are from Mueller and Marcus, *Elizabeth I. Autograph Compositions*, with page references in parentheses in the text. Latin quotations from the Parr and Ochino translations and their accompanying dedicatory epistles are from Mueller and Scodel, *Elizabeth I. Translations, 1544–1589*, again with page references in parentheses in the text. All the English translations provided are mine.

It will argue that they demonstrate, not only her linguistic and rhetorical skills (honed and no doubt aided by her Latin tutors), but also her understanding and use of the power of the pen and the written word as tools with which to protect herself in the unstable world of the court, to fashion herself as a learned and pious young woman, and to give expression to, or even promote, moderate and acceptable religious beliefs in a milieu of fluctuating sectarian loyalties. Moreover, in many ways they contain the seeds of some of her later attitudes and enactment of religious and government policies.

Before turning to these texts, however, we should say something of Elizabeth's training as a translator and her reputation as a Latinist in both her own time and ours. As a princess, she received the finest humanist education possible for a young woman in sixteenth-century England, with some of the best tutors available. Her first Latin tutor remains unidentified but in 1544, when she was eleven, William Grindal, a student of Roger Ascham's in Cambridge, was appointed; upon his death in 1548, Ascham replaced him for two years, although he remained Elizabeth's unofficial teacher throughout his life and was one of her Latin secretaries. Like other humanist pedagogues, such as John Cheke, Edward's tutor in the Classical languages, he believed fervently in the importance of the role played by translation in language instruction, and especially by double or back translation as recommended by Cicero and Quintilian. As a student of both Grindal and Ascham, Elizabeth must have spent many hours translating from Latin into English and vice versa and acquiring in the process linguistic but also rhetorical skills. At the same time, this humanist education taught her the importance of the written word and of an eloquent style, both of which represented power.

Elizabeth's early abilities in Latin earned her many compliments from her contemporaries. The most famous came from Ascham, who in a 1550 letter to the German humanist Johann Sturm praised her as a "star" among other English learned women, surpassing even Thomas More's daughter (Margaret Roper), speaking Latin "expedite, proprie, considerate" ("easily, correctly and carefully"), and reading it with a keen eye to style.[5] In another letter to Sturm in 1551, he praised Elizabeth for her "genius" and "high level of understanding" attained under the tutorship of Grindal.[6] In his preface to *The Scholemaster*, he praised her

[5] Roger Ascham, in *The Whole Works of Roger Ascham, Now First Collected and Revised, with a Life of the Author*, ed. J. A. Giles, 3 vols (London: John Russell Smith, 1864–65), Vol. I, Pt. 2, Letter XCIX, pp. 181–93 (91).

[6] Ascham, in Giles, Vol. 1, Pt. 2, Letter CXVII, pp. 271–74 (272).

for her linguistic ability, especially in Latin and Greek, and desire "for the increase of learning & knowledge", both greater, he contended, than that demonstrated by the "yong Ientelmen of England".[7] John Leland tells Elizabeth in an epigram entitled *Ad serenissimam Elisabetham* about a visit he made to her young brother while both children were living at Ampthill and how impressed he was by her linguistic abilities; at Cheke's instigation, he reminds her, he spoke to her: "Utque salutares me tunc sermone Latino/Egit, ut hunc scirem quantus in ore lepos" ("that then you greet me in the Latin language, so that I might know how charmingly you speak").[8] Much later, Sir Henry Savile dedicated his translation of Tacitus to her, lavishly praising her abilities as a translator and urging her to "communicate to the world" her "most rare and excellent translations of Histories", adding, "if I may call them translations, which haue so infinitelie exceeded the originals", a not uncommon compliment found in Renaissance paratextual discourse.[9] Finally, the praise of Elizabeth's both oral and written competence in Latin emanated not only from English courtiers and admirers, but also from slightly more impartial observers like foreign ambassadors and visitors. Of course, in Renaissance encomia of the "learned lady", praise of expertise in the Classical languages constitutes a topos, yet one cannot dismiss out of hand *all* compliments concerning Elizabeth's Latin.

Two modern-day commentators, however, have done so. T. W. Baldwin, in his 1944 *William Shakspere's small Latine and lesse Greeke*, remained extremely sceptical of the praise heaped on Elizabeth, reducing her status of "learned lady" to that of "pedantic poseur" who was never more than a "learned grammarian"; in a sarcastic and sexist mode, he adapted Dr. Johnson's famous comment on his performing dog to her reputed love of the Classics: "the wonder was not that the sovereign learned so well, but that being a sovereign, and a woman to boot, she should trouble to learn at all".[10] Baldwin endorses various negative opinions of the translations she did in later years, particularly

[7] Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster or Plaine and Perfite Way of Teaching Children, The Latin Tong* (London: John Day, 1570), sig. H1r.

[8] John Leland, *Principum, ac illustrium aliquot & eruditorum in Anglia virorum, encomia* (London: T. Orwin, 1589), 58–9.

[9] Henry Savile, trans., *The End of Nero and Beginning of Galba. Fower Bookes of the Histories of Cornelius Tacitus. The Life of Agricola* (London: R. Robinson, 1591), sig. 2^{v}.

[10] T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakspere's small Latine & lesse Greeke*, 2 vols (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1944), 284.

Pemberton's concerning the Boethius, Plutarch and Horace renderings,[11] which of course are scarcely relevant today, given the sea-change that has taken place in translation studies in the past few decades. As for Elizabeth's childhood Latin translations and letters, Baldwin completely ignores them, contenting himself with mocking her erroneous identification of Horace as a source for a Latin proverb in an English letter.[12]

We have fortunately moved on since Baldwin's day, although as recently as 2000 Dana Sutton went little beyond this. While failing to mention a single Latin work composed by Elizabeth, he claims her portrayal as a humanist scholar of Latin emanated solely from the Tudor propaganda machine, which sought to make her palatable to the English educated elite and help them forget her gender, since Latin was the preserve of the country's male meritocracy. Her fictitious "conspicuous prowess" as a Latinist made her a legitimate participant in the form of male "bonding" that Latin promoted and was born of a state policy.[13] Sutton's reference to male "bonding" echoes Walter Ong's view of Latin as a puberty rite for young boys, restricted to males, and available only to women who were but "occasional exceptions".[14] His energy, however, is expended above all in rather reductively demolishing Elizabeth's reputation as a Latinist, much in the vein of other, earlier male commentators on women's Latin translations and writings. Jane Stevenson's *Women Latin Poets* and the three-volume anthology entitled *Women Writing Latin from Roman Antiquity to Early Modern Europe* have resulted in a

[11] Caroline Pemberton, ed., *Queen Elizabeth's Englishings of Boethius, De consolatione philosophiae, A.D. 1593; Plutarch, De curiositate [A.D. 1598]; Horace, De arte poetica (Part), A.D. 1598*. Early English Text Society, orig. ser. 113 (London: Early English Text Society, 1889).

[12] Baldwin, 1944, 276. Baldwin actually mistakenly identifies her source as Publilius Servus, whose wording is "Feras non culpes quod *mutari* non potest" ("what cannot be *changed* must be endured"). It is, in fact, Erasmus's "Feras non culpes quod *vitari* non potest" ("what cannot be *avoided* must be endured", *Adagia* 214, my italics). It appears more than once in his *De conscribendis epistolis*, a widely used letter writing manual with which Elizabeth was most certainly familiar. Mueller and Marcus also mistakenly attribute the saying to Publilius Servus, although they also mention Erasmus's *Adagia*; however, they do not comment on the "mutari", "vitari" variation, which clearly makes Erasmus the source (Mueller and Marcus, 2003, 26, n. 4).

[13] Dana Sutton, "The Queen's Latin," *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch. Journal of Neo-Latin Language and Literature* 2 (2000): 233–40; 238–9.

[14] Walter J. Ong, "Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite," *Studies in Philology* 56, no. 2 (1959): 103–24; 108.

far more balanced view of female Latinity, although as Stevenson says, few women wrote in what was the language of authority, associated with an educated male elite.[15]

That such learning became an important factor in fashioning Elizabeth's royal image and counteracting criticism based on her gender is undeniable, as Linda Shenk convincingly argues.[16] So, too, is the statement that her later translations served to promote her authority as sovereign and constituted an element of her political rhetoric, as well as attesting to her well-known intellectual abilities.[17] Indeed, Leah Marcus is probably right in suggesting that as queen her primary reason for translating "was in order to be publicly known to be translating [which was] but a form of political assertion".[18] All of this suggests that her Latin was not entirely a figment of her admirers' imagination or simply a tool in her courtiers' propaganda machine, although men in both groups certainly fostered it in part for both personal and political ends. Elizabeth as queen was herself clearly instrumental in creating her own public image of learning and piety, which as Mary Thomas Crane argues, differed significantly from the image created by the men around her.[19] In this essay, I shall argue that such image-making started with her very first Latin compositions and translations, which demonstrate how aware she already was of the power of the written word to shape one's reputation.

[15]Jane Stevenson, *Women Latin Poets. Language, Gender, and Authority from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Laurie J. Churchill, Phyllis R. Brown, and Jane E. Jeffrey, eds., *Women Writing Latin from Roman Antiquity to Early Modern Europe*, 3 vols (New York and London: Routledge, 2002).

[16]Linda Shenk, *Learned Queen. The Image of Elizabeth I in Politics and Poetry* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

[17]Lysbeth Benkert, "Translation as Image-Making: Elizabeth I's Translation of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 6, no. 3 (2001): 1–20, http://purl.oclc.org/emls/06-3/benkboet.htm, date accessed November 10, 2016; Georgia E. Brown, "Translation and the Definition of Sovereignty: The Case of Elizabeth Tudor," in *Travels and Translations in the Sixteenth Century. Selected Papers from the Second International Conference of the Tudor Symposium (2000)*, ed. Mike Pincombe (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 88–103.

[18]Leah S. Marcus, "Queen Elizabeth I as Public and Private Poet: Notes Toward a New Edition," in *Reading Monarch's Writing: The Poetry of Henry VIII, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, and James VI/I*, ed. Peter C. Herman (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), 135–53; 143.

[19]Mary Thomas Crane, "'Video et Taceo': Elizabeth I and the Rhetoric of Counsel," *Studies in English Literature* 14 (1988): 1–15.

Elizabeth's Letters to Edward

The four Latin familiar letters addressed to Edward in 1547 and 1548 reflect the conventions in letter writing taught as part of the humanist curriculum. In the way that the subjects and arguments are set out and the rhetorical strategies employed, Elizabeth proves herself an apt pupil. While the letters appear formal and unoriginal to modern eyes, with phrases no doubt suggested by her tutor, borrowed from letter-writing manuals, or culled from a commonplace book, they are not impersonal or purely mechanical school exercises; nor are they "stilted little letters", as Neville Williams says of both Elizabeth's and Edward's correspondence.[20] Rather, they express the warmth of her affection and depth of her concern for her young brother, although couched in formal and sometimes formulaic language. As Judith Henderson states, letter writing was not expected to be wholly original, or original at all; the line between the familiar and the official letter was blurred, as was the conception of private versus public correspondence; letter writing was taught as an exercise in rhetoric and even familiar letters had to obey certain compositional rules and employ specific formulae.[21] It is in this context that Elizabeth's letters to Edward should be seen.

The letters all begin and end, in humanist fashion, with an appropriate form of address reflecting the rules of social hierarchy. Although Elizabeth is an older sister, Edward is king. The "excelentissimo et nobilissimo", "illustrissimo" and "serenissimo" titles of address used in each letter are thus perfectly correct and conventional; nevertheless, Elizabeth's repetition of these and similar formulae of reverence in various grammatical forms throughout all four letters—"tuam Maiestatem", "Rex serenissime et Illustratissime", "tuam Celsitudinem"—suggests an insecurity on her part vis-à-vis her status in Edward's court. The greatest concentration, no fewer than nine, is tellingly found in her first letter of 14 February 1547, written exactly six days before Edward's coronation and two weeks after their father's death, in response to his letter of condolence addressed to her.[22]

[20] Neville Williams, *Elizabeth, Queen of England* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1967), 10.

[21] Judith Henderson, "On Reading the Rhetoric of the Renaissance Letter," in *Renaissance-Rhetorik/Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. Heinrich F. Plett (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 143–62.

[22] John Gough Nichols, ed., *Literary Remains of King Edward The Sixth. Edited from his Autograph Mansucripts, with Historical Notes, and a Biographical Memoir* (London: J. B. Nichols and Sons for the Roxburgh Club, 1857), 40.

Elizabeth's letter is signed "Maiestatis tuae humilima serua et soror" ("your Majesty's most humble servant and sister") (13). Notice the placing of "serua", which can mean both servant and subject, before "soror". Furthermore, this is the only letter in which she switches abruptly, and in the same sentence, from addressing Edward with the familiar second person singular, "tu", to the more respectful third person: "quod non tantum praesentem praesens omnibus humanitatis officiis prosecuta sit, verumetiam nunc absens suum erga me absentem animum annulo misso testatum fecerit" ("for not only has he in person, while he was present, kindly honoured me with every favour, but even now, although himself absent, will have offered proof of his feelings in his absence by sending me a ring") (12–13). Elizabeth is obviously at pains to stress her feeling of respect for him as king, as a rather densely argued passage demonstrates. Declaring that her feeling "erga tuam Maiestatem obseruantiam et fidem declarabit" ("will demonstrate appropriate reverence and allegiance to your Majesty") (12), she drives the point home by using a favourite humanist rhetorical strategy, the use of a proverb, which she personalizes and intensifies: "Verum haec ego re ipsa et factis potius quam uerbis a te cognosci cupio" ("Truly, by deeds and facts rather than by words do I want you to know this"). A strong declarative sentence follows: "Quod ut fiat ego omnibus viribus contendam" ("To make this so, I shall strive with all my might"). Finally, a long simile reinforces the claim that one's feelings will be seen with the greatest certainty in one's works, just as gold is recognized as such only after it has been fired, purged of dross and completely refined.

Thomas Heywood, despite giving a clearly embellished and idealized account of the bond between Elizabeth and Edward, nevertheless claims a change took place after his coronation: "No sooner was Edward crowned, but that the Lady Elizabeth gave way to his State (…), formerly she loved him as a Brother, now she honours him as her Soveragine".[23] This, however, is not entirely borne out in her Latin letters to Edward. Carole Levin's assessment of their sibling relationship is more accurate, pointing out that such relationships were "predetermined

[23]Thomas Heywood, *Englands Elizabeth: Her Life and Troubles, During Her Minoritie* (London: J. Beale for P. Waterhouse, 1631), 46–7.

by the political and religious constraints of the time", which complicated familial feelings. Elizabeth's relationship with Edward was a mix of sisterly affection, prudence in the face of possible danger to herself, and respect for his kingship.[24] This is especially evident in her letters. In the one sent in February 1547, the first sentence demonstrates the way in which she intertwines and rhetorically juxtaposes the themes of respect and sisterly love, addressing Edward as "tuam Maiestatem" and "Rex Serenissime et Illustrissime" ("your Majesty" and "most Serene and Illustrious King") but thanking him for his "humanitate fraternoque amore" ("kind and brotherly love") (12). Similarly, writing seven months later, she asserts she has neglected to write to him, but out of neither a lack of respect nor forgetfulness: "nunquam obliuisci vel possum, vel debeo" ("I neither could nor should forget [you]") since "tua incolumitate quicquam mihi esse posse optabilius" ("nothing can be more desired by me than your sound health") (13). The letter of February 2, 1548 expresses perhaps most explicitly the feelings of love between Edward and herself, opening strongly and emphatically with "Amoris erga me tui argumenta nulla vel plura, vel illustriora dari potuerunt (…) quàm cum proximè fructu iucundissimae consuetudinis tuae perfruerer" ("Of your love no greater or clearer proof could be given (…) than when recently I enjoyed the satisfaction of your most pleasant companionship"). There follow reminiscences of their conversations and Edward's favours, which, "amorem in me tuum propensum maximeque fraternum perspiciens") ("noting the love and especially your brotherly disposition towards me"), caused her no small joy (14).

While no doubt genuine, these twin expressions of affection and respect also confirm and emphasize her blood relationship to Edward and rightful place in the royal family, as well as her loyalty towards him as a subject. In short, they constitute a strategy of self-preservation. Nor should this be surprising at a time when life had suddenly become less stable and Elizabeth's future under the new boy-king, already surrounded by the executors and counsellors Henry had named in his will, was less clear. Notably, on 4 February, just ten days before Elizabeth

[24]Carole Levin, "Sister-Subject/Sister-Queen: Elizabeth I Among Her Siblings," in *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World: Sisters, Brothers and Others*, ed. Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 77–88; 87.

wrote her letter, they had chosen to invest almost regal power in the hands of Edward Seymour and within a very short time he had been appointed Lord Protector.[25] Meanwhile, Thomas, his brother, future husband of Elizabeth's stepmother and would-be seducer of Elizabeth herself, was trying to exert influence over Edward in the hope of replacing his brother as Lord Protector.[26]

Elizabeth's strategies of self-preservation were also linked to strategies of self-representation. As a pious, serious, learned young girl, she would attract no criticism, in fact, quite the contrary. The religious references in her letters to Edward are nevertheless rather few and far between and rarely rise above invocations of God's aid in keeping the young prince safe or expressions of gratitude that He has, through "some special mercy of divine providence" (14). The parade of learning is far more visible. The four letters are carefully constructed, putting humanist letter writing principles into practice and no doubt reworking the result under Grindal's critical eye. Elizabeth exploits rhetorical strategies such as phrasal reiteration: "certo/certissimo" ("certainly/very surely"), "praesentem/praesens" ("present/in person"), "Cuis sanè cum recorder (quotidie autem recordor)" ("[the companionship] about which I do indeed think (and I do think about it dayly)"). Three of the four letters begin in humanist mode, starting with the conjunctions "quod" ("the fact that") and "tametsi" ("even if") to introduce apologies for not having written. The uses for her classical allusions are threefold: to drive home a point, display her knowledge of the strategy in question, and display her familiarity with respected authors. Our lives are uncertain, she tells the recovering Edward in her letter of 20 September 1547, and quotes Pindar and Homer to prove it: "nimirum qui Pindari testimonio nihil sit aliud, quam vmbrae somnium" ("without doubt, according to Pindar, [life] is nothing other than the dream of a shadow") and "homine, vt ait homerus, nihil terra alit fragilius" ("Earth nurtures nothing more fragile, Homer says, than man") (14). One year later, in 1548, feeling ill at ease after receiving so many of Edward's favours and fearing he would regret them, she calls upon Cicero's *De officiis* as an authority: Edward might "in me benefacta, aut male locata, aut potius

[25] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant. Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London: Allen Lane, 1999), 7.

[26] David Loades, *Intrigue and Treason: The Tudor Court, 1547–1558* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2004), 36–8.

(vt Ciceronis ex Ennio sumptis vtar verbis) malefacta esse arbitraretur" ("consider his favours to me to be either ill-placed, or rather (to use Cicero's words in quoting Ennius), ill deeds") (15).

Elizabeth also comments on the question of kingship, which serves both to compliment and subtly advise Edward. At the same time, it points forward to her own later exercise of sovereignty. Expressing gratitude for his recovery, she prays that "tu huisice regni habenis tractandis quamdiutissimè seruareris" ("you might be preserved for the longest time possible, holding the reins of this kingdom") (13). The metaphor, although familiar in discourse on kingship, had a special resonance, and perhaps constituted a subtle warning, in the context of the months following the young king's coronation and the power play surrounding him. The second comment, made five months later in 1548, is less subtle. In a moment of self-revelation, but also perhaps of self-fashioning, Elizabeth tells Edward that her regret for not having written was couched in inadequate "mutis vocibus" ("mute words"), especially since, as Edward knows, she characteristically does not say in words as much as, or more than, she thinks. Yet everywhere others do so, "maxime verò in aulis principum et Regum" ("in truth, especially in the courts of princes and kings") (15). This warning to her young brother, surrounded by conniving and flattering courtiers, is immediately followed by a Greek pun taken from a classical source: Edward must not have more "κόλακασ" [sic] ("flatterers") inside the court than "κόρακασ" [sic] ("crows") outside of it. A similar warning was possibly intended in her above-mentioned reference to gold refining in the Feburary 1547 letter. The metaphor recurs often in the Bible but its use in Proverbs 25: 4–5 is particularly apt: warning a king against wicked advisors, it says the "dross" must be eliminated so that his throne can be established in righteousness.

Elizabeth's Translation of the *Prayers or Meditacions*

Elizabeth's first engagement with the theme of kingship had occurred two years earlier, this time intertwined with expressions of affection for her father. In December 1545, she presented Henry with her New Year gift of a trilingual translation of Katherine's Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions, wherin the mynde is styrred paciently to suffre all afflictions here, to sette at nought the vayne prosperitie of this worlde, and alway to longe for the euerlastyng felicitie*, prefaced by a dedicatory epistle in Latin. Katherine

received a similar new year's gift, an English translation of Chapter 1 of Calvin's *Institution de la religion chrestienne*, it, too, preceded by a dedicatory epistle, this time in French. As I have argued in relation to that dedication, Elizabeth clearly understood and successfully fulfilled the requirements of the Renaissance dedicatory epistle. At the same time, she had her dedication serve a threefold purpose: to express gratitude for being reinstated at court and secure that reinstatement, to produce a religious text that would project an image of herself as pious but without risking her father's disapproval, and to display her linguistic and translating abilities.[27]

A similar familiarity with epistolary conventions and concern with self-preservation and self-fashioning are apparent in her dedication to Henry, in which she marshals a range of rhetorical devices in order to pen an extremely personal and important letter at a crucial time in her life, one that emphasizes above all her daughterly relationship to the king. Just one year before, he had restored Mary and Elizabeth as legitimate heirs to the throne after Edward. In the ensuing months, Elizabeth was present in court on several occasions and was made the third ranking lady after Katherine Parr and Mary. It is therefore no coincidence that the dedicatory epistle is notable for its many references to "father", "daughter" and "heir". Elizabeth establishes her submissive filial relationship to Henry in the title, "Elizabeta Maiestatis Suis humillima filia, (…) benedictionem suam suplex petit" ("Elizabeth, His Majesty's most humble daughter, (…) beseeches his blessing") (138). Three phrases, containing verbal repetition and rising to a crescendo, describe how she is bound to Henry as both subject and daughter: "lege regni vt domino, lege naturae vt domino, et patri meo lege diuina, vt amplissimo domino, et singulari, ac benignissimo patri, et omnibus legibus et officijs (…) obstricta sim" ("as lord by royal law, as lord by natural law, and as my matchless and most benevolent father and most magnificent lord by divine law, and by all laws and duties (…) am I bound"). Elizabeth then subtly reminds him that her choice to translate his wife's work is an appropriate task for a daughter of his, "quae non modo virtutum tuarum imitatrix, sed illarum etiam *haeres* esse debeam" ("who is not only an imitator of your

[27] Brenda Hosington, "'How We Ovght to Knowe God': Princess Elizabeth's Presentation of Her Calvin Translation to Katherine Parr," in *Booldly bot meekly. Essays on the Theory and Practice of Translation in the Middle Ages in Honour of Roger Ellis*, ed. Catherine Batt and René Tixier (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 353–63.

virtues, but also an *inheritor* of them") (my italics). She ends by referring to "paterna tua bonitas" ("your fatherly goodness") then rather daringly claims he should esteem the work all the more since, although his wife composed it, "paulo in maiori precio habendum esse, quia abs filia tua conuertebatur" ("it is to be attributed somewhat greater worth because it has been translated by your daughter") (139). Perhaps Elizabeth was subtly reminding her father that as a potential heir to the throne, she ranked higher than her stepmother, or that familial relations counted for more than spousal ones. She might even have been imagining that eyes other than her father's and stepmother's might see this, since she knew that manuscripts often circulated in court. In her earlier dedicatory epistle to the Marguerite de Navarre translation she had requested Katherine be the sole reader, "lesse my fauttes be knowen of many" (42). Now, perhaps, she was envisaging just the contrary, in which case this statement, together with the many father–daughter references, would constitute an astute move in preserving her rank at court.

Elizabeth expresses her allegiance to Henry as a subject but also makes two other references to the nature of royal authority, both of course designed to flatter him but at the same to articulate the Tudor conception of kingship. In her title, she describes him as "secundum christum" ("second to Christ"), a notion to which she will return in her dedication of the Ochino translation to Edward. She hopes Henry will appreciate this work on a "divine subject", "Nam nihil acceptius esse debet regi, quem philosophi deum in terris esse sentiunt" ("For nothing should be more acceptable to a king, whom philosophers believe is a god on earth") (138). The young Elizabeth obviously already had a firm grasp of the concept of the divine nature of kingship. She is also possibly referring to a current argument in favour of attributing to Henry a "godlike sovereignty".[28]

Elizabeth also uses the epistle to Henry to portray herself as pious and learned, as indeed she had done in the Calvin dedication. She does so in part by stressing the piety of Parr and her work, describing her prominently on the Latin title-page as "Nobilissimam et Pientissimam Dominam Catherinam". The title also emphasizes the religious nature of the text that follows, for it is "Ex quibusdam pijs scriptoribus (…) collectae" ("collected (…) out of pious writings") (137). In the dedication

[28] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, 136, n. 5.

itself, Elizabeth says of both author and text, "tam pium sit, et pio studio atque magna industria Reginae illustrissimiae fuerit anglicè collectum" ("it is so pious and was put together in English by the pious endeavour and great diligence of a most illustrious queen") (138). Further on, Elizabeth repeats that it is "argumento pius" ("pious in its subject matter") (139) and states that positive acceptance of her work will, as she grows in years, incite her to grow in fear of God, "itaque fiet vt illum religiosius colam" ("so that I might worship him more religiously"). The epistle closes on a wish for Henry's soul and life, "vt in vera pietate, ac religione (…) viuamus" ("so that we might live (…) in true piety and in religion"). Note Elizabeth's use of the inclusive first person plural verb that unites her, Henry, his subjects, and any other potential readers.

Her aspirations are not, however, limited to piety, for she also hopes to grow in "scientia", which can mean "knowledge", but also "expertise" or "skill". Availing herself of the popular rhetorical figure typically found in Renaissance dedications, the modesty topos, she traditionally imputes any possible mistakes to "tenera, et inchoata studia, et puerilis ingenij immaturitas" ("studies that are incomplete and not fully developed, and a childish mind that is immature") (138), and to "ignorationem, aetatem, breue tempus studij" ("ignorance, youth, and little study time") (139). Yet, again conventionally, this 'modesty' is seemingly contradicted by her claim concerning the importance of her translation and, implicitly, by her choice to translate the text, not into one language, but into three. Hardly a modest endeavour. However, it was a clever one. By choosing Latin, a prestige and male-associated language, and suitably placing it first, she would impress her father with her erudition; a prestige vernacular, Italian, would particularly charm Katherine, who took pride in speaking it; another one, French, would please Henry and Katherine, since they both spoke it. She was thus making a gift guaranteed to satisfy both parents and at the same time demonstrate just how learned she really was.

A final testimony to her learning is the way in which her dedicatory epistle conforms to and deploys humanist rhetorical principles and the conventions of dedication writing. It establishes both a personal and suppliant relationship with the dedicatee, although the solicitation is for paternal love rather than patronage; it acts as a 'threshold' leading the reader into the text and lends the translated text authority; it expresses modesty, apologizing for her incompetence on account of inexperience, youth, inadequate education, and pressure of time, while at the same

time professing the importance and value of her work; finally, it justifies the choice of subject and author.

Translations proved popular as New Year's gifts, as seen, for example, in those given to Elizabeth once she was on the throne.[29] They represent roughly one quarter of the total number given to her but 42% of the printed books. Children could offer their own translations to parents, thus simultaneously pleasing and impressing them, as indeed the earl of Arundel's daughters, son-in-law and stepson sought to do with their Latin and English translations.[30] The choice of a trilingual translation of Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions*, be it hers or her tutor's, was thus a perfectly conventional if ambitious gift, yet at the same time particularly astute, pleasing the receptor and complimenting the author. It was also startlingly beautiful. Written in a fairly well-formed italic hand, copied from her tutor Jean Belmain, on 117 vellum folios,[31] the work was bound in crimson silk and embroidered by Elizabeth with gold and silver thread and coloured silks. Both front and back covers had one white York rose in each corner, her father's and stepmother's entwined initials, and her father's initial repeated twice. Even if her tutors had a hand in revising or correcting the dedication and translations, it was, as David Starkey says, "an astonishing achievement" and "as she intended, prodigious".[32] It was also the first Latin rendering of what was already a popular text, although the teenaged John Radcliffe dedicated one to his stepfather, the earl of Arundel some time after 1548, since he describes Parr as "quondam angliae regina" ("the late queen of England").[33]

Katherine Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions* is a collection of 183 meditations culled from Book 3 of the 1531 English translation of the anonymous *De imitatione Christi*, entitled *The followyng of Cryst* and previously attributed to Richard Whitford. It is a careful remoulding of the English

[29] Jane A. Lawson, "This Remembrance of the New Year. Books Given to Queen Elizabeth as New Year's Gifts," in *Elizabeth I and the Culture of Writing*, ed. Peter Beale and Grace Ioppolo (London: The British Library, 2007), 133–71; 161–5.

[30] Roger Ellis, "Translation for and by the Young in 16th-Century England: Erasmus and the Arundel Children," in *Thou Sittest at Another Boke: English Studies in Honour of Domenico Pezzini*, ed. Giovanni Iamartino, Maria Luisa Maggioni, and Roberta Facchinetti (Milan: Polimetrica, 2008), 59–72.

[31] H. R. Woudhuysen, "The Queen's Own Hand: A Preliminary Account," in *Elizabeth I and the Culture of Writing*, ed. Beale and Ioppolo (2007), 1–28; 3.

[32] David Starkey, *Elizabeth. Apprenticeship* (London: Vintage, 2001), 53.

[33] BL Royal MS 7 D ix, f. 1.

translation written for a monastic audience, changing the dialogue between two gender-marked speakers, the masculine "Lord" (Jesus) and "the Son", into a de-gendered first person monologue by a penitent sinner, the soul addressing Christ, as Janel Mueller observes.[34] This pious work gave Elizabeth an opportunity to demonstrate her somewhat precocious interest in religion, guaranteed to please parents who were both deeply concerned with matters theological. Parr had striven to create a text that steered a safe course between the Catholicism of the original text and the Reformist beliefs of the more evangelical factions at court. Elizabeth's translation, as Mueller and Scodel say in their introduction, "for the most part (…) adheres closely to the structure and sense of Parr's versicles".[35] Given that she was translating a text written by her stepmother and most certainly approved by her father, it would not have been politic to stray far from the original. Translation, however, always implies rewriting, whether intra-lingual, as in the case of Parr's reworking of the 1531 English translation, or inter-lingual, and however much Elizabeth's "adheres closely" to her stepmother's original, it also contains some changes.

A case in point is the question of de-gendering that Mueller claims constitutes one of Katherine Parr's major changes in remoulding the original work. While Elizabeth retains the monologue form and first person discourse, she cannot, for linguistic reasons, reproduce the speaker's dominantly gender-neutral discourse. In Latin, a language with grammatical as well as natural gender, the neuter could not be used for persons; in the case of unspecified natural gender, or of groups comprising persons of masculine and feminine gender, convention required that the masculine, or inclusive, 'unmarked' gender be used; finally, substituting the feminine gender for the masculine would have signalled a clearly conscious and unbelievably risky choice on Elizabeth's part and would never have passed her tutor's censure. Parr's neutral-gender speaker thus consistently becomes masculine in Elizabeth's translation: "seruante" becomes "seruus"; gender-neutral English participial adjectives like "I am cast down and overthrown" become "sum prostenatus et diectus". There are no fewer than thirty such grammatical transpositions. Mueller says this re-gendering "distances [Elizabeth's] generic Christian speaker

[34] Janel Mueller, ed., *Katherine Parr. Complete Works and Correspondence* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 374.

[35] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, 131.

from herself" but at the same time "heightens the appropriateness of the work" for a male dedicatee, Henry, who could thus be implicitly invited to identify with the first person speaker.[36] However, while the modern reader is affected by cultural changes that have influenced such reactions to gendered and non-gendered discourse, it is doubtful that the Renaissance practitioner or reader of Latin would have reacted in the same way.

The question of gender in the translation, moreover, is a little more nuanced than at first it appears. Many of Elizabeth's adjectives have identical nominative forms in both the masculine and feminine gender: "quod adeo inconstans, adeo imbellicus, adeo fragilis sim" (142) ("that I am so unstable, so weake, and so fraile"). Two self-descriptive terms used by the speaker are feminine: "creatura" ("creature") and "anima" ("soul"). Some masculine-gendered nouns denote, in their plural form, both masculine and feminine genders: Parr's "we, outlawes, the children of Eue" is rendered as "nos exules filij euae" (153). Unlike their Latin equivalents, English possessive adjectives denote the gender of the possessor, not the thing possessed, while finite verbs are usually preceded by pronouns; as a result, Parr's text sometimes sounds more 'masculine' than Elizabeth's: "what hath thy seruante, but that he hath of the, and that without his desert?" / "Quid habet seruus tuus quod non habet abs te? Et illud sine merito suo". Lastly, although Parr uses "man" in its generic sense, it requires masculine personal and reflexive pronouns and possessive adjectives, while none is necessary in Latin: "Blessed is that man that (…) lerneth truly to ouercome hym selfe, and (…) crucifyeth his fleshe (…) so that he maie offer hys prayers to the" is markedly more 'masculine' than Elizabeth's "Beatus ille (…) discit seipsum vincere et (…) carnem suam crucifigit, (…) et (…) possit offerre [sic] tibi suas precationes" (152–153), with its non-gendered "seipsum", feminine possessive adjectives "suam" and "suas", and omission of the pronoun "he".

In her discussion of Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions* and its relationship to *The followynge of Cryst*, Mueller singles out certain traits such as a heightening and an intensification of self-deprecation, together with connotations of deference, dependency and submissiveness, which she describes as "ingrained in Parr as a feminine obligation", but especially as Henry's wife; these are achieved by using intensifying adverbs, textual

[36] Ibid., 131.

additions, and doublets.[37] As I have suggested with regard to Margaret Beaufort's similar use of intensifying strategies in her translation of two French devotional texts, one of which is the *De imitatione Christi*, this might well be characteristic of early modern translations of prestige-language devotional texts translated into English, or of male-authored texts translated by women.[38] Elizabeth, however, does not reproduce many of Parr's intensifying strategies. She quite consistently removes adverbs such as "veraie", "euer", and "wholly", makes no significant additions, and, more interestingly, reduces most of Parr's doublets to a single word: "war and battle"/ "bellum"; "greuous and unquiet"/ "molesta"; "wyll and ordinaunce"/ "voluntatem"; "more easye and comfortable"/ "delectabilior". Perhaps this pruning arises from the fact she is translating from a vernacular into a prestige language, thus nullifying the need to use doublets to clarify and reinforce meaning in an 'unstable' language. Doublets, however, are also a stylistic feature used to emphasize and intensify both original and translated prose; Parr uses them in this way to great effect. Elizabeth's omissions thus lessen the work's emotional impact, making the text more condensed and far terser, especially since synthetic Latin is already more succinct than analytical English. In terms of the vocabulary used to denote submissiveness and dependency, however, Elizabeth rings no changes. If Parr was suitably deferent to the king as his wife, Elizabeth could be no less so as his daughter.

The *Prayers or Meditacions* are immediately followed in all three editions of 1545 by two prayers, "A praier for the kynge" and "A praier for men to saie entring into battile", which had first appeared one year earlier in Parr's *Psalms or prayers*.[39] The first, relating to Henry's risky military foray into France, was her translation of John Fisher's concluding prayer in his *Psalmi seu precationes*, "Precatio pro rege"; the second she composed herself. Elizabeth translated both. As Micheline White has ably demonstrated in two substantive articles, the first prayer assumed great importance in the Anglican liturgy as it wound its way through Edward's reign as part of the Primer, survived Mary's reign, and on Elizabeth's orders in 1558 was printed with suitably adapted vocabulary

[37] Mueller, 2011, 381.

[38] Brenda Hosington, "Margaret Beaufort's Translations as Mirrors of Practical Piety," in *English Women, Religion, and Textual Production, 1500–1625*, ed. Micheline White (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 185–203.

[39] Dvii^{r}–viii^{r}.

in the Chapel Royal, and was finally included in the 1559 Book of Common Prayer.[40] White points out that Parr herself made small but significant changes to Fisher's prayer: Christ is not "monarcha monarchum" but the "only ruler of princes", a subtle allusion to Henry's royal and ecclesiastical supremacy; he must, however, actively "incline" to God's will and "walk" in His way, not simply be borne along passively; he must "obey" rather than, as Psalm 2 says, "serve" God.[41] Elizabeth carefully reproduces each change: "solus gubernator principum", "inclinet", "ambulet", and "obediat". Also, for once, she translates the doublets, intensifying Parr's desire that Henry "vanquish and overcome" foes ("vincere et superare") and "be dread and feared" by the country's enemies; "timeant et formident illum" (they will fear and dread him) (156). White states that this prayer played a vital role in Elizabeth's "developing understanding of the power of state prayers to promote and display obedience"; at age ten, she had written to Parr demonstrating her already astute grasp of the matter by asking her to pray for Henry's "vittoria de soui inimici" in France ("victory over his enemies").[42] To this should be added her very careful translation of the prayer at age twelve, which also might well have impressed upon her the monarch's role as head of the church. Like her other childhood translations and epistolary compositions, the translated prayer already contained the seeds of her later actions and enactment of religious policies as queen.

Elizabeth's Translation of "Che cosa è Christo"

Elizabeth had another occasion to exercise her combined skills as rhetorician and translator when she offered as a New Year's gift to Edward her Latin translation of Ochino's sermon, "Che cosa è Christo & per che venne al mondo", dedicating it to him in Latin. This was most probably in 1547, when he had been on the throne for less than a year. The work

[40] Micheline White, "Pray for the Monarch. The Surprising Contributions of Katherine Parr and Queen Elizabeth I to the Book of Common Prayer," *The Times Literary Supplement* (3 April 2015): 14–15.

[41] Micheline White, "The Psalms, War, and Royal Iconography: Katherine Parr's *Psalms or Prayers* (1544) and Henry VIII as David," *Renaissance Studies* 29, no. 4 (2015): 554–75.

[42] White, "The Psalms, War, and Royal Iconography," 2015; Mueller and Marcus, 2003, 5.

is dated simply "Enfield, December 20". Opinions as to the year differ. Mueller and Scodel favour 1547 on account of Elizabeth's letter of February 2, 1548 to Edward,[43] in which she blames her failure to contact him partly on the composition of an "opusculum" ("a little work") that she wished to send him.[44] Loades also suggests 1547,[45] while Susan James points out that Katherine and her husband Thomas Seymour spent Christmas of that year at Enfield.[46] Elizabeth, as a member of that household, would surely have been there too. Starkey, however, dates the translation to 1551–1552,[47] which Woudhuysen supports for calligraphical reasons.[48] I would argue that by 1551–1552 Elizabeth would hardly have needed to describe Ochino in her dedication, since some of Ochino's sermons had been translated and published in January 1548 by Richard Argentyne and in July of that year by Anne Bacon, who translated fourteen more in 1551; even more significantly, in 1549, Ochino had dedicated a play to Edward, who featured in it as an anti-papal hero, and the evangelical printer Walter Lynne had given him a presentation copy of its translation by John Ponet, *A Tragoedie or Dialoge of the unjuste usurped primacie of the Byshop of Rome*.[49]

Nowhere is Elizabeth's love for Edward more clearly articulated than in the dedicatory epistle accompanying the Ochino translation. At the same time, the text affords yet another example of her familiarity with and exploitation of humanist epistolary and rhetorical conventions. For example, her uses of balanced clauses, changes of rhythm for emphasis, and employment of antitheses are immediately evident in the first paragraph. It opens in conditional mode, "Si aliquid hoc tempore haberem" ("If at this time I had"); this is then followed by two phrases of six words each: "quod mihi ad dandum esset accommodatum, et Maiestati tuae congruens ad accipiendum" ("something appropriate for me to give and suitable for your Majesty to accept") (302). The balanced "for me" and "for your Majesty", the synonymous "appropriate" and "suitable",

[43] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, 294.

[44] Mueller and Marcus, 2003, 15.

[45] David Loades, *Elizabeth I. The Golden Reign of Gloriana* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2003), 58.

[46] Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr. The Making of a Queen* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 321.

[47] Starkey, 2001, 88.

[48] Woudhuysen, 2007, 11–12.

[49] MacCulloch, 1999, 27.

and the antithetical "to give" and "to accept", make this a powerful opening sentence. Other antithetical phrases then expand the modesty topos. Edward deserves "res magnas et excellentes" ("great and excellent things") whereas Elizabeth can provide only "mea facultas exigua" ("my meagre ability") and "facultate (…) minima" ("the least ability"); yet in her heart she wants to offer him the "maxima" ("greatest things"). Others might surpass her in deeds ("ab alijs opibus superer") but nobody outdoes her in love and goodwill ("nemine amore et beneuolentia vincor"). After this buildup of contrasts, she seems to stop for breath, writing three short, emphatic sentences: "Ita iubet natura, authoritas tua commouet, et bonitas me hortatur" ("Thus nature commands, your authority stimulates, and goodness exhorts me"). She then echoes her earlier letters: she must respect him, her prince, out of a sense of duty ("officio") but also love him profoundly as her "frater (…) vnicus et amantissimus" ("only and most beloved brother"). She again has recourse to a modesty topos but, hardly able to blame youth and inexperience two years on from her Parr translation, she assumes personal responsibility, suggesting she has done her best: her translation "profecto talis non est qualis esse debet, sed qualis a me effici posset" ("is assuredly not such as it should be, but such as was possible to be accomplished by me") (302). Finally, she switches to the polite third person: "Maiestas tua (…) iudex sit" ("may your Majesty (…) be the judge"), to whom "meum laborem commendo" ("I commend my work") and "vna meipsam etiam dedico" ("at the same time I also dedicate myself"). Since "dedicare" means "to commit to" or "to dedicate to" in a formal sense but can also have a more personal, familiar connotation such as "to devote oneself to", Elizabeth could again, this time implicitly, be evoking her roles as both loyal subject and devoted sister.

The remainder of the dedication provides two reasons for choosing to translate this particular sermon, again both conforming to the humanist principles governing the composition of dedications. The first compliments the dedicatee and explains the pertinence of the text to him. Edward speaks daily of Christ and, by being king, "post eum in terris proximum locum et dignitatem habes" ("after him, you have the rank and the next place on earth") (302). This echoes the titles and dedication of the Parr translation and proves yet again that Elizabeth had a very firm grasp of the Tudor notion of kingship and the religious status of the king as head of the English church. She could not perhaps have foreseen Edward's own precocious interest in the question of royal versus papal

supremacy when, in 1548, he began to write a treatise in French;[50] it is, however, tempting to think that *he* was inspired by her dedication to him. Edward, Elizabeth continues, is also so religious, reading of Christ daily; Ochino's sermon on the nature of Christ should then be particularly "utilis et fructuosa" ("useful and fruitful"), since it "pia est et docta" ("it is pious and learned"), these last adjectives also pertaining, of course, to the image of herself that she was wishing to project.

The second reason for Elizabeth's choice relates to authorial and textual authority, of particular relevance in the case of translation, often perceived as a 'second order text'. Ochino, she says, enjoys a reputation that in itself is sufficient to "adorn" the text; an exile on account of religion and Christ, he lives in "foreign places" and among "unknown men". In referring to Ochino's banishment from Italy following his conversion to Protestantism and to his sojourns in Geneva, Augsberg, Basel and Strasbourg, Elizabeth is demonstrating that she is *au fait* with current affairs but, more importantly, sympathetic to Protestant exiles, many of whom had settled in England. Elizabeth obviously understood what Anne Overell calls the "immense power" of the idea of exile;[51] in referring to it, she provides proof of Ochino's wisdom and courage. Together with the nature of the translation itself, this would have stood her in good stead in the eyes of the Somerset faction that now surrounded Edward. Ochino's reputation as a preacher, writer and religious refugee was well known in England before he fled there on 20 December 1547, just days before Elizabeth presented her gift to Edward. It is likely, then, that she knew of his imminent arrival. He had after all been invited by Archbishop Cranmer, Elizabeth's and Edward's godfather, and was a favourite with many of England's more fervent evangelicals. He would become one of hers, too, presumably, since in the preface of his 1560 theological work that he dedicated to her, *Laberinti del libero arbitrio o ver servo*, he evoked the times she had asked him during his stay in England to explain "some ambiguities" in his sermons on predestination—an impressive if rather unusual topic of conversation for a teenager.[52]

[50] MacCulloch, 1999, 26–7.

[51] Anne Overell, *Italian Reform and English Reformations, c.1535–c.1585* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 47.

[52] Bernardino Ochino, *Prediche di M. Bernardino Ochino, nomate laberinti del libero, o ver servo arbitrio, prescienzia, predestinatione, & libertà divina, & del modo per uscirne* (Basel: Pietro Perna, 1561), sig. A3v.

In the Ochino translation, Elizabeth was translating from one foreign language into another, a greater challenge than translating into or out of one's native tongue, as was the case with the Parr translation. Although the two languages in question, Italian and Latin, were closely related, the text was far more difficult. Ochino's is a devotional and meditational sermon, portraying Christ in all his human and divine aspects. It is not one of his dramatic sermons on theological subjects or controversies such as election and predestination, which would attract Argentyne and Bacon. Elizabeth, with reason, was far more circumspect in choosing religious texts and, as I suggest in discussing the Calvin translation, shied away from thorny issues such as predestination.[53] She wrote the translation, based on the text in part 2 of the Basel edition of the *Prediche*,[54] on forty-two leaves of vellum, following the pencilled lines and margins carefully, and in a more decorative and skilful italic hand that demonstrates her progress in calligraphy from the French Italic taught to her by Belmain, which served for the first three of her translations, to a more sophisticated form she learned under the tutorship of Grindall and with which she impressed Ascham.[55] She used red ink for the title, the first word, and the first two words or first syllable of each new paragraph; she indented the paired antitheses comparing the laws of Christ and Moses as did the printed source text, but in a far more ornate and dramatic layout, juxtaposing large upper case capital letters with small lower case and using red ink to highlight initial words in each phrase; finally, she set off two short biblical quotations in upper case capitals and red ink and placed them in the centre of the line, "Is qvi fvit ab initio" ("He is who was from the beginning") and "GLORIA in excelsis. DEO" ("Glory to God in the highest") (308, 324). This work, then, represented a more carefully crafted production than the Parr translation, one that reflected Elizabeth's increasing maturity, but, in both cases, the material features of the translation play a significant role in emphasizing the value of the original text and author, the merits of the translation and translator, the influence of a good humanist education, and also of course the importance of the dedicatee. There were also fewer instances of erasure or haste, although the omission of the original's marginal biblical references might be attributable to

[53] Hosington, 2016, 363.

[54] Bernardino Ochino, *Prediche di Bernardino Ochino da Siena. Nouellamente ristampate & con grande diligentia riuedute & corette* (Basel: s.n, 1543–62).

[55] Woudhuysen, 2007, 1–4.

the latter. This translation was also undoubtedly encased in a presentation binding but it has been replaced by a nineteenth-century binding.

In translating this text, Elizabeth demonstrates the same sensitivity to style as she did in translating Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions*. The very first paragraph, perhaps the most overtly rhetorical in the work, illustrates this perfectly. Ochino states that not recognizing Christ is worse than not knowing the people around us, named in a series of three antitheses denoting positions of inferiority/superiority and a series of four types of relationship increasing in degree: "pecorello/pastore, soldato/capitaneo, servo/padrone"; "amico", "sposo", "fratello", "proprio padre" ("little sheep/shepherd, soldier/captain, servant/lord"; "friend, spouse, brother, one's own father") become "ouicola/pastorem, miles/diuam [sic], seruus/dominum"; "amicum", "sponsam", "fratrem", "proprium parentem" (304). Notice the shift in gender with 'sponsam', which Elizabeth obviously chose in relation to the masculine pronoun 'quis' ('someone'). The final lines of the paragraph repeat the second item of each preceding pair of words (except that "signore" replaces "padrone") and the four items in the second series, but are intensified by the addition of adjectives: "buon pastore", "ottimo capitaneo", "piissimo signore", "vero amico", "dolce sposo", "cordiale fratello", "caro padre". Elizabeth mostly follows suit with "bonus pastor", "optimus dux", "pientissimus dominus", "uerus amicus", "dulcis sponsus", "amans frater", "charus pater", but note the change from "cordiale fratello" ("affectionate brother") to the much stronger "amans frater" ("loving brother"), a not perhaps insignificant one given the person of her dedicatee.

As Mueller and Scodel remark, this text is more evangelical than Parr's *Prayers or Meditacions* and Ochino is certainly more overtly reformist than Elizabeth's stepmother, yet the translation, unlike Elizabeth's earlier Marguerite de Navarre and Calvin renderings, bore its author's name. Furthermore, the text "ranges without inhibition not only throughout Scripture but also into vexed contemporary issues of theology", such as the cult of the saints, the Bible as sole authority concerning the nature of Christ, and the relation of law and grace. This all demonstrates how different the world of Edward's court was in terms of the royal children's religious education.[56] However, Elizabeth's choice rested, as we have said, on one of Ochino's least controversial sermons. It did nevertheless

[56] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, 294–5.

contain many references to the "eletti" ("the elect"), a distinctly reformist term, and in one passage maintains that salvation depends on faith, not good works, a distinctly reformist tenet. The term "eletti" is consistently rendered as "electi"; this marks a significant difference with Elizabeth's more cautious translation of Calvin's reference to a church that is "encores plus segrégée" ("even more set apart", or "segregated"), as "more at large", open to all.[57] While not overtly refuting papal supremacy, Ochino declares firmly that Christ is "capó della Chiesa" (sig. cc5^{r}), translated literally as "caput ecclesiae" (308), and in many places he stresses the role of Christ as sole mediator for the forgiveness of sins, another reformist teaching; he came into the world "per essere nostro unico mediatore & avvocato, per essere nostra propitiatione" (sig. ff2^{v}). Elizabeth translates this closely as "vt esset noster vnicus mediator, et aduocatus, vt esset nostra vnica propitatio" ("to be our sole mediator and advocate, to be our sole propitiation"), although intensifying the all-important adjective "unico" by repeating it (322). She demonstrates the same closeness in translating the vast majority of such theological statements; the few omissions she makes are certainly not sufficient to change Ochino's message in any way or lessen its impact. As a result, she could not be faulted by her very evangelical brother or any inquisitive courtiers whose eyes might alight upon her translation. Rather, she could but earn their approbation as the learned and pious young woman she sought to represent by executing a translation into Latin of a text by a popular and greatly admired Protestant preacher and theologian, and accompanying it with a Latin dedication that clearly indicated her love and respect for the king.

Conclusions

While some influence in the choice of texts to translate for Henry and Edward most certainly emanated from Elizabeth's humanist tutor, William Grindal, there are enough clues in the dedications to indicate that she fully understood the appropriateness of each text to dedicatee and the contribution it was making to the image of herself that she wished to project. Translation became for her in these early and somewhat uncertain years the means by which she could consolidate her

[57] Hosington, 2017, 363.

position at court as a learned but pious young woman, linguistically gifted but religiously inclined, adept with the pen in the best humanist fashion as witnessed in her careful italic hand and layout of text, and skilled with the needle, as seen in her embroidered bindings. Like her translations, her dedications and letters must also have come under Grindal's scrutiny, been corrected, and perhaps somewhat revised to conform to humanist principles, yet she effected enough personal touches to articulate her feelings, hopes, and ambitions, and express her interests in matters religious and secular, however circumspectly. These early Neo-Latin original and translated compositions afford a glimpse of her life as she progressed towards adulthood but at the same time foreshadow some of the ideas that would later shape her outlook and influence her actions. They constitute an early manifestation of that canny and perceptive understanding of politics and public relations that would empower her throughout her life. They also bear witness to her belief in the power of the written word, which in the Calvin dedication she placed above that of the plastic arts in truly representing God, and in a 1549 letter to Edward above that of pictorial representation, which, she said, depicted only outward appearance. In applying herself to learning and in composing translations and letters, she used language to exercise that power, however modestly, and to use it to protect herself in the dangerous world of Henrician and Edwardian politics.

CHAPTER 3

Ethics from the Classroom: Elizabeth I's Translation of Cicero's "*Pro Marcello*"

Alessandra Petrina

The multi-volume edition of Elizabeth I's works published at the beginning of the twenty-first century has allowed scholars not only to build an overall assessment of the queen's literary practice, but also to gauge the extent of her writerly activity over the years, in parallel with her better-known political activity.[1] Although the research undertaken over the last few years by scholars such as Carlo Bajetta, Rayne Allinson and Guillaume Coatalen has shown how quite a large part of the queen's literary production has remained hitherto unexplored or still awaits

[1] The central volume of this edition is *Elizabeth I. Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000). Further volumes dedicated to translations and foreign language originals were added in the following years.

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D. Montini and I. Plescia (eds.),
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analysis,[2] we begin to see her output as a whole and to identify patterns of development or change. One fundamental problem in such an evaluation exercise is the impossibility to distinguish the public from the private persona in the case of Queen Elizabeth—and, as concerns her writings, to distinguish what was a personal enterprise from what may have been the result of collaboration with her chancery or her secretariat. As in the case of any public figure, there are a number of writings in Elizabeth's name to which she may have contributed nothing more than her *placet*, or some corrections, and her signature. The issue is pivotal in those areas on which critical debate has mostly focussed: her poems, prayers and speeches, to varying degrees, may be said to be the expression of the public persona of the queen, while her letters offer a fascinating testimony of her ability to assume different characters, in different languages and styles, according to her interlocutor, and to the degree of intimacy her interlocutor may claim with her.[3] It is thus very hard to draw a representation of the queen as a writer based solely on these testimonies.

Elizabeth's Translations

When we turn to her translations, we seem in fact to be closer to Elizabeth as a private person, something that may come as a surprise for the modern reader; at the same time, we may be faced with a different problem. The editors of the complete corpus of Elizabeth's translations, Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel, attribute the queen no less than eleven extant translations (translations of Isocrates, Euripides and Sallust may have been lost),[4] as well as two collections of translations

[2] See Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume Coatalen, and Jonathan Gibson, eds., *Elizabeth I's Foreign Correspondence. Letters, Rhetoric, and Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). See also *Elizabeth I's Italian Letters*, ed. and trans. Carlo M. Bajetta (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[3] As concerns diplomatic letters, Rayne Allinson's work is complemented by Angela Andreani's research on the activity of the queen's clerks. See "Manuscripts, Secretaries, and Scribes; The Production of Diplomatic Letters at Court," in Bajetta, Coatalen, and Gibson, 2014, 3–23, and *The Elizabethan Secretariat and the Signet Office: The Production of State Papers 1590–1596* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

[4] The hypothesis of the lost translations is first formulated in H. H. E. Craster, "An Unknown Translation by Queen Elizabeth," *The English Historical Review* 29 (1914): 721–3; 723.

of very short texts (we may also include the version of a long section of Petrarch's *Triumphus Mortis*, which is still of doubtful attribution).[5] It remains difficult to discern a pattern in her translation activity, and this has to do not only with the fact that such an activity covers a very wide time span—over fifty years at least—and engages with authors varying from Plutarch to Marguerite de Navarre, but also with the fact that the act of translation itself expresses widely different intellectual attitudes in early modern England.[6] Elizabeth's own translations may not have been professional works in the sense that Arthur Golding's or Thomas Hoby's were, but neither were they solely meant for her private use. Some of them were meant for semi-public perusal at court, as in the case of her version of Marguerite de Navarre's *Le Miroir de l'âme pécheresse*, undertaken when she was eleven years old as a New Year's gift for her stepmother, Queen Katherine Parr; or they were written for specific interlocutors, as in the case of the translation of Seneca's *Epistulae Morales 107*, given as a token to the then six-year-old John Harington. In other cases, especially if we consider her early efforts, they appear to have been the result of a purely linguistic exercise. Such an exercise would have been sanctioned—indeed, prescribed—from her very early years, as shown by Roger Ascham's own instructions in his *Scholemaster*.[7] We should therefore think of translation as a habitual activity for a learned gentlewoman, especially one who, like Elizabeth, both loved and was proficient in language learning, and who, in her relations with friends and enemies, appears to have used intertextuality as a frequent form of communication. Her work as a translator thus seems to offer us pointers in different directions, and to provide useful reflections on her intellectual attitude as a queen, a linguist and a scholar.

A number of her translations remain difficult to categorize, and partake of different facets of her personality. There is no doubt that the most striking instance in this sense is her rendering of Boethius's

[5] *Elizabeth I. Translations, 1544–1589*, ed. Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009). *Elizabeth I. Translations, 1592–1598*, ed. Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[6] As shown in Jason Lawrence, *"Who the Devil Taught Thee so Much Italian?" Italian Language Learning and Literary Imitation in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

[7] See Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, in *English Works*, ed. William Aldis Wright (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), 173–302.

De consolatione philosophiae, famously undertaken by a sixty-year-old, presumably very busy queen, completed in a very short time, and showing evident signs of carelessness, as if the queen was more interested in the *act* of translating than in the resulting version. As Sydney Anglo reminds us in his study on the dissemination of the works of Niccolò Machiavelli in early modern Europe, translators are a text's keenest readers:[8] one may convincingly argue that in translating a number of classical, medieval and contemporary Protestant works, Queen Elizabeth was exercising her rights as a reader in foreign languages rather than showing her proficiency as a writer in English. This, coupled with the fact that the queen wrote a number of original texts in different languages, including French, Italian, Spanish, Latin and Greek, appears to underline a linguistic pleasure that may seem surprising in a public figure, but of which she appears to have been aware from a very early age, as shown by her Latin prayer of 1563, in which she gives thanks to God, among other things, for being "eximia atque prestante, literarum praeterea atque linguarum cognitione et vsu," well-versed and indeed excellent in the knowledge and use of writing and languages.[9]

These considerations make the translation under examination here at least as puzzling as the Boethius rendering, since it is unclear whether we are looking at the reworking of a youthful translation, the result of Elizabeth's classroom exertions, or at a translation fully belonging to her maturity. Indeed, her English version of Cicero's *Pro Marcello* (now Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodl. 900, fols 2r–7r), probably undertaken (if not completed: all that has survived is a draft) in 1592, can be situated at the meeting point between her translation activity as part of her *cursus studiorum* and the work she undertook on Latin classics in the years of her maturity.[10] It remains still little studied, yet repays investigation. Unlike some of the other translations attributed to Elizabeth, in this case there is no doubt about the authorship, since the surviving

[8] Sydney Anglo, *Machiavelli—The First Century. Studies in Enthusiasm, Hostility, and Irrelevance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 183.

[9] *Elizabeth I. Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*, ed. Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 121.

[10] The manuscript was first noted and described, with the hand identified as Elizabeth's, in Craster 1914, 721–2.

manuscript is a holograph; there is, however, some doubt as to both the date and the circumstances of this work. What is known derives mostly from the manuscript itself, which has been preserved in the Bodleian Library presumably since its completion, prompting the reasonable hypothesis that the queen herself donated it to the University on the occasion of a visit that took place on 22–28 September 1592; during the same visit, she delivered an (allegedly extempore) speech in Latin, transcribed and preserved in the same manuscript.[11] The two texts are bound together in a period binding, obviously sharing more than casual adjacency. In fact, as has been suggested, the volume may have been assembled "as a memento of the royal visit".[12] It is more difficult to place this particular translation against the background of the queen's translation activity.

While it is hard to recognize a pattern in Elizabeth's work as a translator, given its personal nature and its irregular distribution over the decades, her recent editors are right in assuming that the early stages of her linguistic activity in particular were influenced not only by her teachers (especially the above mentioned Ascham and William Grindal, who taught Elizabeth and her brother Edward in their early years), but also by Katherine Parr, who was the dedicatee or recipient of much of this youthful work,[13] and herself a translator of the Psalms and of other Scriptural texts.[14] Thus we find the young Princess engaging with Parr's own *Prayers or Meditacions*, but also with John Calvin and Bernardino Ochino. This is not to say that Elizabeth did not translate any classical, non-religious writer while she was a student: the very fact that her tutor was Roger Ascham would prove the opposite. Ascham in fact suggested the close connection of language learning and translation, not only for students but also for teachers:

[11] Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*" in *Translations, 1592–1598* (2009), 3.

[12] Mueller and Scodel, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*" (2009), 16.

[13] See Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel, "General Introduction," in *Elizabeth I. Translations, 1544–1589* (2009), 1–22; 2–3.

[14] Parr's *Psalms or Prayers* are edited in *Katherine Parr. Complete Works and Correspondence*, ed. Janel Mueller (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 197–365.

> Translation, is easie in the beginning for the scholer, and bringeth also moch learning and great iudgement to the Master. It is most common, and most commendable of all other exercises for youth.[15]

We also know that Cicero was an author that Ascham would naturally use in his teaching—and indeed not only does he mention the Roman writer frequently in his theoretical work on education; he also links it specifically with Elizabeth. In a letter to Johann Sturm dated 4 April 1550, in fact, Ascham wrote that the Princess "read with me almost all of Cicero, and great part of Titus Livius; for she drew all her knowledge of Latin from these two authors".[16] At the same time, it might be reasonable to suppose that her youthful translations of Latin (or even Greek) classics were confined to the schoolroom, or dismissed as merely linguistic exercises, while her translations of Calvin, Ochino and Marguerite de Navarre were also appreciated in the light of devotional or meditational exercises, and thus more useful in constructing the public persona of the Princess. Nonetheless, even these early texts show how fine the line is that divides linguistic exercise and personal outpouring:

> Elizabeth's earliest translations began an association between linguistic exercise and spiritual exercise that would mark her literary production for the rest of her life (…) From close absorption in the language of a text she was translating, Elizabeth evidently derived an inducement to reflect and to feel by way of that text. In the process she sustained and deepened her thoughts on themes and concerns that were important to her, well beyond the immediate considerations prompting her to translate a given work at a given date.[17]

This observation is confirmed by a closer look at Elizabeth's simplest translations, the texts known as her *Sententiae* (printed in 1563 at the end of the volume *Precationes Priuatae*).[18] The recent editors of this work note that "very probably this compilation is Elizabeth's expansion

[15] Ascham in Wright, 1904, 243.

[16] Quoted T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakspere's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, vol. 1 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1944), 259.

[17] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "General Introduction," 4.

[18] *Precationes priuatae Regiae E.R.*, s.l: T. Purfoot, 1563. The texts of the prayers are printed in *Elizabeth I. Collected Works*, while the *Sententiae* are printed in *Elizabeth I. Translations*, *1544–1589*, 346–94.

of the 'Century of Sentences' that she made for Henry VIII sometime before his death in January 1547",[19] and the very few critical observations devoted to it have tended to consider it as one, complete, fully-though-out text. Thus, in analysing the *Sententiae*, Susan Doran writes that "Elizabeth signed up metaphorically to all these maxims (…) In so doing, she entered what has been called the 'public sphere' in order to fashion herself as a virtuous and godly prince".[20] It might also be added that the *Sententiae* can be seen as testing ground for her transition from religious to political writer, from devotional to pre-Christian literature. But once again this all too clear dichotomy risks clouding the issue, and creating a spurious division, not only between the different kinds of texts used by the queen for her translation activity, but also between this very activity and the meditational focus on the source texts that inevitably accompanied it. In addition, it may be argued that the collection of texts chosen for her *Sententiae* alludes closely to two very specific aspects of early modern reading and learning: on the one hand, the habit of collecting precepts, especially of a political nature, in one easier-to-read volume,[21] or of reducing long texts to a series of maxims, or of preparing commonplace books[22] (such collections constitute an instance of what has been called Renaissance notebook-culture, "an attempt to make ancient wisdom accessible by excerpting it, classifying it under headings and subheadings, and memorising it").[23] On the other hand,

[19] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "General Introduction", 4.

[20] Susan Doran, "Elizabeth I and Counsel", in *The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland 1286–1707*, ed. Jacqueline Rose (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 151–69; 155.

[21] One such instance is *The quintesence of wit being a corrant comfort of conceites, maximies, and poleticke deuises, selected and gathered together by Francisco Sansouino* (London: Edward Allde, 1590). On this volume, see Valentina Lepri, "Machiavelli in *The Quintesence of Wit* and his English Military Readers" in *Machiavellian Encounters in Tudor and Stuart England. Literary and Political Influences from the Reformation to the Restoration*, ed. Alessandro Arienzo and Alessandra Petrina (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 45–57.

[22] Such as the one compiled by the seventeenth-century erudite Sir William Drake over the course of many years. Drake's commonplace book is now preserved as a collection of 54 notebooks (London: University College London Library, MS Ogden 7).

[23] Stuart Clark, "Wisdom Literature of the Seventeenth Century: A Guide to the Contents of the 'Bacon-Tottel' Commonplace Books. Part I," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 6 (1976), 291–305; 291. See also Stuart Clark,

the *Sententiae* show an affinity with the didactic redaction of *vulgaria*, or collections of sentences in Latin and English intended for translation exercises.

There are varying definitions of *vulgaria*. Paul Sullivan calls them "schoolroom exercises that interpolate colloquial English and Latin phrases";[24] Nicholas Orme, perhaps more narrowly, calls them sentences in English that the pupil is asked to "Latinize", that is, turn into Latin sentences called *latinitates*, while the master would have a model translation into Latin.[25] They derive from late medieval teaching practices, but were extremely popular in Tudor England, and in fact some of these collections circulated in printed form: the English Short Title Catalogue informs us that 41 editions of *vulgaria* were printed in England between 1480 and 1534. At the same time, they played an important role in education: at Winchester grammar school, for instance, timetables for 1530 suggest this exercise for fourth form students:

> hath a verb providyd ageyne vij og the ye Clok when the Scholem[aste]r comyth in. And hase the verbe examined among them with vulgares upon the same. And after they write the laten that one of them shall make by ye assygnyng of the master.[26]

In his *Scholemaster*, Ascham (although peppering his own text with Latin and Greek sayings) characteristically criticized the reading by excerpts, which he described under the heading of *Epitome*:

> *Epitome*, is good priuatelie for himselfe that doth worke it, but ill commonlie for all other that vse other mens labor therein: a silie poore kinde of studie, not vnlike to the doing of those poore folke, which neyther till, nor sowe, nor reape themselues, but gleane by stelth, vpon other mens grownde. Soch, haue emptie barnes, for deare yeares.

"Wisdom Literature of the Seventeenth Century: A Guide to the Contents of the 'Bacon-Tottel' Commonplace Books. Part II," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 7 (1977), 46–73.

[24] Paul Sullivan, "Playing the Lord: Tudor *Vulgaria* and the Rehearsal of Ambition," *ELH* 75 (2008), 179–96; 179.

[25] Nicholas Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1973), 98.

[26] Quoted in Sullivan, 2008, 184.

> Grammer scholes haue fewe *Epitomes* to hurt them, except *Epitheta Textoris*, and such beggarlie gatheringes, as *Horman, whittington*, and other like vulgares for making of latines.[27]

Yet the very fact that Ascham, while disapproving of their use for studying purposes, recommends *creating* them as writerly practice, as shown in the opening words of this quotation, may justify our hypothesis that the gleaning of pithy sayings from an authoritative text was part of Elizabeth's habitual approach to a Greek or Latin work. Their value as translation exercises was obvious: their brevity ensured memorability and syntactic simplicity, and allowed the reader-translator to concentrate on key words and concepts. This would chime with more general Elizabethan reading practices, since sixteenth-century readers:

> were often extremely specific in the ways in which they approached texts, using them, to extract the precise information they needed, concentrating on key passages to further their particular arguments (some aristocratic readers even paid scholars within their households to underline passages from them to scrutinize later).[28]

If the queen's *Sententiae* find their origin in schoolroom exercises, then their publication in the early years of her reign might support her self-presentation as a learned woman, well versed in the double practice of divinity and politics, as shown by the choice of material. With the solitary exception of a few quotations from Erasmus' *Institutio Principis Christiani*, all the sentences chosen for Elizabeth's translation in this work come from canonically established works such as the Bible, Patristic works, or classical Greek and Roman writers, from Demosthenes to Curtius Rufus to, inevitably, Cicero, one of the most cited among non-Christian authors. Like the corpus of her translations as a whole, the collection known as *Sententiae* shows that, in Elizabeth's mind, no distinction between Christian and non-Christian writers is really necessary, since the latter are a necessary premise to the former, just as theology is a necessary premise to politics. Her interest in the latter needs no justification, and is highlighted by the first section of the *Sententiae*,

[27] Ascham in Wright, 1904, 259.

[28] Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare and Renaissance Politics* (London: Thomson, 2004), 17.

headed "De regno" ("On rule"), yet opening with eleven quotations or paraphrases from the Bible.

Translating Cicero

Within this frame, Elizabeth's approach to Cicero's oration acquires meaning. Cicero was among the recommended authors for a student desirous to follow the established models of Latin writing, and the recent trend of educational humanism that had played such a major role in English culture had given a new impulse to the study of his works: in the second book of his *Scholemaster* ("teachyng the ready way to the Latin tong"), Ascham listed him with Varro, Sallust and Caesar as the peak of Latin writing in prose, while in the first book he had explicitly indicated Cicero's *Epistles* as the best text to be chosen for his exercise of double translation. Elizabeth translated one of Cicero's *Epistolae ad Familiares* as a gift to her godson John Harington in 1579, and in so doing might have been reminded of her linguistic practice with her tutor, and met once again a writer she had already been familiar with. Ascham also mentions Cicero's orations in the famous passage in which he describes minutely the process of "double translation":

> This diligent translating, ioyned with this heedefull marking, in the foresaid Epistles [of Cicero], and afterward in some plaine Oration of *Tullie*, as, *pro lege Manil: pro Archia Poeta*, or in those three *Ad C. Caes*: shall worke soch a right choise of wordes, so streight a framing of sentences, soch a true iudgement, both to write skilfullie, and speake wittlelie, as wise men shall both praise, and maruell at.[29]

As noted by Mueller and Scodel, "Ad Caium Caesarum" refers to three orations of which *Pro Marcello* is one.[30] There is of course no need to infer that Elizabeth remembered Ascham's recommendation when

[29] Ascham in Wright, 1904, 187.

[30] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*," 4. Early editors referred to *Pro Marcello*, *Pro Ligurio* and *Pro Rege Deiotaro* as the *Caesarianae*, orations written in the early years of Caesar's dictatorship. See N. H. Watts, ed., *Cicero. The Speeches. With an English Translation*, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1953), 417. I use this edition for quotations from the original Latin, and for the corresponding modern English translation.

translating this particular oration later in life; but since many of Ascham's instances from classical literature appear to be descriptive of a widespread usage and approbation, it is inevitable to assume that, as in the case of Boethius, Elizabeth would naturally turn to this text when her need to meditate on politics and the duty of a ruler was expressed by the favourite linguistic exercise of translation.

At the same time, it should be noted that, perhaps even more than in the case of Boethius, the reception of Cicero has undertaken profound changes over the centuries, and that our appreciation of the Latin writer may profoundly differ from that of the early modern reader. It might be argued, in fact, that linguistic suppleness and stylistic elegance have proved the most enduring characteristics in an assessment of Cicero's fame over the centuries, at the expense perhaps of his status as a philosopher: today he is first and foremost an orator and a supreme example of Latin prose, while the Renaissance saw him as "a wise statesman, prince of eloquence, and master moralist".[31] The engagement of early modern England with Cicero's works is long and articulated, starting with his more clearly moralizing writings: John Tiptoft translated *De Amicitia* in the 1460s; Robert Whittington, the schoolmaster excoriated by Ascham for his *Vulgaria*, translated *De Officiis* in 1534, and in 1556 the text was translated once more by the poet Nicholas Grimald, who disparaged the previous translator (a not unknown practice among translators) in his Preface.[32] The works of Cicero that are more directly concerned with religion appear to have been given less consideration, but his philosophical construction found great favour:

> That he is an even-handed moralist, an eloquent redactor of a range of positions taken up by what we think of as his philosophical betters, may have helped. He mounts exhibitions of moral argument. That is why the *Paradoxa*, which combines rhetorical obviousness with the possibility of serious engagement with large issues is translated three times.[33]

[31] Neal Wood, "Cicero and the Political Thought of the Early English Renaissance," *Modern Language Quarterly* 51 (1990), 185–207; 185.

[32] Robert Cummings, "Classical Moralists and Philosophers," in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English. Volume 2: 1550–1660*, ed. Gordon Braden, Robert Cummings, and Stuart Gillespie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 371–89; 381.

[33] Cummings, 2010, 381.

Elizabeth's own practice confirms this trend. In the first section of her *Sententiae*, "De regno," she used extracts or adaptations from *De Amicitia* (which she marked, according to contemporary practice, as "Cicero in Lelio"),[34] *De Legibus, De Officiis*,[35] and "Cice. ad Papir.," that is, Cicero's letter to Papirius Paetus in his *Epistulae ad Familiares*.[36] Once she used a quotation from a Ciceronian oration, *Pro Caecina*. The section discussing mercy (a central concept in *Pro Marcello*) includes quotations from *De oratore, De officiis*, and *Philippics*,[37] while the Roman writer is much less present in the third section, "De Consilio" ("Of counsel"), which includes only one extract each from *Philippics* and *Pro Plancio*.[38] The *Philippics* also appears once in the section "De Pace" ("On peace"),[39] inevitably richer in extracts from the Church Fathers. As for the final section, "De Bello" ("On war"), it only includes two quotations from *De Officiis*.[40] As can be seen, the orations have a secondary place, and the "Caesarian" orations do not appear at all—although Elizabeth's modern editors note that for her choice of Ciceronian precepts she might have drawn from a ready-made contemporary collection of Ciceronian sentences rather than using original sources.[41]

The very variety of this list, however, also indicates that in early modern England, as in the late Middle Ages, the orations could be used as moral rather than literary texts, as noted by Ronald G. Witt:

> When medieval scholars dipped into these orations, they used them largely as sources for moral and philosophic truths. For instance, the writings of Northern twelfth-century scholar John of Salisbury are dotted with citations from these works, but their usage suggests that John viewed Cicero more as a philosopher than an orator. On the other hand, whereas the

[34] *Sententiae*, 353.

[35] *Sententiae*, 358, 360.

[36] *Sententiae*, 360.

[37] *Sententiae*, 365, 367.

[38] *Sententiae*, 375.

[39] *Sententiae*, 381.

[40] *Sententiae*, 386, 387.

[41] In their notes to the text, Mueller and Scodel refer to Cicero, *Sententiae Insigniores, Apophthegmata, Parabolae*, edited by Petrus Lagnerius, and published in Lyon in 1555. It should be noted, however, that there were a number of such collections circulating in Europe, edited by Lagnerius and others.

> Italian *dictatores* used *De inventione* and *Ad Herennium* idiosyncratically to produce their own letters, there is no indication that they ever read the ancient orator's speeches.[42]

By the end of the fifteenth century, Ciceronian prose would be the model for any humanist writer. Renaissance humanism would rediscover Cicero as "a model of conduct";[43] what Elizabeth looks for in the excerpts of her *Sententiae* as well as in her translation of *Pro Marcello* is probably a reflection on ruling, even if not a specific guide.

In this perspective, the Ciceronian oration had a number of traits that might appeal to Elizabeth, not least its brevity, which would allow her to engage with the whole text in the comparatively limited time at her disposal. But it is also worth pointing out that one of the interesting things in the original is that, as usual, Cicero is speaking in the first person; and that, less usually, he will describe his own role in the contention between Caesar and Marcellus in one of his epistles (*Ad familiares*, IV.4). Some subsequent letters were exchanged between Marcellus and Cicero (*Ad familiares*, IV.10–12). Elizabeth is thus speaking with the voice of one who sees ruling, as it were, from the outside. Cicero's *Pro Marcello* is a political oration, delivered in front of the Senate on the occasion of Caesar's granting a pardon to the consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus, one of the main supporters of the now vanquished Pompey, who after the latter's defeat had retired at Mytilene and refused to ask Caesar's pardon.[44] In his speech therefore, Cicero, who had also supported Pompey and paid for it with a long exile, maintains a precarious balance between his defence of Marcellus and his praise of the ruler, a victorious leader but above all a just and merciful one: while winning in war may be, at least in part, attributable to fortune, benevolence and mercy are solely the consequence of the ruler's good counsel. Cicero uses this opportunity to set aside the republicanism of his earlier orations and portray the ideal prince: someone who can control his passions and overcome his enemies not by force but with virtue, wit and nobility of the soul. Such a portrait could be used to great advantage by the queen, who obviously could not offer a martial image on the battlefield but, throughout her reign, built a self-representation

[42] Ronald G. Witt, "Civic Humanism and the Rebirth of the Ciceronian Oration," *Modern Language Quarterly* 51 (1990): 167–84, 169.

[43] Witt, 1990, 176.

[44] Watts, 1953, 419.

in which *clementia* and *virtus* were predominant characteristics. Such self-representation would be influenced by a long tradition of advisory literature, and the modern editors rightly point at Thomas Elyot's *The Boke Named the Governoure* (first published in 1531) as among the most illustrious examples of the genre.[45] Yet, as in the case of religious meditation, in this case too translation proved to be a discipline through which the queen could develop her reflections on the topic, first of all by focusing on the first term of praise used by Cicero with reference to Caesar: *clementia*. Cicero's use of this word and its treatment on the part of Elizabeth will be the topics discussed in the last section of this essay.

Clementia

"Caesar's clemency is the central theme of *Pro Marcello*",[46] and Cicero develops the theme from the start with a rich articulation of the concept, embedding it in a quasi-synonymic series:

> tantam enim mansuetudinem, tam inusitatam inauditamque clementiam, tantum in summa potestate rerum omnium modum, tam denique incredibilem sapientiam ac paene divinam tacitus praeterire nullo modo possum. (I.1)

> For such humanity, such exceptional, nay, unheard-of clemency, such invariable moderation exhibited by one who has attained supreme power, such incredible and almost superhuman loftiness of mind I find it impossible to pass by in silence.

Elizabeth's translation is scrupulously adherent to the syntax and word-order, so much so that, leaving aside the vagaries of spelling, it is more literal than the modern English version:

> for so great mildnis so unused and Unhard ^{of} marcye so great a meane in hiest power of alL thinges so incridible a Wisedome and aLmost diuine with tied toung by no meanes may I pas. (16)

[45] Elyot himself "generously acknowledges the Roman and probably quotes him more than any other ancient author." Wood 1990, 189.

[46] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*," 5.

At the same time, she does not use calques here, as she does elsewhere, but strives to find the equivalent English lexicon of politics and good ruling, as well as to work out the adjective *tacitus* into a homely English phrase ("with tied toung"). It is interesting to see how she translates the key word: we find *mercy* in the opening lines, and we shall find it again in the oration, once again translating *clementia* or its cognates: thus Cicero's "clementer, mansuete, iuste, moderate, sapienter" (III.9: the modern editor translates "of mercy, of kindliness, of justice, of moderation, and of wisdom") becomes "marcy, ~~Curtesie~~ Curtisie and temper" (p. 22), while a few lines later "clementiae tuae iudicio" (IV.12: "your deliberate clemency") is rendered with "thy marcys Iugement" (p. 24). The same happens in this rather more complex passage:

> mihi quidem videantur di immortales, etiam si poenas a populo Romano ob aliquod delictum expetiverunt, qui civile bellum tantum et tam luctuosum excitaverunt, vel placati iam vel satiati aliquando omnem spem salutis ad clementiam victoris et sapientiam contulisse. (VI.18)

> to me at least it seems that the immortal gods, even if they did exact retribution from the Roman people for some sin, in that they roused a civil war so grave and lamentable, have yet at last been so far appeased and sated that they have transferred all prospects of a happy issue to the clemency and sagacity of the victor.

In Elizabeth's version there is a central misunderstanding of the construction of the sentence:

> me thinkes the Immortal Gods althogh the Looked for some due punischmentz at the Romanes hands Vpon the sturrars and raisars of such huge rebellion and Woful War Yet noW ether appaised or satisfied the Seme to haue Yelded alL ~~to~~ hope of life in to the handz of the Victorars ~~Wise~~ marcy and ~~Wit~~ / ~~wisedome~~ Wit. (28)

The use of the diplomatic transcription[47] allows us a better understanding of the working of Elizabeth's mind in this extraordinary rendering. First of all, as noted by the editors, she misreads "a populo Romano,"

[47]The edition of Elizabeth's translations presents the diplomatic transcription and modernized edition on facing pages.

and "construes the Roman people as the agents rather than the recipients of divine punishment".[48] Whether deliberate or the result of a faulty or hasty reading, this construction avoids Cicero's sharp opposition between the Roman people and the *victor* who saved Rome from the civil war that was the direct result of the people's folly, substituting the people with "sturrars and raisars," individual agents of destruction and civic unrest. The Roman people, rather, become the impartial instruments of divine retribution. At the same time, the civil war becomes "such huge rebellion and Woful War," and here it is more difficult to attribute the misreading to a linguistic shortcoming: the *bellum civile*, the subject of one of Julius Caesar's two books, was a central moment in the history of Republican Rome, and could not be easily downgraded to a mere civic rebellion. But such a misreading becomes instead applicable to the realities of English politics in the 1590s, a time in which civic rebellion was an ever-present risk. In their Introduction, Mueller and Scodel link the translation of the *Pro Marcello* with the earl of Essex's affair: since in 1592 the relation between the queen and her courtier had come to a crisis, and Elizabeth had had to decide on drastic measures, this translation could be part of a meditation on the opposing claims of rigour and mercy. The queen thus "applied her humanist training to a thorny problem of practical statecraft".[49] It might be a bit limiting to connect so closely a public event and a private exercise, but the translation of this passage shows Elizabeth exorcizing the thought of civil war by aligning it to a circumscribed episode, which would involve not "the people" but a misguided minority of troublemakers. In the end, the *victor* is the gods' ultimate weapon: even if the people were expected to punish the rebels, it will be sufficient, for the appeasing of the gods, to call on the victor's own mercy and intelligence. In the previously quoted passage (I.1), Cicero had paired *clementia* to *mansuetudo* and *modus*; the same happens here, as he pairs *clementia* with the more challenging *sapientia*. The numerous corrections and rewritings here show that the translator is not so much worried by issues of syntax or construction, but by lexical choices: in the manuscript, there is

[48] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*", 29.

[49] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "General Introduction", 8 and "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*," 10.

an alternation between *wisdom* and *wit* that sees the latter prevail, while *mercy* remains unchallenged. *Clementia* in fact is a concept including equity and forbearance but also magnanimity (the latter a word beloved by mirrors for princes), and Elizabeth finds an equivalent that would include, as explained by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "Clemency and compassion shown to a person who is in a position of powerlessness or subjection, or to a person with no right or claim to receive kindness".[50] The quasi-divine quality, according to the modern editors, gives a transcendent overtone to the whole passage, so that it has been said that "by forgiving Marcellus and other opponents including Cicero, Caesar has registered a godlike, Stoic triumph over his passions, gaining glory and turning foes into friends":[51] but the idea of a "Stoic triumph" points at a personal virtue, which is perfectly appropriate for Cicero, while I would argue that Elizabeth is here more interested in public representation.

In the next instance, the word *mercy* does not translate as *clementia* but *misericordia*. Cicero is here speaking of Caesar's enemies:

> Omnes enim, qui [inimici] fuerunt, aut sua pertinacia vitam amiserunt aut tua misericordia retinuerunt, ut aut nulli supersint de inimicis aut qui fuerunt sint amicissimi. (VII.21)

> For all who were your foes have either forfeited their lives to their own obstinacy, or have retained them at the bidding of your mercy; and if all your foes have not perished, those who survive have become your firmest friends.

The modern translator, though extremely accurate, misses the parallelism between the two pairs of "aut … aut," while Elizabeth underlines it by using "either … or" twice:

> all the that were [enemies] ether haue perist by ther stumberd^{nis} or wer saued by thy marcye So hit folowes that ether none dothe liue or the that brithe be Wome thy noune. (30)[52]

[50] *Oxford English Dictionary*, www.oed.com, *s.v.* mercy.

[51] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*," 6.

[52] As the editors note, "thy noune" should be read as "thine own."

By highlighting the parallelism, the translator creates a strong polarity between *perist* and *brithe*: the enemy of the ruler is death, while the same ruler can give life (almost *breathe* life) through his mercy. In translating *misericordia*, *mercy* acquires a transcendental salvific power. Surprisingly, Elizabeth does not translate at all the other occurrence of *misericordia* in Cicero's text.[53]

In the last instance of the use of the word *mercy*, it translates yet another abstract noun, *bonitas*:

> Perfuncta res publica est hoc misero fatalique bello: vicit is, qui non fortuna inflammaret odium suum, sed bonitate leniret; (X.31)

> The commonwealth went through to the bitter end with this wretched war wherewith fate had burdened it. The conqueror was not one to let success kindle, but rather to let his innate kindliness mollify his hatred;

Here, the modern translation is rather misleading, especially in the pun between *kindle* and *kindliness*, and in the use of *fortuna* as an agent rather than a means. Elizabeth closely follows Cicero:

> thus Was this Comenwelth affLicted with this Wretched and iueL destined War but he Wan who kindeled not his hate with his fortune but couured hit With his marcy. (38)

As is evident throughout, this version is very faithful to Cicero's construction, less to his lexical flexibility. If the adherence to the original syntax may be the result of Ascham's insistence on the close reading of the structure of the Latin sentence, the lexical freedom appears to point at a poorer repertory of abstract nouns in English, as shown by the fact that *mercy* translates *clementia*, *misericordia* and *bonitas*. This might be explained by the student's need to look closely at syntax, always a major obstacle in Cicero's prose, and thus to pay less attention to lexicon. A poet of the previous generation, Sir Thomas Wyatt, faced with a translation of a Latin meditational text, Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunae*, had excused himself (preferring to translate Plutarch) by lamenting the poverty of the English vocabulary:

[53] She omits "ante aequitate et misericordia" ("by your equity and your compassion") at IV.12.

> the labour began to seme tedious / by superfluous often rehersyng of one thyng, which tho perauenture in the latyn shalbe laudable / by plentuous diuersite of the spekyng of it (for I wyll nat that my iugement shall disalowe in any thyng so aproued an auctor) yet for lacke of suche diuersyte in our tong / it shulde want a great dele of the grace.[54]

Whether or not this is a ruse on Wyatt's part, the "lack of diversity" in English seems to be a matter that readers and writers might agree on. On the other hand, throughout her translation, Elizabeth opts for a plain lexicon even while following the tortuousness of Cicero's syntax. More importantly, she seems to use the Latin original as an object of study, as shown by the counterexample of her rendering one Latin word with a variety of choices: it is the case with *res publica*, which, as noted by the modern editors, is variously rendered as *common good*, *the state*, *commonwealth* or *commonweal*.[55] It is true that the use of the latter two terms in particular appears to create an analogy between the Roman republic and the Elizabethan monarchy,[56] yet this seems far from being the queen's peculiar choice. The very concept of state is the object of analysis in English writing at the time, and *commonwealth* is part of the ordinary sixteenth-century vocabulary of politics, as shown by pamphlets such as *Leicester's Commonwealth*,[57] as well as by the use of the word in the university debates that accompanied Elizabeth's visit to Oxford in 1592—the same visit that prompted the translation of Cicero.[58]

[54]Thomas Wyatt, *Tho. wyatis translatyon of Plutarckes boke, of the quyete of mynde* (London: R. Pynson, 1528), sig. A2.

[55]Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*," 5.

[56]Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*," 5. The editors highlight this by coupling it with another example: "When Elizabeth has Cicero call Caesar 'princely' by loosely translating 'praeclarissimam' (most admirable), she applies her preferred term for herself in her public speeches" (5).

[57]A pamphlet attacking Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester, written in 1583 and printed, probably in Rouen, in 1584; though the English authorities attempted to stop the circulation of the pamphlet, a number of manuscript copies circulated in England after 1584. See Dwight C. Peck, ed., *Leicester's Commonwealth. The Copy of a Letter Written by a Master of Art of Cambridge (1584) and Related Documents* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1985).

[58]Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "Queen Elizabeth's Translation of Cicero's *Pro M. Marcello*," 8.

Interestingly, we find the word used by a number of translators, mostly anonymous, who engaged in those same years with a very special text, Niccolò Machiavelli's *Principe*: of the five extant manuscript translations undertaken between the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, three (the translation now preserved in Oxford, Queen's College Library; the translation now in Lambeth Palace Library; and the Scottish translation by William Fowler) repeatedly use *commonwealth* when referring to the republic as opposed to the *principality*.[59] This observation brings us back to the connection between Cicero and advisory literature, which was not original to Elizabeth: as noted by Neal Wood, in the Italian Renaissance Cicero was considered:

> a primary source for the venerable mirror-of-princes' tradition that under Lorenzo the Magnificent, when Plato was rediscovered, bolstered the monarchical reaction to republicanism. Niccolò Machiavelli in 1513 in *The Prince* shared briefly in these promonarchical sentiments, albeit by an ingenious inversion of the values of Cicero; then, in the later *Discourses*, he unfurled his true republican colours.[60]

According to a well established, if controversial, tradition, Elizabeth owned a copy of the first, Italian edition of the *Principe* and *Discorsi*, ambiguously provided with a manuscript notation on the back fly-leaf, which read "Heu nimius noli admirari".[61] There is of course no clear link between her attested use of Cicero and her unattested reading of Machiavelli, which seems the result of wishful thinking on the part of modern scholars. Rather, what one can draw from these observations is an attempt on the part of the queen to refine her approach to ethics thanks to her meditation on political classics, and her realization that the act of translation gave her a unique opportunity to study the most elusive nuances of a text.

[59] On the early translations of Machiavelli's *Principe*, and especially Queen College and Fowler's, see Alessandra Petrina, *Machiavelli in the British Isles. Two Early Modern Translations of the Prince* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009). The Lambeth Palace Library translation (Sion L40.2/E24) has not hitherto been studied.

[60] Wood, 1990, 186.

[61] "Take care, do not admire it too much." On this volume, now in Princeton University Library, see Petrina, 2009, 21.

Elizabeth's Approach to Translation in the 1590s

The queen's translation activity throughout the 1590s answers the need of confronting Latin texts, all linguistically challenging and diverse, since they belong to different moments in the evolution of the language,[62] whilst all sharing a strong interest in individual ethics. Every one of these translations, to all appearances, was intended solely for private use. This is confirmed by the state of the manuscripts that have arrived to us: "*Pro Marcello*, Boethius and Plutarch are complete versions of their source texts; yet all are first drafts, extensively revised and susceptible of further revisions".[63] In the early 1590s, the ageing queen appeared fascinated by the possibility of meditating on political and philosophical themes through her translation activity. She moved away from the devotional and religious texts she favoured in her youth and focused on the political and existential meditations to be found in classical texts. In this perspective, her work on Boethius has inevitably attracted great interest: monarchs have often made use of theoretical philosophy to assert their kingship, and the kingly translations of Boethius (King Alfred being Elizabeth's predecessor in this task) are an apt instance. The less interest gained by her translation of Cicero may be due more to our changed attitude towards the Latin writer than to a different approach on her part.

In one of the letters prefacing the translation of Erasmus' *Paraphrases*, dedicated to Katherine Parr and published in 1548, Nicholas Udall writes:

> Though every translatour folow his owne veyne in turning the Laten into Englishe: yet doeth none willyngly swerue or dissente from the minde and sence of his autoure. (…) the office of euery studious and diligent writer is to have his iye directed to the publique utilitie only.[64]

[62] In the case of Plutarch's *De Curiositate*, Elizabeth was using Erasmus' Latin version.

[63] Mueller and Scodel, 2009, "General Introduction," 9. As the two editors note, to the three translations listed here we might add her version of Sallust's *De bello Jugurthino*, now lost, but attested to by William Camden (10). The texts are extant in the same type of paper, with identical watermarks (Craster 1914, 721).

[64] Erasmus, *The First Tome or Volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus Upon the Newe Testamente* (London: Edwarde Whitchurche, 1548), sig. fo.xvi.

In her translation activity, Elizabeth foregoes her uniqueness as a monarch and a virgin queen, and becomes "every translatour", participating in the approach to foreign language canonical texts that played such an important role in her time. Her translation of Cicero shows continuity between the young scholar and the adult monarch, wishing never to swerve from the author's intention and at the same time working, albeit at a very private level, for "publique utilitie". In this, she is not only the pupil of Katherine Parr and Roger Ascham: she is also fully a member of the intellectual world of early modern England.

CHAPTER 4

Styling Power: A Corpus-Linguistic Approach to the Correspondence of Queen Elizabeth I

Mel Evans

Elizabeth's letters are a valuable document of her political and personal activities as queen. They show Elizabeth's hands-on approach to royal diplomacy, her participation in contemporary cultural movements, her education under men such as Roger Ascham, and first-hand evidence of her close relationships with her councillors.[1] Her letters contribute to the construction of the queen's royal identity, and to her relationships with her subjects and contemporary royals. One cannot deny that royal letters also gain some of their significance because of their physical connection with the monarch. Yet, and perhaps as a consequence of this material

[1] Susan Doran, "Loving and Affectionate Cousins? The Relationship between Elizabeth I and James VI of Scotland, 1586–1603," in *Tudor England and Its Neighbours*, ed. Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 203–34; Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

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proximity, many studies of Elizabeth's correspondence have tended to overemphasize Elizabeth's holograph letters.[2] This is despite the fact that the majority of Elizabeth's English-language royal letters are scribal, and relatively few extant Elizabethan letters are holograph compositions. As Iannaccaro and Petrina recently argue, Elizabeth's "epistolography" is woefully understudied when considered beyond the boundaries of holograph categorization. They observe that scholars need to "be careful never to take it for granted that an epistle sent by a Renaissance head of State has actually been physically written (or even devised, corrected, and amended) by the same person whose signature appears".[3] Yet this does not mean that such letters are insignificant.

This chapter argues that Elizabeth's holograph letters should be read more explicitly against the royal epistolary norms of the period, if we are to undertake a full study of the role of letters in Elizabeth's queenship. Recent work has begun to expand the scope of royal epistolary scholarship, with new work undertaken on, for example, Elizabeth's foreign correspondence.[4] The present analysis of Elizabeth's English correspondence sits alongside this work. It offers an account of how the language of Elizabeth's correspondence contributed to her power and rule, focusing on their impact on the letters' recipients, using corpus linguistic methods.

Queen Elizabeth I's Language and Letters

Elizabeth I is "the period's most prominent writer", a status that reflects her elite position as queen.[5] Her textual outputs were part of a career based on language, rhetoric and communicative strategy. As Bell notes, "she was remarkably outspoken for a woman", and cultivated a linguistic

[2] This situation is not exclusive to Elizabeth's reign, of course. See Alan Bryson and Mel Evans, "Seven Newly-Discovered Letters of Princess Elizabeth," *Historical Research*, forthcoming, for a discussion of scribal letters sent by Elizabeth prior to her accession.

[3] Giuliana Iannaccaro and Alessandra Petrina, "To and From the Queen: Modalities of Epistolography in the Correspondence of Elizabeth I," *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 3 (2014): 70.

[4] Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume Coatalen, and Jonathan Gibson, eds., *Elizabeth I's Foreign Correspondence* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[5] Ilona Bell, *Elizabeth I: The Voice of a Monarch* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 7.

style now famous for its prevarication, and ability to say much without saying anything.[6] However, Elizabeth's royal correspondence is part of a long tradition of royal epistolary communication. Since the Anglo-Saxon era, letters were the primary tool, other than human messengers, to communicate with one's subjects and other rulers at distance, and by the sixteenth century "letter writing had become an integral part of a monarch's job description".[7] However, what is notable about Elizabeth's writing when compared with her medieval predecessors is the queen's personal involvement in much of the correspondence issued in her name, which is what makes this genre so vital for our understanding of Elizabeth's particular approach to and strategies of queenship. Elizabeth's contribution to the epistolary outputs of her reign, holograph or scribal, are indicative of the value she placed on correspondence for the conduct of rule. At present, however, we have only a partial view of her epistolary strategies. Scholarship of the queen's letters has tended towards a case-study approach of her (holograph) writing, exploring the "intricacies and suppleness" of the queen's words in letters concerning particular participants, themes and/or time-periods.[8] This, of course, reflects the situational sensitivity of epistolary material, as well as the traditional methodologies of the disciplines interested in royal epistolary writing.

Studies of Elizabeth's correspondence have benefited from the growth in early modern letter-writing research.[9] This has enabled Queen Elizabeth scholars to identify overlaps between sixteenth-century royal letters and broader epistolary trends, particularly concerning the social significance of materiality linked to the choice of a scribal or holograph letter. For example, in the 1560s, Mary Queen of Scots pleads for letters from Elizabeth, expressing a preference for holograph texts rather than those of a secretary.[10] In the correspondence between Elizabeth and Catherine de Medici, it is likewise notable that both women took the time to pen letters in their own hands, Elizabeth using her

[6] Ibid., 2.

[7] Allinson, 2012, 1.

[8] Bell, 2010, 1.

[9] See, for example, James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); James Daybell and Andrew Gordon, *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450–1690* (London: Routledge, 2016).

[10] Allinson, 2012, 77.

finest presentation hand on many occasions. This suggests the value a royal writer and recipient might place on a holograph letter.[11] Indeed, Allinson suggests that the volume of holograph correspondence issued by Elizabeth, particularly to her contemporary royal rulers, reflects the period's increasing association between letter-writing, self-expression and good governance, and the value therefore of materially signalling one's personal involvement in their epistolary acts.[12]

Elizabeth's letter-writing practices to her contemporary royals thus appear to parallel the broader social values of the scribal and holograph letter. Sixteenth-century scribal letters had a professional, formal and practical orientation, and this likely applies to royal letters as well. Indeed, Richardson posits that the royal letter initially provided a template for those in the lower ranks to follow, prior to the popularization of humanist epistolary theory, and remained an influence in more formal and professional contexts of writing.[13] Holograph letters, which include a material trace of their author with their message, may have signalled authenticity, as well as greater intimacy resulting from the author's manual labour. Holograph letters were generally more suited to private material, regardless of the moral principals of a sixteenth-century secretary.[14] Yet, as recent studies have shown, the broad associations between holograph as private and scribal as public did not preclude the possibility of a 'private' letter in the hand of a scribe.[15] It appears that, in some cases, practicalities of composition outweighed the possible requirements of the recipient. For example, at the end of a brief business-like scribal letter concerning Anthony Pointz, the author, Robert Dudley, Earl

[11] Ibid., 97–9.

[12] Ibid., 2.

[13] Malcolm Richardson, "The Fading Influence of the Medieval Ars Dictaminis in England After 1400," *Rhetorica* 19, no. 2 (2001).

[14] See Alan Stewart, "The Early Modern Closet Discovered," *Representations*, no. 50 (April 1995): 76–100.

[15] Daybell, 2012, 86–7; Graham T. Williams, *Women's Epistolary Utterance: A Study of the Letters of Joan and Maria Thynne, 1575–1611* (Amsterdam, NL: John Benjamins, 2013), 31. See also Angela Andreani, *The Elizabethan Secretariat and the Signet Office. The Production of State Papers 1590–1596* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

of Leicester adds an explanatory holograph postscript for his recipient, Francis Walsingham because "perhapps, you wyll not very plainly understand whome I meane".[16]

The tendency for holograph letters to relate to more personal subject-matter explains their privileged place in studies of Elizabeth's correspondence. They demonstrate the queen's skill in manipulating her social identity and relationship with the recipient to achieve her goals, as she generally negotiated the public/private tensions at play when writing as head of state as well as a friend or as family. One example is the queen's twenty-year correspondence with her godson, James VI of Scotland, in which Elizabeth "frequently adopted the tone of a world-weary and exasperated parent" whilst negotiating the political matters of international significance.[17] However, what is less clear is how her epistolary techniques of self-representation and interpersonal work compare with those in her scribal correspondence. Elizabeth's holographs show some continuity in style and expression, such as her preference for figurative language, yet are also situationally dependent. The properties of her scribal correspondence, and the degree of variation within this category, are under-documented. Do scribal letters contain traces of 'personal' expression, in the same way that her holograph letters are used for political work? Do they show contextual variation, tailored to recipient and circumstance, as her holograph letters appear to?

Of course, the division between scribal and holograph is not as clear-cut as the preceding discussion might suggest. May identifies a third type of letter, a hybrid group that combines "formal and familiar elements"; this applies to scribal letters with separate holograph components (e.g. a postscript or enclosed note). Hybrid letters imply that the communicative context required the social meanings of both letter types.[18] I consider an example of hybrid correspondence below (**p. 75**). Moreover, there is the problematic question of authorship with regards to Elizabeth's scribal letters. I have suggested elsewhere that some

[16]Robert Dudley, *Correspondence of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leycester, During His Government of the Low Countries in the Years 1585 and 1586*, ed. John Bruce (London: Camden Society, 1844), 177.

[17]Doran, 2005, 205.

[18]Steven W. May, *Queen Elizabeth I: Selected Works* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2004), xviii.

scribal letters sent to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, show markers of Elizabeth's epistolary style, indicating that the queen was involved in these purportedly less personal texts.[19] However, the exploration of royal epistolary authorship on a larger scale requires essential descriptive groundwork, to which this paper offers a contribution.

The growth of sociolinguistic and pragmatic studies of early modern letters indicates the potential of a large-scale approach to royal correspondence.[20] Linguistic corpus-based research, alongside the 'distant reading' approach cultivated under the banner of digital humanities, exploits the non-linear analytic potential of digital texts to identify trends and characteristics not readily apparent to the human eye.[21] There is therefore an opportunity to supplement the previous qualitative studies of Elizabeth's correspondence with a macro-level analysis. This will not only provide (the first) large-scale documentation of the key epistolary features of Elizabethan royal letters, it will also provide a baseline against which to read and evaluate specific examples of the queen's correspondence.[22]

Methodology

Corpus linguistics exploits the potential of electronic texts. It identifies patterns in linguistic data and allows for a much larger survey of material (often millions, if not billions, of words) than can be done manually.[23] Corpus analysis is often considered to take two guises: corpus-driven and

[19] Mel Evans, "By the Queen: Collaborative Authorship in Scribal Correspondence of Queen Elizabeth I," in *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450–1690*, ed. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (New York: Routledge, 2016), 36–54.

[20] See, for example, Terttu Nevalainen and Helena Raumolin-Brunberg, *Historical Sociolinguistics* (Harlow: Longman, 2003); and Minna Nevala, *Address in Early English Correspondence: Its Forms and Socio-Pragmatic Functions* (Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 2004).

[21] Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (London: Verso, 2013).

[22] I have previously examined Elizabeth I's holograph correspondence using some of these techniques, although this study is primarily concerned with Elizabeth's participation in contemporary trends of language change, rather than explicitly investigating the linguistic expression of her royal epistolary identity. See Mel Evans, *The Language of Queen Elizabeth I: A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Royal Style and Identity, Publications of the Philological Society*, vol. 46 (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

[23] Tony McEnery and Andrew Hardie, *Corpus Linguistics: Method, Theory and Practice*, Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1–2.

corpus-based uses of data.[24] The former uses a corpus to investigate language use without pre-determined ideas of *what* should be investigated; instead, the corpus dictates the linguistic features of interest and study. Conversely, corpus-based analysis uses a set of texts to explore a feature or set of linguistic features deemed of interest prior to the investigation (e.g. morphosyntactic change). For the contrastive analysis of Elizabethan royal letters, the approach is largely corpus-driven, with the comparative analysis revealing features of interest within the holograph and scribal letters.

Corpus linguistics, of course, requires a corpus. Developments in digitization makes this approach to Elizabethan royal correspondence feasible for the first time. Two corpora, one of holograph and the other of scribal Elizabethan letters, were compiled by the current author. The texts for Elizabeth's holograph correspondence were taken from the original manuscripts, wherever possible, with further consultation of print editions. It includes 95 holograph letters overall, from 1562 to 1603. The most frequent recipient is James VI of Scotland, but other recipients include Elizabeth's councillors and statesmen. The corpus comprises 34,800 words, and collects almost all of Elizabeth's extant English-language holograph epistolary writing.

The scribal corpus relies more heavily on transcriptions from print editions. This reflects the sheer volume of the letter type, which number over 3000 in the *State Papers Online*.[25] It was not possible to compile an exhaustive corpus of all known materials; instead, the corpus aims to provide a sample of English-language scribal material issued in the name of the queen. The corpus comprises 168 letters, dating from 1559 to 1601, and includes only letters closed (i.e. folded and sealed). The recipients in the scribal corpus include individuals also in the holograph corpus, such as James VI of Scotland.

The spelling of both corpora has been normalized using the semi-automated software VARD.[26] This is because the corpus linguistic software, AntConc, relies on string searches (i.e. character-based) meaning that the same lexical item is categorized as multiple items if spelled multiple ways, thus producing unreliable results.[27]

[24] Ibid., 5–6.

[25] "State Papers Online: Early Modern Government in Britain and Europe," accessed July 1, 2016, http://gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714.aspx.

[26] Alistair Baron, *VARD 2.5.4*, 2016.

[27] Laurence Anthony, *AntConc 3.4.4*, 2016.

Keywords: The *Aboutness* of the Letters

The starting-point for the corpus-driven analysis is to identify the keywords of the royal letters. Keywords are lexical items that occur statistically significantly more frequently in a target corpus (e.g. holograph letters corpus) than expected when compared with a reference corpus, and reveal the 'aboutness' of a text, as well as how that content is organized and put together.[28] Keywords can be interpreted in their own right, as well as revealing linguistic features or categories suitable for further analysis.

Given the comparative focus of the investigation, as well as the more practical issue that no early modern letters corpus (e.g. *The Corpus of Early English Correspondence*) is presently publicly available with normalized spelling, the keyword analysis compares each royal letter corpus with the other.[29] The top twenty keywords for this analysis are shown in Table 4.1, listing the most statistically significant items in each corpus. For instance, the first-person singular pronoun forms (*I, me, my*) are the most significant, or marked, items in the holograph letters when their frequency is compared with that within the scribal letters.

Viewed thematically, the keywords fall into several groups. Pronouns are a distinguishing feature of the royal letter types, suggesting that royal self-reference and reference to others differ both in form and in frequency. Nominal address and third-party reference forms also appear in both lists (e.g. *God, Sir*), which suggests variation in interpersonal language; namely, how the letter constructs Elizabeth's relationship with the recipient. Other items are more abstract, suggestive of different attitudes and world views. For example, the holograph keywords include terms of (superlative) degree (e.g. *never, ever, most*), whereas the scribal keywords feature prepositions that link objects and concepts, and demarcate relationships (e.g. *upon, unto, by*).

[28] Dawn Archer, "Does Frequency Really Matter?," in *What's in a Word-List?: Investigating Word Frequency and Keyword Extraction*, ed. Dawn Archer (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 4.

[29] Terttu Nevalainen et al., *Corpus of Early English Correspondence*, 1998, accessed July 22, 2017, http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/CoRD/corpora/CEEC/.

Table 4.1 Top twenty keywords

Rank	*Keywords: holograph*	*Keywords: scribal*
1	i	we
2	my	our
3	me	the
4	your	us
5	dear	said
6	never	of
7	a	by
8	am	also
9	ever	to
10	too	same
11	not	trusty
12	suppose	ye
13	god	beloved
14	than	service
15	so	greet
16	you	her
17	will	unto
18	no	sir
19	brother	upon
20	most	there

Expanding analysis to the top 100 keywords reveals further thematic differences. Many holograph keywords are linked to subjective experience, thought and emotion, such as the verbs *beseech, hope* and *thanks*; the nouns *life, heart, fear* and *trust*; and adjectives such as *loving*. By comparison, the scribal keywords suggest a concern with informational clarity and precision; for example, the nouns *service* and *purpose*; the verbs *require* and *understand*; the demonstrative *said*; and the adverbs *wherein* and *whereof*. There are a greater proportion of concrete nouns in the scribal letters, for example, *horsemen, town, council* and *footmen*, indicative of the military and civic concerns of Elizabeth's scribal letters. Elizabeth's holograph letters contain more abstract nouns as keywords: for example, *malice, affection* and *hate*, suggesting more affective, emotional content.

The keywords suggest that Elizabeth's letters reflect the two sides of early modern monarchy: the political, military and civic machinations required to keep a realm fit and functioning; and the more intimate, affective and human-oriented concerns, also integral to the successful maintenance of rule. These sides appear linked to wider generic practices: the markers of intimacy and emotional openness between Elizabeth and

Table 4.2 Top twenty three-word clusters

Rank	*Three-word clusters: holograph*	*Three-word clusters: scribal*
1	*my dear brother*	*we greet you*
2	*sister and cousin*	*greet you well*
3	*and cousin elizabeth*	*right trusty and*
4	*cousin elizabeth r*	*of our reign*
5	*your most assured*	*and well beloved*
6	i beseech you	*trusty and right*
7	*loving sister and*	*trusty and well*
8	i assure you	*year of our*
9	*your most affectionate*	*given under our*
10	*assured loving sister*	*under our signet*
11	i doubt not	*and right well*
12	that you will	*right well beloved*
13	i will not	*our signet at*
14	*most assured loving*	*of the said*
15	doubt not but	*well beloved we*
16	*elizabeth r my*	*beloved we greet*
17	the king of	*signet at our*
18	i pray you	require you to
19	*most affectionate sister*	we require you
20	of such a	we have thought

recipient can be understood within the contemporary humanist framework of letter-writing, whereas the specificity and definiteness of the scribal letters are indicative of a more traditional business-style of epistle, linking back to older models of royal correspondence.

Clusters (i.e. recurring sequences of words) offer further support for this preliminary interpretation. Perhaps the most striking property of the three-word clusters (Table 4.2) is how each kind of royal letter follows conventions of the epistolary genre but uses very different forms. The most frequent clusters from both types of Elizabethan royal letter are part of opening and closing formulae (shown in *italics*). This is particularly the case for the scribal letters, which largely maintain genre norms established in the fifteenth century.[30]

[30]Hubert Hall, *A Formula Book of English Official Historical Documents. Pt. 1, Diplomatic Documents (…)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 157–8.

Other clusters in Table 4.2 are linked to the letters' functions, and reveal the ways in which Elizabeth is connected to that function. In the scribal correspondence, the final three clusters (18–20) relate to the issue of instruction and commands. W*e require you* (an explicit directive) typically orders the recipient to fulfil the instructions set out in the co-text. For example, a letter sent to George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, in 1569, informs the earl of his relief of duty regarding the queen of Scots:

> And for that Purpose, to disburden you of the great Care, which we know you do take, **we require you** to give straight Order that all your Servants may diligently obey our said Cousin of Huntingdon, as they ought to do to your self, for the Surety and safe keeping of the said Queen.[31]

It is interesting that, despite its near-formulaic reoccurrence in the scribal letters, the co-text is sensitive to the recipient and the situation, conveying in the queen's gratitude for Talbot's "great care". The other clusters in the holograph correspondence also relate to epistolary function. *I pray you* typically co-occurs with a request, used primarily in letters to James VI of Scotland. *I beseech you* has a similar function, and also occurs in letters to James VI of Scotland, as well as a postscript message to his wife, Anne of Denmark.

These constructions declare the queen's desires, and their fulfilment thus rests to some degree on the recipient's compliance; this contrasts with scribal *require*, which does not acknowledge an emotional dimension to the request or any risk of non-compliance. Relatedly, other clusters in the holograph letters refer to the queen's mental state: *I assure you*, and *I doubt not*, which also indicate the more personal construction of Elizabeth's holographs.

The keywords and cluster analysis offers an overview of the most distinctive lexical differences between the two types of royal correspondence. Collectively, the findings suggest that scribal letters are characterized by an adherence to genre formulae, as well as precision in the informational content. The holograph correspondence suggests a more varied style of letter-writing, which includes reference to the queen's personal attitude and emotions.

[31] Markham John Thorpe, ed., *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Scotland, Preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office (…) 1509–1589 (1589–1603) and the State Papers Relating to Mary, Queen of Scots, During Her Detention in England, 1568–1587*, vol. II (London: Longman & Co., 1858).

In the sections that follow, I look more closely at two areas of language use that emerge from these preliminary findings; namely, forms of self-reference (identity construction), and interpersonal language (recipient relationships).

Constructing Royal Identities

The keyword analysis suggests that pronouns are a key differentiator of Elizabeth's holograph (*I, me, my*) and scribal (*we, our*) correspondence. In this section, I explore how this pronominal distinction is linked to royal identity construction. Importantly, each letter types' keyword pronouns are used near-exclusively. Thus, within the scribal correspondence, there are no examples of the first-person singular. Pronominal self-reference is achieved using the plural, *royal we* form.

Royal we can be traced back to the proclamations of Henry III, and the longevity of the pronoun is likely connected to its multi-faceted beneficial pragmatic effects.[32] At a base level, the pronoun evokes the semiotic principle 'more is greater', symbolizing the superiority of royal authority.[33] The royal user is the only individual who can legitimately construe themselves in the plural. In the sixteenth-century, this also usefully articulated the theological-political concept of the king's two bodies, the *body politic* and the *body natural*.[34] In terms of its pragmatic values, the pseudo-plural can be seen to construct a greater social distance between queen and recipient than the first-person singular, as the pronoun form foregrounds the queen's elite identity; that is, the royal self, and the associated political and theological authority. Finally, from a practical perspective, the pronoun provides a scribe with the necessary ambiguity to write and express the will of the queen, without presupposing insights into Elizabeth's personal emotions and beliefs. In summary, the uniformity of *royal we* in scribal correspondence is a self-authenticating and self-authorizing linguistic marker of the letter-type; a recipient would recognize the text as having royal origins partly because of the pronominal form.

[32] Oxford English Dictionary, "'we, Pron., N., and Adj.'.," n.d., http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/226539?rskey=9R7Cgc&amp.

[33] Katie Wales, *Personal Pronouns in Present-Day English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 64.

[34] See Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

In Elizabeth's holograph correspondence, the first-person singular pronoun is used for the majority of self-reference. As I have noted previously, *royal we* occurs infrequently, and is used for specific purposes, such as for entities under Elizabeth's possession as a consequence of her royal position, rather than being in her personal ownership; for example, "our ambassadors", "our commandment", "our name".[35] The singular pronoun form is therefore exceptional within royal epistolary writing (in contrast with its mundane status for the rest of the populace). The pronoun's salience as a self-reference form would arise precisely because the recipient would know that the author is entitled to the full *royal we* form, but has made a choice not to use it. The pragmatic effects of the first-person singular are plausibly the inverse of those of *royal we*; for example, reduced social distance, greater individualization, perhaps even a foregrounding of the *body natural* over the *body politic*. These effects are arguably enhanced because of the pronoun's deviant status from the recipient's perspective—recall that recipients of royal holographs typically received scribal letters from Elizabeth as well, including King James VI of Scotland.

Constructing Royal Relationships

Within the dyadic context of the epistolary genre, addressee reference is another significant device to signal (and construct) the author's relationship with their recipient. In Elizabeth's letters, second-person pronouns are keywords in the holograph corpus (see Table 4.1), suggesting that pronominal addressee reference is more frequent in this letter type than her scribal correspondence. The exception to this trend is *ye*, an archaic form of the second-person subject pronoun in decline by the middle of the sixteenth-century, which is a keyword of the scribal correspondence.[36] This suggests that scribal letters have a more conservative epistolary style, particularly when compared with Elizabeth's own progressive idiolect.[37] However, the infrequency of *you* in the scribal letters is not attributable to the scribes' preference for *ye*. Overall, the second-person pronoun forms (*ye*, *you* and *your*) occur 53.8 times/1000 words in the

[35] Evans, 2013, 140–60.

[36] Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg, 2003, 60–1.

[37] Evans, 2013, 219–20.

holograph letters, compared with 32.2 times/1000 words in the scribal correspondence. It is unclear from frequencies alone whether the scribal letters interact less (directly) with their recipient, or whether the address takes a different form.

The analysis of nominal address suggests that the scribal letters contain a greater variety of forms than Elizabeth's holographs. These are primarily titles, demarcating the recipient's rank and/or position in relation to Elizabeth. *Cousin* is the most frequent address form, used in the opening formula; for example, "Trusty and well-beloved cousin". In her holographs, *cousin* is only used self-referentially, in closing salutations to James VI. This indicates differences in how the two letter types undertake interpersonal work. In the scribal correspondence, the generic address form is applied to the recipient; Elizabeth declares, even determines, her relationship with them. The formulaicity of the correspondence probably reduces any possible intimacy that the form may otherwise signal. Conversely, *cousin* is used self-referentially in the holographs. Elizabeth conveys her conception of *her* position with the recipient, but this could be disputed or disregarded by the recipient themselves. This suggests Elizabeth's scribal letters evoke an overt, hierarchical structuring of Elizabeth's relationships, whereas her holographs require a more active negotiation with the recipient.

The frequent kinship terms *brother* and *sister* denote a more exclusive group of royal addressees. *Brother* is used as a direct address in both letter types to James VI, reflecting the (cross-linguistic) conventions of kinship terminology for royal-to-royal interaction in the period.[38] *Sister* is similarly used as an address form for Mary, Queen of Scots, but this occurs in scribal letters only, reflecting Elizabeth's preference to use French when writing to the queen herself. In the holograph letters, *sister* is only used self-referentially, as a closing expression in letters to James VI that mirrors the opening kinship address.

A surprising finding, perhaps, is the distribution of the address term *Sir*. The title occurs twice in the holograph correspondence, both in letters to "Sir Spirit" (Elizabeth's nickname for William Cecil). This might appear to be a playful twist on the rigid formality of scribal correspondence, foregrounding those letters' holograph status. However, the scribal

[38] Janel Mueller, "'To My Very Good Brother the King of Scots': Elizabeth I's Correspondence with James VI and the Question of the Succession," *PMLA* 115, no. 5 (2000): 1063–71.

corpus shows addressee-directed *Sir* occurs only in the external address, with those in the main text denoting a third party. The playful use by Elizabeth in her holograph writing thus seems also to rely on the contrast with general (i.e. non-royal) correspondence of the period. CEEC shows *sir* is used as a direct address term throughout the sixteenth-century.[39]

Overall, the analysis suggests that recipient address (nominal and pronominal) is less frequent in the scribal letters than the holograph counterparts. Pragmatic studies of early modern correspondence suggest that high frequencies of the second-person pronoun constructs greater intimacy between interlocutors, whereas infrequency of address could suggest increased social distance, and a lack of respect.[40] The scribal letters' nominal forms, with the emphasis on generic conventions, support this interpretation. Elizabeth's holograph letters therefore must have appeared highly intimate and personalized by comparison.

The analysis of the most frequent collocates (i.e. words that co-occur) of *you/ye* provide further insight into how Elizabeth's relationship with her addressee is characteristically constructed in holograph and scribal contexts.

Table 4.3 shows the top twenty collocates of *you/ye* in L1 or R1 positions, ranked according to their statistical significance (log-likelihood, value >3). The collocates for the scribal corpus suggest an emphasis upon instruction and direction, indicating a relationship with Elizabeth that is presented as explicitly hierarchical, corroborating the cluster analysis results. This is shown in the explicit directive verbs: *require*, *authorize* and *command*, and modal *shall*. Elizabeth's scribal identity is highly authoritative (i.e. *royal we*), and therefore her power is expressed unapologetically, without hedges or qualification. A slight exception to this is the verb *pray*, which connotes the speaker's desire or will; although in this case that will is the royal prerogative, due to the collocation with *royal we*.

The verb *assure* occurs infrequently in the scribal letters corpus ($n = 34$), but its presence in the collocate list reflects its strong association with the second-person pronoun. The expressions of assurance convey Elizabeth's sincerity regarding her intentions or beliefs; for example, *We assure you that*. These occur only in scribal letters with a more personal dimension, such as a letter of condolence to Elizabeth Hoby, or a letter to Mary, Queen of Scots prior to her imprisonment in

[39] Nevala, 2004, 90–1.

[40] Williams, 2013, 174–6.

Table 4.3 Top twenty collocates of *you/ye*

Rank	*Holograph collocates*	*Scribal collocates*
1	commit	requiring
2	bless	greet
3	molest	authorise
4	beseech	**pray**
5	please	**praying**
6	tell	hold
7	trouble	wit
8	render	require
9	knew	command
10	unto	thank
11	preserve	shall
12	**assure**	**know**
13	send	let
14	save	unto
15	pleased	**assure**
16	**pray**	well
17	yield	advertise
18	grant	whereby
19	**know**	can
20	are	whom

England.[41] However, quantitatively, these are unusual occurrences, and may be indicative of a greater authorial role by the queen in those letters' composition.

Other collocates in the scribal letters reveal a meta-linguistic component, in which the writer reflexively comments on the instructions and information about to be provided; for example, *advertise* and *let* (which co-occurs with *know/wit* in the expression "let you know/wit"). This points to the importance placed on clarity and specificity of information for the recipient. The presence of *whereby* also stems from this stylistic property, the adverb used to indicate relation between topics.

The holograph collocates of *you/ye* show some similarities at a functional level with the scribal letters, but attend to different aspects of the

[41] Elizabeth I, *The Letters of Queen Elizabeth I*, ed. George B. Harrison (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1935), 48–9. The National Archives State Papers 526, f.123.

queen–recipient relationship. Rather than using explicit directive verbs, Elizabeth couches her requests in a more personal and affective frame; for example, *beseech, pray* and *please*. This suggests that the relationship between Elizabeth and the recipients of her holograph letters is more nuanced than in the context of her scribal letters, requiring greater pragmatic work than the hierarchically dependent, explicit directives. Other collocates have a meta-linguistic function. *Know* occurs in statements declaring the giving of knowledge to the recipient (e.g. "letting you know"), similar to the scribal correspondence; *tell* has a comparable function. Other collocates of the second-person pronoun are associated with epistolary formulae. However, it is indicative of the interpersonal strategy of her holographs that these verbs (*grant, preserve, commit* and *bless*) all occur in the closing blessing (benediction), as Elizabeth wishes for the recipient's health and prosperity.

Re-reading Elizabeth's Letters: Hybrid Correspondence and Thomas Heneage

The corpus analysis of Elizabeth's correspondence has identified distinctive linguistic characteristics of her holograph and scribal letters. In this final section, I examine two royal messages from the 1580s, sent to Thomas Heneage. They are an example of hybrid correspondence; namely, a scribal letter with a holograph postscript note (see Appendix to this essay).[42] The texts are well-known, but provide an opportunity to explore the potential contrastive functions and effects of royal letter types, read in light of the macro-level epistolary conventions of Elizabeth's letters.

Heneage was a successful statesman, with a long-lasting friendship with the queen. During a career encompassing various political and courtly roles, Heneage remained on good terms with influential men at court, and had a particularly strong relationship with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Heneage's network ties gave him an advantage at the court, and he often acted as liaison between the queen and her councillors and officials. In 1586, he was sent overseas for the first and only time in a diplomatic capacity to assist Leicester in the Low Countries.[43]

[42] Dudley in Bruce, 1884, 241–3.

[43] Michael Hicks, "Heneage, Sir Thomas (B. in or before 1532, D. 1595)," in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

His appointment was triggered by Leicester's unauthorized acceptance of the office of states-general. In February 1586, Heneage was entrusted with instructions written on the queen's behalf, and a highly charged and critical letter from Elizabeth to Leicester. Heneage's role in the exchange of royal messages is inscribed into that letter's text. He is the twice-named bearer, who was, with the queen's authority, to convey to Leicester that he was to resign his position.[44] Upon arrival, Heneage mediated with Leicester, as well as with the states council. Walsingham praised Heneage as "a pryncypall instrument in [Leicester's] recovery of [the queen's] favour".[45] On 1st April 1586, the queen wrote (scribally) to also endorse Heneage's work.[46] However, Heneage then overstepped himself in his negotiations, and promised the council that peace would involve consultation with the Dutch rebels. This greatly angered Elizabeth, triggering the hybrid correspondence. Heneage received the letters, dated 27th April, whilst commencing his return to England.

Using the corpus data, each letter can be evaluated for their adherence to the norms of their respective types, allowing a fuller assessment of the pragmatic impact of their hybrid status. Firstly, the official letter (which was plausibly composed first, even if we cannot know the order in which Heneage read them) shows typical scribal letter properties, including *royal we*, and conventional royal epistolary formula, such as "Trusty and well-beloved" and "Given under our signet". Following the opening formula, the letter explicitly criticizes Heneage's actions. The queen's attitude is conveyed by the perceptual metaphor "we find it very strange", and she remonstrates Heneage for damaging "our honour and contentment". The letter presents Elizabeth's royal identity as one founded upon honourable behaviour, and her satisfaction dependent upon her subjects' compliance with her royal will. The presence of the stylistic accoutrements of scribal letters (*royal we*, formulae) make it clear that Heneage's actions have full *body politic* implications. The contrast in tone from the previous scribal letter sent by the queen earlier in the month, which showered Heneage with praise, must have been striking.

[44] Dudley in Bruce, 1884, 110.

[45] Dudley in Bruce, 1884, 206.

[46] Ibid., 205–6.

The opening criticisms are followed by commands that allude to the unique power of the royal prerogative: "our pleasure is (…) you shall". The queen then specifies Heneage's transgressions in more detail, noting her "mislike" of his delayed correspondence, and his ill-founded assurances to the States council. Elizabeth evaluates the latter, attributing it to two possibilities: "we either think that you have far exceeded your commission, or else our secretary had greatly mistaken our direction given unto him in that behalf". It is somewhat ambiguous as to whether the second explanation is meant sincerely, although Elizabeth did often despair of her secretaries' capabilities.[47] The subsequent holograph note implies that in this case the first was the more plausible. At the letter's end, Elizabeth makes Heneage's responsibilities clear: "our meaning is not that you shall return unto us before the same be accomplished".

The letter's message is comprehensive and generally unambiguous. *Royal we* adds authority and weight, and the second-person pronoun occurs within explicitly royal directives, which makes the hierarchical position of queen and recipient indisputable. The specificity of the impact of Heneage's transgression magnifies the severity, and certainly intimates that their professional relationship is damaged. One can imagine the effect this letter had on Heneage, who was waiting to return home, believing—based on his previous correspondence with the queen—that he had fulfilled his role and was in line for further royal favour.

It is therefore curious that Elizabeth enclosed a holograph note, using the first-person singular *I*, alongside her official letter, making the communicative act a hybrid text that draws on the pragmatic affordances of both letter types. I am unaware of evidence suggesting Heneage received other holograph letters from the queen. However, given their friendship, it is plausible that the note would be evocative of their spoken conversations (it seems unlikely that Elizabeth used *royal we* in her everyday spoken language, although this is difficult to prove). Given its probable sequential position after the scribal letter, the first-person singular pronoun, rendered in the queen's own hand, must have been an abrupt change for the reader, akin to a switch from having a queen's representative recite her wishes to the queen being there in person.

[47] Elizabeth Mazzola, *Learning and Literacy in Female Hands, 1520–1698* (Dorchester: Ashgate, 2013), 75.

The postscript allows Elizabeth to convey her exasperation and disappointment in a manner not permitted by the conventions of her scribal letters, as suggested by the presence of linguistic features more typical of spoken language. The note opens with two rhetorical questions, which allude to bodily humours to understand the "phlegmatic" reasons for Heneage's actions. Her questioning is interrupted with a blasphemous exclamative "Jesus", before a third rhetorical question "what availeth wit when it fails the owner at greatest need?" (Elizabeth uses the same exclamative in a letter to James VI in 1593: "And for Bodwell, Jesus, did ever any muse more than I (…)").[48] Elizabeth then refers to the official scribal letter and bluntly orders Heneage's compliance with it, without any reference to the royal prerogative or associated expressions: "Do that you are bidden and leave your considerations for your own affairs". Another marker of spoken language, *yea*, demarcates and foregrounds the transgressions that so infuriate her: "for in some things you had clear commandment, which you did not; and in other none and did, yea to the use of those speeches from me that might oblige me to more than I was bound or mind ever to yield".

Whilst written in the first-person singular, the postscript includes a switch to royal inclusive *we*, where Elizabeth alludes to the collective activities of monarchs: "we princes be wary enough of our bargains".[49] This switch foregrounds her royal plurality (*natural* and *politic*) in a manner different to the *royal we* self-reference of the preceding letter. Royal inclusive *we* differentiates Elizabeth's social identity from that of her subjects, marking her social rank as one shared with an elite few, also drawing on the semiotic principle of 'more is greater'. The postscript then switches back to the first-person singular, expressing another rhetorical question and a concluding assessment of her attitude towards Heneage and his transgressions: "I am assured of your dutiful thoughts but I am utterly at squares with this childish dealing".[50]

Her expression of assurance deviates from her usual self-declaration (viz. the cluster *I assure you*). It states her verdict on the relationship between herself and Heneage, acknowledging Heneage's loyalty. Her attitude towards his actions is given one final airing, using the superlative

[48] British Library, MS Add 23240, f.126.

[49] Evans, *The Language of Queen Elizabeth I: A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Royal Style and Identity*, 156.

[50] Dudley in Bruce, 1884, 243.

idiomatic expression "utterly at squares". Whilst the OED has no record of *square* in a prepositional phrase, the verb *square* has a relevant contemporaneous sense, meaning "to regulate, frame, arrange, or direct" on the basis of "some standard or principle of action".[51] That Elizabeth is "at squares" suggests she is unable to make sense of Heneage's actions; the same sentiment expressed in the scribal letter as a cognitive perception: "we find it strange". However, whilst it might be denotationally less explicit, the holograph articulation, on account of its idiomatic form, conveys the sincerity of Elizabeth's emotions forcefully and memorably, with no risk of a bleaching of meaning that arises in more formulaic expressions.[52] Yet the proximal demonstrative *this* separates the loyal Heneage from the actions she considers so "childish". Heneage may have interpreted this closing remark as offering hope for a future reconciliation.

This example of hybrid correspondence thus uses linguistic features conventionally associated with scribal and holograph correspondence, respectively. The close proximity of each letter type, as part of a single communicative act, enables Elizabeth to reframe the author–recipient relationship on a professional and personal level. The scribal letter, adhering to conventional formulae and expressions, conveys the official criticism and directives to a man whose relationship with his sovereign (and employer) is no longer favourable. In the holograph note, the switch to first-person *I* and markers typical of (the queen's) spoken language establishes a more personal interaction through which Elizabeth can convey her emotional reaction.

The impact of the holograph postscript relies on the preceding scribal message to foreground its individualized expression. The scribal letter, too, on account of its explicit criticism and allusions to royal honour and feeling, deviates from scribal letters Heneage had received earlier during the campaign, as well as the matter-of-fact style he would have been familiar with, more generally, in royal scribal correspondence. Both of Elizabeth's messages therefore rely on royal epistolary conventions, either conforming to or deviating from such conventions to achieve their communicative effects.

[51] Oxford English Dictionary, "'square, V.'.," n.d., http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/188195?rskey=Kz5KX7&amp.

[52] Carol Lynn Moder, *Mechanisms of Change in Grammaticization: The Role of Frequency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 271.

Conclusion

I have suggested that a broader view of Elizabethan royal correspondence provides a more robust platform for understanding the particular epistolary acts that took place during Elizabeth's reign. The application of techniques derived from corpus linguistics allows the identification of the linguistic characteristics of her scribal and royal correspondence, revealing differences between letter types that relate to topic, self-representation and interpersonal (relationship) work. As dialogic documents, identity and relationships are integral to the communicative effectiveness of a letter—and this is no less the case for Elizabeth's correspondence. The corpus-based approach provides evidence of the linguistic norms of her epistolography, and thus allows for a more nuanced reading of her correspondence, demonstrated in the analysis of the hybrid correspondence to Heneage. Of course, this investigation is a relatively small exploration of Elizabethan epistolary data using computational methods. The value of corpus linguistic and digital humanities for Elizabethan scholars has yet to be fully realized, and there is scope for further investigations into the discourses of (royal) power in the Tudor period.

Appendix: Letter Transcription

British Library, Cotton Galba C IX f.197–f.197b. Spelling modernized and punctuation added.

Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. Upon perusal of your late letters, and of the copy of the speech in our name unto the states, we find it very strange, that in that matter that doth so greatly touch us in honour, and the continuance of the title of absolute governor, there is nothing yet done for the qualification thereof, for any thing we have yet received from you. For we did look, accordingly as we directed, that there would have been some resolution taken in that behalf, between the counsel of estate, our cousin of Leicester, and you. Which being not performed, falls out far contrary to our expectation, and the regard we looked you would have both had to our honour and contentment, being a thing by us so much affected. And therefore our pleasure is, whersoever these our letters shall find you, you shall with all convenient speed return to our cousin of Leicester, and to join with him in conference, and with the council of estate there, how the said qualification in point

of title may be performed accordingly as we desire, and yet the authority reserved unto our cousin the earl under the title of our lieutenant-general, which we see no cause to doubt but that the same will work as good effect for the avoiding of the confusion of government there, as the other title of absolute governor. We are further to let you understand, that we have cause greatly to mislike of two points in your proceeding there. The one, that there was stay made in the delivery of our letters unto the states, for the doing whereof we gave no special direction, nether to our cousin of Leicester nor unto you, nor yet do see any cause to allow thereof for any thing contained in your letters. The other is, the assurance given by your speech unto the states, that we would make no peace with the king of Spain without their privity and assent, wherein we either think that you have far exceeded your commission, or else our secretary had greatly mistaken our direction given unto him in that behalf; for that our meaning was, that they should only have been assured, that, in any treaty that might fall out between us and Spain, we would have no less care of their safety than of our own. And whereas, by your letters unto us, you do let us understand, that you received a short answer from the council of estate to the points by you propounded, we marvel greatly why you forbear to send the same unto us, importing us so much as it doth to have some speedy resolution in the said point of qualification, wherein we do assure you we shall receive no satisfaction until the same be performed as we desire. And therefore our meaning is not that you shall return unto us before the same be accomplished; and, in the mean time, we do look to hear often from you touching your proceeding therein. Given under our signet at our manor of Greenwich, the xxvijth day of April, 1586, in the xxviijth year of our reign.

Postscript

What phlegmatical reasons so ever were made you, how happeneth it that you will not remember that when a man hath faulted and committed by abettors thereto that neither the one nor the other will willingly make their own retreat. Jesus, what availeth wit when it fails the owner at greatest need? Do that you are bidden and leave your considerations for your own affairs; for in some things you had clear commandment, which you did not; and in other none and did, yea to the use of those speeches from me that might oblige me to more than I was bound or

mind ever to yield. We princes be wary enough of our bargains. Think you I will be bound by your speech to make no peace for my nown matters without their consent? It is enough that I injure not their country, nor themselves, in making peace for them without their consent. I am assured of your dutiful thoughts but I am utterly at squares with this childish dealing.

CHAPTER 5

"Beholde Me Thy Handmaiden": The Pragmatics and Politics of Queen Elizabeth's Prayers

Donatella Montini

eximia atque prestante, literarum praeterea atque linguarum cognitione et vsu
Precationes privatae, Regiae E. R., 1563

Elisabeth Regina Supplex

In the frontispiece to *Christian Prayers and Meditations* (1569), Queen Elizabeth is depicted in prayer (see figure on p. v at the beginning of this volume):[1] worshipping in private, she kneels before a prie-dieu, her sword of state resting on the floor and her crown propped over her open prayer book; the words in the caption come from King Solomon's prayers before the masses (2 Chronicles, 6:12). Although alone and in a private space, the queen's figure is framed by curtains—as though

[1] *Christian Prayers and Meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke, and Latine* (London: John Daye, 1569) (STC 6428).

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she were on a stage opening before an audience. Bearing the emblems of temporal power and the stance of religious devotion, the queen's figure is portrayed as the nexus of these forces. Indeed, "the tale of Queen Elizabeth's transactions with the Almighty is long and very characteristic, on the Queen's side at least. She was reared to the sound of prayer",[2] wittily commented Charles F. Tucker Brooke in his 1938 pioneering survey of prayers ascribed to Elizabeth. Brooke also reminded his reader that Elizabeth's career as author had begun when she was only a child with the translation of two works of royal piety: Queen Margaret of Navarre's *Mirror of the Sinful Soul* (1544), which Elizabeth rendered from French verse into English prose and dedicated to Katherine Parr; and the translation into Latin, French and Italian of the collection *Prayers Stirring the Mind Unto Heavenly Meditations* (1545), composed by Katherine Parr herself. As a princess, Elizabeth's erudition in languages was made to match the profundity of her religious knowledge, and before anyone could portend she would one day be the reigning monarch, Elizabeth was trained to be a pious, chaste and virtuous woman.[3]

The early modern age and early modern England were certainly imbued with religious culture: the Protestant Reformation had, if possible, increased the intensity of religious fervour and brought theological disputes and devotional practices to shape the lives of individuals and entire communities alike. A decade before Elizabeth's accession, under the direction of the Archbishop Cranmer and King Edward VI's Protectors Somerset and Northumberland, a *Book of Common Prayer* had been compiled and drastic changes brought about in the liturgy: as of August 1547, it was ordered that at high Mass the Epistles and Gospels from the Great Bible be read in English; in 1548, an English Communion was introduced and all Latin service books were replaced by a single book, entirely in English. In stages, a new devotional *koinè* was inaugurated as reformers aimed at "subsuming private devotion within the public liturgy of the church".[4] For these reasons, the

[2] Charles Tucker Brooke, "Queen Elizabeth's Prayers," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (1938): 69–77; 69.

[3] See Aysha Pollnitz, "Christian Women or Sovereign Queens? The Schooling of Mary and Elizabeth," in *Tudor Queenship: The Reign of Mary and Elizabeth*, ed. Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 127–42; Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely Education in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 241–61.

[4] Ramie Targoff, *Common Prayer. The Language of Public Devotion in Early Modern England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001). See also, John Denton, "'Hail Mary' Goes Underground. Public and Private Religious Discourse in 16th

Book of Common Prayer was used by the faithful in conjunction or in competition with private prayer books that were intended for use in the household rather than church—the tradition of private prayers being distinct from community prayer.[5]

As Supreme Governor of the Church of England, the queen attended religious services at court daily and would listen to the sermons delivered there. She would pray publicly, and official prayers in her name would further be issued by the government to be recited across parishes in England to implore for God's aid at times of special difficulty and to offer thanks to Him for the triumphs of the nation.[6]

Elizabeth also composed original prayers, some of which were distributed far and wide, in manuscript and in print: Steven May argues that "she apparently did not object to the publication of prayers for her use, but she distinguished these from her own prayers to God, prayers she considered too personal for widespread circulation".[7]

While Elizabeth's linguistic excellence is widely acknowledged and is easily verifiable in her writings, scholars have given her prayers surprisingly little attention: less than two decades have passed since the authoritative University of Chicago Press collections of Elizabeth's works were made to include the prayers as part of the first volume in the series (edited by Leah S. Marcus, Mary Beth Rose, and Janel Mueller in 2000) and in the subsequent collection of autograph texts and foreign language originals (edited by Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus in 2003);[8] finally,

Century England," in *The Language of Public and Private Communication in a Historical Perspective*, ed. Nicholas Brownlees, Gabriella Del Lungo, and John Denton (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2010), 135–60.

[5] See Susan M. Felch, ed., *Elisabeth Tyrwhit's Morning and Evening Prayers* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

[6] Steven W. May, ed., *Queen Elizabeth I. Selected Works* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2004), xxviii.

[7] May, 2004, xxx.

[8] Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000) (hereafter CW); Elizabeth I, *Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*, ed. Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003) (hereafter ACFLO). Since the 1980s and with various approaches, a good number of books have explored early modern women's writings. Without attempting a comprehensive list, a limited number is mentioned here out of those that take religious writings into consideration: M. Hannay, ed., *Silent but*

in his *Queen Elizabeth I: Selected Works* (2004), Steven W. May also included five prayers.[9]

It should also be noted that in the same round of years, a special interest developed around Elizabeth's putative holograph and autograph works, and thus in her handwriting, raising a number of issues about her social and linguistic identity and encouraging a reappraisal of her writings in this perspective.[10] In this connection, any scholarly probing into *what* Elizabeth wrote, *how* she came to write what she wrote, and *whether* any of her alleged writings are in fact in her own hand will have to measure itself up against a 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"[11]—as an aggregate, that is, of disparate facts, myths and recollections, even as she is regarded as an author. Anyone studying her works, it appears, must thus face the seemingly permanent challenge of uncovering evidence of the queen's agency, and of the authenticity and origin of the materials examined.[12] Arguably, authorship in the early modern period bore no privileged relationship

for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985); Erica Longfellow, *Women and Religious Writing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Patricia Demers, *Women's Writing in English: Early Modern England* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2005); Kimberley Ann Coles, *Religion, Reform, and Women's Writing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and Elizabeth Clarke, "Women in Church and in Devotional Spaces," in *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed. Laura Lunger Knoppes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 110–23. In these works, such authors as Katherine Parr, Anne Askew, and Ann Bradstreet are the subject of interesting studies. However and quite surprisingly, Queen Elizabeth I's prayers are mentioned only occasionally.

[9] May, 2004. Other prayers are found scattered across other collections, although without a systematic and dedicated editorial project.

[10] Janel Mueller, "Textualism, Contextualism, and the Writings of Queen Elizabeth I," *English Study and History* 4 (Tampere: Tampere English Studies, 1994): 11–38; Peter Beal and Grace Ioppolo, eds., *Elizabeth I and the Culture of Writing* (London: The British Library, 2007); H. R. Woudhuysen, "The Queen's Own Hand: A Preliminary Account," in Beal and Ioppolo (2007), 1–27; Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume Coatalen, and Jonathan Gibson, eds., *Elizabeth I's Foreign Correspondence. Letters, Rhetoric, and Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[11] Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I. The Competition for Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 7.

[12] Mel Evans, *The Language of Queen Elizabeth I: A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Royal Style and Identity* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

with manuscript writing, the latter often merely counting as the medium of transmission of a text: the making of a text could begin at a far remove from its appearance on the page and consist of a layered and cumulative process.[13] Thus, the notion of authorship itself has to be called in question and stands in need of qualification when applied to the period, further considering the complications brought about by the incipient printing trade: unsurprisingly, royal writings represent a very special case in which *author* may at best be intended as a collective term for "a person who speaks with many voices but may also sum up many voices in one".[14]

Yet the voice of *Elisabeth Regina supplex*, the queen at prayer, rings particularly distinctive and is likely to provide one of the best documents available of the progress of Elizabeth as *political persona*, and of the strategic gendering of her self-representation. If we regard the act of prayer as the verbal *and* spiritual meeting point between a humble sinner and his/her Creator, with worshipper and his/her God engaging in private dialogue, Elizabeth's instance represents a special case and raises several issues. In the first place, the voice of the 'repentant soul' here holding dialogue with his/her Lord is the solo voice of a Renaissance sovereign, of God's deputy on earth whose word is divine in itself, as the Renaissance political *episteme* would have it.[15] Secondly and quite uniquely, the voice in question in Elizabeth's particular instance is the voice of a female body caught up within a rigid patriarchal setting in which the notion itself of a female sovereign was still anathema.[16] In what way, then, would a sovereign speak to God? And in what way should a queen speak to her God; and how did this special queen, who was also the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, do it? The theological, political and linguistic problem of representing herself as monarch among mortals went hand in hand with her need to position

[13] On the description of early modern letter writing see also James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[14] Alessandra Petrina and Laura Tosi, eds., *Representations of Elizabeth I in Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2011), 4.

[15] See Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

[16] John Knox, *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women (1558)* (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972); John Aylmer, *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subjects (1559)* (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972).

herself before God as a poor sinner, to enrol "among the world's weak and humble, as sufficiently imitative of Christ's own meekness and humility, in accordance with the religious reformers' imperative that suffering is a sign of God's favour".[17] So, what might it mean for a powerful woman to endorse the linguistic forms of submission that prayers conventionally entail?

This chapter discusses these issues through a qualitative investigation of a number of linguistic and pragmatic features to be found in Queen Elizabeth's prayers. We will look at examples of the dialogic construction of the queen's authorial voice in particular and analyze the chief linguistic and discursive strategies to be found in a limited but representative corpus made up of four prayers composed in the English vernacular and ascribed to the queen. This study is also a contribution to the larger investigation of Elizabeth's linguistic persona, with special emphasis on the tension between the idiolect of her piety and her political and social standing. From a sociopragmatic and discourse-analytic point of view, prayers are fundamentally to be regarded as speech-purposed texts: thus, the politics of nominal and pronominal forms of address will disclose the carefully poised hierarchical relations they imply, which also occurs in the way different speech acts convey varying degrees of strength and directness.[18]

Before going into the discussion of specific findings, however, I will first outline a broad overview of the corpus of Elizabeth's extant prayers and then introduce the chief linguistic and pragmatic features of devotional texts. Finally, a set of the queen's prayers will be examined in order to provide samples of the distinctive features of this particular language as spoken by her.

[17] Jennifer Clement, "The Queen's Voice: Elizabeth I's *Christian Prayers and Meditations*," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 13, no. 3 (January 2008): 1.1–26, 1.

[18] More and more frequently, studies are made into the sociopragmatic make-up of text types in order to highlight conventions and patterns. Research that integrates stylistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic approaches to texts from the past increasingly refers to individual text-producers to investigate patterns of expression and linguistic recurrences that enable their communicative styles and strategies to be profiled. In the stylistic domain, analysis has to be regarded as part of the interpretative process: in establishing procedures, approach and investigative hypotheses, a reading of the text to be analysed is already at work, accounting for or disputing previously established assessments and interpretations, rather than producing new ones. For a general review see Jonathan Culpeper, "Historical Sociopragmatics," in *Historical Pragmatics*, ed. A. H. Jucker and I. Taavitsainen (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2010), 69–94.

Queen Elizabeth I's Prayers

The corpus of Queen Elizabeth I's prayers is not as large as that of her correspondence or Parliamentary speeches, but it is notable in so far as it is probable that she herself authorized the publication of a few of the volumes in which selections from her prayers are included. A first collection, *Precationes privatae Regiae E.R.*, appeared in print in 1563 (STC 7576.7), just after she had recovered from a near-fatal attack of smallpox; this small octavo volume is exclusively composed of Latin *precationes* and *sententiae*, including a long prayer of thanksgiving for the restoration of the queen's health.[19] In 1569, a volume entitled *Christian Prayers and Meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke, and Latine* appeared in print: it was published by John Day who held the official patent for printing the Psalms in English.[20] Two further Latin prayers appear in *Variae Meditationes et preces piae* printed by Christopher Barker in 1582.[21] The untitled manuscript known as *Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book* must belong to the same period.[22] It is a girdle book, written on vellum, three inches high and two inches wide, and adorned with miniatures of Elizabeth and the duke of Alencon by Nicholas Hilliard; it contains six original prayers, the first and the last being in English, the others in French, Italian, Latin and Greek. Finally, the collection by Steven W. May includes five prayers from different sources and all are related to political events that occurred between 1576 and 1597.[23]

[19] Prayers "on sickness" are also included in the 1569 collection: here the queen and her subjects pray together.

[20] A facsimile; the queen's personal copy is preserved at Lambeth Palace, in the library of the archbishops of Canterbury. London 1569 (STC 6428).

[21] There is a copy of this work in the library of Emmanuel College, in Cambridge, perhaps the only extant.

[22] British Library: Cotton MS Otho E.9, f.209. A transcription into modern English is *A Book of Devotions Composed by Her Majesty* (with translations by The Reverend Adam Fox D. D., with a foreword by The Reverend Canon J. P. Hodges) (Gerrad Cross, Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Limited, 1970).

[23] Prayer 1: On Progress to Bristol, August 15, 1574. Prayer 2: On the defeat of the Spanish Armada, August 1588. Prayer 3 is holograph, kept at Hatfield House, undated, possibly written after the 1591 expedition to France. In ACFLO the same prayer is entitled "On the defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1588", although in a note the editor points out: "The possibility cannot be excluded that the prayer was composed even later to record the queen's thanks for the delivery from one of the several threatened invasions by a reconstituted Spanish Armada during the 1590s" (ACFLO, p. 84). For a photographic reproduction see CW, p. 422. Prayer 4: For the success of the expedition against Spain, June 1596. Prayer 5: For the success of the 1597 naval expedition against Spain. May, 2004, 246–59.

It is well worth repeating that "no official publication of any prayer unquestionably by Elizabeth is known to have taken place during her reign".[24] Some prayers published under the queen's name and in the queen's first-person voice signal royal use, not royal composition, and this is the crucial problem with Elizabeth's authority. There is, however, an important sense in which all these prayers contributed nonetheless in shaping the queen's public image in both domestic and international contexts, as reflected, for example, by the juxtaposition of English-language and foreign-language prayers in various collections. Thus, in so far as they *appeared* to be authored by her, they de facto produced the effect of Elizabeth as author, as the hidden voice calling to God. As such, these texts gain special significance as a contribution to the public image of the queen as head of state and Supreme Governor of the Church of England, as well as furnishing indications of Elizabeth's reputation as a published writer.[25]

Christian Prayers and Meditations may stand out as the clearest example in point, and on this account also has received considerable attention in recent years. Although the question of authorship remains uncertain, as there is no autograph copy to support the ascription, the text overtly relates the name of Elizabeth to its composition and publication, not least through wording in the frontispiece and the reproduction of her royal arms on the first and last leaves. This lengthy book also includes prayers not by the queen: the liturgy of the Church of England and some prayers drawn from Henry Bull's 1568 version of John Bradford's *Private Prayers and Meditations*. The seventeen foreign language prayers that close the collection are in Latin, French, Italian, Spanish and Greek and serve to present Elizabeth both as a multilingual, Christian queen who speaks to the international community and as a guide to the National Church. The foreign-language prayers read to a considerable extent as a document of the queen's intents on the political and religious plane: while ostensibly Elizabeth's private communications with God, these prayers were, after all, clearly intended for public display, and were indeed published. It seems further likely, since these

[24] May, 2004, xxx.

[25] See Linda Shenk, "Queen Solomon. An International Elizabeth I in 1569," in *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Carole Levin and Robert Bucholz (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 98–125.

prayers appeared in several foreign languages, that they were meant to be read outside England, especially in those countries—primarily France and Spain—that were still bound to the Roman Catholic church and posed a threat to Protestant England. In spite of the strict intimacy with God that the prayers communicate, there is a certain deliberateness in the way they appear to be meant to shape the public persona of the queen, just as much as, for example, were Elizabeth's periodic progresses through the countryside. In these prayers, as Linda Shenk points out, "Ecclesiastical, monarchical, international politics coalesce in Elizabeth's learned persona":[26] she is a new Solomon, authoritative both as ecclesiastical figure and as politician. She enters the devotional life of her people, asserts pious superiority over Catholic nations, and is an ally to Protestant countries. She prays with and alongside her subjects ("my people", as she calls them) and, with a similar language of obedience and divine wisdom, England and Elizabeth fuse into the queen's royal image. Page after page, from the frontispiece to the final prayers in Greek, Elizabeth stands out as a monarchical image that trumpets her own and her people's fitness to lead the transnational Protestant church, under the aegis of her ecclesiastical and monarchical presence.

Touching upon the politics of stylistic registers, Shenk notes that while Elizabeth is unfailingly assertive on the subject of her leadership, there is a degree to which her intents and the intensity of her claims vary according to the language in which she is praying: thus, prayers in French trumpet her mission as God's chosen champion of a reformed church; prayers in the languages of the Catholic nations, such as Italian and Spanish, introduce antipapal comments and assume an aggressive stance; in Latin, however, her tone is more conciliatory, asking for God's protection against enemies. In particular, foreign language prayers suggest the rich, cognitive and compositional implications of Elizabeth's multilingualism. In her exercises in other languages (working both into and from English), her lexical choices and turn of phrase are recurrently patterned on English forms and word order, leaving the flavour of her native language, although showing a certain repetitiveness.[27]

[26] Linda Shenk, *Learned Queen. The Image of Elizabeth I in Politics and Poetry* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 21.

[27] Janel Mueller, "Preface," in Mueller and Marcus (2003), xi–xxxiii.

As such, Elizabeth's prayers operate as a political performance in which the queen's addresses to God are intended to attain certain effects and accomplish certain goals. On one level, these prayers communicate with the divine, disclose the queen's desires for herself and her people, and request wisdom and mercy from God. On another level, the prayers are being shared with Elizabeth's subjects (as well as, it is presumed, an international audience) and thus are also directed at human beings to shape a public sense of Elizabeth as ruler.

Language and Prayers: Methodological Issues

From a historical perspective, the domain of Christian religious discourse largely contributed to shape most European languages, and this also applies to the history of the English language. "Religion, and the power of the Church and its teachings were pervasive in every branch of life in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance".[28] In England during the Tudor and Stuart periods, by virtue of a link between politics and religion that appeared indissoluble, the advice and justification of the 'right' religion was of supreme political and social importance, lending the utmost significance to religious writings (as well as making them liable to persecution). After the Reformation, religious language became available to a large public through printed volumes that were made increasingly affordable: texts have come down to us in large numbers and our knowledge about their readers is often more detailed than in other domains. The various genres of religious discourse enjoyed basic linguistic relevance: in Steven May's words, "the spiritual intensity of the age caused prayer-books to rank among the most popular in the book trade; guides to private prayers in English, public service books, primers compiled by several authors rolled out of the English presses in multiple editions".[29]

From a linguistic perspective, religious language differs from other varieties formally and stylistically. Still, linguistic studies on English religious discourse are scarce, especially in a diachronic and communicative perspective. One difficulty stems from the large number and diversity

[28] Thomas Kohnen, "Religious discourse," in *Historical Pragmatics*, ed. Andreas Jucker and Irma Taavitsainen (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 523–47; 523.

[29] Steven W. May, "Queen Elizabeth Prays for the Living and the Dead," in *Elizabeth I and the Culture of Writing*, ed. Peter Beale and Grace Ioppolo (2007), 201–11; 203.

of sub-genres of religious discourse, and various attempts have been made to outline a systematic description. It is essentially a composite language made of formulaic inserts and borrowings from other religious texts, especially from the Old and the New Testament, and from the Psalms; what is more, it may be regarded as the only variety of English to be wholly (or largely, at any rate) based on translation, from Latin especially.[30]

Five communicative spheres have been identified within the religious domain: the Bible, liturgy, catechesis, theology, and the Church. However, this distinction does not help to further identify different text genres, as these then appear in more than one sphere: prayers, that is, may be included in liturgy, catechesis, or the Bible, and so on. A reliable model was devised by Thomas Kohnen that makes it possible to establish relations among the *spheres, genres* and *functions* of different religious discursive forms as well as to maintain a focus on the two protagonists and main interactants in the world of religious discourse, namely God (as the transcendental authority) and the Christian community.[31]

Prayers, both liturgical and private, were certainly one of the most popular and widespread genres. A linguistic and stylistic perspective will emphasize how prayers as a genre are not merely "words on the page" and instead present themselves as a speech-purposed, eminently interactive and performative genre that involves the communicative functions of a text and the dynamic exchange between speaker and hearer.[32] Typically, the communicative setting of a prayer is straightforward and unidirectional: among the various genres and text-types of religious discourse, prayers constitute a special subfield of communication in which the only addressee involved is a transcendental authority.[33] Both in individual and in liturgical

[30] David Crystal and Derek Davy, "The Language of Religion," in *Investigating English Style* (London: Longman, 1969), 147–72.

[31] Kohnen, 2010. Recent research is based on the *Corpus of English Religious Prose* (*CERP*), compiled at the University of Cologne, and covering English religious prose from 1150 to the end of the XVIII century: the major genres included are sermons, prayers, religious biographies, treatises. Prayers and religious instructions are most widely investigated, especially on speech acts and text functions.

[32] Denton, 2010; Gerard M. Lukken, "Liturgy and Language: An Approach from Semiotics," *Questions liturgiques* LXXIII (1992): 36–52.

[33] The biblical texts usually present the opposite communicative model, since in that case the transcendental authority is the addresser.

prayers, the speaker positions himself/herself as a single subject, humble, in a subordinate position, sinful, helpless, begging for salvation, and addressing divinity. First and second person pronouns occur with great frequency, comparable to the frequency found in contemporary conversation or early modern English trial proceedings and drama.[34] Pronouns of address are usually accompanied by a high frequency of nominal terms especially designating God (Jesus, Lord, Almighty, Creator, Redeemer): they may be followed by an apposition or relative clause (or both), usually in support of the subsequent petition. The markedly performative formula that characterizes prayers is further compounded by the pervasive presence of speech acts taking the forms of thanksgivings, of acts of confession/profession (e.g. of one's sins, or God's divine nature), and of acts of praise and worship, all of which are directed to God; finally, and wholly consistently with the performative nature of prayers, directive speech acts (viz. pray, beseech, entreat) are found occur much more frequently in prayers than in any other religious genre.[35]

In Kohnen's description of religious language viewed in its communicative functions, core text-functions (identified as such as invocations, petitions, thanksgivings, confession, profession and adoration) serve to shape the textual development of prayers.[36] Both the pronominal features and the core functions, as well as the interactive setting, occur throughout the centuries, and this accounts for the exceptionally static and conservative nature of prayers.

Devotional Petrarchism

In virtue of its content and the occasions of its production, religious discourse is certainly to be considered a most stereotyped language, generated by formulae, phrases and vocabulary rooted in a secular tradition, which in turn fed on theological, biblical, ecclesiastical and liturgical

[34] Jonathan Culpeper and Merja Kyto, *Early Modern English Dialogues. Spoken Interaction as Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[35] In this respect, prayers are closer to letters than to sermons.

[36] "Invocation is the basic act of calling upon God (or the saint); the petition includes the various requests addressed to God (or the saint); thanksgiving comprises acts of thanking God, for example, for his grace. In addition, persons praying will confess their sins but also profess their faith, that is, that God is the only true God. Lastly, adoration comprises acts of praising and worshipping. Of course these functions and their associated text sections, may combine differently, and not all of them will necessarily appear in a given prayer", Kohnen, 2010, 530.

knowledge and language. Elizabeth's education and learning made her one of the most proficient and expert masters of the genre. Thus, her prayers tend to reproduce the *conventional* functions of a devotional text-type, probably to a larger extent than her political speeches observed any set convention, and certainly more than her letters did. For these reasons, Elizabeth's sought-after true voice may appear more elusive than ever in the prayers, hidden behind the words of Holy Scripture and of the community of believers. However, a stylistic investigation may help detect linguistic traces of Elizabeth's idiolect and confirm or disconfirm previous hypotheses regarding the queen's linguistic and rhetorical strategies.

Four prayers have been selected for this analysis, for three chief reasons: they were composed in English, hence implicitly offered to only an English audience; all of them are ascribed to the queen directly; and finally, they cover a significant period of Elizabeth's life and reign, between the 1560s and the 1580s—namely, the period preceding the great watershed defeat of the Spanish Armada by the English.

The first prayer appears in *Christian Prayers and Meditations*, and is included in a group of three relating to the supplicant's sickness (sigs. Kiij–Liij; in Appendix the whole text; my transcription from the original):[37] while the speaker does not name herself, internal reference within the corpus enables us to identify the speaking voice as Elizabeth, speaker and author of the third text, where a clearly gendered female voice refers to herself as God's handmaid, the *ancilla Domini* recurrently emerging in Elizabeth's 1563 Latin *Precationes*. Moreover, the speaker specifically draws attention to the lineage and legacy whereby she is accorded the status of a queen, naming her father and mother respectively as king and queen (an unusual move indeed, considering the reputation of Anne Boleyn):

> Beholde me thy handmaiden upon whom from my tender yeares unto thys day, thou hast heaped so great and so many, and almost infinite benefites of thy gratious goodness, whom being borne of a king and Queene (…). (sig. K.iiij.)

[37] According to Shenk (2010), the prayer had appeared in Elizabeth's Latin prayer book *Precationes priuatae* (1563), but in the English version, the Queen would reinforce her bond with her people and include them in the plea for her illness: "Wherfore as well I as thy people committed unto me, bowing the knees of our hartes before thy maiestie, do humbly besech thee most gratious Saviour, in thy iudgement to remember thy mercy" (L.j.).

Two more prayers are from *Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book* (1579–1581), "the First English prayer", and "the Second English Prayer", set to open and close the foreign language prayers section.[38] Both prayers present a female gendered speaker, again God's handmaid, who declares her right to the throne by the will of God. Here, Elizabeth casts herself as the sinner who receives God's mercy and benefits. The fourth text here selected is a thanksgiving prayer for the defeat of the Spanish Armada, presumed to date *ca* 1588.[39] The speaker thanks God for His help against the enemy, and the speaker's voice features as the voice of a king/queen addressing the divinity.

A devotional text usually starts with an *invocation*, of variable length, which includes the names and titles to be attributed to God, and some self-description of the person praying. This section is usually the most 'interactive' part in a prayer, since it serves to convey the relationship holding between God and the believer, who is conventionally a "mortal creature" and "repentant soul" invoking God's mercy. A *thanksgiving* follows, in which the condition of the believer is expounded and described before reaching the *petition*, one of the core functions of a prayer, which normally ends with the *adoration*, a few lines devoted to renovating faith and love towards the divinity. Elizabeth's prayers largely conform to this pattern, with some interesting variations.

Let us examine the invocational excerpts, in which, rather than appealing to a hierarchically superior God, as would be expected, the addresser and the divine addressee are seen to stand, as it were, face to face. Interesting insight can be gained by looking at pronouns and terms of address, which are explicit markers of socio-affective relationships and may be crucially revealing of the intended terms of the relationship among speakers even in those linguistic systems in which pronouns of address have very limited variation.[40] In the first example

[38] Mueller and Marcus, 2003, 44–5, 52–3.

[39] Mueller and Marcus, 2003, 84–5. See also note 23 on prayer 3.

[40] There is no space here to review the abundant literature on the sociopragmatic value of pronouns and terms of address. Bruti provides a synthetic overview to the effect that "Second person pronouns have in many languages two different forms whose semantics is regulated by the relationships between speaker and hearer. Brown and Gilman (1960) equate this dichotomy to the alternation between T and V pronouns, where the initials stand for the Latin pronouns employed to designate second-person singular, *tu* and *vos*, which correspond to the early modern english *thou* and *ye*. Second person pronouns necessarily encode social relationship: the same pronoun can be symmetrically and

provided below, the speaker's main preoccupation is with her imperilled health and the addressee is embedded within a macrometaphor of sickness, which precisely determines subsequent lexical choices in the text. Thus, God is the "perfect Physition", the "heauenly Physitian", on earth to heal "all Diseases" (ex. 1): physical pain and sin coincide, with sin intended as the soul's sickness. The second and third prayer celebrate the role of command which the speaker has derived from God and suggest God's influence on the speaker's condition; finally, in the last prayer, God is reverently and respectfully addressed, but an explicit royal identity is adopted that establishes a closeness of rank among the two interactants.

> 1. O Most mightie and most mercifull Savior Jesu Christ, and onely sonne of the living God, who being here upon the earth amongst mortall men, by the healing of all Diseases, and pardoning of the sinnes of such as put theyr truth in thee, diddest declare unto the world that thou art that onely heauenly and perfect Physition, as well of our soules as of our bodyes: and when such as trusted in theyr owne righteousness did lay it to thy charge as a fault, that thou diddest keepe company with sinners, thou diddest expressely testifie, that not such as were in health, but such as were sicke had nede of a Physician. (In time of sicknes, sig. K.iiij.)[41]

bi-directionally employed when speakers are on the same level (and consider themselves so), or different speakers may have recourse to non-reciprocal forms when their relationship is asymmetrical and unilateral". Silvia Bruti, "Address-Pronouns in Shakespeare's English: A Re-appraisal in Terms of Markedness," in *The History of English in a Social Context*, ed. Dieter Kastovsky and Arthur Mettinger (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000), 25–51; 27. In this respect, "Historical pragmatics is a particularly relevant approach for the study of second person singular pronouns, as both THOU and YOU had a range of pragmatic functions. For example, the words *thou art welcome* might be said by one intimate to another, and the address pronoun would reflect this intimacy, but the same words to a stranger, or a social superior, would likely be taken as an affront by the addressee, as the speaker would be assuming an intimacy or equality that was unfounded." Terry Walker, *Thou and You in Early Modern English Dialogues* (Amsterdam, NL and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2007), 5. See also Gabriella Mazzon, "Pronouns and Nominal Address in Shakespearean English: A Socio-Affective Marking System in Transition," in *Diachronic Perspectives on Address Term Systems*, ed. I. Taavitsainen and A. H. Jucker (Amsterdam, NL and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2003), 223–49; "Terms of Address," in *Historical Pragmatics*, ed. A. H. Jucker and I. Taavitsainen (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2010), 351–76.

[41] The transcriptions from sources retain the spelling and punctuation of the original. Deletions have been marked with a strikethrough. Illegible text and conjectural reading appear between brackets [ ].

2. O moste Glorious Kinge, and Creator of the whole worlde, to whome all thinges be subject, both in heauen and earth, and all best princes most gladlie obaie. Heare the most humble voice of thie handmaide, in this onelie happie, to be so accepted. How excedinge is thie goodness, and how great myne offences? (The First English Prayer, 1579–1582; ACFLO, p. 44)

3. O lorde God Father euerlasting, which raignest ouer the Kingdomes of men, and giuest them at thy pleasures: which of thy great mercie, hast chosen me thy seruant and handmaid to feede thy people and thyne enheritance: so teach me, I humblie beseach the, thy worde, and so strengthen me with thy grace, that I maie feede thy people with a faithfull and a true hart: and rule them prudentlie with powre. Oh Lorde, thou haste set me on highe, my fleshe is fraile and weake. (The Second English Prayer, 1579–1582; ACFLO, p. 52)

4. Most powerfuL and Largist Giving God whos eares hit hathe pleasyd So beningLy to Grace the petitions of Vs thy deuoted Saruent ~~that~~ not With euen measure ~~cannot~~ to our dessiars but with far ampler fauor hathe not only protected Our Army from foes pray, and from Seas danger but hath detained malisci Vs desonours iVen hauing fors to resist Vs from hauing power to attempt Vs or assaile ~~theim~~ them. (On the defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1588, ACFLO, p. 84)

Moving next to the description of the addresser, this appears in Elizabeth's prayers to be generally rather long and detailed, focussing on the speaker's life, failures and successes:

5. Beholde me thy handmaiden upon whom from my tender yeares unto thys day, thou hast heaped so great and so many, and almost infinite benefites of thy gratious goodness, whom being borne of a king and Queene, thou hast not onely endued with giftes of grace, meete for a kingdome, but also hast deliuered me from many and great daungers, out of the hands of my enemies, and from the snares of death which they had set for my life, hast exalted me unto the dignitie of a Queene, and placed me in the high estate of honour amongst mortall persons, and that not through any my deseruyng but onely of thy goodness and mere liberalitie. (In time of sicknes, sig. K.iiiij.)

6. Of nothing hast thow made me not a worme, but a Creature according to thine owne image, heaping all the blessings vpon me that men holde most happie. Drawing my blood from Kinges and my bringing vp

> in vertue: giuing me that more is, euen in my youth knowledge of thie truthe: and in times of most danger, most gracious deliuerance: pulling me from the prison to the pallace: and placing me a Soueraigne Princesse ouer thie people of England. And aboue all this, making me (though a weake woman) yet thy instrument, to set forth the glorious Gospell of thy deare Sonne Christ Ihesus. Thus in theis last and worst daies of the world, when warres and seditions with grieuous persecutions haue vexed almost all Kinges and Contries, round about me, my raigne hath been peaceable, and my Realme a receptacle to thie afflicted churche. The loue of my people hath appeared firme, and the deuises of myne enemies frustrate. (The First English Prayer, 1579–1582; ACFLO, pp. 44–45)

What clearly emerges from the examples above is the correlation between pronoun and nominal address, and its strategic use in Elizabeth's rhetoric: the obvious and inevitable hierarchical imbalance between divinity and mortal that the terms of address might be expected to reflect is constantly undermined and even reversed by representing a mortal addresser upon whose presence and attributes the divine addressee seems to shape his own identity. Indeed, the sick queen almost appears to instate the perfect physician, in so far as it is the sick queen who "makes" the heavenly physician, and the "Soueraine Princesse" who "makes" the God to whom "all the best princes gladlie obaie"; and when the queen defines herself through a 'royal we' ("Most powerfuL and Largist Giving God whos eares hit hathe pleasyd So beningLy to Grace the petitions of **Vs** thy deuoted Saruent"), she invokes and evokes the "most powerfull and largest giving God", as if measuring up to the divinity on an equal level.

Moreover, in Elizabeth's style, all that is bestowed by God (her birth, the deadly perils she has faced, or her triumphs), feeds into the narration of her own story as those events are shared by the royal believer with her people: her life and actions seem to coincide with God's actions to the extent that royal and divine overlap.

In the following examples (ex. 7 and 8), it is particularly evident how invocation, thanksgiving and petition may be transformed into a dialogue of two interactants in which the speaker, by means of an insistent use of first and second person pronouns of address, almost physically drags her addressee, Holy though He be, into the text:

> 7. **thou** has stricken **me** with a greuous sicknes of **my** body, and very daungerous unto **my** life, and also troubled & abashed **my** minde with terrours and anguishes of **my** soule: and withall **thou** hast by **my** daunger sore

> flighted and amased **thy** people of England, whose safetie & quietnes next after **thee**, seemeth to stay uppon **me** aboue all other worldly creatures, and upon **my** life and continuance amongst them. Wherfore as well **I** as **thy** people committed unto **me,** bowing the knees of our hartes before **thy** maiestie, do humbly besech **thee** most gratious Saviour, in **thy** iudgement to remember **thy** mercy, and according to **thy** accustomed goodnes, to deliuer **me thy** handmaiden from thys present perill of daungerous sicknes. (In time of sicknes, sig. L.j.)

> 8. Create therefore in me o Lorde a new harte and so renew my spirite within me [echoes Psalm 51:10] that **thy** lawe maie be **my** study, **thy** truthe **my** delight; **thy** church **my** care: **thy** people **my** crowne: **thy** righteousnes, **my** pleasure: **thy** seruice **my** gouernment; **thy** feare **my** honor: **thy** grace **my** strength: **thy** fauor **my** life: **thy** gospell **my** kingdome: and **thy** saluation **my** blisse: and **my** glory. So shall this **my** kingdome through the be established with peace: so shall **thie** church be edified with power: so shal **thy** gospell be published with zeale: so shall **my** raigne be continued with prosperitie: so shall **my** life be prolonged with happines: and so shall **my self** at thy good pleasure be translated into immortalitie. (The Second English Prayer, 1579–1582; ACFLO, p. 53)

Across the entire corpus of prayers, *thou*, *thee*, and *thy* are definitely foremost among second person pronouns: while the pronominal system in early modern English tended to be unstable and frequently allowed for the coexistence of these forms with *you*, the pronouns of intimacy and reverence are the queen's regular choice, partly as a reflection of the fact that religious discourse has been the one domain in which the T forms have always prevailed.

It is also particularly interesting to note how the variations in gender that Elizabeth habitually displays in her political speeches when referring to herself disappear altogether in the prayers in favour of the feminine. The strategic gendering of Elizabeth's self-representation has been the subject of a considerable body of research since the 1980s. New historicist and feminist scholars have re-examined her strategy of power and proposed to define it in terms of a 'political Petrarchism' that informed courtly relations and was particularly prominent among her male courtiers. Indeed, in early modern England, gender is crucial in the relationship between the sovereign and his subjects, and the presence of a woman on the throne undermined the very concept of power and of

its forms. Elizabeth was highly aware of her condition and fashioned her discourse through a multifaceted gallery of dramatis personae, male and female, old and young, learned and simple, in order to cope with and bypass the claims and demands of a patriarchal system.[42] In her Parliamentary speeches, for example, she chooses to wear several masks and take up identities that stage her both as a sovereign and as a woman, as a 'body politic' and as a natural body. When Elizabeth focuses on ruling roles, she positions herself somewhere in between king and prince, queen and princess, displacing herself in response to the expectations of her subjects.[43] She introduces herself to them as their "anointed Queen", their "just Prince", and their king, as in the famous words at Tilbury:

> I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too. (CW, p. 326)

In her prayers, however, she is consistently queen, sovereign princess, and signally a weak woman and God's handmaid. Designedly, in *Reading Humility in Early Modern England*, Jennifer Clement claims that Elizabeth's prayers, regarded as text, "negotiated the complex territory of rank and gender":[44] they position the queen as typical and unique simultaneously, a humble sinner who is divinely chosen to rule England, who bows before no other human, yet who abases herself in front of God. In Reformation constructions, weakness occupied a strangely ambiguous place vis-à-vis gender, salvation and authority. "Weakness signified an inferiority and vulnerability usually gendered feminine, and yet also characterized Christ on the cross and his suffering in obedience to the will of his father".[45]

[42] See Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King. Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1994); Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth. Authority, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006).

[43] Donatella Montini, I *discorsi dei re. Retorica e politica in Elisabetta I e in* Henry V *di Shakespeare* (Bari: Adriatica, 1999).

[44] Jennifer Clement, *Reading Humility in Early Modern England* (London: Ashgate, 2015), 80. On the topos of humility see also Patricia Pender, *Early Modern Women's Writing and the Rhetoric of Modesty* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[45] Clement, 2008, 2.

Elizabeth refers to herself repeatedly as God's "handmaid", a term she also uses in *Precationes privatae*:[46] in Latin, 'handmaid' translates as 'ancilla'—the word notably spoken by the Virgin Mary in the *Magnificat* of the Vulgate Bible. The repeated use of this word, characteristic of Elizabeth's own rhetoric, strongly establishes a link between the Virgin and the queen, both in their shared virginity (although in 1569, Parliament had not yet despaired sufficiently to sit a husband on Elizabeth's throne) and in their shared devotion to God, by whose grace the queen had authority to rule her country. The God to whom Elizabeth prays is a father and a sovereign, who may be relied upon to rejoice with his daughter/handmaid when she outwits her enemies, and relied upon, ultimately and importantly, to support Tudor policy.

It is tenable, finally, that Elizabeth's need to appear submissive and meek in a religious context should confirm early modern stereotypes of gendered identity, which patently set a limit to her power and authority, whereas if she appeared overly confident she might run the risk of defying biblical injunctions against women's speech, an issue deftly addressed by the queen's rhetorical strategies.[47]

The negotiation between rank and gender that has been suggested through the interplay of pronouns and terms of address seems to be further reinforced by the use of a skilful weft of verbal forms, especially in the *petition*, that section of a prayer in which the believer asks for God's help to obtain some benefit. Given the need to continuously reiterate the features of request, the *petition* is the part in which the highest frequency of *directive speech acts* is retrievable, and thus is particularly amenable to speech-act analysis. The following examples from three different prayers show typical rhetorical traits of a devotional plea, and Elizabeth's idiolectical linguistic choices:

[46]The same term can be found in Queen Elizabeth's speech at the close of Parliamentary session, March 15, 1576: "And as for those rare and special benefits which many years have followed and accompanied my happy reign, I attribute to God alone, the Prince of rule, and count myself no better than His *handmaid*, rather brought up in a school to bide the ferula than traded in a kingdom to support the sceptre." *CW*, 169.

[47]In the framework of a patriarchal setting in which silence befitted women, the female ruler's word survived as an exception. It is worth bearing in mind that the queen's voice plays a special role in Elizabeth's exercise of power: after 1563, almost every parliamentary speech bore reference to "the word of a Prince" and Elizabeth herself analyzed her style, as well as the aims of her utterance. Marcus, Mueller, and Rose, 2000, 152; Donatella Montini, "'As Many as Are English, Are My Children and Kinsfolks.' Elizabeth I and the

9. For his sake therefore, to whome thou hast giuen all power, and wilt denie no petition, **heare** my praiers. **Turne** thie face from my sinnes (o Lorde) and thine eies to thy handyworke. **Create** a cleane heart, and **renew** a right spirite within me. **Order** my steppes in thie worde, that no wickednes haue dominion ouer me, **make** me obedient to thie will, and delite in thy law. **Graunt** me grace to liue godlie and to gouerne iustlie: that so liuing to please the, and raigning to serue **that I maie euer glorifie the** the Father of all goodnes and mercie. (The First English Prayer, 1579–1582; ACFLO, p. 45)

10. Wherfore as well I as thy people committed unto me, bowing the knees of our hartes before thy maiestie, **do humbly besech thee** most gratious Saviour, in thy iudgement **to remember thy mercy**, and according to thy accustomed goodnes, **to deliuer me thy handmaiden from thys present perill** of daungerous sicknes. And first O heauenly Physitian, **I besech thee heale my soule**, pardoning my unkindness towards thee, forgeuing my forgetfulness of thee and of my selfe, & utterly blotting out and putting cleane away all other my sinnes committed against thy Maiestie. **Heale my minde**, reforming and instructing me with thy heauenly grace, **that I may take thys sicknes**, which thou hast most iustly punished me withal, contentedly and paciently, as a bitter, but wholesome medicine of all the Diseases of my minde offered unto me by thee, as it were by the hands of the best Physician. And withall **heale my body** also making it sound and pure [trò] all infirmities, & remnantes of sicknes, **that (?) I may be throughly cured** by the hauing of awhole minde in a whole body: and **that I** hauing obteyned perfect health of both by thy only benefite, **not onely my self, but also all thy people of England with me may both be taught by the peril past**, hereafter to geue due reuerence and obedience unto thy maiestie, and for the deliuere from so great a daunger, and benefite of perfect health, **may magnifie thy goodness and mercy** with perpetuall prayses and continuall thankesgeuing. (In time of sicknes, sig. L.j.)

11. **Let humble acknowLegement and most reuerend thankes sacrifice suppLy** ~~the~~ Our Want of SkiL to Comprehend such endless Goodnis and Vnspeakable Liberalitie Euen Suche / Good Lord as Our Simple tounges

Rhetoric of the Country," in *Queen and Country. The Relation Between the Monarch and the People in the Development of the English Nation*, ed. Alessandra Petrina (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 59–78; Donatella Montini, "Aspetti dell'oratoria politica di Elisabetta I d'Inghilterra," in *Visione politica e strategie linguistiche*, ed. Donatella Montini (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2010), 15–30.

> may not Include suche Wordz as merites such laudes / but **this VoWe Except most deare God in Lieu of bettar merite that Our brithes We hope to ther Last Gaspes shaL neuer Cease.** (On the defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1588, ACFLO, p. 84)

Directive speech acts, normally taking the form of orders, requests, or questions, provide some of the most interesting linguistic and stylistic clues to the nature of interpersonal relationships.[48] In a political text-type, directives may offer themselves for consideration as the most natural pragmatic move, and a sovereign's discourse may be read comprehensively as "a macro-directive" speech act:[49] under normal circumstances a monarch can only be expected to issue orders and be obeyed, but what happens when a sovereign is not addressing her subjects or peers, is not giving commands to her courtiers or soldiers, but is praying and worshipping her God, the only authority above her royal power? Again, the stylistic strategy Elizabeth adopts is one of mitigation by regular positioning either a term of address of reverence and praise ("O Lorde") next to the directive, or adding another directive that reinforces the performance and commitment of the speaker as an apposition ("I beseech thee"). The ritual list of standard second-person imperatives ("heare", "turn", "create", "order", ex. 9) addressed to the divinity and typical of religious pleas is accompanied by performative directives—that is, various forms of directive speech-act verbs in the first-person singular or plural indicative active ("I do humbly beseech thee"), or by the so-called third-person imperatives ("Let humble acknowLegement and most reuerend thankes sacrifice suppLy the Our Want of SkiL").

[48] The tracing of speech acts in texts of past eras and the very possibility of diachronic speech act research have been variously investigated and carried out by a few scholars (Dawn Archer, "Speech Acts," in *Historical Pragmatics*, ed. Andreas H. Jucker and Irma Taavitsainen (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 379–417; Andreas H. Jucker and Irma Taavitsainen, eds., *Speech Acts in the History of English* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2008). Various important issues have been raised such as the form of speech acts, their grammatical features, the level of indirectness, the historical context, even the possibility of a diachronic speech act theory. For an analysis of speech acts in Queen Elizabeth I's political speeches, see Donatella Montini, "Tracing Speech Acts Through Text and Genre: Directives and Commissives in Queen Elizabeth I's Political Speeches and in Shakespeare's Henry V," *Status Quaestionis*, no. 5 (2013): 130–46.

[49] Ulrich Busse, "An Inventory of Directives in Shakespeare's *King Lear*," in Jucker, Taavitsainen (2008), 85–114.

Moreover, the same forms tend to be compounded by modal constructions in which the focus returns to the speaker's commitment and wellness ("that I may take thys sicknes", "that I may be thoroughly cured", "that I and my people both be taught by the peril past", ex. 10 and 11), thus leaving the addressee little choice but cooperate.

Several other examples from the texts could be offered, and an enlarged corpus may hopefully bring further insight into the pragmatics of Elizabeth's prayers and further evidence of the rhetorical strategies that the learned queen enacted to reinforce her political power and role. The stylistic and pragmatic perspective suggests that, in her devotional texts, Elizabeth continued to negotiate the delicate balance between power and prayer, and operated strategies "within which the weakness of the female body can be transformed into strength through the mediation of divine authority".[50] In so doing, Elizabeth appears to translate her political strategies into a religious context and inaugurates a canon that we may regard as a 'devotional Petrarchism' in which even the Heavenly Father is assigned a courteous, tributary role in her self-representation.

Appendix

From *Christian Prayers and Meditations* (1569)

"In time of sicknes"

O Most mightie & most mercifull Sauior Jesu Christ, the onely sonne of the liuing God, who being here upon the earth amongest mortall men, by the healing of all diseases, and pardoning of the sinnes of such as put theyr trust in thee, diddest declare unto the world that thou art that onely heauenly and perfect Physition, as well of our soules as of our bodyes: and when such as trusted in theyr owne righteousnes did lay it to thy charge as a fault, that thou diddest keepe company with sinners, thou diddest expressely testifie, that not such as were in health, but such as were sicke had nede of a Physitian. Beholde O heauenly Physitian, here in me a matter most worthy of thy diuine cure, most meete to shew both thy power and mercy uppon. Behold a person [sore] oppressed both with sickenes of my soul and body. Beholde me thy handmaiden upon whom from my tender yeares unto thys day, thou hast heaped so great & so many, and almost infinite benefites of thy gratious goodness,

[50] Clement, 2008, 2.

whom being borne of a king and Queene, thou hast not onely endued with giftes of grace, meete for a kingdome, but also hast deliuered me from many & great daungers, out of the handes of my enemies, & from the snares of death which they had set for my life, hast exalted me unto the dignitie of a Queene, and placed me in the high estate of honour amongest mortall persons, and that not through any my deseruyng, but onely of thy free goodnes and mere liberalitie. But now O Lord, either left too much worldly prosperitie should cary my minde astray and cause me to forget my selfe and my bouden dutie towardes thee, or els for that I being by thee made a Queene ouer thy people, haue neuer as I ought to doe from my hart acknowledged and confessed my self to be the subiecte and handmaiden of thy Maiestie, neither behaued my selfe towardes thee accordingly, as became thy handmaiden, neither being thankfull towardes thee, as my most gratious Sauiour, nor obedient unto thee, as my most dreadfull Lord, or els for other causes unto thy diuine wisedome best knowen: now I say, eyther wholesomly to admonish, or most iustly to punishe thy disobedient seruant, and so gratiously to correcte and amend me, thou hast stricken me with a greuous sicknes of my body, and very dangerous unto my life, and also troubled & abashed my minde with terrours and anguishes of my soule: and withall thou hast by my daunger sore flighted and amased thy people of England, whose safetie & quietnes next after thee, seemeth to stay uppon me aboue all other worldly creatures, and upon my life and continuance amongest them. Wherfore as well I as thy people committed unto me, bowing the knees of our hartes before thy maiestie, do hu[m]bly besech thee most gratious Sauiour, in thy iudgement to remember thy mercy, and according to thy accustomed goodnes, to deliuer me thy handmaiden from thys present perill of daungerous sicknes. And first O heauenly Physitian, I besech thee heale my soule, pardoning my unkindness towardes thee, forgeuing my forgetfulnes of thee and of my selfe, & utterly blotting out and putting cleane away all other my sinnes committed agaynst thy Maiestie. Heale my minde, reforming and instructing me with thy heauenly grace, that I may take thys sicknes, which thou hast most iustly punished me withal, contentedly and paciently, as a bitter, but wholesome medicine of all the diseases of my minde offered unto me by thee, as it were by the handes of the best Physician. And ithall heale my body also making it sound and pure [trò] all infirmities, & remnantes of sicknes, [that] I may be throughly cured by the hauing of awhole minde in a whole body: and that I hauing obteyned perfect health of both by thy only benefite,

not onely my self, but also all thy people of England with me may both be taught by the perill past, hereafter to geue due reuerence and obedience unto thy maiestie, and for the deliuere from so great a daunger, and benefite of perfect health, may magnifie thy goodness and mercy with perpetuall prayses and continuall thankesgeuing: who with thy heauenly father, and the holy Ghost are one immortall and most glorious God, to whom belongeth all Empyre, power, and maiestie worlde without end. Amen.

Transcribed from *Christian Prayers and Meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke, and Latine* (London: John Daye, 1569) (sigs. K.iij–Liij.).

CHAPTER 6

Elizabeth I as Poet: Some Notes on "On Monsieur's Departure" and John Dowland's "Now O Now I Needs Must Part"

Cristina Vallaro

Queen Elizabeth's Poems

In 1589, George Puttenham declared that *The Doubt of Future Foes* was "the most bewtiful and gorgeous" poem of its type.[1] The first to speak of Queen Elizabeth as a poet, he did so in *The Arte of English Poesie*, his study of prosody, which at the time was considered an important contribution to the understanding and appreciation of poetry and rhetoric. Puttenham's flattery of the queen is quite evident, but Elizabeth nevertheless proved to be a very skilled poet and her works have much intrinsic merit of their own. Her greatness as a poet was again noted some ten years later,

[1] George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesy*, in Peter C. Herman and Ray G. Siemens, "Introduction," in *Reading Monarch's Writing: The Poetry of Henry VIII, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, and James VI/I*, ed. Peter C. Herman (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), 8.

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in 1598, when Francis Meres included her in his *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasurie*, a sort of anthology whose aim was to collect and record the great writers of the time, list their merits and compare them to the classics.

Francis Meres hailed his queen as an outstanding writer who excelled at all kinds of poetry:

> Elizabeth our dread soveraign and gracious Queene is not only a liberal patrone unto Poets, but an excellent Poet herselfe, whose learned, delicate and noble Muse surmounteth, be it in Ode, Elegy, Epigram, or in any other kind of Poem Heroicke, or Lyricke.[2]

This evident *captatio benevolentiae*, fully characteristic of works of this kind, is not the only justification for Elizabeth's presence in Meres' volume. She was a poet in her own right, taking after her father, Henry VIII, who himself wrote poems and songs and was very fond of literature and art in general. He was a Renaissance king and, although not his parents' first-born son, he had received a literary education that he passed on to his children.[3]

Elizabeth's education enabled her to master not only Latin and Greek but also rhetoric, metrics, language and style.[4] She had always been surrounded by great men of culture and her reign marked a renascence of culture and art in England. Highly intelligent, she loved literature and all forms of art to the point that, like other Renaissance monarchs, she started writing on her own account: poems, jealously kept hidden; prayers to thank and glorify God; translations, from both the classics and French; speeches for Parliament and official occasions; letters concerning private and public matters.

Although her contemporaries knew about her literary activity and considered her a great writer, her fame and prowess would be ignored in the centuries following her death, when attention was drawn to the

[2] Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia. Wits Treasury Being the Second Part of Wits Common Wealth* (London: printed by P. Short for Cuthbert Burbie, 1598), 285.

[3] For further information on Henry VIII's education, see M. D. Palmer, *Henry VIII* (London: Longam, 1983); David Starkey, *Six Wives. The Queens of Henry VIII* (London: Vintage Books, 2004); Richard Rex, *Tudors, The Illustrated History* (Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2014). For further information on Elizabeth's education, see David Starkey, *Elizabeth. Apprenticeship* (London: Vintage, 2001).

[4] For more on Elizabeth's education, see David Starkey, *Elizabeth I's Apprenticeship* (London: Vintage, 2000).

historical rather than literary nature of her speeches, which alone make up a considerable part of her output.

As far as we know, Elizabeth wrote less than twenty poems, but as Leah Marcus argued in "Queen Elizabeth I as a Public and Private Poet",[5] as a poet she is still a largely submerged rock: many of the poems Puttenham alludes to have yet to be found. The poems that have reached us are of different genres, ranging from songs and prayers to epigrams and verse-exchange poems, not to mention a long debated text in ten-line stanzas. Elizabeth's writings mirror the literary tendencies of the time in which they were conceived, and in many cases they anticipate the conventions and fashions of late sixteenth-century literature. The refined elegance of her style, her use of assonances, consonances and puns on selected words, make them interesting models that challenge readers to distinguish literary conventions from personal feelings. Elizabeth was aware of the game she was playing and intentionally excluded her enemies from her real feelings, which were intended to be understood only by their addressees.

Besides the intertwining of jest and reality, which is what makes Elizabeth's poems difficult to understand, another important question needs answering—whether Elizabeth's poems are all autograph texts or not. The editors of the 2002 *Collected Works* declare they are certain that, with a few exceptions, Elizabeth wrote all the poems included in the volume—more than Bradner had argued for in his 1964 collection. For example, *When I Was Fair and Young* was denied authenticity in Bradner, but not in the *Collected Works*, while *On Monsieur's Departure*, perhaps the queen's most famous poem, is considered an authentic composition by both Puttenham, the first who overtly recognized her merits, and Bradner, the early twentieth century editor of the queen's poems.[6]

[5] Leah Marcus, "Queen Elizabeth I as a Public and Private Poet: Notes Towards a New Edition," in *Reading Monarchs Writing: The Poetry of Henry VIII, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, and James VI/I*, ed. Peter C. Herman (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), 135. See also Giovanni Iamartino and Angela Andreani, "In the Queen's Name: The Writings of Elizabeth I Between Public and Private Communication," in *The Language of Public and Private Communication in a Historical Perspective*, ed. Nicholas Brownlees, Gabriella Del Lungo, and John Denton (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 116–34.

[6] See Leicester Bradner, *The Poems of Queen Elizabeth I* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1964); Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002). Elizabeth

The circulation of texts both in holograph and scribal forms does not help scholars with the question of the poems' authenticity, but rather complicates it and allows for no exhaustive conclusion. To complicate matters still further, many of Elizabeth's manuscript texts were hidden away and have yet to be found, while many others may have been irrevocably lost. As the editors of her poems explain, this secrecy was due to the fact that the queen didn't intend her poems to circulate: since they were private reflections written at specific moments of her life in response to particular historical events, Elizabeth herself kept them safely locked away in her private rooms, far from the gossiping courtiers of her train. This raises the insoluble problem mentioned before of whether or not these verses sincerely mirror Elizabeth's heart and mind. Even more difficult it is to understand the reason why Elizabeth wrote her poems and, as a consequence, what she really meant with them. As far as we are given to know,[7] Elizabeth took to writing poems as an escape from her troubled life as a monarch and may have seen them as a way of letting her heart and mind speak for themselves. However, this cannot be taken for certain as her poems could also be regarded as straightforward literary exercises extolling her abilities as a writer. Both possibilities are equally plausible, and since there is no way of knowing whether her poems reveal her true thoughts and feelings or not, they have to be taken for what they are: texts composed by a clever, witty woman who succeeded in offering her readers a charming mix of diplomacy, personal feelings and literary conventions.[8]

I's poems, or a selection of her poems, have been collected also in these editions: Janel Mueller, *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003); Steven May, *Elizabeth I: Selected Works* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2005).

[7] For further information on this point, see the works on Elizabeth's poems cited in this essay.

[8] These considerations on Elizabeth's poems can be traced in Peter Herman, *Royal Poetry: Monarchic Verse and the Political Imaginary of Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2010), 101; Leonard Forster, *The Icy Fire: Five Studies in European Petrarchism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 130; Jennifer Summit, "'The Arte of Ladies Penne': Elizabeth I and the Poetics of Queenship," in *The Mysteries of Elizabeth*, ed. Kirby Farrell and Kathleen Swaim (Amherst: University of Massachussetts Press, 2003), 67–96; Leah S. Marcus, "Queen Elizabeth I as Public and Private Poet: Notes Toward a New Edition," 135–53.

The most striking feature of Elizabeth's poems is the way they use wit to convey specific messages. Ambiguously structured sentences make words shift from one meaning to another, conditioning the whole sense of the line and, sometimes, of the entire text. The subject may turn out to be the object and vice versa, a preposition can be linked to more than one item, a verb can suggest various kinds of action and the message varies according to shifts in emphasis.

On Monsieur's Departure *and* Queen Elizabeth's Affair with Anjou

On Monsieur's Departure is a case in point: as well as being emblematic of all her poetry, it exemplifies the characteristic features of her poetry as well as the events relating to them.

It was written in the early 1580s after the duke of Anjou[9] had left England for good with no hope of winning Elizabeth's hand. François was Catherine de' Medici's youngest son and this had been her third attempt to extend French influence and win the English crown for her sons.[10] François himself was not new to wooing Elizabeth, having previously attempted to win the queen's heart in an assiduous four-year-long courtship (from 1572 to 1576). In the 1570s, when the first courtship had taken place, Elizabeth's councillors had been looking for a good husband for her and thought the French duke was one of her best possible options. Since he was not the heir to the French throne, François was "'much less scrupulous' than his brother in matters of religion; sympathetic, even, to the Huguenots (…) and 'more apt than th'other' when it came to getting children".[11] His Catholic faith, however, soon turned out to be an insurmountable obstacle, bringing the marriage negotiations to an abrupt stop.

[9]Anjou or François, as he will be called in this essay, was the youngest son of Henry II of France and Catherine de' Medici. He was born in 1555 and his true name was Hercule François, duke of Alençon. He became duke of Anjou in 1576, when his elder brother Henry became King of France as Henry III. He died in 1584 from malaria in the Flanders, where he had unsuccessfully fought for the control of some Flemish towns. For further information on the duke of Anjou, see Mack P. Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle During the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[10]Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony. The Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 130.

[11]Sarah Gristwood, *Elizabeth & Leicester* (London and Toronto: Bantam Books, 2008), 278.

They started again when, in a change of mind in the late 1570s, Elizabeth came to believe that France would be a good ally against the dangerous threat from Scotland. The French were convinced that only marriage could create a strong alliance and so marriage negotiations started again. This time, determined to win her over, the duke decided to go to England and meet his beloved. He arrived incognito at Greenwich on the 3rd August 1579 and spent ten days there. François was immediately ensnared by Elizabeth's charm and Elizabeth herself was smitten by her lover's sex appeal. As far as we know, the duke was by no means handsome: "His complexion was scarred by smallpox. His nose was large, heavily veined, and disfigured, probably by syphilis. His mother denigrated him. His brother, the king (Henry III of Valois), distrusted him and, at times, even warred with him. His contemporaries mocked him, calling him dwarfish".[12]

Anyway, handsomeness, or rather ugliness, was not the heart of the matter: above all, religion was the problem, as well as the duke's age (he was twenty years younger than her) and his eventual coronation and duties should he find himself a widower or the father of an heir. Elizabeth stubbornly refused the French requests so the duke decided, for the second time, to go to England and get what he thought was his by right. He arrived in London on the 31st October 1581 with the intention of settling the matter once and for all. A turning point was reached in November when Elizabeth became publicly engaged to him: she put on his ring and gave him a kiss. A few hours later she was already regretting her decision and, as her councillors were urging her, thinking of a way out: she had changed her mind and realized she couldn't marry François. She was aware of the consequences of what she had done and, since she was determined not to mortify him completely, resorted to a kind of double dealing: with François, she was sweet and encouraging; with her counsellors, determined to avoid the marriage. However, the situation proved intolerable to the duke, who decided to leave England and with it his hopes for wedlock there. He left on the 1st February 1582. Elizabeth was relieved and felt free to start a new page of her life,

[12] Ilona Bell, *Elizabeth I. The Voice of a Monarch* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 148–9.

although her sadness at his departure is insufficient to indicate whether she really was in love with him or simply playing the part recommended by her counsellors.[13]

The duke's departure not only put an end to his courtship; it also convinced Elizabeth that, considering her age, her chances of getting married had dramatically reached an end. Her lover's affection pleased her and made her feel loved and desired. She showed her affection for him and used her letters to express her feelings:

> For my part, I confess that there is no prince in the world to whom I would more willingly yield to be his, than to yourself, nor to whom I think myself more obliged, nor with whom I would pass the years of my life, both for your rare virtues and sweet nature, accompanied with so many honorable parts that I cannot recite them for their number nor dare to make mention of them for the length of time that would take me.
>
> (December 1579–January 1580)[14]

Elizabeth wrote this in her late forties and felt pleased to be courted by a charming young man. As a woman, she missed the affection of a devoted husband and the warmth of a family, but as a queen she could not allow her heart to gain the upper hand. She was responsible for her subjects and the wealth of her kingdom: this was enough for her to dismiss the duke and live her life as a single woman.

Her inner debate is clearly expressed in *On Monsieur's Departure*, composed in 1582 after the French duke's departure. A mixture of political diplomacy and personal despair, it comprises three stanzas of ten-syllable lines each, rhyming *ababcc*. Both the metre and the rhyme place the poem in the literary tradition of its times and anticipate a taste for the love lyrics of the last decade of the century.

[13]For more information about Elizabeth's love affair with the French duke, see also: Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572–1588* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Alison Weir, *Elizabeth the Queen* (London: Pimlico, 1999); Susan Doran, *Queen Elizabeth I* (London: The British Library Historic Lives, The British Library, 2003); Alison Plowden, *Elizabeth I* (Stroud: Sutton Plublishing, 2004); Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[14]Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 243.

On Monsieur's Departure

I grieve and dare not show my discontent;
I love, and yet am forced to seem to hate;
I do, yet dare not say I ever meant;
I seem stark mute, but inwardly do prate.
  I am, and not; I freeze and yet am burned,
  Since from myself another self I turned.

My care is like my shadow in the sun –
Follows me flying, flies when I pursue it,
Stands, and lies by me, doth what I have done;
His too familiar care doth make me rue it.
  No means I find to rid him from my breast,
  Till by the end of things it be suppressed.

Some gentler passion slide into my mind,
For I am soft, and made of melting snow;
Or be more cruel, Love and so be kind.
Let me or float or sink, be high or low;
  Or let me live with some more sweet content,
  Or die, and so forget that love e'er meant.

Elizabetha Regina[15]

The structural antithesis typical of poems of this kind harks back to Catullus' *Odi et amo* and, later, to Petrarch's Sonnet 134, *Pace non trovo e non ho da far guerra*, which is plainly mirrored in Elizabeth's lines.[16]

Clearly influenced by Petrarch's contrastive technique, the first stanza reveals Elizabeth's difficulty in mastering the desires of her heart and the reprimands of her mind. She is herself the unfortunate lover torn

[15] Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 302–3. The comment on the text is a re-elaboration from Cristina Vallaro, *Elisabetta I poetessa e regina* (Ariccia, Roma: Aracne, 2014), 103–23.

[16] Elizabeth was an expert translator of the classics, both Greek and Latin, and of French (see, for example, her translation of Marguerite de Navarre's *Le miroir de l'âme pécheresse*). She was so enamoured of Italy and its culture that she could hardly ignore Petrarch and his writings or the English versions of some of his poems collected in Tottel's *Miscellany*. For more see Ilona Bell, *Elizabethan Women and the Poetry of Courtship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Roger Ellis, "The Juvenile Translations of Elizabeth Tudor," *Translation and Literature* 18 (2009): 157–80.

between what she feels and what she is expected to show. The passive verbs in lines 2 and 5 change the strictly interior Petrarchan conflict into a debate between the woman's interiority and unknown external forces that annihilate her feelings and dampen her desires: the verb she chooses is *dare*, which sounds like a *mélange* of need and wish, spontaneous feeling and strong rationality imposed by her surrounding world. The interior debate comes to a head in line 5, where "I am, and not" stands for both the author's whole existence and its contrary.

Elizabeth's centrality in the text is shown by the dominant presence of the pronoun *I*, explicit at the beginning of the first five lines of the stanza and implicit in the second half of each line. This *I*-centred-ness reaches its climax in the final line of the stanza "Since from my self another self I turned". Actually, this line is a mystery, destined to be solved only by the identity of the "another self" she refers to. It may be a person Elizabeth had rejected—for example, the duke who had been diplomatically persuaded to abandon his marriage plan. It may allude to the fruit of her union with François and consequently to Elizabeth's refusal to have an heir ruling over England and France.[17] The situation becomes even more complicated when we consider the version of the poem reported by John Nichols in *Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I*,[18] where there is "my other self". Although this version does not specify the reason why and the moment when the poem was written, it supports our initial interpretation and idea of what Elizabeth meant: rejecting the duke was the same as keeping the woman she was far from the queen she had to be. In other words, she refused to satisfy her wishes as a woman in order not to sacrifice the wealth of her country.

The second stanza introduces alternating present and past tenses in the same line, perhaps the most ambiguous of the entire poem. The key feature of the stanza is the word *care*, which expresses the intensity of Elizabeth's anxiety. She compares it with her shadow: both are natural, physical phenomena that cannot be opposed. Elizabeth is then forced to accept and to live with them: the duke's departure causes her to suffer and she can't do without it. This is a moment of real suffering

[17] Bell, 2010, 153–4.

[18] John Nichols, *Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth Among Which are Interspersed Other Solemnities, Public Expenditures, and Remarkable Events, During the Reign of that Illustrious Princess*, vol. 2 (London: printed by and for John Nichols and Son, 1823), 346.

for Elizabeth, torn between her duty as queen and her affection for François, who steps directly into the text at line 10. It is there that the adjective *His* introduces the French duke and implies that the duke and Elizabeth's suffering coincide in her heart. Monsieur's presence completes the love triangle. This time, however, the Petrarchan hierarchy has been reversed and the adaptation of the conventions to the female point of view makes this poem a mirror version of the Petrarchan tradition. Now it is the woman, not the man, who is suffering and has to accept this *care* without end.

Elizabeth also speaks of repentance and uses the verb *to rue*, another ambiguous word open to more than one interpretation. She may be repenting for turning him away, or for deceiving him with promises that couldn't be kept. Both readings justify Elizabeth's behaviour with Anjou and point to the message in the stanza's final couplet: Elizabeth seems to say she can't keep the duke out of her heart and that she is aware of the fact that this situation will end only with the end of everything—true of her heart as well.

The strength of her passion is expressed in the third and last stanza where she resumes her interior debate. The love she feels for the French pretender is conditioned by other thoughts: she is not free to love as other women are and she feels as ephemeral as snow melting in the sun. Unable to bear this situation any longer, she wishes Anjou to put an end to her pain. The very last line of the poem seems to hint at her hope for the duke's departure, but the presence of the verb *to mean* makes it ambiguous. *To mean* can also be a synonym of *to matter*, in which case Elizabeth may be saying that love is unimportant and not worth worrying about or wasting time on. But *to mean* can also mean *to signify*, in which case Elizabeth wants to keep love and all its consequences far from her. In other words, we are dealing with two nuances of the same idea—namely, refusing Monsieur's love in exchange for England's affection and love. Though in love with the French duke, she loved her country and her subjects more than anything else.

Now O Now I Needs Must Part: *John Dowland and the French Love Affair*

Although Elizabeth kept her poem jealously concealed in her private rooms, the duke's courtship and their marriage negotiations were not secret and soon became a topic for discussion at court and throughout

the kingdom. To commemorate the duke's presence in England, for example, many a musician published his own version of *Munsers Almaine*,[19] while Nicholas Hilliard "was invited to capture Anjou's likeness on canvass".[20] By contrast, in his letter against the French duke, Sir Philip Sidney sets down in "simple and direct terms" his opinion on this "most important matter" and declares that "the marriage with Monsieur will be unprofitable unto"[21] the queen and her people. Sidney's opinion was shared by the majority of Elizabeth's subjects, who saw the queen's love affairs, suffering and torment included, as a good subject for popular entertainment.

The tearful, despairing tone of the queen's text is shared by a number of popular songs and dances, showing how matters of state, such as weddings and love affairs, involved all social classes and provided amusing topics for the people's entertainment.[22] The fact that Elizabeth herself

[19] *Munsers Almaine*, or *Monsieur's Almain*, has been attributed to Daniel Bacheler, but many composers arranged it for their own tunes. As Ian Terry explains, the almain was a German dance that "a suitor of Queen Elizabeth would enjoy dancing with her" (see Ian Terry, *Popular Music of Elizabethan England 1558–1603* (London: Unicorn Publishing, 2014), Kindle Edition).

[20] Holt, 2002, 163.

[21] Sir Philip Sidney wrote a letter to the queen in 1580, opposing her marriage with the French duke. The letter, *To Queen Elizabeth I, anno 1580, dissuading her from marrying the Duke of Anjou*, is online: http://www.luminarium.org/editions/sidneyeliza.htm. The quotations in this page are from the cited web page (last accessed October 20, 2016).

[22] Elizabeth's relation with the French duke turned to be a good topic in political and literary debates. George Gascoigne's pageants for Elizabeth's progress to Kenilworth in 1575 were meant to dissuade her from accepting François' wooing and to turn to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester's love and courting (See Cristina Vallaro, *Queen Elizabeth I on Progress. The Kenilworth and Elvetham Pageants as Reported in John Nichols' Work* (Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2011)). Leicester was so taken by his ambitious plans with Elizabeth that he managed to convince his nephew, Philip Sidney, to support him against the French match. Sir Philip Sidney's letter *To Queen Elizabeth Dissuading Her from Marrying the Duke of Anjou* (1580) is clear evidence of how poets and courtiers took part in the debate, contrasting the queen's marriage with a Catholic. Sidney argues the French duke was not equal to the role of Elizabeth's husband: he was too young and, besides this, throughout his life he had proved to have no military skills, nor any political competence. Sidney's open letter was echoed in Edmund Spenser's *Shephaerdes Calender* where "Colin's extraordinary praise of Eliza's virginity (…) was perfectly calculated to please his prospective patrons" in their plans against the French match. (See Richard McCabe, "Patrons," in *Edmund Spenser in Context*, ed. Andrew Escobedo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), Kindle Edition. This opinion is shared also by Susan Doran, *Monarchy and*

was very fond of music encouraged her subjects to use it as a spontaneous and efficacious way to express their feelings on state matters, to the point that music turned out to be a good resource for the propaganda policy and the praise of the queen as a divine creature among her people. Many events of Elizabeth's life served as springboards for plays and texts of all kinds, to say nothing of those dealing with her love affairs and private life. The queen's marriage was, in fact, a perfect occasion for gossip, if a sad circumstance for the kingdom—a wrong husband would have ruined England forever and profoundly affected her future. This might indeed have happened if Elizabeth had married François—her Frog, as she used to call him—who, besides not being overly handsome, was both French and Catholic.

On more than one occasion, both literature and music mirrored the people's feelings and helped to propagate ideas, seditious ones included, throughout the country: music, like all the courtly arts, could be used "to influence a monarch to accept good counsel", as Castiglione suggests in *Il Cortegiano*.[23] The queen's marriage could not be seen as an exclusively private affair, but rather as a state one since it affected everybody's future. It should come as no surprise, then, that the French love

Matrimony, 167–72.) Spenser alluded to Elizabeth's marriage with Anjou also in *Prosopoia or The Mother Hubberd's Tale*, a beast fable which can be considered as a "biting attack on the Anjou marriage" (in Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony*, 169). Opposition to the marriage was expressed also in John Stubb's *The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf* (1579). Stubbs simply gave voice to what most of the English felt and his reasons must have sounded unacceptable to the queen who condemned him to be cut his right hand (see Gristwood, 2008, 357–8; Natalie Mears, "Counsel, Public Debate, and Queenship: John Stubb's The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf, 1579," *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 3 (September 2001): 629–50). At Whitsun 1581, the French commissioners involved in the marriage negotiations were presented with a pageant, known as *The Fortress of Perfect Beauty or the Four Foster Children of Desire*, which portrayed Elizabeth as "an unattainable object of desire in the chivalric tradition and a neoplatonic celestial being" (See Susan Doran, "Juno Versus Diana: The Treatment of Elizabeth's Marriage in Plays and Entertainments, 1561–1581," *The Historical Journal* 38, no. 2 (1995): 257–74): in other words, the queen was rather out of reach for the French duke. The *Sieve Portraits* series has to be considered as another way to oppose the marriage (Roy Strong, *Gloriana. The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 95–107), while poems like *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice* was a popular text that gave voice to the people's dislike for the French match.

[23] Katherine Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2015), 10.

affair was much discussed and debated among the queen's subjects, to the point that 'frogs' and 'toads' started to "proliferate in all kinds of published works from 1579 to 1581, acting as a coded form for hostility to the match".[24] Songs like *The Moste Strange Wedding of the Frogge and the Mouse* were originally intended as political satires, allowing the contemporaries to understand their codes. In this particular case, then, Elizabeth's subjects wouldn't have missed the allusion to the marriage dealings with the French duke.[25] The opposition to François' engagement to the queen was so strong that opponents could be found in any social class and Courtiers were not an exception. Poets denounced the risks of a Catholic match in their works, while musicians expressed their discontent in the composition of new airs, or in the adaptation of old ones. John Dowland's *Now O now I needs must part* is a real case in point, as it describes the suffering of a heartbroken lover who is forced to leave his beloved and learn to live without love in his life. As original as it may sound, Dowland's air seems to have much in common with Elizabeth's *On Monsieur's Departure*. The song was published in 1597 in John Dowland's *First Booke of Songes and Ayres*,[26] a book "so made that all the partes together or either of them severally may be sung to the Lute, Orpherion, or Viol de Gambo".[27] What distinguishes the air, probably intended to be sung to an audience, is "the presence of a dominant melodic part, which may be accompanied by the lute"[28] or other instruments. Scholars agree that in such cases the texts chosen by musicians were particularly appealing from both the literary and musical point of view, offering a variety of genres comparable only to the poetical miscellanies circulating in Tudor times. Epigrams, lyrics, sonnets and above all madrigals were set to music, adapted to one tune or other, or made suitable for singing[29] as the fashion of the day required and

[24] Doran, 1996, 168.

[25] See Charles K. Wolfe, ed., *Folk Songs of Middle Tennessee: The George Boswell Collection* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 34.

[26] Diana Poulton, *John Dowland* (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 214.

[27] Edmund H. Fellows, "The Songs of Dowland," *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 56th Sess. (1929–1930): XVI.

[28] Edward Doughtie, ed., *Lyrics from English Airs 1596–1622* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), 1.

[29] Doughtie, 1970, 11.

as many contemporary scholars recommended. In addition to Thomas Elyot's *Boke of the Governor*, where some dances taken from ditties are mentioned, William Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetrie* explains that "neither is there anie tune or stroke which may be sung or plaide on instruments, which hath not some poetical ditties framed according to the numbers thereof".[30]

Dowland's *First Book* was printed in the format that would establish the rules for future books of the same genre and would soon be taken as representative of the English tradition.[31] However, Dowland had not been educated in England alone; his journeys on the continent introduced him to the Italian tradition and brought him into contact with the most famous *Maestri* of the day.[32] This explains why his texts bear the features not only of the English tradition (e.g. the idea of setting poems to music) but also more innovative features (like the structure of the text itself, to mention only one) that he had encountered abroad.

The text we are concerned with here is a lute song comprising three stanzas set to the same music, each followed by a repeated refrain.[33]

> Now O now I needs must part,
> parting though I absent mourne,
> absence can no ioye empart,
> ioye once fled can not returne.
> While I liue I needs must loue,
> loue liues not when hope is gone,
> now at last despayre doth proue,
> loue deuided loueth none:
>
> Sad dispaire doth driue me hence,
> this dispaire unkindes sends.
> If that parting be offence,
> it is she which then offendes.

[30] For Webbe's quotation, see Poulton, 1982, 193.

[31] Poulton, 1982, 1 and 3.

[32] John Dowland recounts his journeys in France, Germany and Italy in a long letter to the reader, in the introductory pages of his *First Booke*. He describes his education abroad in detail and supports his words by mentioning the names of the great music scholars of the day. One of them is Luca Manenzio, one of the greatest Italian masters of the time, who wrote Dowland the short letter he reports in his book.

[33] John Dowland, *First Book of Songes and Ayres*, 1597, in Doughtie 1970, XV.

Deare when I from thee am gone,
Gone are all my ioyes at once,
I loued thee and thee alone
In whose loue I ioyed once:
And although Your sight I leaue,
Sight wherein my ioyes doo lye
Till that death do sence bereaue,
Neuer shall affection dye.

Sad dispaire doth driue me hence,
this dispaire unkindes sends.
If that parting be offence,
it is she which then offendes.

Deare if I doe not returne,
Loue and I shall die together,
For my absence neuer mourne
Whom you might haue ioyed euer:
Part we must though now I dye,
Die I doe to part with you,
Him despayre doth cause to lie,
Who both liued and dieth true.

Sad dispaire doth driue me hence,
this dispaire unkindes sends.
If that parting be offence,
it is she which then offendes.[34]

The three stanzas of eight trochaic lines rhyme *abab cdcd*, followed by an *efef* refrain. The typical Petrarchan style clearly emerges as the protagonists of the story are introduced to the reader or listener. The I-speaker and Love come first, followed by an anonymous *thee* in the second section of the song. The three of them form a love triangle whose vertices stand for the principal roles in a love relationship: Love, the lover and the beloved are united for the first and only time in the last stanza, where *we* makes its appearance in line 5. Throughout the text, however, the I-speaker seems to suggest further alliances among them all in order to draw attention to the obvious and explicit relationship they are involved

[34] John Dowland, *The First Booke of Songes and Ayres*, in Doughtie 1970, 72–3.

in. *Joye* is clearly said to be a lover's aim and Love's natural consequence, while hope—as much as its opposite, despair—confirms how difficult and prickly a lover's life is, caught between fights against a cruel fate and suffering without relief.

As for the beloved, the speaker gives neither names nor details. She is totally unknown; nothing is mentioned apart from her rudeness and malice alluded to in the refrain. It is there that the lover's hapless condition becomes even more explicit—as nothing can be done and his beloved cannot be persuaded, he is forced to leave in despair, judging his beloved to be the real offender. The situation described in the song reminds the listener of the other situation, the real one, between Elizabeth and Anjou who, after spending some months in London, realized his courtship had been fruitless and preferred to leave the country.

Perhaps it is for this reason that the text could be related to Elizabeth's poem as a possible further version of the French duke's courtship,[35] and could be taken as the proof that their marriage negotiations had been conducted in the public domain. As a matter of fact, the future of the country depended on the queen's decision to marry and produce heirs and this allowed her subjects to adapt the question into songs and poems, and to transform her pretenders into allegorical characters. Elizabeth was aware of the importance her subjects' opinions had in decisions like this and took pleasure in showing herself gratified and flattered, or vexed and annoyed as it suited the occasion.[36] The closeness between Dowland's air and the queen's French courting has never been explicitly discussed by scholars, and yet the feelings expressed in the song have much in common with the poem considered in this work. As a matter of fact, Dowland was Servant in the Chapel to Queen Elizabeth and King James and, as such, he was well known at Court. Thomas Fuller mentions him in *The History of the Worthies of England* as the "rarest Musician that his age did behold".[37] As he regularly played before the queen, it was impossible for him to keep out of the marriage debate and suggest his own version of the matter.

[35] The closeness between Elizabeth's poem and Dowland's version has been noticed by the scholars quoted in these pages, but has never been explicitly studied or commented on. The reason relies on the fact that Elizabeth's love affair with her Frog was so popular and debated upon that scholars agree on the fact that Dowland must have chosen this way to comment on Elizabeth's relation with François.

[36] For more detail on this point, see the Elizabeth's biographies mentioned above.

[37] Poulton, 1982, 19.

To make things simultaneously more mysterious and challenging, Dowland chose to adapt the text to one of the numberless instrumental versions of a very popular galliard—the *Frog Galliard*.[38] As Diana Poulton explains in her book, "The extreme popularity that this galliard achieved brought it into the category of tunes that became almost common property"; it "passed into common usage in ballad literature and arrangements were made for virginals, cittern and other instruments".[39] As Poulton argues, "There is no evidence to explain the name 'Frog Galliard', but it is a well known fact that Queen Elizabeth often referred to the duke d'Alençon (later duke d'Anjou) as 'her frog', and it could be that the tune, whether originally written by Dowland or not, was named after the last and most persistent of her suitors".[40] There is then good reason to think that it had something to do with Elizabeth's French suitor, since "the sentiments expressed in the text of Dowland's song were appropriate to any one of the duke's departures from the English court".[41] Indeed, *On Monsieur's Departure* and the song are complementary in both feeling and content, as they tell of the suffering of an unfortunate lover obliged to stay faraway from his beloved and to suffer hopelessly. As further evidence, one should also consider the title: *Frog* was in fact Elizabeth's nickname for François, whose pronunciation of the letter R was particularly marked.

Conclusions

That the queen's love affair was so well known among her subjects and so much criticized by them, to the point that pamphlets against the French suitor circulated surreptitiously throughout London and England, is also confirmed by the fact that the melody Dowland had

[38] Doughtie, 1970, 460.

[39] Poulton, 1982, 142 and 143.

[40] Poulton, 1982, 144. The same thesis is supported also by John M. Ward, "Apropos *The British Broadside Ballad and Its Music*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 20, no. 1 (Spring, 1967): 44/28–86. In Ian Terr's opinion, instead, "This was one of Dowland's most popular pieces and became so well-known that some thought the tune was common property. (…) Dowland himself re-used the piece as the basis for the song, 'Now, O now, I needs must part'" (see Terry, 2014).

[41] John M. Ward, "Apropos *The British Broadside Ballad and Its Music*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 20, no. 1 (Spring, 1967).

chosen for his song could be traced to a series of popular musical versions and to a number of quotations in poetry collections and anthologies. Edward Doughtie, for example, explains that it can be recognized in a poem attributed to Nicholas Breton, *On a hill there growes a flower*, later printed in *England's Helicon*,[42] while Diana Poulton points to similarities between *Now, O now* and *Quand j'entens le perdu temps*, suggesting that Dowland must have been influenced by the rhythm of this song when composing his galliard.[43]

Elizabeth was an accomplished lute player and it is not difficult to imagine that she spent most of her free time playing, dancing and singing. She was a Renaissance prince and her privileged education enabled her to appreciate the pleasure of a good song or stage performance, especially in her saddest moments. Poetry, as well as music, gave her solace and provided some respite from the stormy, unruly life at court. Whether honestly or not, Elizabeth must have borne her lot sadly and, as Peter Herman argues,[44] *On Monsieur's Departure* seemingly refers to the penalty Elizabeth had to pay for her exhausting love affair; she portrays herself as a weak and feeble woman having to play the role of a strong, powerful man. Time and experience would teach her well, and by the end of the decade she was able to present an entirely different image of herself. In 1588, at Tilbury, her soldiers would not see a weak and feeble woman, but rather a lioness defying her enemies and defending the boundaries of her domain.

[42] Doughtie, 1970, 460.

[43] Poulton, 1982, 194.

[44] Peter Herman, *Royal Poetry: Monarchic Verse and the Political Imaginary of Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2010), 127–32.

PART II

Elizabeth Authored

CHAPTER 7

A Critical Edition and Discussion of SP 70/2 f.94: A Letter and Two Sonnets by Celio Magno to Queen Elizabeth I

Carlo M. Bajetta and Guillaume Coatalen

Introduction

On February 3, 1558/9, less than three months from Elizabeth I's accession to the throne of England, a young Venetian intellectual sent her two complimentary poems with a fairly long congratulatory letter

Carlo M. Bajetta has edited, translated, and annotated the texts (providing also the "Note on the texts and their translation"), and written the introductory section, while Guillaume Coatalen has provided the commentary to the letter and poems (the section entitled "Magno's Praise of Elizabeth").

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Elizabeth I in Writing, Queenship and Power,
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in Italian.[1] Celio Magno (1536–1602) was not yet the famous poet and high ranking official of the Republic he would later become. His future laid in store a post as Secretary to the Council of the Ten and the Senate, as well as a significant literary reputation;[2] even now, however, Celio was no novice in both verses and politics. The son of a man known for his ties with Ariosto and Aretino, and a former law student, the young Magno was, in fact, already a published poet, a frequenter of the Petrarchan circle which Domenico Venier gathered at his palace of St. Maria Formosa, and a member of the Venetian Academy.[3]

The affiliates to this institution had a penchant for long, learned introductions and commentaries for their poems. The printed edition (1597) of Magno's 129-line poem *Deus* was accompanied by 156 pages of painstaking exegesis.[4] The texts printed here seem much on the same

[1] Throughout this article, the date presented in the original documents has been allowed to stand, thus following the style of the place, normally Old Style (Julian calendar) for letters written in England, and New Style (Gregorian calendar) for letters coming from the continent. The 'double date' system has generally been used for dates between January 1 and March 25 (e.g. January 14, 1556/7).

[2] On Magno's reputation and the context of his poetry see Antonio Pilot, *Del protestantesimo a Venezia e delle liriche di Celio Magno* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di arti grafiche, 1909); Francesco Erspamer, "Lo scrittoio di Celio Magno," in *Il libro di poesia dal copista al tipografo*, ed. Marco Santagata and Amedeo Quondam (Modena: Edizioni Panini, 1989), 243–50; Giuseppina Stella Galbiati, "Epilogo sacro e libro: alcune considerazioni sulle Rime di Celio Magno," in *Autorità, modelli e antimodelli nella cultura artistica e letteraria tra Riforma e Controriforma*: *Atti del Seminario internazionale di studi Urbino-Sassocorvaro, 9–11 novembre 2006*, ed. Antonio Corsaro, Harald Hendrix, and Paolo Procaccioli (Manziana: Vecchiarelli, 2007), 369–85; Franco Tomasi, "Le ragioni del 'moderno' nella lirica del XVI secolo tra teoria e prassi," in *Moderno e modernità: la letteratura italiana: Atti del XII Congresso dell'Associazione degli Italianisti, Roma, 17–20 settembre 2008*, ed. Clizia Gurreri, Angela Maria Jacopino, and Amedeo Quondam (Rome: Sapienza Università di Roma, 2009), online at http://www.italianisti.it/upload/userfiles/files/Tomasi%20Franco-8.pdf (last visited November 28, 2017).

[3] A sonnet of his had appeared in *Del tempio alla divina signora Giovanna d'Aragona* (Venice: P. Pietrasanta, 1555). On Magno see Daniele Ghirlanda, "Magno, Celio," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 67 (2006), online via http://www.treccani.it.

[4] Cf. Monica Bianco, "La biografia a servizio dell'esegesi: i canzonieri postumi nella Venezia di pieno Cinquecento," in *Il Poeta e il suo pubblico. Lettura e commento dei testi lirici nel Cinquecento*, Atti del convegno di Ginevra, 15–17 maggio 2008 (Genève: Droz, 2012) and Giuseppina Stella Galbiati, "Contributo per Celio Magno: una lettura della Canzone Deus, insieme ai suoi antichi commentatori," in *Studi di onomastica e letteratura offerti a Bruno Porcelli*, ed. D. Camilli (Pisa-Roma: Gruppo Editoriale Internazionale, 2007), 129–44.

line: the poems are preceded by a lengthy exculpatory epistle justifying the young poet's ambitious gesture of sending his composition to the English queen, which may also serve as an implicit commentary and contextualization of these lyrics.

The interest of this letter, however, resides not merely in its meta- and paratextual flourishes. It contains, in fact, an early praise of Elizabeth's knowledge of Italian alongside that of classical languages. Clearly, this was not a mere piece of flattery, as Magno dared to write in his native language instead of more customary Latin. In fact, news of the young queen's proficiency in the vernacular of the peninsula had reached Venice as early as 1554, when Giacomo Soranzo, then envoy from the Republic, observed that she had a considerable knowledge of Italian; three years later, his compatriot and colleague Giovanni Michiel pointed out that her skills far surpassed Queen Mary's.[5] Interestingly, Magno himself would later sign five letters in Italian sent to Elizabeth by the Republic of Venice between 1581 and 1584, now in Kew, National Archives, State Papers (henceforth SP) 102/64, fols. 1–5v.[6]

The missive printed below witnesses to "the infinite happiness with which, almost everywhere in these lands" (i.e., Venice—but possibly Italy in general) felt for Elizabeth's "felicitous accession", and states quite clearly that "this Reign, if we should look at past events, was due to Your Majesty by blood, and by the marvelous work of God". Magno's rather convoluted prose constitutes, then, an early example of a celebration of Elizabeth's accession, but also a justification of her right by descent to the English throne.

Magno's Praise of Elizabeth

Magno begins his hyperbolic praise of Elizabeth by recalling the divine right of kings. He then wishes she could see through the hearts of men like God, an allusion to several scriptural passages from the Old

[5] *CSPVen*, VI.2, *1556–1557*, 1043–1085, no. 884; Alessandra Petrina, "'Perfit Readiness': Elizabeth Learning and Using Italian," in *Elizabeth I's Foreign Correspondence. Letters, Rhetoric, and Politics*, ed. Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume Coatalen, and Jonathan Gibson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 93–6.

[6] On these letters, and some other epistolary exchanges between the Republic and England dating from the 1580s, see *Elizabeth I's Italian Letters*, ed. and trans. Carlo M. Bajetta (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 92, 97, 101, 116.

Testament such as Jeremiah 12:3, 1 Chronicles 28:9, Psalm 44:21 and perhaps, more to the point, 1 Samuel 16:7 "homo enim videt ea quæ parent, Dominus autem intuetur cor" ["for man loketh on the outwarde appearau*n*ce, but God beholdeth the harte" in the 1540 Bible], a passage dear to Protestants. While Magno's rhetoric is overtly religious, he adroitly avoids any potentially Catholic overtones. Paradoxically, he points out that she does not possess this divine gift of seeing through men's hearts, and, by doing so, he underlines the distance between God and the queen. In a textbook case of *captatio benevolentiae*, Magno appeals to her benevolence to gain Elizabeth's goodwill and justify his bold enterprise. There is no contradiction between her superiority and the intimate affection of the hearts of the Italians, including Magno's—he cleverly presents his letter as belonging to an unsung and unheard chorus of praise. He continues by suggesting she is too modest to contemplate her perfections in a mirror, an exception to the stereotype on female vanity. While the first and third rhetorical questions list general virtues, the second one lays the stress on her vast and varied knowledge of the classics, theology and vernacular Italian. Elizabeth, despite her gender and age, is praised as a humanist scholar who may compete with any old man's knowledge. The learned monarch she embodies goes back to Plato's *Republic*: Magno contributes to the development of the myth of Elizabeth as the absolute model of the ruler for present and future princes. What also strikes the reader as typically humanist is the insistence on her mastery of both theory and action or rather action's preeminence. Magno's references both to the length of his letter and to his inability to do justice to the topic at hand because of its magnitude constitute two related variations on the affected modesty *topos* masterfully analysed by E. R. Curtius in his *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*.[7] The suggestion is that lengthy panegyrics could and should be written on the queen's perfections. The poet displays his wit by including a paradox on Elizabeth's modesty "which while making you feel poor, fills you with an infinite treasure": the wording may recall Saint Francis of Assisi's theology of poverty, and in any case certainly sounds Christian. Towards the end, when Magno introduces the sonnets, the letter reverts to its

[7] E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, 1990), 83–5.

beginning by commenting again on the queen's inability to "see into the thoughts of men".[8]

Elizabeth is clearly praised as the poet's muse, a point made by countless English poets throughout her reign. The letter posits the superiority of verse over prose, since only poems can fully express such delight. Then, Magno carefully distinguishes between her right to the crown by blood and her personal achievements as an individual, which single her out even more. He finally discards the *topos* of the indignity of his verses, to present them as "primitie" ("firstlings", the first of other glorious ones), thus asserting his own worth as a poet.

As for the poems themselves, one observation that can be made on the first sonnet is that while Elizabeth was later in her reign associated with Diana, the goddess of the moon (almost a cliché for virginity), a masculine Apollonian sun is here chosen as her allegory. The celebration of her accession to the crown by Nature—with the three allegories of rivers symbolizing centers of civilization—is commonplace in Virgilian pastoral verse, and so is the presence of Echo. In the second sonnet, however, Elizabeth is represented by the rose "humble in her regal mansion", and no longer by the sun. Thus, she becomes far more passive and is pictured waiting for impregnation in her "fecund garden", in the traditional, submissive and procreative role allotted to women. The poet seems to hesitate between painting her with masculine and feminine attributes. To make matters even more complicated, the rose is described as being impervious to "storm or scorn". The sonnet's insistence on constancy departs from widespread representations of women as being fickle.

When Magno composed the sonnets to Elizabeth he was writing his preface to Petrarch's verse, which he began in 1557 and finished in 1561.[9] The comparison with a flower may be reminiscent of Petrarca's *Canzoniere* (*Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*, RVF) 323, ll. 70–71 "come fior colto langue, / lieta si dipartio" ["as a plucked flower languishes

[8] Interestingly, the central paradox developed in the letter, that of the queen's distance and proximity to common men, is reminiscent of the idea of God's transcendence and immanence. For a concise survey of this topic see Millard J. Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*, ed. L. Arnold Hustad (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 87–9.

[9] Venezia, Biblioteca nazionale Marciana, *MS* 171 (2980).

she departed happy"][10] but perhaps RVF 246, ll. 5–8, "Candida rosa nata in dure spine, / quando fia chi sua pari al mondo trove? / Gloria di nostra etate" ["White rose born among hard thorns, when will anyone find her like on earth? Glory of our age!"], and 249, ll. 5–7, "I' la riveggio starsi humilemente / tra belle donne, a guisa d'una rosa / tra minor' fior" ["I see her again standing humbly among lovely ladies, like a rose among lesser flowers"] are more immediate sources for Magno's second sonnet. Petrarch's sonnets were already fashionable at court when the queen read the letter, in part also thanks to Tottel's highly successful and often reprinted *Songs and Sonnettes*, first published in 1557.[11]

Magno was equally attentive to the quality of his verse and of his *mise en page*. A comparison between the italic found in the manuscript and Arrighi's in his influential 1524 *Operina*[12] proves the calligrapher's letter forms were imitated with an added slant to the right. The prestigious hand that gave birth to the fonts used for the publication of major humanist editions of the classics was in itself a subtle compliment to the queen's intellectual achievements.

A Note on the Texts and Their Translation

The letter and the accompanying poems printed below are preserved in Kew, National Archives, SP 70/2, fols. 94–96 (henceforth *K*). They were not included in Magno's later authorized version of his *Rime* (Venice: Andrea Muschio, 1600).[13] The sonnet beginning "Ecco mirabil Sol, ch'in Occidente" appears as no. 265 in Francesco Erspamer's edition

[10] The text and translations are taken from *Petrarch's Lyric Poems: The "Rime sparse" and Other Lyrics*, ed. and trans. Robert M. Durling (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).

[11] Copies of the *Canzoniere* circulated at Queen Katherine Parr's court; see e.g., *Elizabeth I's Italian Letters*, ed. Bajetta, Introduction, par. 1 and Letter 1.

[12] An online edition is available via the webpage of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the Library of Congress: http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=rbc3&fileName=rbc0001_2010rosen0807page.db (last accessed November 28, 2016).

[13] On this edition see Francesco Erspamer, "Per un'edizione delle rime di Celio Magno," *Studi di filologia italiana* XLI (1983): 45–73; 72.

of Magno's poems (*E*),[14] the second of two sonnets headed "A Isabella reina d'Inghilterra nella sua coronazione". Interestingly, *K* does not include the sonnet beginning "Scende in te pur dal ciel nova Minerva" (no. 264 in *E*). Even when the existence of a published version of the second poem is taken into due consideration, the interest of the manuscript version lies in its variants and characteristic spellings, which acquire

[14] *Archivio della tradizione lirica: da Petrarca a Marino*, ed. Amedeo Quondam (the Celio Magno section, edited by Francesco Erspamer; Rome: Lexis Progetti Editoriali, 1997); online via *Biblioteca Italiana*, Roma: Biblioteca Italiana, 2004—http://ww2.bibliotecaitaliana.it. Nos. 264–266 are titled here "A Isabella reina d'Inghilterra nella sua coronazione". See also Erspamer 1983. We reprint these texts below so as to allow an easier comparison (see also the collation of poem 1 below).

no. 264:
Scende in te pur dal ciel nova Minerva,
Anglia felice, e 'l tuo bel scettro adorna.
Per lei l'età de l'oro in te ritorna,
e stil cangia tua sorte empia e proterva.
L'amata libertà, ch'afflitta e serva
piangesti un tempo, al fin cinta ed adorna
di sacra oliva in te lieta soggiorna,
per lei, ch'ad alta speme ancor ti serva.
Mira come nel seggio ov'ella splende
da la fronte serena un raggio move,
ch'a vera gloria ogni cor freddo accende.
Mira com'apre a le sorelle nove
suo real manto, e tal se stessa rende
che ben figlia pò dirsi al sommo Giove.

no. 265:
Ecco bramato sol ch'in Occidente
del brittannico mar sorge a noi fuore
e comparte al suo ciel grazia e favore
tal ch'invidia ne porge a l'Oriente.
O ricco lido, o fortunata gente,
soggetti a la virtù del suo splendore;
quando v'addusse mai più felici ore
altro sol più di lui chiaro e lucente?
Ecco tessono a lui, sorti de l'onde,
Arno, Tebro ed Ilisso ampia corona
De' più ben culti fior de le sue sponde.
Ecco, mentre di voci alte e gioconde
ogni monte, ogni valle, ogni antro suona
— Isabella! —, — Isabella! — Eco risponde.

particular significance in consideration of the holograph nature of *K*, as well as in the accompanying missive, which provides a rich and detailed context for the poetic compositions.

In the translation of the introductory letter, Magno's very long sentences have, for reasons of clarity, been re-arranged into shorter phrases, occasionally altering the sequence of the Italian. In fact, given the rhetorical punctuation and the complex structure of the original, this allows a better understanding of the logical progression of the text. Similarly, some lines from the poem have, occasionally, been anticipated, mostly to preserve a less Italianate sentence structure, or to make the relation subject/object less confusing than in the original.

Celio Magno's Letter and Sonnets

Seren*issi*ma Reina,

Vorrei, che si come i Principi del mondo sono piu uicini, et simili à Dio nella preminenza, et gouerno, che ogni altra creatura mortale, così hauessero in dono dalla sua benignità il poter, come egli, penetrar con la uista per entro i cuori degli huomini. Percioche hora vostra Maestà prenderia certo testimonio da se stessa con gli occhi propri della infinita allegrezza sentita in queste contrade quasi general mente da ciascuno, et da me in particolare per la sua noua, et felice elettione, et successione al Regno *et* ne prenderia insieme quell'honesto piacere, et debito, che sono usati di sentire i personaggi grandi, et magnanimi conoscendo se non pare essere nella gratia, et osseruanza de' suoi, ma eziandio delle strane, et remote genti. Che quantunque in luogo di questa diuina gratia lontana dalla conditione humana usi V*ostra* M*aes*tà la sua rara benignità, et cortesia; le quali douriano porger ardimento ad ogni bassa persona, et da lei non conosciuto di manifestarle o parlando, o scriuendo la sua *pre*sente letitia; non è però cio bastante à far, che pienamente le sia palese l'intimo affetto de' nostri cuori, conciosia che tutti non si conducano à farlo: Anzi in cosi gran numero di suoi deuoti assai maggior parte è quella senza al cun dubbio, che o per non poter da giusto impedimento ritenuti se ne rimangono, o comparata l'altezza, et lo splendor del grado uostro alla bassezza, et oscurità loro; et di qui poco giudiciosi temendo, se'l facessero, nota d'arroganza nella opinion del uulgo; si lasciano piu tosto por freno da una certa uana consuetudine, che uincere, e trasportare dalla uostra gentil natura. Un altro mezzo piu ispediente pe<r> conseguir

il fine, c'ho detto, potria V*ostra* M*aes*tà hauer da se stessa, quando ella non si rendesse schifa d'adope rarlo: cio sarebbe il riguardare, et contemplar se medesima nel chiaro specchio delle proprie uirtù, et ponderar insieme la loro mirabil forza. Imperoche (lasciando per hora stare la bellezza del corpo) qual parte è in V*ostra* M*aes*tà che non doueste reputar amabiliss*im*a et degnissima d'ammiratione et riuerenza presso à ciascuno, che habbia qualche odore, et sentimento, di bene? Hor in qual sauio, e scientiato huo mo, et che fosse antico d'anni, et di studio, non saria uno stupor l'hauer quella cognitione delle lettere diuine et humane, et insieme della lingua Greca, et della Latina, et della Volgare Italiana, che accompagnata d'accorto, e securo giudicio, et ornata d'una rara eloquenza si scorge in Voi pur giouane, et donna? Che dirò della giusticia, della clemenza, et della liberalità, che sono uostre doti così proprie, et in Voi eccellenti,[15] che par che la Natura le habbia solo à nostri giorni à V*ostra* M*aes*tà concedute, accioche ogni Principe, che hoggidì regna, et che regnar dee, in lei rimirando, come in chiaro essempio, le impari no*n* solo à conoscere, ma à porle in uso? Tutte queste con molte altre degne, et notabli uostre conditioni; che hora parte in così breue summa ristringo, et parte lascio adietro per non essere questo il luogo, doue ho da trattarne compiutamente; potrebbero dar à V*ostra* M*aes*tà copiosa materia d'argomentare, et far euidente proua à se stessa della co*n*tentezza, che senta ogniuno per la noua esaltation sua. Ma cio è contrario alla uirtù della modestia, laquale in Voi principalmente riluce; et mentre ui stima pouera, ui fa ricca d'infinito thesoro: Onde io non oso desiderarlo nella M*aes*tà Vostra; perché graue errore si commetterebbe, e troppo in grato saria alla benignità della Natura chi desiderasse in Voi cosa, che potesse corrompere, o macchiar la uostra perfettione. Mancando à Voi dunque modo da poter mirar dentro i pensieri degli huo*min*i: *et* dando à me ardire la grandezza della humanità uostra di giudicar, che male facciano coloro, che ritenuti da uano rispetto la

[15] **giusticia… liberalità**: These are the qualities that the Neapolitan humanist Giovanni Pontano mentioned in his *De Principe* (1493) as typical of a good prince. Interestingly, Baldassarre Castiglione, the author of *The Courtier*, would refer to these virtues explicitly in his letter to Henry VII of England written on the occasion of the death of Guidubaldo di Montefeltro (1508); see Cecil H. Clough, "Baldassare Castiglione's Presentation Manuscript to King Henry VII," *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 3 (1978): 269–72 and Michael Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 35–41.

*pre*sente letitia nei loro petti chiudono senza scoprire qualche aperto et grato segno alla M*aes*tà V*ostra*: le inuio confidentemente hora con queste mie l*ette*re di congratulatione, quali elle si siano i due inclusi sonetti: iquali la felice noua della Elettion sua ha fatti sorgere dal fonte della mia interna allegrezza. Ne mi rallegro tanto per lo Regno a V*ostra* M*aes*tà per sangue debito, et in lei marauigliosamente per sola opera di Dio giusto riconoscitor del suo merito peruenuto, se uorremo hauer ri guardo a i preteriti accidenti; quanto per l'altezza del grado, nel quale il gran ualor uostro gia molto tempo u'ha collocata: Conciosia che quello ui rende uguale à molte Reine; questo u'inalza, et da corona sopra tutte le altre: Quello durerà, per molti, che habbiano ad essere, pochi, et corti anni considerando il corso di nostra uita; questo di secolo in secolo trapassando alla memoria de' posteri, ui conseruerà sempre, et manterrà uiua nel uostro splendore perpetuamente. Degnisi V*ostra* M*aes*tà riceuer queste mie poche rime non come frutti del mio sterile, et basso ingegno; che cio sarebbe un offe*n*der la uostra altezza; ma come primitie à Voi riuerentemente sacrate dalla pura diuotione d'un anchor giouane di poca età, ma uostro deditissimo seruo: il quale per la maggior felicità, che si creda poter desiderar alla M*aes*tà V*ostra* oltra quella, che possedete, prega N*ostro* Sig*nore* Dio, che ui consoli tanto, qua*n*to Voi consolate hora i uostri popoli con l'alta speranza della uostra ueram*en*te mirabile, et singular uirtù. Di Venetia à iij di Febr*aio* M. D. L. VIII.

Di V*ostra* M*aes*tà

humiliss*im*o et diuotiss*im*o seruitore
Celio Magno

Alla Seren*issi*ma Reina
d'Inghilterra.

Ecco mirabil Sol, ch'in Occidente
Del Britannico mar sorge à noi fuore;
Et comparte al suo ciel gratia, e fauore
Tal, ch'inuidia ne porge à l'Oriente.
O ricco lido, ò fortunata gente
Suggetti à la uirtù del suo splendore,
Quando u'addusse mai piu felici hore
Altro Sol piu di lui chiaro, e lucente?
Ecco tesser à lui sorti de l'onde

Arno, Tebro, *et* Cefiso, ampia corona
De' piu ben culti fior de le sue sponde.
Così, mentre di uoci alte, e gioconde
Ogni monte, ogni ualle, ogni antro suona,
Isabella Isabella Echo risponde.

1 Mirabil] bramato, *E* 9 tesser] tessono *E* 10 Cefiso] Ilisso *E*
12 Così] Ecco *E*

Nel felice giardin, ch'irriga, e'nfiora
Tamigi, e l'Ocean cinge d'intorno,
Spiega candida Rosa il crine adorno
Dopo lungo tardar d'amica Aurora.
Quel Sol, ch'al Sol men degno i raggi indora,
L'apre guardata da tempesta, e scorno:
Et ella humil nel suo Real soggiorno
L'inchina; e grata il souran lume adora.
Ben nato Fior, del tuo giardin fecondo
Sola uaghezza, e desiata speme,
Te serbi ognihor il ciel fresco, e giocondo:
E ti giunga à tal Fior, che teco insieme
Germe produca, onde risorga al mondo
L'antico pregio del celeste seme.

Translation

Most Serene Queen,

The Princes of this world are, in their preeminence and in their role as governors, nearer and more similar to God than any other mortal creature. Accordingly, I wish they would be granted, by His grace, a power similar to His to see into the hearts of men. Then Your Majesty would certainly see, with her own eyes, the infinite happiness which, almost everywhere in these lands,[16] everybody—and me in particular—feels for your recent and felicitous accession to the throne. Such frank

[16] **lands**: "contrade" assumes here, quite clearly, a wider sense and not merely that of "quarter" or "county." cf. *Il Vocabolario della Lingua Italiana Treccani*. Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 2010-in progress. Online edn.: http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario. "Contrada," 1–3.

and just delight would you get from this, as common to the great and magnanimous, when seeing that even strangers and people who live far from there give praise to and reverence you almost as much as your own subjects.

Whenever, in place of such divine gift, far from our human condition, Your Majesty will use her rare benevolence and courtesy, this should encourage any stranger of lower condition to express—in speech or writing—his present joy. This, however, would yet not be enough to make you fully perceive the intimate affection of our hearts, because not everybody would be driven to do it.[17] On the contrary, the large majority of your devotees allow certain vain customs to detain them, instead of being inspired by your gentle nature. Some do this because they are held back by just impediment. Others compare your stature and splendor to their low and obscure condition; hence they are afraid that, if they spoke up,[18] people would think them most arrogant.

Your Majesty could find by herself another, useful[19] means to obtain what I mentioned earlier, if You would deign to use it.[20] This is, to see the reflection of your own virtues and consider the extraordinary strength of their combination. In fact, (even leaving aside, for now, corporal beauty)[21] what is there in Your Majesty that should not be considered by you most lovely, or unworthy of the praise and reverence of anyone endowed with at least some good feelings? What sage and learned man, old in years and studies, would not marvel to find in you, so young, and a woman,[22] such knowledge of both divine and human

[17] **driven to do it**: i.e., to express his "present joy" in "speech or writing" as mentioned in the preceding phrase.

[18] **spoke up**: "se l'facessero" in the original, clearly referring, again, to express their "present joy" in "speech or writing."

[19] **useful**: this is the contemporary meaning of "espediente" in the original; cf. *Vocabolario Treccani*.

[20] **if You… it**: sixteenth-century Italian "schifare" is normally meant as "schivare", "to avoid" (cf. *Vocabolario Treccani*, "schifare," 1a). Incidentally, Elizabeth used this word in her 1566 letter to Maximilian II (Letter 4 in *Elizabeth's Italian Letters*, ed. C. M. Bajetta).

[21] **even … corporal beauty**: Magno will, quite tactfully, make no mention of Elizabeth's physical aspect.

[22] **What sage … woman**: the Italian construction, ending with "in Voi pur giouane, et donna" ("in you, so young, and a woman") clearly emphasises gender as an additional element of surprise.

letters,[23] as well as of Greek, Latin, and of the Italian Vernacular, accompanied by shrewd and sure judgment and adorned by eloquence?

What will I say of justice, clemency, and munificence, virtues which befit you so properly and in which you excel? And you do to such degree that it seems Nature, in these days, has granted these to you only, so that any Prince reigning now or in the future may—by looking at you as a bright example[24]—not only discover where to learn, but also how to make use of them.

All these, and many other notable qualities[25] of Yours (which I now summarize so briefly, or leave out, since this is not the time[26] for me to deal with them in detail) could bring abundant arguments and clear evidence to convince Yourself of the happiness everybody feels for your recent accession. This, however, would be contrary to modesty, a virtue which shines so prominently in you—and which while making you feel poor, fills you with an infinite treasure. I cannot, therefore, wish this[27] of you: one would make a serious mistake and would be too ungrateful towards your magnanimity who desired of you something which could corrupt or stain your perfection.

Since you cannot see into the thoughts of men, and since I am emboldened by your most humane understanding of how wrong they are those who—deterred by vain respect—keep hidden within their breasts their present delight, without allowing Your Majesty to see any clear and manifest sign of it, I am now enclosing with this congratulatory letter these two sonnets (however they may be). The joyful news of your accession made them gush out of the spring of my inmost happiness.

This Reign, if we should look at past events, was due to Your Majesty by blood, and by the marvelous work of God—who has justly recognized

[23] **divine and human letters**: the *studia humanitatis* and *studia divinitatis* were seen by humanists such as Colluccio Salutati as profoundly interconnected; see Cesare Vasoli, *Le filosofie del Rinascimento* (Milan: Mondadori 2002), 54–5. Salutati defended, in particular, the value of studying pagan literature as a means to reach a better understanding of the Bible and the Church Fathers; see Rens Bod, *A New History of the Humanities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 145.

[24] **bright example**: cf. *Vocabolario Treccani*, "chiaro", 2 (which derives from Latin "clarus").

[25] **qualities**: cf. *Vocabolario Treccani*, "condizione," 2c.

[26] **time**: the meaning of the Italian original is clearly "time", "occasion", *Vocabolario Treccani*, "luògo," 4.

[27] **this**: i.e., that you renounce your modesty.

your merit—and has come to You. I do not, then, merely rejoice for your accession, but for this eminent state which your valor, now a long time ago, achieved. If the former[28] makes you an equal to many queens, the latter[29] exalts you and grants you a crown above all others. The former will last for what should be many years, [even if] a few, and short, years when we consider the course of our life. The latter, being passed on by the memory of future generations, will keep you alive through the centuries, and will keep you perpetually splendid.

May Your Majesty deign to receive these few lines of mine not as the invention of my sterile and low wit. This would be offensive to Your Highness. Rather, accept them as firstlings consecrated to you of the pure devotion of a man who is, though young, your most devout servant. The same prays the Lord our God for the best happiness he can possibly wish for Your Majesty, in addition to that you already enjoy. I pray the Lord may comfort you as much as you now comfort your people with the great hope of your truly admirable and singular virtue.

From Venice, 3rd February 1558

Your Majesty's

most humble and devout servant

Celio Magno

To the most Serene Queen
Of England

Lo! The wondrous Sun that in the West
towards us rises, out of Britannia's sea
and grace imparts, and favor to its sky
to such extent that envious is the East.[30]
O rich, rich shores! O happy people,
subject to the virtue of its splendor.
Did ever other sun, brighter than this,

[28] **the former**: the "regno", the fact of having become queen by descent.

[29] **the latter**: Elizabeth's "merito", which God himself has acknowledged.

[30] **to … east**: The course of the sun is altered, its rising now taking place in the west.

and more refulgent, bring you happier days?
Lo, arisen from the seas, Arno
Tiber and Cephissus[31] prepare a crown
made of the choicest flowers of their shores.
So, where with loud and happy voices
every mount, valley, and cavern sings
Elizabeth! Elizabeth! Echo responds.

In the joyous garden, by Thames made rich
of flowers and water, by Ocean girt,
a candid Rose parades its ornate head
having long waited for her friend, Aurora.
In that sun, which his lesser twin's rays makes
golden, she blooms, sure from storm or scorn,
and, humble in her Regal mansion, she
bows—and grateful the sovereign light adores.
Most welcome Flower, the only desire of your
fecund garden, its longed-for hope: may
Heaven keep you always fresh and merry.
May it befall, o Flower, that with you
it may produce the germ of the return
on Earth of the precious ancient seed.

[31] **Arno … Cephissus**: the rivers of Florence, Rome and Athens, here a symbol of the best heritage of Western ancient and modern culture.

CHAPTER 8

"La Comediante Politica": On Gregorio Leti's 1693 Life of Queen Elizabeth I

Giovanni Iamartino

Introduction

> We princes, I tell you, are set on stages in the sight and view of all the world duly obserued. The eyes of many behold our actions; a spot is soon spied in our garments; a blemish quickly noted in our doings. It behooveth us therefore to be careful that our proceedings be just and honorable.[1]

This is what Queen Elizabeth I is reported to have said in her speech to the Parliament on 12 November 1586; and this is what may somehow explain, and perhaps justify, the embarrassingly rude title of one of the

[1] *Elizabeth I. Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 194. The theatrical metaphor apart, it is undeniable that "For a ruling queen public and private cannot be separated. The details of Elizabeth's life, the events in her privy chamber, had a political significance and, no matter how privy, they were never private". Elizabeth Brown, "'Companion Me with My Mistress'. Cleopatra, Elizabeth I and Their Waiting Women," in *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens*, ed. Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 199.

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early, widely read biographies of Queen Elizabeth, *Historia o vero Vita di Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra. Detta per Sopranome la Comediante Politica* (History or Life of Elizabeth, Queen of England, nicknamed the political play-actress), written by Gregorio Leti and first published in Amsterdam in 1693.

Leti is a now largely forgotten Italian polymath of the 17th century. The few critics that were brave enough to study Leti's enormous literary output—most notably and recently Franco Barcia[2]—have generally styled him as an adventurer and a liar, as a scoundrel lacking any moral principles, a time-serving writer whose only aim was money, and a hack whose many works are characterized by shameless cynicism, brazen impudence, libellous gossip, and a servile attitude towards the great. And yet, if this picture is true to life, how was it possible for this man to have been welcome in many courts in Europe? to be offered honorary appointments in different towns in Europe? to be given gifts of money and treated with courtesy by both Louis XIV and Charles II? and to be voted a member of the Royal Society? There must be a reason as to why his works were widely read all over Europe, always reprinted and often translated from Italian into other languages: for instance, Leti's *Vita di Elisabetta* boasts four editions in Italian, nineteen in French, five in Dutch, two in Russian and one in German.[3]

Such a huge publishing success makes Leti's *Vita* an important milestone in Queen Elizabeth's European afterlife,[4] and a biography worth studying. What I will focus on in my chapter is not so much Leti's

[2] Franco Barcia, *Bibliografia delle opere di Gregorio Leti* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1981), *Un politico dell'età barocca: Gregorio Leti* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1983), *Gregorio Leti informatore politico di principi italiani* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1987). Previous research on Leti includes Agostino Cameroni, *Gregorio Leti: uno scrittore avventuriero del secolo diciassettesimo. Appunti critici* (Milano: Libreria Editrice Galli di C. Chiesa e F. Guidani, 1893), Luigi Fassò, *Avventurieri della penna del Seicento* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1923), 3–267, and Enrico Nistri, "Per una rilettura di Gregorio Leti," *Nuova rivista storica* 63 (1979): 349–77. Arguably, the most balanced assessments of Leti's output are to be found in Barcia, 1983, 145–58, and Giorgio Spini, *Ricerca dei libertini* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1983), 295–312.

[3] Barcia, 1981, 417 ff, and Barcia, 1983, 146. See also Nati Krivatsy, *Bibliography of the Works of Gregorio Leti* (New Castle: Oak Knoll Books, 1982).

[4] The four-century history of the Queen's posthumous reputation is found in Michael Dobson and Nicola J. Watson, *England's Elizabeth. An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) (where, on p. 82, Leti is briefly mentioned as a transmitter of inherited anecdotes) and Julia M. Walker, *The Elizabeth Icon, 1603–2003*

narrative of the momentous events in the queen's long reign as his description of her outward appearance, personal qualities and defects—in other words, Leti's portrait, psychological and otherwise, of the queen as well as his opinion on the motivations behind her acts. Before that, however, a summary of Gregorio Leti's life and works is in order.

Leti's Life and Works

Gregorio Leti was born in Milan on 29 May 1630, although his family was originally from Bologna.[5] He grew up in Calabria and studied at a Jesuit school in Cosenza, as his father Girolamo had become governor of Amantea. When Girolamo died in 1639, Gregorio was placed under the tutelage of his uncle, Nicolas Leti, a prelate in Rome, later to become bishop of Acquapendente in Umbria. As a young man, Gregorio lived a turbulent, dissipated life, thus frustrating his uncle's plan to get him to enter a legal or an ecclesiastical career. When living with his uncle, Gregorio may have come to know of the abuses and intrigues in the papal court, and this may explain his lifelong anti-Catholic feelings. While planning to go to France, Leti travelled to Geneva and it was not long before he decided to stay there, converted to Calvinism, and got married. He used to earn his living by teaching Italian and by publishing his books (*Strage dei riformati innocenti*, 1661, was his

(Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). Kerstin Weiand, *Herrscherbilder und politische Normbildung: Die Darstellung Elisabeths I. im England des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015) focuses on the early post mortem image of Queen Elizabeth in Britain up to the 1630s, while John Watkins, *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England. Literature, History, Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) deals with the whole seventeenth century. See also the essays in *Queen Elizabeth I: Past and Present*, ed. Christa Jansohn (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2004) and in *Resurrecting Elizabeth I in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Elizabeth H. Hageman and Katherine Conway (Madison and Teaneck: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007). This is perhaps the place to add that, according to Patrick Collinson, "Elizabeth I (1533–1603)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, online edition January 2012, http://www.oxforddnb.com.pros.lib.unimi.it/view/article/8636, accessed August 18, 2017), "the 790 pages of Agnes Strickland's fourth volume of her *Lives of the Queens of England* (1851) (…) was fulsome and marred by uncritical dependence" on Leti's *Vita*.

[5] My summary of Leti's life is based on A. H. Machielsen, "Some Notes on Gregorio Leti and his 'Vita di Elisabetta'," *Neophilologus* 38, no. 3 (1954): 183–9; Barcia, 1981, 21–7; Krivatsy, 1982, 3–8; Barcia, 1983, 7–47.

first work published in Geneva). More interestingly, he also regularly received money from the grand duke of Tuscany to prevent publication of anything damaging to the Medici family in Switzerland; he was also entrusted with diplomatic assignments by Venice and France. Rumours about his genuine Calvinist convictions were fuelled by some passages in his published works (*Itinerario della corte romana*, 1674; *Vaticano languente*, 1677; *Livello politico*, 1678); and when his laudatory biography of Philip II of Spain came out, whose first volume was dedicated to the Catholic duke of York, the future James II of Britain, Leti was banned from Geneva because his Calvinist faith was doubted.

Leti moved first to Paris, then hoping to become court historian to Louis XIV: the post was indeed offered to him, on condition that he give up his Protestant religion. As he could not accept this condition,[6] Leti decided to go to England in 1680, since the religion there was more akin to his and some of his books had already been translated into English.[7] As a matter of fact, Charles II received him in March 1681, presented him with a gift of money, and even promised him a pension, on the condition that Leti should pen a history of England from its origins to the Restoration.

Leti set to work at once, and two volumes of *Del Teatro Brittanico*—altogether more than 1500 pages—were published in December 1682, the imprint being "Londra, Da Roberto Scott Mercante Libraro MDCLXXXIII". Instead of receiving the hoped-for pension, however, Leti was ordered by the king's privy council to leave the country within ten days, and all the copies were required to be seized and destroyed. This happened because the duke of York resented the fact that Leti now preferred the patronage of his brother, and because the Catholic faction at court was offended by the content of the book,[8] but above all because of what has been defined as Leti's:

[6] See Barcia, 1983, 27–9 on Leti's religious attitude.

[7] *The Life of Donna Olimpia Maldachini* (London: R. Littlebury, 1666; further editions in 1667 and 1678), *The Loves of Charles, Duke of Mantua; and of Margaret, Countess of Rovera* (In the Savoy [London]: Henry Herringman, 1669; further edition in 1685), *Il Cardinalismo di Santa Chiesa; or the History of the Cardinals of the Roman Church* (London: John Starkey, 1670), *Il Putanismo di Roma, or the History of the Whores and Whoredom of the Popes, Cardinals and Clergy of Rome* (London: no publisher, 1670), *Il Nipotismo di Roma: or, the History of the Popes Nephevvs* (London: John Starkey, 1673).

[8] See Vittorio Gabrieli, "Gregorio Leti: disavventure di un avventuriero," *Nuova Antologia* 88 (1953): 314.

> amazing tactlessness. It is almost unbelievable that anyone could write such enormities about the king's love affairs and his behaviour towards his legal wife, without having even an inkling of his lack of discretion.[9]

Indeed, the book is crammed with gossip and scabrous details about Charles's lovers, his wife Catherine of Braganza, the marriage life of the duke of York and Anne Hyde, and also about other members of the court.[10]

Having to leave England for good before the end of January 1683, Leti travelled to Holland and settled in Amsterdam: he spent the last seventeen years of his life there, being appointed historiographer of the city of Amsterdam and publishing many new books before he died in 1701. As far as English history is concerned, in 1684 Leti brought out a second, revised and enlarged edition—in 5 volumes, this time—of *Il Teatro Brittanico*, which did not regain the English king's favour. Some ten years later, his lives of Oliver Cromwell and Queen Elizabeth were published in Amsterdam, in 1692 and 1693, respectively.

This short summary of Gregorio Leti's life and works is especially meant to highlight two features of his literary output: firstly, the close relationship between his work as a writer and a historian on the one hand, and his life and personality on the other hand; and secondly, the interrelationship among his works on English subjects. In fact, while in London, Leti had made friends with the earl of Anglesey, who then served as Lord Privy Seal for Charles II; the earl, who spoke Italian and had read Leti's lives of Pope Sixtus V and Philip II, urged him to write the biographies of Oliver Cromwell and Queen Elizabeth, provided him with written records and, most probably, allowed him to read in his own library—in those days, a very large one.[11] As a result, while writing

[9] Machielsen, 1954, 185.

[10] See Franco Barcia, "La 'Storia' come romanzo: il *Teatro britannico* di Gregorio Leti," in *Storie inglesi. L'Inghilterra vista dall'Italia tra storia e romanzo (XVII sec.)*, ed. Clizia Carminati and Stefano Villani (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2011), 171–86.

[11] Michael Perceval-Maxwell, "Annesley, Arthur, First earl of Anglesey (1614–1686)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, online edition January 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com.pros.lib.unimi.it/view/article/562, accessed August 18, 2017) writes that there were some 30,000 volumes in Lord Anglesey's library, "the largest private library of the time". As a matter of fact, when Lord Anglesey died, his library was sold at auction, and its catalogue—Thomas Phillips, *Bibliotheca Angleseiana* (no place: no publisher, 1686)—lists over 6800 books.

Del Teatro Brittanico in London, Leti devoted one day a week each to his lives of Cromwell and Elizabeth.[12] When he hurriedly had to leave England, he brought with him the manuscripts of both lives, which he took up again years later in Amsterdam.

Leti's Life of Queen Elizabeth

As an introduction to my analysis of Leti's *Vita di Elisabetta*, I may mention a passage from Leti's address to the "Benigno Lettore", in the second edition of his *Teatro Brittanico*. Here, Leti confides to his readers that "gli evvenimenti passati nel primo apparir del mio Teatro Brittanico, potranno assai farti comprendere se ne hai cognitione ch'è meglio tacere molte cose, che il mostrarle col dito";[13] and a couple of pages later:

> io non posso cambiar di naturale, cioè di scriver le cose senza Belletto (…) Siamo in un Secolo nel quale non si può vivere che formando gazzette, cadendo gli Historici nella fatalità di vedersi perseguitare per vna oncia di male, & appena ricompensati d'un pelo di cento Libre di bene. Per viver bene trà vivi bisogna scriver di morti, lo so cosi bene che un altro, ma la disgrazia vuole che non mi serve tal massima.[14]

> I cannot change my nature, that is to say writing without embellishing things (…) In this day and age one can only live by writing news-sheets, so that historians are destined to suffer persecution for an ounce of evil, and be hardly rewarded for one hundred pounds of good. In order to live well among the living, one should write about the dead: this I know as well as anybody else, but unfortunately I do not live by this maxim.

[12] It is Leti himself who explains his working method in his address to the reader, "L'Auttore al Lettore," prefixed to his *Historia, e Memorie recondite sopra alla vita di Oliviero Cromvele* (Amsterdam: Blaev, 1692).

[13] Gregorio Leti, *Il Teatro Brittanico o vero Historia della Grande Brettagna* (Amsterdam: Abramo Wolfgang, 1684): "what happened when my *Teatro Brittanico* was first published will make you understand very well, if you are informed about it, that it is better to keep quiet about many things, rather than point them out".

[14] As a matter of fact, towards the end of his biography of Queen Elizabeth, Leti writes: "questa Regina è morta, e la sua Casa estinta, di modo che si può dir la verità" (II,v,552: "this queen is dead, and her lineage extinct, so that one can tell the truth"). All translations of Leti throughout this chapter are my own.

Made wiser by his banishment from England, in fact, Leti devoted the last stage of his life to historical subjects, and especially what we may define as fictionalized biographies of important figures of the recent past—Queen Elizabeth for one.

Although Leti's *Vita di Elisabetta* was first published in 1693, he states in his address to the reader—"L'autore al benigno lettore"—that he had started collecting documents on Elizabeth and comments by English noblemen while writing the life of Pope Sixtus V, that is to say in or before 1669, but had shelved that book project as the ideas and judgments on Elizabeth handed down to him were too diverse and conflicting. Once in England, though, he had been urged to take up his biography again by Lord Anglesey.[15]

At the end of his *Vita*, Leti writes that, while penning it, a copy of William Camden's *Annales* always lay open on his desk but—to the readers' surprise and, possibly, resentment—he did not follow it blindly (II,v,581–582); rather, Leti had consulted written records and papers that Camden had neither made use of nor mentioned, even though he did choose the best from the renowned author's work (II,v,583).[16] The reference to Camden—an obvious choice on Leti's part—might be meant to hide much more substantial plagiarism from other works,[17] or

[15] See "L'Auttore al Lettore" in Leti's *Historia* of Cromwell. Lord Anglesey's suggestion may well have depended on his "nostalgia for Elizabeth [that] was inevitable during the troubled seventeenth-century transition from absolutism to constitutional monarchy" (Watkins, 2002, 3–4).

[16] In the *Vita*, the title of Camden's book is mentioned in Italian, so that one cannot say whether Leti had at his disposal the first, Latin edition of 1615, or the later French (1624) or English (1625) translations, which included many changes and additions, especially in Camden's description of Elizabeth and her reign. See Patrick Collinson, "William Camden and the Anti-Myth of Elizabeth: Setting the Mould?," in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 79–98.

[17] Given the way Leti worked, his limited proficiency in English and his intended readership's appetite for gossip and scandal in high places, he may have taken ideas and lifted passages from the English early biographical accounts of the Queen—John Clapham's, Thomas Heywood's, Robert Naunton's, Francis Bacon's, Francis Osborne's, not to mention the relevant pages in John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, and many other works—but he may also have relied on the pseudohistorical French novels of the second half of the seventeenth century focusing on the lives of royalty and the nobility: see Watkins, 2002, 150–87. Barcia, 1983, 78, blames Leti for omitting his sources or referring to them only vaguely, so

even outright fabrication in more than one instance. Whatever the case,[18] it is what Leti did actually publish that had a major impact on Queen Elizabeth's late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century reputation and fame in Europe – hence, worth considering as such.

Leti's account is organized in ten books, five for each of the two thick volumes of his *Historia o vero Vita di Elisabetta*. The lengthy description of the events in Elizabeth's long life and reign is interspersed with the biographer's comments and personal judgements on the queen that, taken together, make up his portrait of "la Comediante Politica".[19] To these, I will now turn.

as to avoid any kind of check. Stefano Villani styles him as a downright plagiarist, on the most reasonable assumption that you cannot write a 1000 page book every year for some 40 years without copying word by word a substantial part of what you publish ("Encomi in inglese di G. Leti," in *Forme e occasioni dell'encomio tra Cinquecento e Seicento*, ed. Danielle Boillet and Liliana Grassi (Lucca: Pacini Fazzi, 2011), 213–36, here 234). Leti's sources for his lives of Cromwell and Queen Elizabeth is the topic of an essay I am currently researching.

[18] Leti refers to his sources more than once, but almost always obliquely: an old manuscript owned by Robert Bruce, 1st Earl of Ailesbury (I,ii,98); a manuscript given to him by Sir John Finch, formerly ambassador of England to the Ottoman Empire (I,v,542); an unmentioned Latin work reporting the words of a French gentleman travelling in England during the reign of Henry VIII (I,ii,151–152); such expressions as "d'alcuni si scrive che" (I,ii,157: "some write that"), "molti dissero, e scrissero che" (II,i,93: "many said and wrote that"), "gli Auttori Protestanti" (I,iii,240 *et passim*: "Protestant authors"), "alcuni Auttori Inglesi" (I,iii,249: "some English authors"), "più volte ancora hò letto che" (II,i,55: "I have often read that"); a foreign source may be discerned behind a word or clause in Italian calqued on a French idiom (I,ii,156) or an English one (I,iii,247; I,iv,371). No source text is mentioned when the Italian biographer quotes letters exchanged by the Queen and Edward Courtenay, 1st Earl of Devon (I,iii,231–234, 305–307), or addressed by Elizabeth to Queen Mary (I,iii,315–317). Instead, a letter sent to Rome by the Jesuit Ignatius Cherdan about King James I is said to have been excerpted from an edition published in Paris in 1621 (II,v,578–579). Examples of Leti's use of personal communication as a source for historical information is found when he reports Lord Anglesey's words on Elizabeth's lovers (I,iii,241–243) or the 1st Earl of Arlington's on her chastity (II,i,55).

[19] In order to set the quoted passages from the *Vita* in their proper historical and biographical context, the contents of Leti's two volumes may be usefully summarized as follows. Volume 1 first deals with Elizabeth's parents, Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (Book i, pp. 1–96), then with her birth, education and attitude towards religion, as well as events up to the death of Edward VI (Book ii, pp. 97–216); Book iii concentrates on Mary's reign (pp. 217–336), while Book iv describes Elizabeth's accession to the throne and relevant events to the end of 1564 (pp. 337–432), and Book v covers the period 1565–1572

Queen Elizabeth I in Leti's *Vita*

Leti introduces his *Vita* by praising Elizabeth as a woman and as a queen, and by arguing that she was both sensible and lucky, such that her countrymen considered her the greatest heroine of all:

> Se molti non fossero gli esempi dell'ottima, e maravigliosa riuscita delle Donne, e della loro straordinaria capacità nel Governo, basterebbe quello solo della *Regina Elisabetta*, che dagli Inglesi si stima un prodiggio dell'Arte, e della natura, & un miracolo del Cielo sovra la Terra, in tutto quello che si tratta dell'ordine d'un ben limato, e maturo Governo. (…) Certo è che questa Regina non mancò di senno, ma si può dire che più che senno hebbe fortuna, e lo stato degli affari dell'Europa, accrebbe la sua Fortuna, & il suo senno: in tanto gli Inglesi ne parlano come della più grande Heroina di tutti i Secoli. (I,i,5,6)
>
> If there were not several examples already of women's great and amazing success, and of their extraordinary capability to govern, Queen Elizabeth's only would be enough, since the English think she is a prodigy of art and nature, a miracle of heaven on earth, as far as the order of a well-polished and fully developed government is concerned. (…) Certainly this queen did not lack sense, but one can argue that she had more good fortune than sense, and the state of affairs in Europe increased both her fortune and her sense, so that the English speak of her as the greatest heroine of all times.

And yet:

> il Ritratto delle sue Attioni, fu tinto di cosi differenti colori di male, e di bene, cosi nel Governo, che ne' suoi costumi che difficilmente si può fare un buon giudicio, & un giusto equilibrio alla bilancia. Il disegno di questa Historia è di chiuder la bocca à quei o che ne hanno parlato e scritto troppo male per capriccio e per malignità, o che si sono dati à lodarla in eccesso per passione. (I,i,6–7)
>
> the picture of her actions was painted in such contrasting colours of good and evil – in both her government and morality – that it is difficult to

(pp. 433–552). The books in volume 2 focus in turn on the most momentous events in Elizabeth's life and reign (1573–1584: Book i, pp. 5–120; 1585–1587: Book ii, pp. 121–240; 1588–1594: Book iii, pp. 241–360; 1595–1600: Book iv, pp. 361–480; 1601–1603: Book v, pp. 481–583), with the last thirty pages or so of the final book containing Leti's explicitly personal judgement on the queen.

> make a fair judgement, and hold the scales even. The purpose of this history is to silence those who talked or wrote badly about her out of fancy or sheer malice, as well as those who were overzealous in praising her.

Leti, therefore, proposes himself as a fair judge of her actions, steering a middle course between the biased, opposing judgements passed on her by Protestants and Catholics alike. The former:

> la spacciano per la Reina dell'Heroine; per l'Amazone del suo Secolo, per l'Ornamento de' Principati, e per la Base inespugnabile della Chiesa di Christo, (…) la lodano (…) come un modello di perfettione trà i Prencipi, come una Fucina di buon governo: e come una miniera di tutte le virtù Eroiche. (I,i,37,38–39)

> pass her off as the queen of heroines, the Amazon of her age, the ornament of principalities, and the unconquerable foundation of the Church of Christ (…) they praise her (…) as a paragon of perfection among sovereigns, as a hothouse of good government, and as a mine of all the heroic virtues.

while

> Li Catolici parlano della Regina Elisabetta come d'un mostro d'Inferno: come d'una Donna scelerata, e perversa, come d'un'ingorda di sangue humano, e come di una furia animata contro la Religione Catolica. (I,i,38)

> The Catholics speak of Queen Elizabeth as a monster from hell, as a wicked and depraved woman, greedy for human blood, and as an unrestrained fury against the Catholic religion.

After these introductory pages, Leti's narrative unfolds chronologically. In the book dealing with Elizabeth's birth and youth, the first description of her physical appearance and talents is found. From nature:

> haveva ricevuto un Corpo ben disposto, e ben formato, con un garbo maestoso, e grave senza affettattione, che s'andò da un giorno all'altro augumentando nella medesima dispositione: un volto bello che poteva in fatti portare il titolo di volto Angelico, poiche tutti i suoi tratti erano ben formati. Ma tutti questi doni della natura venivano illustrati da quei della Gratia, possedendo uno spirito, quanto più perfetto si potesse desiderare in una Donna; di modo che quei che la vedevano, confessavano ad alta voce, *che bisognava che il Cielo l'havesse riservato a qualche gran Governo nel*

mondo, per essere stata dal Cielo, e dalla Terra arricchita di talenti troppo grandi. (I,ii,159–160)

she had received a well-built and well-proportioned body, with manners solemn and grave without any affectation, that improved in the same frame of mind day by day. Her nice face might well deserve the title of an angelic visage, because all its features were regular and fine. But all these gifts of nature were brightened by those of her grace, because her spirit was as perfect as one could wish in a woman, so that those who met her were ready to acknowledge in a loud voice that heaven must have destined her for some great government in the world, as she had been endowed with such a wealth of talents by both heaven and earth.

Her beauty and gracefulness were enhanced by her fondness for magnificent, expensive clothes, for which she had a real passion:

era questa Prencipessa bellissima, di statura più che mediocre, capello biondo, occhi bruni, guardo piacevole incitante alla venerattione. Si compiaceva molto nel lusso femminile, e voleva che tutte le sue Dame, e suoi Gentil'huomini, e prima, e dopo divenuta Regina vestissero splendidamente; essendo vero che dall'età di nove anni in poi, non si compiacque in altro esercitio che in quello dello studio, e nella galanteria degli Abiti. (I,iv,339)[20]

This Princess was beautiful, more than average in height, with fair hair, dark eyes, and a pleasing appearance that attracted reverence. She was exceedingly pleased with female luxury, so much so that, before becoming a queen and afterwards, she wanted her ladies-in-waiting and her gentlemen to dress splendidly. It is true that, since she was nine years old, she was only pleased with the practice of studying and the pomp of dressing up.

More than her taste in dressing, however, Leti praises her study of and proficiency in many disciplines, and especially languages:

Certo è che non haveva mai visto l'Inghilterra Donzella nobile in una età simile con una inclinattione cosi grande ad ogni qualunque scienza, o lavoro manuale, poiche trapuntava con l'Ago à maraviglia, nè vi era cosa di gentile che vedesse fare ad altre Donne, che non volesse farne lo stesso; ma

[20] Elizabeth's feminine vanity, as far as her love for rich apparel is concerned, is also mentioned on I,iv,392.

sopra modo s'avanzò nelle scienze più utili e nobili, à segno che nell'età di dodeci anni possedeva maravigliosamente la Geografia, la Cosmografia, la Matematica, l'Architettura, la Pittura, l'Aritmetica, l'Historia, e non poco della Meccanica, con gran maraviglia de' Maestri, che non potevano comprendere, come potesse rendersi capace di cosi gran coltura di scienze lo spirito d'una Fanciulla, e come questo ispirito gli potesse fornire una memoria cosi feconda in ogni qualunque cosa. Sopra tutto hebbe un particolar dono per le lingue, havendo imparato col mezzo del *Bingast* suo Precettore la lingua Latina, non già per parlarla, ma solo per poterla ben'intendere, & in fatti l'intendeva nell'ultima perfettione, godendo spesso che i Dotti, e Professori che andavano per visitarla gli parlassero in questa Lingua. Ma per quello che tocca alle Lingue Francese, Spagnola, Italiana, e Fiamenga, non si contentò solo d'intenderle, ma volle perfettionarsi all'ultimo grado, onde le parlava, e le scriveva tutte quattro, di modo che non ben si comprendeva, se nella sua bocca, e nella sua mano, fossero in Lei materne, o straniere. (I,i,160–161)[21]

Definitely, England had never seen a noble young lady of a similar age showing such a great inclination towards any science or manual work. In fact, she was wonderfully able with her needle, and there was nothing gentle and polite she saw other ladies doing that she did not want to do herself. But in particular she made rapid progress in the most useful and noble sciences, to such an extent that, at the age of twelve, she perfectly mastered geography, cosmography, mathematics, architecture, painting, arithmetic, history, and some mechanics too; her teachers were astonished by all this, and did not understand how a young girl's spirit could have such a good command of scientific knowledge, and how her spirit enabled her to have such a fertile memory for everything. Above all, she had a peculiar gift for languages, having learnt Latin from Mr Bingast, her tutor, not so much to speak it as to understand it well; and indeed she perfectly understood it, and often took pleasure in asking the scholars and professors who visited her to speak to her in that language. But as far as the French, Spanish, Italian and Flemish languages are concerned, she did not content herself with just understanding them, she wanted to become fully proficient: she was so good at speaking and writing them that it was hardly understood whether they, in her mouth and hand, were maternal or foreign languages.

[21] Later in volume I, however, Leti adds that the queen "non voleva parlar Spagnolo, benche l'intendesse benissimo, solendo dire, *che questa Nattione era assai fiera, e che però non bisognava aggiungergli fierezza, col persuaderla che le altre erano innamorate della sua lingua*" (I,iv,340: "[she] did not want to speak Spanish, although she understood it perfectly, for she was often said that this nation was very proud, and therefore one should not make it prouder by convincing it that the other nations were fond of its language").

If languages, both classical and modern, were the main aim of her study as a girl, as a young woman she focused on what might be profitable for her hoped-for obligations as a queen:

> Si diede a studiare con accurata applicattione alcune le Opere di Machiavello, che correvano con gran fama nell'Europa, di più Cornelio Tacito, e quanti Libri potè trovare della più fina politica. In oltre ripassò per una seconda volta l'historia Romana, e li commentarii di Cesare; la vita de' Pontefici del Platina, quella degli Imperadori, e più in particolare le Historie d'Inghilterra, e di Scotia, e tutti i Successi di quelle tante Guerre e Paci, e Trattati e Massime tra Carlo V. Henrico suo Padre, Francesco primo, & i Pontefici Romani; & in tutte le sudette opere soleva fare annotattioni nelle margini di sua mano, & un'Estratto di quel che trovava di più raffinato in un suo libretto, che solea leggere, e fare dell'osservationi mentre spasseggiava ne' Giardini. Certo è che mai Donna hebbe un'applicattione cosi grande agli studii di tal natura, nè mai altra meglio di Lei seppe meglio profittarne. Hebbe ancora molto à cuore gli studii nelle materie di Religione, e si andò instruendo in particolare di quelle massime che si erano serviti Lutero e Calvino, nel fondare, e propagare le loro Riforme, con ogni particolarità sopra ciò. (I,iii,301)
>
> With careful diligence she devoted herself to study some of Machiavelli's works, whose fame was spread all over Europe; also, Cornelius Tacitus, and all the books of the subtlest politics she was able to find. Moreover, for the second time she went over Roman history, and Caesar's Commentarii; Platina's Lives of the Popes, the lives of the emperors, and more particularly the histories of England and Scotland; and all the successes of those many wars and pacifications, as well as treaties and maxims, among Charles V, her father Henry, Francis I, and the Roman Popes. To all these works she added marginal notes in her hand, and copied the most refined passages from them in a notebook of hers, that she used to read and comment on while taking a walk in the gardens. Definitely, no other woman ever applied herself so much to these kinds of studies, nor knew how to profit from them better than her. She also took the study of religious matters to heart, and in particular she learnt those maxims that Luther and Calvin had made use of when starting and spreading their reforms, with every detail about them.

Whether it was due to the influence of Machiavelli's teachings or to the lessons learnt from other historians and from experience, Elizabeth practiced the art of dissimulation and political lying from the first moments of her life as a queen. Indeed, Leti introduces his image of Elizabeth as a

"comediante politica" when describing how, the very day Elizabeth was first brought to London after Mary's death, she behaved during a service in the chapel of the Tower of London:

> postasi Elisabetta inginocchioni, udì con gran divotione il canto del *Te Deum*, dando principio ad ingannare i Catolici con tale apparente pietà, e verso i quali, e particolarmente verso quei che l'haveano il più offesa, mostrò tanti atti di humanità, che non hebbero difficoltà di persuaderse la clemente e nemica di vendetta. (I,iv,340)

> Down on her knees, Elizabeth heard the Te Deum song most devoutly, thus beginning to deceive the Catholics by such outward piety; to them, and more particularly to those who had offended her most, she performed so many acts of humanity that they had no difficulty whatsoever to consider her merciful and an enemy of revenge.

Quite unsurprisingly, the ceremony of Elizabeth's coronation was staged like a play, thus setting the tone for her whole life as a queen, if one is to believe what Leti's source for this passage wrote about the Gran Duque de Feria, the Spanish ambassador in London:

> il Duca di Feria che fu presente alla Ceremonia della Coronattione, uscito di Londra dopo essersi vedute disperate le speranze delle Nozze col suo Rè, andava dicendo da per tutto, *che mai Donna* (cosi si scrive dall'Ollon) *soura Teatro, haveva cosi ben riuscito a far la parte di Comediante come havea fatto Elisabetta nella sua Coronattione*. Et in una conversatione interrogato dal Duca d'Alba, qual giudicio faceva egli della riuscita del Governo di questa Regina, gli diede in risposta, *Il suo Governo sarà una Comedia perche le sue attioni sono più tosto da Comediante che da Regina*: & à che soggiunse il Duca d'Alba: *questo mi fa credere che sarà per riuscire scaltra nella politica, poiche le Comedianti, con le lusinghe guadagnano il cuore di tutti, e non danno mai il loro à nissuno, costumano d'aver sempre le parole diverse de' disegni; promettono molto e non ottengono nulla, e sopra tutto sanno ingannare con gratia*. Replicò il Feria, *Ecco il vero ritratto di Elisabetta*. (I,iv,366–367)[22]

[22]While vainly attempting to arrange the marriage between his sovereign, Philip II, and Queen Elizabeth, "si vede constretto il Feria di scrivere al Rè Filippo, *Sire Questa Regina è simile ad una Commediante di Teatro, che parla molto, e non risolve nulla*." (I,iv,355: "Feria was forced to write to King Philip: 'Sir, this queen is like a play-actress, who speaks a lot and decides nothing'"). Leti even reports that "in Francia s'era fatta una Farza

> the Grand Duque of Feria, who attended the coronation ceremony, after leaving London when he abandoned hope of her marrying his king, kept on saying everywhere, that no woman in a theatre (so writes Ollon) had ever succeeded in playing the actress so well as Elizabeth had done during her coronation. And while carrying on a conversation with the Grand Duke of Alba, who asked for his opinion about the success of this queen's government, he replied: 'her government will be a play, because her actions are more like a play-actress than a queen'. To which the Duke of Alba added: 'this makes me think that she will become a sly politician, because play-actresses win everybody's heart with their enticements, and never give anyone their own; they have a habit of speaking words that are always different from their designs; they promise much, and give nothing, and above all they are able to deceive gracefully'. Feria replied: 'Here is the true picture of Elizabeth'.

This was followed by the first session of the Parliament—once again, a magnificent ceremony that attracted severe criticism from the bishops of Winchester and Lincoln, both of them Roman Catholics promoted in the reign of Mary Tudor (and soon to be arrested and sent to the Tower on 3 April 1559):

> Li 25. di Gennaro segui la prima Sessione del Parlamento, la Regina ne fece l'apertura essendosi portata in persona, con la Corona e Scettro con una superba Cavalcata di Officiali, Cavalieri, e Dame, essendosi affaticato più giorni il gran Maresciallo ad ordinar questa Ceremonia, sforzandosi ogni uno à comparire più che pomposamente con l'ultimo eccesso della vanità, per corrispondere all'humore della Regina, cosi inclinata al lusso & alle pompe. Fù fatto l'honore alle Dame con nuovi e più superbi ornamenti che mai vestite d'entrare nella Sala della Raunanza, e vi restarono sedenti all'intorno della Regina fino che questa fece il suo discorso, e poi alzate si ritirarono, onde alcuni Vescovi (de' quali il numero non era più che di 14. morti o esenti gli altri) dissero ad alta voce, *Ecco la prima scena della Comedia, vediamo la seconda*: anzi *Giovanni Vhite* Vescovo di Vincester tornatosi dalla parte di *Tamaso Vatson*, Vescovo di Lincoln, che gli era a canto gli disse, *se la Regina farà una nuova Religione al securo che sarà tanto più ricca di vanità quanto più povera di modestia & à cui rispose*

sopra alla sua Coronattione, trattando Anna sua Madre da *Puttana*, e d'*Adultera*, e lei da *Comediante, e Bastarda*" (I,iv,366: "in France a farce had been staged about her coronation, treating her mother Anne like a whore, and an adulteress, and herself like a play-actress, and a bastard").

l'altro, Non può fare che una Religione di Teatro, per havere essa il garbo di Comediante. (I,iv,375–376)[23]

On 25 January the first session of the Parliament followed; it was opened by the queen, who went there in person, with her crown and sceptre, riding in a superb cavalcade of officials, knights, and ladies; the Grand Marshal had long worked hard to organize this ceremony, where everyone strove to show off more than ostentatiously with the latest excess of vanity, to comply with the queen's humour, who was so keen on luxury and pomp. The ladies, wearing the most novel and superb clothes than ever, had the honour of entering the meeting room, and sat there around the queen until she delivered her speech. Then, they stood up and left, so that some bishops (there being no more than fourteen of them, as the others were dead or absent) said in loud voice: 'this was the first scene of the play, let us see the second'; indeed, John White, Bishop of Winchester, turning towards Thomas Watson, Bishop of Lincoln, who sat next to him, told him: 'if the queen establishes a new religion, it will certainly be as rich in vanity as poor in modesty'; to which replied the other: 'she can only establish a theatrical religion, because she has the manners of a play-actress'.

Repeatedly, Leti provides examples "ch'Elisabetta, sapeva giocar la Farza dove bisognava, e la Comedia dove era nicessario" ("that Elizabeth could play a farce when needed, and a comedy when it was necessary". I,iv,368).[24] She is said to perform as in a play, to the best of her ability, especially when discussing the thorny issue of her marriage with her parliaments and when flirting with her suitors:

questa Regina, in qualità di Comediante politica, si compiaceva di far della sua Corte un Teatro per havere il piacere di givocar la Comedia delle sue Nozze à questo, & à quell'altro. (II,i,95)

this queen, as a political play-actress, was pleased to make a theatre of her court, in order to have the pleasure of playing the comedy of her marriage to one, or another.

[23]On the queen's religious attitude and beliefs, see Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Religion* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994) and Susan Doran, "Elizabeth I's Religion: The Evidence of Her Letters," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 51, no. 4 (2000): 699–720.

[24]Further comments on Elizabeth as a "Comediante" are to be found at I,iv,341, 365,367,371,409 and I,v,455.

For example, Leti relates the episode when a delegation of the members of Parliament went to court to implore her to get married. The biographer reports Elizabeth's reassuring words and kind attitude to the delegation, but concludes his narration as follows:

> Nel tempo che la Regina parlava a' Deputati si trovava vicino a Lei il Conte d'Arondel, rispetto alla sua Carica di gran Maresciallo, onde nel pronunciar quelle parole, che *venendomi il pensiere di maritarmi, saprò fare scelta d'un Marito ugualmente grato, & auvantangioso alla mia persona, & agli interessi de' miei Popoli*, guardò con piacevole e fisso sguardo l'Arondel, quasi che volesse significargli che Lui sarebbe stato quello, che haurebbe scelto, per adularlo maggiormente nelle sue concepite speranze, acciò facilitasse i suoi disegni, con l'obligare il Conte a non portarne ostacoli; & in fatti questo Cavaliere continuò a concepire con un tanto sguardo cosi alte speranze, che prese la risoluttione di dare il suo voto nelle cose della Religione, a tutto quello che vorrebbe la Regina. Che bella, destra, e sagace Comediante. (I,iv,383–384)
>
> While the queen was speaking to the deputation, the Earl of Arundel stood near her, owing to his position as Grand Marshal; therefore the queen, on saying 'should I think of getting married, I will choose a husband equally pleasing to and suitable for me, and in the interests of my peoples', cast a pleasing and intent glance at Arundel, as if she wanted to signify to him that he would be the chosen man; she did so to flatter him and raise his cherished hopes even more, so that the Earl made her designs easier and did not interfere with them; as a matter of fact, this knight kept on entertaining such high hope so fondly that he resolved to give his vote, as far as religion was concerned, to anything the queen wished. What a nice, clever, and astute play-actress!

In short, as a "perfetta Comediante nella politica" ("perfect actress in politics". I,iv,371), the queen was able to keep both her Parliament and her suitors at bay.[25] Still, her attitude came soon to be known, both

[25] More passages in Leti's biography expand on the queen's attitudes to her favourites and suitors, like the Earl of Arundel (I,iv,367–371; see also II,i,54 and II,v,545–547) or the Duke of Alençon (II,iv,92–93). Research on this includes Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony. The Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996); Susan Doran, "Why Did Elizabeth Not Marry?," in *Dissing Elizabeth. Negative Representations of Gloriana*, ed. Julia M. Walker (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998), 30–59; Ilona Bell, *Elizabeth I. The Voice of a Monarch* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 145–71.

abroad and at home: indeed, Elizabeth herself did hardly care about the "dicerie che andavano correndo nell'Europa che fosse una Comediante, già che non sapeva fare altro che rappresentar Comedie della sua Persona" ("the rumours going around Europe that she was a play-actress, since she could only stage plays about herself". II,iv,93); and as far as her countrymen were concerned:

> onde i più arditi, & i più temerari andavano dicendo *la nostra Regina sarebbe forse meglio riuscita ad esser Comediante che Regina*, però riusci benissimo ad esser *una vera Regina nel Governo, & una buona Comediante in apparenza*. (I,v,455)
>
> so that the boldest and most reckless among them used to say that 'our queen might have been more successful as a play-actress than as a queen', and yet she very well succeeded in being 'a true queen in government and a good play-actress to all appearances'.

Towards the end of his biography, Leti comments on what is probably Elizabeth's major flaw, her stinginess:

> Mà quel che pare più stravagante in Lei, che visse con un'animo basso, e vile in sostanza, e mai l'Inghilterra vide governo più spilorcio di questo, cosa che deve dar tanto più di maraviglia ad ogni uno, quanto che non vide mai non dico l'Inghilterra, mà l'Europa tutta, Regina più di questa fastosa, & inclinata alle magnificenze, e sopra tutto agli ornamenti degli abiti, & à farsi vedere in publico trà le pompe, le grandezze, e li superbi apparati; mà in sostanza tutto suaniva in fumo. (II,v,547)[26]
>
> But what is apparently most peculiar in her is that she lived a poor, and ultimately, mean life, and never did England see a more stingy government than hers; this will make everyone feel surprised all the more as not just England, but the whole of Europe, never ever saw a more ostentatious queen than this one, fond of great pomp and above all the ornaments of clothing, and keen on being seen in public with great pomp, grandeur, and superb display; but ultimately everything went up in smoke and vanished.

[26] In a chapter discussing Leti's ideas, Barcia 1983, 94, states that, in the early modern historian's opinion, four vices cause monarchs to be hated by their subjects: cruelty, avarice, innovations and lust.

This is not simply a personal defect, as being avaricious and mean does not become a monarch at all. And yet, Queen Elizabeth never succeeded in getting rid of that bad habit, and it became obvious to anyone after her death: many were shocked and outraged when her will was read, and her ingratitude to her servants and ladies-in-waiting became apparent (II,v,570–571). More importantly, however, Leti criticizes Elizabeth because she lived:

> quasi mezo secolo senza far cosa alcuna degna di memoria. Et in fatti non si trova in Inghilterra nè fabrica, nè fondatione di Chiese, di Capelle, d'Hospitali, di Colleggi, di Palazzi, nè di Giardini, nè di Palchi, nè di cosa alcuna che possa la Natione Inglese lodarsi, e dire, *questa opera è stata fatta dalla nostra Regina Elisabetta*. (II,v,548)

> almost half a century without making anything memorable. In fact you cannot find in England any building or foundation of churches, chapels, hospitals, colleges, hospitals, palaces, gardens, stages, or anything the English nation might boast of and say, this work was done by our queen Elizabeth.

In the following eleven pages (II,v,549–559), Gregorio Leti passes his own personal judgement on the queen, with general statements or pieces of information from his sources being replaced by comments in the first person, as will be shown in the following excerpts. Most importantly, though he is ready to concede that she was "una grande Heroina", she did not behave as a true Prince should, in his opinion:

> In quanto al mio particolare nel vedere il Ritratto della Regina Elisabetta, mi sembra di vedere quello d'una grande Heroina, poiche infatti chi ben considera la sua vita, troverà cose degne da far inarcare le ciglia, toccante la natura del suo Governo, con questa sola differenza, fù quasi nemica di quella gloriosissima Massima de' Prencipi, ristretta in quelle parole: *Non sibi soli vivere, sed & aliis proficere*, essendo vero che il Prencipe deve haver sempre nel cuore questa grandezza d'animo, e questo Reale oggetto nella mente di benificar tutti, che a far conoscere a' propri Suditi, & a' Prencipi stranieri, ch'egli non sostiene lo Scettro, per viver à se stesso, e perche cosi lo ricerca il suo interesse, ma per cercar mezi da beneficar tutti, e da render la propria Nattione sopra ogni altra più gloriosa (…) Di questo mancò Elisabetta, poiche parve che non havesse havuto mai altro scopo, nè altra massima che quella sola *di vivere, e lasciar vivere*, e di non curarsi che del presente, come se fosse stata nemica giurata della Posterità, non curandosi

> nè d'haver figlivoli, già che odiò il maritaggio, nè di far cosa che potesse rendere immortale il suo nome negli altri Secoli. (II,v,549,550)

> As far as I am concerned, when seeing the portrait of queen Elizabeth, I think I see that of a great heroine, because whoever considers her life well, will find things, concerning the nature of her government, that will make them raise their eyebrows; with this only difference, that she was almost hostile to the most glorious princely maxim that is summed up in these words: *Non sibi soli vivere, sed & aliis proficere*. Indeed, a Prince should have a heart full of magnanimity, and the royal objective to aid everybody, in order to let subjects and foreign sovereigns know that he does not hold his sceptre to live for himself and his own interest, but to find the way to benefit everybody, and make his nation more glorious than any other (…) Elizabeth failed to do this, because it seemed she had never had any other goal, nor any other maxim than to live, and let live, taking care of the present only, as if she had been a sworn enemy of posterity, neither thinking of having children, as she hated the idea of getting married, nor doing anything that could make her name immortal in times to come.

As to her religious beliefs:

> Per me non penetro quale fosse il zelo di questa Regina nella Religione, poiche delle cose occulte nel petto degli Huomini soura la Terra non ne tiene la chiave che quel Dio solo che stà ne' Cieli: ma per quello riguarda il visibile, e che si puo dagli Huomini penetrare per farne giudicio, certo è che molte furono le massime di stato temporali che obligarono indispensabilmente questa Prencipessa ad esser nemica del Papato, e cosi Zelante protettrice della Riforma della Chiesa in Inghilterra, senza di che haurebbe corso gran pericolo di perder la Corona (…) La verità è ad ogni modo che non fù troppo scropolosa nelle cose di Religione. (II,v,551,552)[27]

[27] To put it differently: "Sò che molti dicono, e molti vogliono che questa Regina non fù nemica di Roma per odio che havesse al Papato, nè cosi inclinata alla Riforma della Chiesa per zelo di Religione, mà per interesse di stato, essendo cosa impossibile d'esser Catolica e Regina, (…) di modo che amò meglio d'esser Regina, e Protestante, che Catolica & Elisabetta" (II,v,551: "I know that many people say, and many people think that this queen was not an enemy of Rome because she hated Papacy, nor so keen on the reform of the Church for religious zeal, but for interest of state, being impossibile for her to be Catholic and queen, (…) so that she liked it better to be a queen and Protestant, rather than Catholic and Elizabeth").

> I personally cannot fathom out how zealous this queen was in religion, because only God in heaven holds the key to the things hidden in the hearts of men on earth. But as regards what is visible and men can penetrate to pass judgement on, no doubt there were many temporal maxims of state that compellingly forced this princess to be an enemy of papacy, and such a painstaking defender of the reform of the church of England, without which she would have run the risk of losing the crown. (…) In any case, the truth is that she was not overzealous in religious matters.

Despite her shortcomings, Leti argues that Elizabeth should be praised because of her difficult position as a female ruler:

> Confesso che nella vita di questa Regina vi è un lustro di virtù degno di essere ammirato da una parte, ma certe nebbie d'imperfettioni molte oscure dall'altra. Una donna regnar 44. anni e più in un Regno pieno di spiriti (se pure è vero quello che d'altri si scrive, e parla) volubili, inconstanti, amici di novità, e portati alle seditioni, & alle rivolte? Una Donna entrare al Governo in uno stato tutto diviso ne' sentimenti della Religione, e quel ch'è più maraviglioso, che quella era la più debole, e che prevaleva il meno ch'essa professava. Una Donna che havea tanti nemici li dentro, tanti invidiosi di fuori con tanti Potentati all'intorno che volevano precipitarla; con ribellioni di dentro, e con tante minaccie di fuori; & in tanto à dispetto degli uni e degli altri, più con la destrezza, che con le Armate seppe rendersi il cuore de' suoi Popoli, il terrore de' suoi Nemici, e l'ammirattione di tutta l'Europa. (II,v,556–557)

> I admit that in the life of this queen, on the one side there is a shine of virtue worthy of being admired, but also some very dark fogs of defects on the other side. A woman reigning more than 44 years in a kingdom full of fickle, inconstant minds (if what is written and said about others is true), lovers of novelties, with a bent for sedition and rebellion? A woman coming into power in a nation divided in its religious sentiments, and what is more amazing is that the religion she professed was the weakest and prevailed least. A woman who had many enemies at home, and as many envious people abroad and rulers around, who wanted to overthrow her; with rebellions at home, and many threats from abroad; and in the meantime, in spite of all this, she was able – by means of her cleverness rather than her armies – to make herself the heart of her peoples, the terror of her enemies, and the admiration of all Europe.

Leti highlights here the contrast between Elizabeth's biological reality, with all its attendant risks and sociocultural attitudes towards women, and her role as a prince—a contrast that the queen was very well aware of, and that largely determined her attitude and behaviour.[28] As a consequence, although Leti often styles Queen Elizabeth as a "comediante politica" in his biography, when he has to pass his final judgement on her, such a negative label can be turned into a positive one:

> Fù Commediante è vero, mà a che gli servirono le Comedie? dico le sue Comedie politiche? di fare un trastullo de' Prencipi Stranieri à beneficio de' suoi interessi, & à tenere à suoi Popoli allettati, e delusi in un tempo istesso. Qual gloria potrà mai uguagliarsi alla sua, d'haver vinto, abbattuto, humiliato, e dirò quasi constretti à ricevere le sue leggi e Roma, e Spagna, e Francia, e l'Imperio senza sfodrar Spada, che nella più estrema necessità? (…) S'ingiuria Elisabetta d'essere stata Comediante; e quale maggior gloria, che di regnar con tanta gloria facendo Comedie? E qual politica da compararsi alla sua, di governar cosi gloriosamente quasi scherzando sul Trono? (II,v,557,558)
>
> She was a play-actress, it is true; but what was all her play-acting used for? I mean, her political play-acting? For making fun of foreign princes to the

[28] Most famously, this contrast was made explicit in Elizabeth's Tilbury speech on 8 August 1588: "I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king and of a king of England too" (Marcus, Mueller, and Rose, 2000, 326). In a way, it might be argued that striving to make her 'body natural' into the representation of Britain's 'body politic' was Queen Elizabeth's chief aim during her reign. Apart from such basic references as Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957) and Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), much research has focused on the ways Queen Elizabeth sublimated her femininity, adopted the symbols of divine virginity, turned her physical appearance into an icon, and learnt how to compromise with patriarchal conventions: see, among others, Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competion for Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995); A. N. McLaren, *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I: Queen and Commonwealth, 1558–1585* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Susan Doran, "Virginity, Divinity and Power: The Portraits of Elizabeth I," in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, edited by Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 171–99; Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth. Authority, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006); Carole Levin, *'The Heart and Stomach of a King': Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

> advantage of her own interests, and for keeping her peoples allured and deluded at the same time. Who will ever be as glorious as Elizabeth, who vanquished, beat, humbled and, I will add, nearly forced to abide by her laws both Rome and Spain, both France and the Empire, without drawing her sword except in the most extreme necessity? (…) Elizabeth is insultingly said to have been a play-actress; but is there greater glory than to reign so gloriously by being an actress? And can any politics be compared to hers, who ruled so gloriously almost jesting on the throne?

In short, Elizabeth became an "actress" to make up for her weakness, initially as the daughter of Anne Boleyn, later as a female ruler in a world where all the power was in the hands of men. Even her talents might be a danger to her, as Leti explains when introducing the book on Mary's reign:

> *Elisabetta*, che come si è detto haveva uno spirito suegliato, e che s'andò sempre crescendo superiore di molto all'età, nodriva nel petto vanità feminile a bastanza, & una virile ambitione nell'animo, ma come grande era lo spirito, si lasciava da questo sugerir la prudenza per coprir l'una e l'altra. (I,iii,217)

> Elizabeth – who, as has already been told, had a lively spirit that was always more mature than her age – harboured female vanity in her heart and a virile ambition in her mind; but as her spirit was great, it cautioned her to hide both.

Female vanity and virile ambition: two traits of her character that might be looked upon as dangerously suspicious by her elder sister, and that she did well to conceal, or at least keep under control. This is not the only place in the *Vita* where Leti praises Elizabeth for having (supposedly) virile qualities: the young queen "parlava distintamente con gratia, con gravità, e con eloquenza, accompagnando le sue attioni con la constanza d'un animo virile, ch'era quel dono appunto che mancava al Padre, che fù la volubilità istessa" ("spoke clearly, with grace, seriousness, and eloquence, her actions being matched by the constancy of a virile spirit, the very same gift that her father lacked, who was inconstancy itself". I,iv,340); and in the difficult circumstances of her reign, she often displayed "uno spirito superiore al virile" ("a more than virile spirit". II,v,558). And yet, everything considered, her female vanity was stronger than her virile ambition:

> Quei che conoscono il naturale del sesso l'iscusano, poiche la Donna pure che habbia di che mantenere il suo fasto, la sua vanità feminile, Gemme & abiti da mutar spesso; pure che sia amata, incensata, e corteggiata, poco gli importa che vi sia, ò che non vi sia Mondo dopo di se. (II,v,559)
>
> Those who are cognizant of the nature of the female sex excuse her, because a woman – provided she has enough to provide for her pomp, her female vanity, gems and dresses she can often change; provided she is loved, flattered, and courted – hardly cares if the world still exists, or does not, after her.

As a result, Queen Elizabeth should be both praised for what she achieved and blamed for what she did not want to pursue:

> questo prodiggio di buon Governo, questo distillatoio di massime riguardevoli nel ben reggere Popoli, non volle haver dopo di se, nè figlivoli, nè merita d'eternità, contentandosi solo di far cose quanto bastassero à ben vivere, & à ben governare, mà non già opere degne di rendere immortale il suo Nome. Perdè le più belle occasioni d'immortalarsi, nè tenne che à Lei di ricuperar Cales, sia nell'unirsi con gli Spagnoli contro i Francesi, ò vero con Henrico contro l'Arciduca, (…) Almeno doveva ordinare qualche Hospitale, qualche Colleggio, qualche Palazzo, qualche chiesa, qualche Appartamento. (II,v,559)
>
> This prodigy of good government, this distiller of remarkable maxims for ruling peoples well, wanted to leave after her neither children nor eternal merit, being simply content to do just enough to live well, and to rule well, but no works that could make her name immortal. She missed the best opportunities to gain everlasting fame, as it was up to her to conquer Calais back, either by forming an alliance with the Spanish against the French, or with Henry against the Archduke (…) At least, she might have ordered the construction of a hospital, a college, a palace, a church, or a house.

Concluding Remarks

It has long been stated that Gregorio Leti's "inexactitude as an historian is notorious" and Queen Elizabeth's *Vita* has been defined as "thoroughly unreliable".[29] This judgement may be contrasted with Leti's own idea of an historian's job:

[29]The former statement is found in Thomas Aldolphus Trollope, *The Papal Conclaves, as They Were and as They Are* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1876), 106, the latter in Conyers Read, *Bibliography of British History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 60.

> Dirò vna cosa che da' Politici, e prudenti non è stata mai disprezzata, cioè *Che non fà mai male quel che si publica, mà quel che si tiene nascosto*: & in fatti la verità dell'Historia è vna medicina, che sembra amara, e porta la salute; chi sà, quel che di Lui si dice, e si pretende, può hauere il suo tempo di portarui il dovuto rimedio: forse quel che nell'Historia pare veleno è Theriaca salutifera. Sò certo che se vi è qualche scintilla di magnanima buona intentione per far giustitia all'Historia, non temo che venghi fatto torto alla mia risoluttione di publicar le cose tali che sono, e di seruir solo di Pittore col rappresentare l'imagine delle virtù, e de' Vizi senza rendersi giudice.[30]
>
> I will say something that was never held in contempt by politicians and prudent people, that is, what is published never causes harm, but what is kept hidden does; indeed, the truth of history is a medicine, that tastes bitter but improves health; whoever knows what is told and claimed about him can have time to find a solution: perhaps what in history tastes like venom is health-giving theriac. I know for sure that, if there is some spark of magnanimous, good intention to do justice to history, I do not fear that I will be wronged in my resolve to publish things as they are, and to act as a painter who pictures the images of virtues and vices without presuming to pass judgement.

Leti may not have been equal to his task, but I propose that one relies on Isaac Disraeli's insightful criticism:

> He wrote with great facility, and hunger generally quickened his pen. He took every thing too lightly; yet his works are rather esteemed for many curious anecdotes of English history which are to be found in them, and which are not met with elsewhere. But his great aim was always to make a book, so that he swells his volumes with a thousand idle digressions; and, with a view of amusing his readers, intersperses many low and ridiculous stories; and gives to illustrious characters all the repartees and good things he collected from old novel writers.[31]

In other words, I argue that one should not expect from Leti what he was not able to do nor, possibly, interested in doing. He was neither

[30] Leti, 1684, v. 413.

[31] Isaac Disraeli, *Curiosities of Literature. Consisting of Anecdotes, Characters, Sketches, and Observations. Literary, Critical, and Historical*, 4th ed., vol. I (London: Murray, 1794), 142–3.

precise nor impartial as an historian (if unerring precision and disinterested impartiality can be expected of historians, not to mention early modern historians); he was vague and unreliable in the use of his sources; his historical writings were not framed in any well-considered political or cultural agenda. Yet, Gregorio Leti was able to provide his readers with what they wanted: funny anecdotes, juicy court gossip, stories of political intrigue and illicit love[32]—and, to be fair to him, some reliable analyses of human psychology and of the role of the passions in human behavior. In doing so, moreover, he stood out in his days as a man of letters who could earn his living by his pen rather than relying on a wealthy patron. Leti's contribution to the historical reconstruction of Queen Elizabeth's reign may be negligible, but his role in spreading her myth and popularizing her image in late modern Europe is not and cannot easily be dispensed with. The overlapping and often conflicting "layers of fact, myth and memory that constitute our understanding of Elizabeth"[33] conditioned Leti's biography as much as they determined the later and modern perception of the Tudor queen. All in all, Gregorio Leti's *Vita di Elisabetta* makes interesting reading as both a piece of evidence—part fact, part fiction—of her European afterlife, and a chapter in the history of Anglo-Italian relations.

[32] Barcia, 1983, 53 and 148.

[33] Mel Evans, *The Language of Queen Elizabeth I: A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Royal Style and Identity* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2013), 198.

CHAPTER 9

Multilingualism at the Tudor Court: Henry, Elizabeth and the Love Letter Genre

Iolanda Plescia

Since the beginning of what might be defined as a 'turn' in studies on Elizabeth I, which has not only shone a light on her learning and intellectual abilities, but has begun to consider her as a writer in her own right, countless critics have commented on the queen's exceptional linguistic skills. It is true that Elizabeth's incredible capacity for learning has been noted ever since her own time: accounts by her tutors, admiration from her contemporaries, have all given early contributions to the construction of her image as the 'learned queen'.[1] This essay proposes to reappraise her linguistic and rhetorical achievements by exploring the multilingual environment she was brought up in, momentarily shifting the perspective back to the reign of Henry VIII. It examines the small corpus of seventeen love letters written by Henry to Elizabeth's mother Anne Boleyn, which were stolen and brought to Rome after her death,

[1]See Linda Shenk, *Learned Queen. The Image of Elizabeth I in Politics and Poetry* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), in particular 1–20.

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in parallel to Elizabeth's own use of foreign language in her letters to Francis, Duke of Anjou: a comparable type of writing, belonging to the genre of the familiar letter, but which, in Elizabeth's case, goes well beyond the love note type. An analysis of the linguistic strategies employed in both sets of letters will illuminate the ways in which a special identity is constructed in the use of a foreign language to express sentiment and deploy tactics of persuasion.

Henry VIII's letters to Anne Boleyn were only published in England nearly two centuries after Anne's death, in 1714.[2] A descriptive and analytic approach will be adopted in discussing the letters and their cultural significance by highlighting a number of features that make these letters a particularly interesting testimony of the king's use of language in negotiating the complicated interplay of public and private spheres. Issues of the same nature would increasingly be brought to the fore during Elizabeth's reign as a woman on the throne, and those were issues that she managed through an astute process of self-fashioning through language. The selection here analyzed of Elizabeth's own 'love letters', written within the context of a fraught and difficult courtship, are yet another instance of her rhetorical proficiency.

Both Henry and Elizabeth Tudor, it is often emphasized, enjoyed a thorough and privileged humanist education, one that involved studying foreign languages, and both were well practised in French. Much has been made of this fact, and this essay largely supports the idea that the two royal writers were able to make use of their linguistic skill with specific communicative aims in mind, being well aware of the cultural prestige of the romance language. It is important, though, to also bear in mind that the idea of a stable, monolingual identity was not common in Europe before the eighteenth century at all, at least among the upper echelons of society. As Kurt Braunmüller and Gisella Ferraresi have indicated:

> Especially the upper classes and the court circles often used foreign languages in internal as well as in international communication. They quite often wrote private letters in non-native languages and sent their children

[2] My interest in Henry and Anne's 'linguistic' relationship has grown out of previous work done to produce the first complete Italian translation of the King's love letters to Boleyn: Iolanda Plescia, ed. and trans., *Lettere d'amore di Enrico VIII ad Anna Bolena*, con un saggio di Nadia Fusini (Roma: Nutrimenti, 2013).

> abroad in order to get acquainted not only with other countries, their cultures and businesses but also with foreign languages. *Being monolingual would have been the non-normal case in the upper layers of the European societies of those times.* (my emphasis)[3]

Multilingualism, then, was the norm at courts throughout Europe, and the Tudor court was no exception, since Henry VII had implemented a new educational system for royal children, one that would enable him to "emulate the cultural sophistication of his continental neighbors".[4] Braunmüller and Ferraresi further explain, however, that different levels of linguistic competence may be present in the same individual, doing away with the often deceptive notion of perfect bi- or multilingualism: "Receptive bilingualism, functionally restricted multilingualism or the command of a foreign linguistic variety as a *lingua franca* were absolutely normal".[5] Particularly interesting, in this sense, is the interplay between the issue of multiple language competence with the history of language development in the European context. The early modern period was a time when English was still finding its confidence as a national language, entertaining constant dialogue with the continent, and in which Latin and French especially—but the romance languages in general—were considered as inherently more prestigious, lexically rich, and expressive. The so-called 'inkhorn controversy', which saw purists defending the Anglo-Saxon roots of the language against the 'invasion' of French and other tongues, and against intellectuals who felt the need to enrich and ennoble English through foreign borrowings, raged precisely in Elizabeth's time. John Cheke and Roger Ascham, both of whom had served as Elizabeth's tutors, took a severe stand against the practice of importing foreign words into English: being multilingual was indeed a virtue, but one's own mother tongue was to be kept pure.[6] Multilinguistic competence and linguistic identity were thus

[3] Kurt Braunmüller and Gisella Ferraresi, eds., *Aspects of Multilingualism in European Language History* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2003), "Introduction," 1–14; 1–2.

[4] Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 7.

[5] Braunmüller and Ferraresi, 2003, 3.

[6] The *querelle* is known as the 'inkhorn controversy', because of the amount of ink it took to write long-winded foreign words, considered obscure and pedantic by a number of learned men. For an account of the controversy, see Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, *A History of the English Language*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), 203–24.

joined in a complex relationship: this essay does not attempt a thorough investigation of these aspects, since it concentrates on a limited sample of letters written in English and French, but such questions form a necessary background. It is to be hoped that more will be done in the future in this area of study, fruitfully connecting language change with language contact phenomena and the wider cultural transformations which characterized the early modern age.

Ma Maitresse et Amie: Henry's Love Letters to Anne Boleyn

The corpus of Henry's letters to Anne Boleyn consists of seventeen letters, written during their courtship between 1527 and 1528. The letters begin at a time when Anne had temporarily left the court, either to preserve her good name in the face of mounting gossip, or—as some have suggested—because of Henry's fear of the spreading of *sudor anglicus*, the highly contagious sweating sickness, which apparently had been caught by one of Anne's maids. Whatever the true reason, Henry and Anne were apart for long stretches of time during these two years, and the king's letters are manifestly much more than mere tokens of affection: they are consciously written to sustain the courtship at a time when Anne—clever woman as she was, a fitting mother to the even cleverer Elizabeth—was holding off.

A first, striking feature of the correspondence is that nine out of the seventeen letters were written in French. Twentieth-century editions tend to present English translations of these letters, as for example the edition reprinted in 1906, which had been made popular by J. O. Halliwell Phillips, a historian, antiquarian and biographer (one of the first to write a life of Shakespeare): his edition is the one most readily available to a wide public, as it is included in the Gutenberg project website.[7] A second significant fact to consider is that none of Anne Boleyn's replies have been recovered: while she carefully preserved the king's words, it appears that the sovereign did not take the same care with her replies.

[7] *Love Letters of Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn* (Boston and London: John W. Luce & Company, 1906), available at http://www.gutenberg.org/files/32155/32155-h/32155-h.htm (last accessed September 30, 2017); based on J. O. Halliwell Phillips, ed., *Letters of the Kings of England, in Two Volumes*, vol. I (London: Henry Colburn, 1848), available at https://archive.org/details/letterskingseng03hallgoog (last accessed September 30, 2017).

It is therefore impossible to hear her voice in what is obviously an ongoing conversation, as emerges from a number of thematic repetitions that weave the letters together. These are not only love notes whose pragmatic and communicative function is to establish contact with the addressee; they are, in most cases, requests and entreaties, to which answers must have been provided in order for the dialogue to continue at a distance.

The king's missives disappeared after Anne's death, and much has been made of a supposed international spy-story in which the letters were stolen and secretly brought to Rome.[8] However they may have got there, the fact remains that they are to this day preserved in the Vatican Library, in the Cod. Vat. Lat. 3731A, accessible only to scholars: on the contrary, at the time when the letters were first brought to the attention of the English public, they were freely "shewn to all Strangers", as stated in the anonymous Preface of the first English edition of 1714. It was, in fact, only in that year that the letters were published in England, after the influential historian and bishop of the Church of England Gilbert Burnet took a trip to Rome, saw the letters and pronounced them to be authentic, and commissioned a copy to be made by a certain Dr. Fall. Upon his return, the bishop supposedly—so the 1714 Preface states—entrusted a "friend" with the task of editing the transcribed letters and publishing them in a little book, since they could not be considered fit to be bound with Burnet's monumental, and very serious, *History of the Reformation of the Church of England*. On the one hand, it is easy to understand why the bishop would not want to be directly associated with the publication of letters that contained the odd 'indecent', sexually explicit passage. On the other, it is hard not to surrender to the temptation of surmising that the anonymous friend and author of the Preface might have been the bishop himself, eager to explain the indecencies away and underline, in an act of textual re-appropriation, that the letters were far from showing that the king had acted out of mere lust, as the Papists would have it: they were actually to be read as a testimony to powerful, noble and sincere sentiments, and to the king's wish to make an honest woman of Anne by marrying her.[9]

[8] For some hypotheses on the arrival of the letters in Rome, see the "Introduction" in Jasper Ridley, ed., *The Love Letters of Henry VIII* (London: Cassell, 1998), 9–18.

[9] Preface to *Love Letters from King Henry the VIIIth to Anne Boleyn: Some in French, and Some in English. To Which are Added, Translations of Those Written in French. With an Appendix, Containing Two Letters from Anne Boleyn, to Cardinal Wolsey; With Her*

After that first edition of 1714, the letters were republished in England several times, for example in the 1745 *Harleian Miscellany*, whose general editors were William Oldys and Dr. Johnson. A new, more faithful transcription was produced and published in *The Pamphleteer*, in 1821, edited by William Gunn, the well-known discoverer of the manuscript of the *Historia Brittonum*; we then find Halliwell-Phillips' modernized-spelling edition, with English translations of the French letters, which made the letters popular in England; in the twentieth century, English editions were produced in 1949, by Henry Savage, and in 1988, by Jasper Ridley.[10]

The text quoted here is the first version that circulated in England—that is, the 1714 text—which does contain mistakes and misunderstandings, but is in any case the closest printed historical document to the actual time of production. As such, we are dealing, as is often the case, with the mediation of the English transcriber's interpretation of Henry's words, along with the king's language itself. This printed text has been compared with every printed version that was available for consultation—in particular, the 1821 *Pamphleteer* edition. Apart from the usual instances of possible misconstructions, there are also short passages in the letters that none of the transcribers have been able to decipher to date, including what appears to be a secret code that closes letter VIII, and for which some different explanations have been put forth, most of which are unsatisfactory.[11]

The letters as they have been received and published in the first English edition are not in chronological order (though the anonymous editor seems to think so, or at least does not take any pains to establish any different order). The order would certainly be debatable, but those who have worked to reconstruct a chronological progression more recently, especially Savage and Ridley, have managed to establish

Last to Henry the VIIIth. 1714. Reproduction from British Library, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, ECCO Print editions.

[10] *The Harleian Miscellany: Or, a Collection of Scarce, Curious, and Entertaining Pamphlets and Tracts, as Well in Manuscript as in Print*, ed. William Oldys, vol. III (London: T. Osborne, 1745); *The Love Letters of Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn*, in *The Pamphleteer*, ed. William Gunn, vol. 21–23 (London: A.J. Valpy, 1822–1823); Henry Savage, ed., *The Love Letters of Henry VIII* (London: Allan Wingate, 1949); Ridley 1998, cit. Only English-language editions have been considered here. A German edition of the letters, containing a faithful transcription, was produced by Theo Stemmler, ed., *Die Liebesbriefe Heinrichs VIII an Anna Boleyn* (Zurich: Belser, 1988).

[11] See in particular Savage, 1949, 39.

a plausible one. As mentioned, the letters were written between 1527 and 1528. The first group of five letters was written in French between the months of June and July 1527 (IV, VIII, X, I, II, with V being written in January 1528); these letters tend to develop the theme of absence, dwelling on the king's suffering and pain at not being able to see Anne. All the other letters were written in English, with three exceptions, starting in February 1528 (XIV, IX, III, XII, XIII). The notes now become more practical, as the liaison is no longer a secret at court, but the language is still allusive rather than explicit when dealing with the details of the king's divorce process, which Henry had at this point initiated by beginning a mediation with Rome. These same letters refer to the raging sweating sickness and to the king's preoccupation with Anne's good heath (as well as his own). Between July and August of 1528, a group of four letters (XI, XV, XVI, VII) increasingly refer to a probable reunion of the two lovers, and to the king's preparations for the day Anne will return to court, after permission for a divorce has been given (at this point in time the king is still convinced that the pope will grant his request). A letter written in September (VI) triumphantly announces that the Papal Legate, Cardinal Campeggio, has arrived in Paris and is on his way to London; and finally, a letter written in October 1528 (XVII), the last one in the collection, reassures Anne of Campeggio's good intentions in procuring a swift permission for divorce (of course, we know that Henry's impression here was far from the truth, and that Rome would not prove to be so accommodating).

The letters, which belong to the familiar letter genre, are especially interesting in that they display a range of communicative strategies employed by the king to reach the various aims of his exchange with the object of his affections: to entreat and hold Anne's attention; to reassure and convey information; but principally, to seduce and persuade.[12] The first aspect that needs to be illuminated is Henry's choice

[12]For an informative survey of recent scholarship on the letter genre in the period, in a historical linguistic perspective, see Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti, "Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern Culture: An Introduction," *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 3 (2014): 17–35; the classic linguistic study in the field is by Susan M. Fitzmaurice, *The Familiar Letter in Early Modern English: A Pragmatic Approach* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002); see also James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). On Henry VIII's age in particular, see Seth Lerer, *Courtly Letters in the Age of Henry VIII: Literary Culture and the Arts of Deceit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). On some linguistic features of the letters

of French for the beginning of the exchange: in this very decision, we can observe the first important intersection of private and public spheres in these specimens of personal writing. One possibility is that the king may have wanted to preserve the letters from prying eyes, for though the well-bred knew French, certainly not everyone at court had mastered the language. Once the relationship was no longer a secret, Henry in effect began to use English consistently, with occasional lapses back into French. While the context of production supports this interpretation of his choice of French, the selection may be better understood in a historical perspective, since French was still a language of high literary prestige in England during the Tudor age, together with Latin and Italian. In the delicate, initial stages of the courtship, Henry may have chosen French not only because of the pleasure afforded by a semi-secret correspondence, but also to underline his own and Anne's common cultural status and cultivated upbringing. Henry, who had wished to fashion himself as a true Renaissance Prince, had become fluent in Latin thanks to his studies under John Skelton; he was able to read Erasmus' *Prosopopoeia Britanniae*, which he had received from him as a gift, at the age of eight; and he had studied French with Giles d'Ewes, achieving fluency in that language also at a tender age. Anne herself had spent time in France, and had received a thorough education. Writing in French would seem to be a way of pointing to a common cultural framework that served to transcend the social divide between the two. It is true that Anne was much less of a commoner than she has been made out to be: her father was rich and had a well laid out plan for getting his family into the upper circles of society. Still, Henry aspired to make Anne his queen, and she was not a member of the nobility. Language and identity are very much tied up together in this first group of letters, and the prestige that the French tongue enjoyed in the public linguistic domain of the Tudor upper class is here embodied in a private, secret and enjoyable means of refined communication.[13]

A second reason for Henry's use of French—one rooted in literary history—was, predictably, that French was the language of courtly love.

themselves, see Terttu Nevalainen, "What's in a royal letter? Linguistic variation in the correspondence of King Henry VIII", in Katja Lenz, Ruth Möhlig, eds., *Of dyuersitie & chaunge of langage: Essays Presented to Manfred Görlach on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Heidelberg: C. Winter Universitätsverlag, 2002), 169–79.

[13] On Henry VIII's education, see also Allinson, 2012, 7–9.

Its literary tradition offered the king a vocabulary that was particularly well-suited to the courtship theme of absence and desire: Anne, who was far away from the court at the time of the correspondence, is to all intents and purposes physically unattainable. The only communion, and communication, that can be established is of an immaterial nature, although Henry fantasizes about Anne's body as well, as we shall see. One clear indication of his reference to the courtly love motif is the king's use of the term of address *Ma Maitresse* as the opening formula of many letters, and the expected pairing with which he closes the letters, referring to himself as *Votre Serviteur*. The letters of this first group written in French are marked by the theme of Henry's *ennui de l'absence*, and contain acts of imploration and request.

What we will focus on are examples of a number of characteristics that are often surveyed in pragmatics-informed stylistic studies, and are useful here in qualifying the language of affection displayed by the king. These are, in particular, his use of personal pronouns, terms of address, opening and closing formulae, and metaphors used to convey foregrounded themes and motifs.[14]

An interesting effect with regard to the king's use of personal pronouns, which is presented right from the chronological start of our group of letters—that is, in letter I—is due to an apparent confusion, on Henry's part, as to the appropriate first person pronoun to use in referring to himself. Henry's use of *I* and royal *we* is here erratic and betrays an intermingling of the public and private persona of the king. The letter is quoted here almost in its entirety so as to allow the reader to follow the alternation, and also as an example of the king's French style:

> Ma Maitresse et Amie, **moy & mon coeur** s'en remettent en vos mains vous suppliant les avoir pour recommander a votre bonne grace, & que par absence votre affection ne leur soit diminuè. Car pur augmenter leur peine ce seroit grande pitiè, car l'absence leur fait assez, et plus que jamais **je** n'eûsse pensè, en **nous** faisant rementevoir un point d'Astronomie

[14]This is a necessarily arbitrary and qualitative selection of features, made for the purposes of a brief analysis. While a methodological overview cannot be included here, a particularly useful and recent reflection on the analysis of historical discourse in a stylistic perspective may be found in Beatrix Busse, "(New) Historical Stylistics," in Michael Burke, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Stylistics* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2014), 101–17.

> qui est tel. Tant plus loing que les [jours] sont, tant plus eloignè est le soleil, et non obstant plus fervent, aussi fait il de **notre** amour, par absence nous sommes eloignez, & neânmoins il garde sa ferveur au moins **de notre coste**. Ayant en espoir la pareille du votre, vous asseurant que de **ma** part l'ennuye de l'absence deja m'est trop grande. Et quand **je** pense a l'augmentation diceluy que par force faut que **je** soufre, il m'est presque intollerable, s'il n'estoit la ferme Espoir que **j**'aye de votre indissoluble affection vers **moy** (…).[15]
>
> (My mistress and friend, **I and my heart** put ourselves in your hands, begging you to recommend us to your good grace and not to let absence lessen your affection, for it were great pity to increase their pain, seeing that absence does that sufficiently and more than **I** could ever have thought possible; reminding **us** of a point in astronomy, which is that the longer the days are the farther off is the sun and yet the hotter; so it is with **our** love, for although by absence we are parted it nevertheless keeps its fervency, at least in [**our**] **case** and hoping the like of yours; assuring you that for **myself** the pang of absence is already too great, and when **I** think of the increase of what **I** must needs suffer it would be well nigh intolerable but for **my** firm hope of your unchangeable affection [**for me**]").[16]

In this letter, the monarch wavers between his identity as Henry the lover, expressed through the singular pronouns (moi/je), and that of Henry the king, who uses royal we: in particular, as may be seen in the third line, the lover is suffering the pain of absence, while it is the learned king who remembers his astronomy ("reminding *us*"). It cannot be by chance that Henry here also chooses the figure of the Sun—a clear parallel to the sovereign—to establish an analogy between the lovers' feelings and the scientific fact that the longer the days, the further the Sun is from Earth, yet those very days are the hottest. While "notre amour" may debatably be attributed to both Henry and Anne, the Renaissance prince soon moves on to a royal *we* ("au moins de nostre coste", "at least

[15] *Love Letters from King Henry the VIIIth to Anne Boleyn*, 1714, 1–2. The word "jours" has been inserted here, and placed in square brackets, to substitute the mistaken word "Mores", which was present in the 1714 edition and subsequently rectified by a number of editors.

[16] The translation quoted is Savage's, to which I have added the two words in square brackets, in order to reflect the king's pronoun use in the original French. Interestingly, Savage translates "de notre coste" as "in my case", referring the original royal *we* to the king's more intimate persona as an individual in love. Savage, 1949, 28.

in our case"), before slipping back into the more private and intimate 'I' identity, which had opened the letter. This sort of uncertainty between *I* and *we* is found in a few more instances in the French letters; it is sometimes harder in the English writings to distinguish a truly royal *we* from a more generally inclusive pronoun referring to Henry's entire household. This instance in English, however, seems to be a good equivalent of the type of mixed subject construction observed in the French example above, confirming a confusion of roles in the king's persona that is possibly also due to haste in writing:

> **I** send you this Bearer, because **I** think you long to hear Tydings from **us**, as **we** do in likewise from you. (Letter XIII)[17]

As to the recurring features of the epistolary style, something may be said of the terms of address used in opening and closing formulae. The king does not always start his letters with a term of address: two letters in French begin by directly addressing "Ma maitresse", but many of the letters begin in *medias res*, as if continuing an ongoing conversation. Interestingly, a number of the English letters begin with "Darling", "To my Darling", or "Myne own sweetheart", terms of endearment that are rather more concrete than the codified and stylized *Mistress/Servant* relationship that the use of French evidently inspires. At times, the address is embedded in the opening sentence—as in "The Cause of my Writeing at this time (good Sweatheart) is wonly to understand of your good Health (…)" (IX), or "Toute fois ma Mestres qu'l ne vous pleu de souvenir de la Promesse que vous me fites (…)" (X)[18]—again suggesting haste, or even the urgency of desire, and also possibly a preference for a familiar, conversational tone.

The impression of hurriedness generally conveyed by these kinds of opening lines, which lack a proper salutation, is confirmed by Henry's constant preoccupation with explaining that he has little time to write; the conclusions of the letters are also often rushed, and the king's politeness strategies in excusing himself range from declaring his fear of being

[17] *Love Letters from King Henry the VIIIth to Anne Boleyn*, 1714, 27. All quotations from the originals refer to this edition and are referenced by means of the letter number throughout the text.

[18] "Although, my mistress, it has not pleased you to remember the promise you made me (…)" (Savage, 1949, 40).

a bore ("Non plus de peur de vous enuyer", IV) to "la[c]ke of time" (VII) or "lack of space" ("faute d'espace", X), culminating in that most classic of excuses, the headache: "which caused me now to write the shorter Letter to you at this tyme, because of some Payne in my Head" (XVI).

In effect, the king is thought to have hated writing, even dreading signing his name on official documents.[19] The closing evocations of the act of writing, which are almost always expressed in the third person, with the king referring to himself as Anne's "Secretary", or by associating the word "servant" with the hand that writes, especially in the French letters, are to a degree conventional; but they may also refer to a sort of 'sacrifice' on the King's part as he takes the time to personally write his lady:

> c'est de la main de Votre serviteur et amy (…) (I)
> Escrit de la main de tout votre serviteur (II)
> Escrite de la main du Secretere, qui (…) est Votre loyal et plus assure serviteur (V)[20]

The English closings also tend to refer to the 'hand' (both in the physical sense and as a reference to the act of writing itself), and often defuse the question of sovereignty, implicit in the signature "Henry Rex", by somewhat downplaying Henry's status as a monarch addressing a subject, in favour of the conventional adieu of a suitor to his lady. The third instance in the following group of examples is especially noteworthy, as a sort of dissociation of the self emerges, again underscored by the use of two different pronouns—*him/I*—which seem to hint at a personal, intimate self (*I*) who wishes that *him*, i.e. the king, so encumbered by

[19] See the fascinating chapter dedicated to the Henry–Anne correspondence by Seth Lerer in *Courtly Letters in the Age of Henry VIII*, cit., 87–121, 87 in particular. While also relating that the King found writing tedious on some occasions, Rayne Allinson has partially mitigated this image of the King, on the basis of the records of writing materials and pairs of spectacles found in Henry VIII's account books, which to her "reveal a delight in writing" (Allinson, 2012, 8). The first chapter of her book, "Tedius and Paynefull: Letter Writing in English Royal Diplomacy," provides an essential background account of royal letter writing before Elizabeth I, including details on the upbringing of her brother Edward and sister Mary (1–16).

[20] "This by the hand of Your loyal servant and friend (…)" (Savage, 1949, 28); "Written by the hand of your entire servant" (30); "Written by the hand of the secretary, who (…) is Your loyal and most assured servant" (36).

royal duty that he almost becomes an absent third person, might finally be joined officially with his loved one:

> Writne with the Hand of **him** which desyreth as much to be yours as you do to have him (XIV)
> Writne with the Hand of **his** that longeth to be Yours (XV)
> writeing with the Hand of **him** which **I** would were yours (VII).

These closings also hint at the king's persuasive intent in emphasizing his desire for Anne: at this point in time, he is still effectively wooing her, and has not yet, it seems, 'enjoyed her', to put it in Renaissance terms. In a few key passages, Henry explicitly states his sexual desire. In such cases, he clearly states his purpose, and these are the instances mentioned above that probably bothered Bishop Burnet. However, the king takes great care to hedge these requests by presenting them as wishes, or possibilities that may or not be granted (by Anne, or by fate, or by God), either through his selection of lexical item (i.e. 'wish'), or through the use of conditional/hypothetical constructions expressed in varying degrees of linguistic modality, as in these examples:

> je **vous souhaitte** entre mes bras (III)[21]
> **wishing** my self (specially an Evening) in my Sweet-hearts Armes whose Pritty Duckys[22] I **trust** shortly to kysse. (XVI)
> with a **Wishe I wolde we were** togyder one Evening (IX)

At times, such a wish is quite daringly mixed up with a prayer to God and a metaphor relating to the pleasures of the flesh (as when Henry sends Anne a gift of deer meat, which represents his own body):

> seeing my Darling is absent, I can no less do, than to send her some Fleshe representing my Name, which is Harts fleshe for Henry, prognosticating, that hereafter God willing you **must** enjoy some of mine, which **if he pleased I wolde were now**. (IX)

Such explicit references to a possible sexual encounter are almost always strategically placed at the end of the letters, thus pragmatically functioning as requests or pleas.

[21] "I wish you between my arms" (Savage, 1949, 32).

[22] Beautiful breasts.

Henry was not a poet: but it was important to him to cast himself as a learned Prince and refer to a literary tradition in penning these letters.[23] Although he tends not to be particularly creative with language, he enjoys using tried and true devices, puns and metaphors inherited from courtly poetry: this he does in English as well, as his play on the *hart/heart* homophony shows, within the well-worn 'pursuit of love as hunting' metaphor used in courtly poetry and beyond.[24] The letters confirm that public persona and intimate sense of self are never wholly separated even in the context of very personal and private communication; and the writer of these letters emerges as a very different Henry from the head-chopping despot handed down by popular history. Although he never forgets he is king, as a writer he wavers, is uncertain of his identity, tends to defuse his desire in third person forms or by resorting to linguistic modality that underlines weakness and powerlessness in the face of love; his is a very persuasive "textualization of emotion".[25] The French language in particular allows him to establish a common ground with Anne, rooted in a shared education, which crucially provides the levelled playing field necessary for a king to court, rather than simply seduce, one of his subjects.

Monsieur: Elizabeth I's Love Letters to the Duke of Anjou

As Rayne Allinson has pointed out:

> Medieval rulers saw writing as an arduous and unnecessary form of manual labor best delegated to secretaries. Although the "word of the king" carried legal authority and numinous power, the "hand of the king" was not needed to apply ink to paper in order for a document to be "authored" by him.[26]

[23] On the king as a writer see Raymond G. Siemens, "Henry VIII as a Writer and Lyricist," *The Musical Quarterly* 92, no. 1/2 (2009): 136–66.

[24] Perhaps the best known early modern example is in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*: "*Curio*. Will you go hunt, my Lord? / *Duke*. What, Curio? *Curio*. The hart. / *Duke*. Why, so I do, the noblest that I have" (I.i.16–18).

[25] See Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500–1700* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), and the particularly stimulating chapter "Affecting Correspondences: Body, Behaviour, and the Textualization of Emotion" (109–42).

[26] Allinson, 2012, 1.

While Henry VIII—not strictly a medieval ruler—did not enjoy writing either, but put up with it as a suitor, years later, his daughter Elizabeth would become one of the most prolific writers of her age, and would face the challenges of a troubled courtship as well, one that would end unhappily. For her too, letters were a necessary means to keep in contact and display affection, but in the case of the queen it can be said that this was not the primary communicative function of the missives: her messages to François Hercule Alençon, later duke of Anjou, performed an important political role, entirely absent from Henry's letters to Anne Boleyn.

The queen's letters taken into consideration here are also written in French. On the one hand, it is undeniable that the choice of language is less marked in this case, both because of the addressee's nationality, and because Elizabeth's use of French was, in Allinson's words, "not so much a gesture of deference to the French monarchs as a matter of established protocol, arising from the close cultural link established between France and England since the Norman conquest".[27] Yet we might add that if Henry's use of French was linked in some way to a need for secrecy,[28] Elizabeth writes her letters to d'Anjou in a very public vein—these letters are as much declarations of sentiment as policy-making and diplomatic messages. In this context, the queen's ability to speak and produce good writing in foreign language, addressing her interlocutors in their own native tongue, contributed to her strategy of self-representation as a woman of learning who could conduct her own negotiations in the first person. As Guillaume Coatalen has shown, as many as 500 items written by Elizabeth in French can be traced, and this language was the foreign tongue that the queen used most often in her letter-writing. She had been taught French at a very young age, and Coatalen judges her first compositions to be "impressive": French became second nature to her, so much so that she "developed her own style" in it.[29] Commentators have thus tended to assume that her personal, intimate voice can be heard even when she uses this language, and draw no drastic distinctions

[27] Allinson, 2012, 27.

[28] Allinson, 2012, 8.

[29] Guillaume Coatalen, "'Ma plume vous pourra exprimer': Elizabeth's French Correspondence," in *Representations of Elizabeth I in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Alessandra Petrina and Laura Tosi (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2011), 83–104.

between her communication in French as opposed to her mother tongue. As this second part of the essay attempts to show, this may well be true, but the voice we hear in Elizabeth's letters to d'Anjou is a public one, with strong political connotations and consequences.

The edited letters used here are the nine ones included in Marcus, Mueller and Rose's *Collected Works*, which were composed between February 1579 and September 1583 (and whose original versions are in Mueller and Marcus' *Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*), and the six holograph letters edited very recently by Guillaume Coatalen and Jonathan Gibson, and included in *Elizabeth I's Foreign Correspondence* (2014), which were written between July 1579 and February or early March of 1582.[30]

The selected group, then, comprises a total of fifteen letters, which is a convenient number since it is comparable to the body of Henry VIII's surviving letters to Anne, although the first notable difference is that Elizabeth's letters, which deal with political matters as much as private ones (with a decided preference for the first kind of topic), tend to be significantly longer than the king's, so that a quantitative investigation—which this essay does not attempt—would have to take into account the difference in word count. Rather, once again we will be looking at some foregrounded linguistic features, to gauge whether the queen's use of French can be said to perform a similar function to the one observed in her father's love letters, but especially to comment upon issues of personal involvement and to assess the degree to which these letters may be ascribed to the same genre.

The material circumstances in which the letters were composed are described in detail by both groups of editors, but a few necessary facts

[30]While all of the contents of the mentioned letters were surveyed, and are described in the following paragraphs, not all of them are explicitly referred to in this analysis, which is limited to a few significant passages. For the edited transcriptions and translations, see Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, eds., *Elizabeth I. Collected Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 232–60; Janel Mueller and Leah S. Marcus, *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 53–5; 151–62; 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. Carlo M. Bajetta, Guillaume Coatalen, and Jonathan Gibson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 27–62. On the materiality and significance of the letters, see in the same collection Jonathan Gibson, "'Dedans la plie de mon fidelle affection': Familiarity and Materiality in Elizabeth's Letter to Anjou," 63–89.

must be summarized here in order to help place Elizabeth's act of writing within the context of the third, and final, official courtship she was involved in. As Carole Levin has observed, "while Elizabeth claimed virginity as her ideal state, and eventually resisted all demands on her to marry, she also loved proposals and courtship".[31] Levin goes on to explain that the courtships were "politically valuable" to Elizabeth, as they provided avenues for opening up diplomatic discussions and relationships, but that they most probably also fulfilled a deep emotional need: in the years in which François courted her, from the late 1570s to the early 1580s, Elizabeth was also a middle aged woman, who might have had a sense that this would be her last real chance at marriage.[32] If this was indeed the case, a certain sense of urgency in the letters examined could be explained by the fact that the queen may have felt the need to 'woo her wooer', to hold his attention and keep herself in his thoughts.

The group of letters edited by Marcus, Mueller, and Rose in the *Collected Works* are in fact mainly concerned with reminding François of his promises. Firstly, to come and see Elizabeth in England (letter 43);[33] she had made it clear that she would not marry anyone whom she had not met in person, and the duke had written to her that he would leave his arduous campaign in the Netherlands—where he was dealing with an exceptionally disorderly army—in order to return to France and thence travel to England to pay his respects in person. Letters written a few months after the duke's first visit to the queen mostly take up the theme of the marriage negotiations, offer advice about François' relationship with Henry of Navarre (later Henri IV of France), and plead in favour of Simier, the French envoy that the duke had sent to Elizabeth's court and who had evidently displeased him for some reason (letters 45, 46, 47). While these messages do contain heartfelt declarations that may be ascribed to the love letter genre, there is a great preoccupation on Elizabeth's part to show that she must take care of the opinion of her people, and act in no way that might diminish her honour: nor will she

[31] Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 39.

[32] Ibid.

[33] The numbering used in the *Collected Works* has been adopted throughout the text, just as numbers 1–6 are used in reference to the letters edited by Coatalen and Gibson. All the English translations quoted are the ones provided by the editors of the two groups of letters.

let the French side of the negotiation ever forget that she is a queen, and that ambassadors, envoys and commissioners must be chosen among the highest and most accomplished social ranks, so as not to compromise her prestige. Letters written between March 1581 and May 1582 (49, 50, 51, 52) display an interesting ambivalence between the queen's desire to show affection, keeping the courtship alive, and a somewhat frostier tone she adopts when hinting at her disapproval of the duke's decision to accept the crown of the Netherlands (which had been offered to her previously and which she had refused, balking at the idea of usurping a throne). The duke would return to see her one last time in October 1581—"to ask Elizabeth for assistance in his war in the Low Countries and to try once more to convince Elizabeth to agree to the marriage".[34] The last letter (55) of this group is dated September 10, 1583, and here affectionate opening and closing formulae frame what is essentially a letter of reproach caused by Francois' insistence to know whether, and to what degree, Elizabeth will assist him "for the preservation of the Netherlands". The queen's fiery defence of her need to put her own people first signals the ongoing breakdown in the marriage negotiations. As is well known, the war in the Low Countries was a "fiasco",[35] and the duke died a few months later, in June 1584.

The second grouping of letters, collected and edited by Coatalen and Gibson, consists of six holograph letters "that appear as transcriptions in the printed calendars of the Cecil Papers at Hatfield House (Salisbury)".[36] The editors also point out that the six letters did not reach Anjou in their current form: while this is an important piece of information on the historical front, it does not detract from the stylistic value of the letters, which have been composed with clear communicative intentions. Again, interested readers should refer to the editors' extremely detailed—and to an extent intriguing—account of the material circumstances of production and of the historical backdrop to the letters, while a brief summary of their contents will be provided here for the sake of narrative coherence. Letter 1 [July 1579] delves into Elizabeth's doubts as to the convenience of the duke's plan to visit her, and

[34] Levin, 2013, 63.

[35] Levin, 2013, 64.

[36] Coatalen and Gibson, 2014, 28. The numbering and dates of the letters are reproduced here as given in Coatalen and Gibson's chapter (27–62).

mentions a passport she has granted for his safe conduct into the island; it is particularly affectionate in its description of the queen's sentiments. The main theme of the second letter [February 1579–1580?] is the feeling of pressure and time constraint that the queen experiences as a result of the complex marriage negotiations, which accounts for a certain apologetic tone and her hint at a possible continuation of a close friendship if the final aim is not achieved; as Anjou became increasingly involved in the affairs in the Netherlands, the queen drafts letters 3 and 4 [February–April? 1580–1581] in which assurances of her love are followed by references to the political situation he is enmeshed in; the difficulties of the prospected match are further expanded upon with special reference to the queen's problem of conscience with regard to the religious confusion that the couple's marriage might produce. Letter 5 [February 1581–1582] clearly manifests the queen's mounting irritation at what she sees as the duke's refusal to take her advice on the matter of the Netherlands, while the sixth and final letter [late February or March 1582?] is more cryptic, although the editors suggest that it belongs to the same period, and that it also "reflects Elizabeth's anger and hurt at Anjou's taking on the sovereignty" that had been offered to him.[37]

Looking at the language and organization of the letters more closely in a few short samples, which are mainly related to the opening paragraphs, we can observe how Elizabeth's main communicative strategy is to form and sustain a bond with the duke while at the same time "holding off": it is the traditional role of the woman in the love and power negotiation, except in this case the woman is a queen who is holding all the cards. It will be noticed that Elizabeth uses respectful terms of address and endearment in her salutations, which can be considered fairly conventional for a female writer addressing a suitor—"Monsieur", "Mon trescher" (*très cher*). There does not seem to be any confusion here among royal and private roles, but rather a firm use of royal *we* that also points to the common state of princes ("we who are princes, setting ourselves in high places", 47), which the queen shares—but only in part—with her interlocutor: a theme (that of shared royal identity) to which Elizabeth returns in a number of her writings and speeches.[38] In the

[37] Coatalen and Gibson 2014, 55.

[38] For an in depth discussion of *royal we* in relation to Elizabeth, see Mel Evans, *The Language of Queen Elizabeth I: A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Royal Style and Identity* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

following passage in which Elizabeth explains the delays in the marriage negotiations as a way to respect the will of the people, Elizabeth is certainly referring to herself:

> Vous n'ignorez mon trescher que les plus grands retardements consistoyent a faire que **nostre peuple** le deuoyt congratuler et applauder. (46)
>
> (You are not unaware, my dearest, that the greatest delays consist in doing what **our people** should rejoice in and applaud).

Yet Elizabeth seems also to be concerned with drawing François into the decision-making process, in an effective strategy of persuasion. By prefacing the statement with an expression of shared knowledge ("vous n'ignorez") or entreating him in letter 47 to "remember" ("remember that we who are princes (…) are solicited by showings from several heads"), the queen is reminding him of a pact and a mutual goal. Her closing reference in letter 47 indeed points to the extra-textual world, referring again to knowledge shared with her addressee, which she now refuses to explain in writing, thus creating an even stronger bond of intimacy: "Ie ne mettray glose a cest texte m'assurent que lentendez trop bien" ("I will not put a gloss on this text, assuring myself that you understand it only too well").

The queen often takes pains to craft letter openings that adopt the self-effacing tone that is culturally required of her as a woman, as in the following examples, which obey a general politeness strategy that involves assuming the position of humility that is vital to the roleplay of the genre:

> Monsieur, si l'importune requeste de ce gentilhomme ne me constraignoist Ie n'eusse molesté voz yeuz si tost apres mes derniers combres (…) (43)
>
> (Monsieur, if the importunate request of this bearer were not constraining me, I would not have troubled your eyes so soon after my last encumbrances (…))
>
> Mon retarder tant Mon trescher de ne recognoistre l'infiniz modes qui accroissent mes obligations en uostre endroyt me me peuuent rendre a bonne raison indigne de traistements si honorables. (47)

> (For me to delay so, my dearest, in acknowledging the infinite ways that my obligations increase in regard to you may render me with good reason unworthy of treatment so honourable.)

In the following instance, however, Elizabeth manages to adopt the expected tone while introducing a general truth that, if applied to her, is also to be applied to the duke (as well as any other interlocutor), thus finding a discreet way to hold her suitor to his own promises—an adage used, to quote Allinson, as a "rhetorical hook" with which to "develop her subject":[39]

> Monsieur quant il me souuient *qu'il n'ya debte plus licite que la parole du iuste ny chose qui plus lie noz actions que la promesse*, Ie m'oublieroys trop en uostre endroyt et a mon honneur si I'ometasse le terme ordonné pour ma reponse a la cause que longs temps nous auons traisté. (46, my emphasis)

> (Monsieur, *when I remember that there is no more lawful debt than the word of a just man, nor anything that binds our actions more than a promise*, I would not forget myself too much in regard to you and my honor if I passed over the term appointed for my answer to the matter that we have long discussed.)

The word of a just man—and of a just queen—is an unbreakable bond, but sometimes reasons of state make it necessary to delay the fulfilment of the given promise. Elizabeth's insistence on the theme of delay and the metaphor of "promise as debt" is to be interpreted both as a strategy of seduction and a political manoeuver.

Perhaps the most interesting letter in the second grouping, edited by Coatalen and Gibson, is letter 2, which presents a pertinent example of precisely such a strategy: here, the queen again resorts to the adage or general truth in order to 'hook' her discourse onto what she presents as the undisputable fact that more time is needed for the marriage to be accepted. She skilfully begins in the following vein:

> Monsieur, Quant les criminelz sentent l'approche du jour de leur condemnation la nature mesme leur enseigne de prolonger la sentence Aussy les

[39] Allinson, 2012, 14.

> debteurs scachant le peu de moyen qui leur est donne de responder leur Creanciers, font des amis pur la prolonger le temps. (2)
>
> (Monsieur, when criminals feel the day of their condemnation approach, nature itself teaches them to prolong the sentence. And debtors, knowing the little means they are given to answer their creditors, make friends to lengthen the time.)

In a brilliant twist to the "promise as debt" theme, which plays on evangelical tones—possibly the parable of the debtor who in his hour of need makes alliances with his own insolvent acquaintances[40]—Elizabeth reverses the paradigm of the "just man" to liken herself to a "criminal" looking frantically to prolong time before an execution; since the parallel may seem harsh to a suitor looking forward to the marriage day, the queen immediately softens it by explaining that her concern is rather for the French duke, who will not be welcomed in her country by the "ill disposed". But the 'debt' image is also useful to the Virgin Queen to allude to the conjugal debt: here, in a clearly seductive move, Elizabeth alludes to her own body as the unattainable final end of the negotiation, at the same time referring to the spiritual domain in reminding the suitor that the body is not as precious as the soul.

> si le marriage ne se faict (…) ne Vois meilleur chemen pour ou dresser mes pas que par la Voye d'une estroicte Amitie telle que l'entendementz humains pouvent composer entre nous deux (…). Et a ceste mode fault il qu'accommodons nos affayres ne uous manquent rien sinon le corps qui est la pire part (…)
>
> (if the marriage does not happen (…) I don't see a better path to set my steps on, than by the way of a close friendship, such as human understanding can compose between us two (…). And in this way, we have to accommodate our affairs, nothing lacking to you except the body, which is the worst part (…))

These are highly wrought rhetorical moments which, crafted as expressions of love, actually perform a politically persuasive function, in reminding the duke that the entire affair is in the hands of her people,

[40] "I tell you, use worldly wealth to make friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, they will welcome you into eternal dwellings" (Luke 16:9).

who are firmly opposed to her marriage with a Catholic member of the French royalty. Such passages are much more incisive and meaningful than the conventional manifestations that she does, at times, use in her letters (likening her love to pure crystal, for instance, or evoking the image of a storm to refer to the tumultuous relationship). Characteristically, the closings of the letters assume a devout tone, through which the learned and pious queen entrusts her lover and the marriage business itself to the Creator: the only One who exercises more power than she.

As Coatalen states in his survey of Elizabeth's French correspondence, "the distinction between private and public letters (…) does not hold in the case of monarchs".[41] While this is certainly true in general, there is an undeniable difference in the degree of public/private entanglement within the love letter genre that both Henry VIII and Elizabeth I try their hand at. Such a difference, rather than being due merely to the specific circumstances, is related to the position of the writing subject: in one case, a powerful king, who explicitly selects the strategy of presenting himself as powerless to resist the charms of his lady; in the other, a powerful queen who has, on the contrary, embraced a rhetoric of control: she must keep her emotions in check, while also finding a way to express just the right amount to hold on to her wooer's interest.

It is in this spirit that Elizabeth writes to her suitor: the letters here examined are conceived with the general aim in mind of conveying a sense of self-worth and composed authority, even when anger or sorrow do transpire. As in the small corpus of Henry's letters, a number of linguistic and rhetorical strategies stand out in their being used to achieve a precise communicative aim, which, however, is not merely, or not mainly, one of seduction—leaving us with a hybrid form of 'love letter', one not easily classified as a private, or intimate, royal voice. For the queen, embracing the French language may not only have been the convenient and obvious choice in dealing with François, but also a sort of exercise, reminiscent of the days of her tutoring, through which to display her ability to deal with any foreigner on an equal footing. Indeed, she had learned at a very early age that presenting herself as a learned woman might be a way of remedying the God-given weakness of her sex: as testified by the only letter addressed by Elizabeth to her father Henry

[41] Coatalen, 2011, 84.

that has reached us—that is, the Latin preface to her trilingual translation of Katherine Parr's *Prayers or Meditations* (1545)—translating the work of her stepmother as a gift dedicated to the king meant presenting herself as a dutiful daughter, "*indebted* to you not as an imitator of your virtues but indeed as an *inheritor* of them" (my emphasis).[42] As early as that letter, the young princess had known to work the semantic field of indebtedness, of obligation, of gratitude, to her advantage. Elizabeth I's concern with linguistic prowess throughout her life originated, perhaps, in this way of conceptualizing her multilingual upbringing: it was a precise inheritance to be used in the exercise of power, and one that effectively authorized her position as the daughter of her father.

[42] Marcus, Mueller, and Rose, 2000, 9–10.

PART III

The Gift of Language, the Language of the Gift

CHAPTER 10

What Elizabeth Knew. Language as Mirror and Gift

Nadia Fusini

She was taken into the confidence of passions on which she fixed just the stare she might have had for images bounding across the wall in the slide of a magic lantern
Henry James, *What Maisie Knew*

That Elizabeth Tudor's childhood was traumatic is well-documented in the various biographies of her life. That this might lead to personality disorders, particularly in the delicate phase of a young woman's sexual development, is something that the modern reader—trained to recognize the complex nature of the question from the case studies of female patients treated in the early 1900s by the masterly Freud in Vienna—is quite ready to believe. It is certainly true that in the second half of the sixteenth century in London, no physician would have ventured to diagnose, even less interpret, the spiritual paralysis and sense of existential disaster as deriving from having been born in a 'wrongly' sexed body—that is, female. And yet, even if such a subversive feeling never, as far as

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we know, became a dominant theme during Elizabeth Tudor's reign, the perception of a secret effect of dis-identification regarding her sex surfaces in many of the Virgin Queen's actions and words. The perception emerges quite clearly in an apparently neutral activity carried out by the princess at a very early age: translation.

Translation was a practice pertaining wholly to the educational sphere of the prince in the Renaissance period, and it had a particular role especially in the education of women. John Florio, excellent translator of Montaigne, went so far as to consider it an essentially female occupation: "all translations are reputed femalls", declares the most famous Italian in London in his preface to his masterpiece,[1] precisely because they are "defective"; that is to say, translations are not 'true', 'original', 'authentic' creations. Applying the reflection to the practical activity, if the birthing of the *Essays* by Montaigne is 'masculine', their rendering in English by Florio is 'feminine'.

On the basis of this belief—in which profound misogyny[2] and equally deep scientific ignorance of the different male and female roles in procreation emerges—as well as an evident underestimation of a kind of intellectual activity that would be of fundamental importance in the Renaissance, translation is reserved for women. Thus, women—aristocratic women—translate. The celebrated daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, for example, were renowned in their time for their enviable, exceptional education. As Mary Ellen Lamb recounts,[3] the eldest sister, Mildred, who married William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley and principal secretary to Queen Elizabeth, was considered by Roger Ascham to be one of the most learned women in England, and translated St. Chrysostom from Greek into English. Anne, the wife of Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, translated fourteen sermons by Bernardino Ochino (a task to which Elizabeth would also devote her efforts). Elizabeth Cooke, married first to sir Thomas Hoby, the famed

[1] John Florio, trans., Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays* (London: Edward Blount, 1603), A2.

[2] Gary F. Waller draws attention to the "marginalization and silence" inflicted upon women in the male-dominated discourse of Renaissance England in his "Struggling into Discourse: The Emergence of Renaissance Women's Writing," in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 1985), 238–56.

[3] See Mary Ellen Lamb, "The Cooke Sisters: Attitudes Toward Learned Women in the Renaissance" in ed. Hannay (1985), 107–25.

translator of Castiglione's *Courtier*, and subsequently to Lord John Russell, translated *A Way of Reconciliation Touching the True Nation and Substance of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament*, and was renowned as a writer of epitaphs: she exercised this ability to commemorate her deceased husbands and other relatives. Catherine, who married Sir Henry Killigrew, a diplomat who served the queen on a number of missions, wrote verses and epitaphs.

In particular, *the new women*, cultured women active in early modern community life, devoted their efforts to the study of devotional science and foreign languages, translations being for the most part confined to religious material. The translation of scriptural passages, especially the Psalms, was a very common exercise in the education of women. Since the Church dictated that women could not preach nor publish personal religious ideas, they practised translation as a partly subversive act of self-expression. Translating the words of a male author was a way of speaking out their own views and feelings. Moreover, translation was also interpreted as a form of praying aloud and memorial safe-keeping of the divine word. In this sense, the contribution of women translators was fundamental to the spreading of a different piety, based on knowledge of the texts, which they translated into the vulgar language—the mother tongue—for the benefit of those who lacked the privilege of knowing Greek or Latin, a knowledge that at the time was confined to a very small number of people.

It must be said however that even though, in recognition of the value of education, the cultural establishment was willing to extend participation in this good endeavour to women in certain fields, we are by no means speaking of equality. Yes, the daughters of princes and nobles would be able to read the Gospel, the Acts of the Apostles, the Old Testament, Augustine, Jerome, Plato, Cicero and Seneca; but certainly not romances, songs, and pagan authors of dubious morality such as Ovid. In truth, with the pretext of female 'fragility'—"frailty, thy name is woman", as Hamlet says to his mother—the control that humanism exerted on women's education was strict. The specious reason given was that women were morally 'fragile'; the real one was the perception that education was power—and there was no intention of sharing power with women. In this light, the question that has been asked is more than appropriate: did women have a Renaissance?[4]

[4]Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?," in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 175–201.

The answer to that question is yes: aristocratic women, in England also, enjoyed a Renaissance of their own. It was necessary to educate young aristocrats to civil and political life, to form the country's ruling class: *the new learning* had this moral and political end. It was the Italian ideal *par excellence,* first and foremost Machiavelli's. It was also the ideal of Sir Thomas Elyot: the prince must be educated for the noble task of holding up the world. And since it so happens that in Shakespeare's isle women could be invested with this task in the absence of a male heir, they too had to follow the custom. Such was the case of Elizabeth Tudor, who despite repeated paternal 'excommunications', was educated as a princess, and responded admirably to the call. As her instructors wrote, it was rare to find a disciple of such depth, judgment and spirit united with grace. They all agreed that her soul appeared to be lacking the levity 'natural' to her sex and her mind was endowed with an almost 'masculine' capacity for work, so rapid and ready to learn was she. She had an excellent memory and quickly learned French and Italian; she mastered Latin with ease, precision and good taste. She studied Greek with Sir John Cheke, Royal Professor of Greek at Cambridge, a key figure of the Reformation and English Renaissance. With Roger Ascham, another great pedagogue, she read the Old Testament and the tragedies of Sophocles. Sir Anthony Cooke and William Grindal were involved in her education. Note, her teachers were all Protestants (for *the new learning* spread especially among the Protestants, though they were not fanatics).

Watching over the health and education of His Majesty Henry VIII's small children, Edward and Elizabeth, was the queen, Catherine Parr. The two young princes adored Catherine and her little dogs, but in July 1544 they were separated: Edward, preparing to become king, was to live at Hampton Court, while Elizabeth was to remain at St. James, with its ceilings painted by Holbein, featuring the interwoven initials of Anne Boleyn and Henry. Elizabeth's letters to Catherine in beautiful handwriting reveal not only courteous idealization in the aesthetics of manner and presentation, but also complete trust in her fourth stepmother. Elizabeth wished to give Catherine a gift for Christmas 1544 and decided to translate for her Marguerite of Navarre's *Le Miroir de l'âme pécheresse*.

Apart from being a considerate thought, it was also a refined and inspired choice, in virtue of which Elizabeth falls within the company of cultivated and learned women. Her great-grandmother before her, patron of William Caxton and Wynken de Worde, had translated a poem of Marguerite's in 1506, which de Worde had reprinted in 1522 and

1526. Now the young princess took up a challenge, whose result would bring together three great women and queens—Marguerite herself; Elizabeth, who would soon become queen; and Queen Catherine Parr, the recipient—while in the background, not mentioned explicitly but ever-present, hovered the ghost of Anne Boleyn, of whom Marguerite had been a friend. It was in such company that Elizabeth attended to the creation of her little masterpiece.

Elizabeth was just 11 years old. The young girl was well-provided for and very well looked after in Queen Catherine Parr's establishment; still, she was an orphan, and many things must have seemed obscure to her. Intelligent as she was, she was probably intensely aware that something had happened about which she could not ask too many questions. As was the case for Maisie, Elizabeth's "little world" must have felt "phantasmagoric – strange shadows dancing on a sheet".[5] She was apparently very well-behaved, quiet, modest and obedient. And also well-meaning and quite affectionate to her fourth stepmother, to whom she was most inclined to give a beautiful present.

She was more fatigued by the gift's manual preparation than the intellectual performance: she did fret over spelling errors, but in fact her calligraphy soon turned out to be the greatest challenge of the endeavour. Haste certainly did not help: the 'g's are written in several dissimilar ways, the 'k's at one time shaped in one way, and at another differently. Embroidering the cover was also a laborious task to which the young pupil devoted her efforts in a whimsical and impulsive manner. First she wanted the cover all blue, with forget-me-nots on the spine, and pansies, a symbol of domestic harmony, standing out against the background in violet, yellow and green silk. However she inverted the colours at a certain point: the upper petals became yellow and the lower ones purple or violet, while the recipient's initials, K. P. (the spelling of the queen's name varies: Catherine or Katherine Parr), were in silver.

In the letter preceding *The Glass*, Elizabeth acknowledges and praises "the affectionate will and fervent zeal" of her stepmother "toward all godly learning". And she also acknowledges her "duty" towards her, fully confessing her own "pusillanimity and idleness" which she defines "repugnant". She has taken up the task of translation precisely for this reason, for she knows that "an instrument of iron [2v] or of other metal

[5] Henry James, *What Maisie Knew* (London: Penguin, 2010), 39.

waxeth soon rusty unless it be continually occupied upon some manner of study": "And therefore have I as for an essay or beginning (so following the right noble saying of the proverb aforesaid) translated this little book out of French rhyme into English prose, joining the sentences [3r] together as well as the capacity of my simple wit and small learning could extend themselves".[6]

She reiterates her wish to please her dear step-mother, a cultured, humanistic lady, who greatly values education. Regarding herself, she recognizes that she is a child, that she strives to do well, but that she is afraid and sometimes panics: "there is nothing done as it should be".[7]

She explains that she likes the title of the poem, for it contains the idea that the soul "(beholding and contemplating what she is) doth perceive how of herself and of her own strength she can do nothing that good is, or prevaileth for her salvation, unless it be through the grace of God, whose mother, daughter, sister and wife by the Scriptures she proves herself to be". Elizabeth is confident, though, that "through His incomprehensible [3v] love, grace and mercy the soul (being called from sin to repentance) doth faithfully hope to be saved".[8]

In the figure of the soul and the mirror, allegorically endowed with universal meaning, Elizabeth also includes her own personal present effort: she knows that her work (spiritual as well as manual) has no merit. Perhaps, being so "unperfect and uncorrect",[9] it is not even worthwhile delivering into the hands of the queen; yet she trusts that "the seal of Catherine's excellent *wit* and good learning in the reading of it (if so it vouchsafe your highness to do) [4r] shall rub out, polish and mend (or else cause to mend) the words (or rather the order of my writing)".[10] She knows, she repeats, that nothing is as it should be. But she hopes that after having been in the hands of the queen, there will be nothing in it worthy of reprehension. In the meanwhile, she hopes that no-one will read it, lest her errors appear before the eyes of many.

[6] Marc Shell, *Elizabeth's Glass* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 111. I refer to this edition and transcription throughout this essay.

[7] Shell, 1993, 112.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

These are words of courtesy, which repeat a rhetorical ritual established by convention. But in the profession of her ignorance, in the general tone of *excusatio non petita* there is something more: a special *anxiety* manifested in errors of imprecision and omission—and in a certain general non-distinction of gender terms, particularly pronounced in reference to father and mother roles, not surprising given that the subject of the text the young princess was translating was incest.

Through experience if nothing else, the young Elizabeth 'knew' a great deal about incestuous relations and the perverse knots that tie fathers and mothers and sons and daughters in tangled relationships. And in fact, caught as she is in the trap of complicated and violent family relationships, the princess loses herself in *Le miroir de l'âme pécheresse*, a text in which she seems to founder.

In his beautiful book, *Elizabeth's Glass*, Marc Shell[11] describes, with simple clarity and without excessiveness or long-winded interpretations, the emotional material that can go into the making of a translation—a simple translation.

Le Miroir de L'Ame Pécheresse

First of all, the story/history. Marguerite Angoulême, Duchess d'Alencon, Queen of Navarre and sister to Francois I, was one of the most celebrated women in France. "Charming, witty, and pious, (…) through patronage, correspondence, friendship and diplomatic manoeuvrings" she maintained relationships with the leading intellectuals and reformers of the age: Erasmus, Bucer, Calvin. Rabelais dedicated his *Tiers Livre* to her, and in 1549, Ronsard wrote after her death that the lady was "certes tout l'honneur/ Des Princesses de notre âge".[12]

In 1531, she published *Le miroir del l'âme pécheresse*. Anne Boleyn and Marguerite had known each other since 1516, and exchanged letters. When Anne became queen in 1533 and gave birth to her daughter Elizabeth, they renewed their friendship. It was Marguerite who sent Anne, herself at heart a Reformer, a copy of the book—perhaps the same one Elizabeth used for her translation? Anne was beheaded in 1536; Elizabeth translated Marguerite's *Le Miroir* in 1544. In that case, the

[11] See in particular his introduction: "No Man Bastard Be," Shell, 1993, 3–73.

[12] Anne Lake Prescott, "The Pearl of the Valois and Elizabeth I: Marguerite de Navarre's *Miroir* and Tudor England," in ed. Hannay (1985), 61–76; 61.

copy from which she translated would have been the only object belonging to her mother that not been wrenched from her.

Others believe that this cannot be, for Anne Boleyn took the *Miroir* with her to the scaffold. In that case, it may have been Queen Catherine Parr, chief patron of evangelical humanism and an ardent supporter of the new learning, who gave her the book. Or it may have been John Cheke who chose it, or even her father Henry.[13] Perhaps, Elizabeth simply knew Catherine's tastes and wanted to please an affectionate stepmother.

If Elizabeth herself chose to translate *Le Miroir*, the act itself already shows *What Elisabeth knew*. Elizabeth was a child, when the first accounts of Anne's death were published, such as *Histoire de Anne Boleyne Jadis Royne d'Angleterre* and *Cronica del Rey Henrico*, for example, where a certain Marguerite, acting as Boleyn's procuress, is mentioned. We don't know what she knew or what Elizabeth might have read. The official accounts insist on the fact that the princess demonstrated no posthumous affection for her mother. Nor did she ever mention her name. But what else could Elizabeth Tudor have done to prevent the saying "like mother, like daughter" from being repeated? It is quite understandable that the daughter feared seeing herself in her mother as in a mirror. The fact remains, however, that at a very young age she adopted her mother's emblem with the motto *Semper Eadem*. And she always maintained it.

Furthermore, it is certainly no accident that later—in 1598—Elizabeth translated Plutarch's *De curiositate*, where Plutarch in effect warns against Oedipal curiosity about family roots. It would be best not to want to know, Oedipus teaches us. On the other hand, how could Elizabeth *not know*? Not know of the charges of incest, the great matter of contention during her father's reign and his great obsession?

Whether she had been advised or with rare intuition chosen on her own, *Le miroir* flung her into a tangle of sublimated promiscuous relationships among her relatives. For this is what *Le miroir* is: a passionate piece, mystical in tone, by a follower—albeit a moderate one—of the reformed religion, in which medieval theological notions of kinship defined as universal brotherhood are reworked and expanded. What is foregrounded is the transcendence of the incest taboo: thanks to a

[13] Prescott, 1985, 66.

Christian re-formulation according to which men and women, becoming brothers and sisters in God, achieve a kind of transmutation of the desire and horror of the physical act of incest into the pure desire of spiritual incest. This is the crucial point of Marguerite's text, which unconsciously seemed to attract the young translator.[14] And it was precisely into the coils of this net that Elizabeth tumbled: she fell into error, tripped and slipped.

There are errors, oversights, Freudian slips or confusions that cloud the vision and complicate the translation not so much because of its obscurity as of the inner resonances evoked in the reader and translator. It is as if the interpreter obfuscates her vision in order to be able to keep to the straight and narrow path, where she manages to remain only thanks to an inner blindness necessary to protect her from being exposed to traumas that would otherwise devastate her. The errors are 'symptoms': they occur by chance and at the same time fit like a glove, literally translating the intentional meaning beyond, in a kind of 'ecstasy'. If I speak of blindness it is to underscore that if Elizabeth misconstrues the meaning of the original, it is because the content pulls the rug out from under her feet and disquiets her. A kind of disturbing effect clouds her thoughts and in the loss of rational control she misunderstands the meaning of the original text, so that other meanings emerge, or surface as in a dream.

Held fast as she was in a perturbing proximity to the passion of incest both on the part of her father and her mother, in love with a father who rejects her, and at the same time called to devoted obedience to a bloodline, persecuted by the ghost of incest, Elizabeth wavered before a text that weaves an ambiguous web around God's love.

She had received a brilliant education; in addition, as was the case with James's Maisie, the protagonist of the novel bearing her name, Elizabeth's birth and childhood were wrapped in a cloud of turbulent passions and complex, perverse relationships.

[14]It is not that I wish to psychoanalyse here the young Elizabeth, but this is the gist of my reading: in her reading first, and then in her translation of Marguerite's text, an unconscious movement is activated in Elizabeth. I also believe that this always happens, in every translation. As in every act of enunciation, in translation as well, to say it with Lacan, *ça parle*.

Elizabeth's father committed incest with Catherine of Aragon, her stepmother Catherine Howard committed adultery with her cousin Thomas Culpepper. Anne Boleyn was accused of having been sexually managed, as Hamlet would note, by her brother and by Elizabeth's father. Elizabeth's uncle-father, Thomas Seymour (uncle, since his sister, Jane Seymour, married Henry VIII the day after Anne Boleyn's beheading, and father, since he married Catherine Parr when she was widowed) was accused of having 'abused' Elizabeth. And if, like Maisie, Elizabeth protected herself with silence, in the translation of the word of an act that was not hers—it is not she who speaks, but another—contradictory emotions surfaced and revealed that she knew more than she thought she knew about her own origins.

What Elizabeth knew is, I repeat, knowledge, at once not known, subconscious and guilty, exactly as in the case of James' heroine. It has to do with the guilt of adultery and the sin of incest, involving her mother and father and other relatives—sin and guilt that must remain unnamed in her consciousness. It so happens however—and what a relief!—that both are liberated in Marguerite's text, translated into other names.

The Glass of the Sinful Soul

Elizabeth's translation is literal.[15] From a perfectly servile position, the translator puts herself at the service of the original to the letter. Yet while respecting the text, she tends to tone down, or cool[16] Marguerite's fervour, which seems to disturb her. Or perhaps the lofty broad rhetorical register of the text she has before her would require a linguistic competence extraneous to a child. She often reduces the number of adjectives, saves on the comparatives: so that when the love of Christ is compared to that of a father or brother, Elizabeth does not translate the adjectives that define him as "doulx, piteux, et debonnaire". Likewise, when Marguerite calls God "Debonnaire et très doulx, sans feintise", she glosses over and softens it.[17]

[15] Shell, 1993, 108.

[16] Prescott, 1985, 68; Shell, 1993, 108.

[17] *Miroir*, l. 146 and l. 512. For a bilingual edition, see *Marguerite de Navarre*. Selected Writings, ed. and trans. Rouben Cholakian and Mary Skemp (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

But the most symptomatic error—if it may be so called—occurs when Marguerite addresses God the Father with the fervid epithet: "Pere, fille, o bieneureux lignaige! / Que de doulceur, que de suavité / Vient de ceste doulce paternité". Here in an extraordinary slip of the tongue, Elizabeth changes the terms: she replaces 'father' with 'mother', while maintaining the term 'paternité'. She writes: "Mother and daughter: o happy kindred. O what sweetness doth procede of the same paternitè".[18] Is this an error? An oversight? Yes, of course, but significant. Is it also the surfacing of a subconscious affection?

"Mother, mother, mother" exclaims *Hamlet* in Act III, scene iv of his tragedy: the mother is a problem, for Hamlet as well as Elizabeth, the children of mothers declared incestuous and adulterous. But if Hamlet feels betrayed by his mother because she chose not him but another man, in Elizabeth's case her mother had been wrenched from her and she from her mother. *Ravagée*, *ravissée*[19] are the words that come to mind in her case; both terms point to the violence of a separation and a solitude that the Virgin Queen would experience until her death. One and alone, Elizabeth was to desire to remain so forever, isolated in her island.[20]

Father's Love

While Marguerite underlines in the father's love for his daughter the fullness of an active and happy bond, Elizabeth does not *maintain* the image—she *cannot*—and replaces the word "father" with "mother". And when she ought to acknowledge to her father that sublime kind of love that is pity (which Marguerite mentions: "Si pere a eu de son enfant mercy / Si mere a eu de son enfant soucy / Si frere à soeur a couvert le peché / Je n'ay point veu, ou il est bien caché"[21]), Elizabeth skips over the verses:[22] no, she has no reason to believe that "a father has pity for his child". Certainly not of his "daughter". What does she know of such an experience?

[18] *Miroir*, lines 350–2; *Glass*, fol. 20v (see Shell, 1993, 121).

[19] Jacques Lacan, "L'étourdit," in *Autres écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 2001). See also Marie-Magdeleine Lessana, *Entre mère et fille: un ravage* (Paris: Fayard-Pleuriel, 2010).

[20] I have elaborated on this motif *Lo specchio di Elisabetta* (Milano: Mondadori, 2001).

[21] Miroir, ll. 581–4.

[22] Shell, 1993, 108.

In effect, how could Elizabeth, intermittently called "bastard" by her father, *believe* in paternal love? In the face of such a feeling, the young bastard princess is embarrassed, as she feels embarrassment before Marguerite's version of the story of Salomon, in which she suggests that God can recognize the false child from the true. What does Elizabeth do in that particular passage? Voluntarily or involuntarily, she prefers to omit the line that says "Pour qui voyéz mon cueur tant travailler".[23]

And when, speaking of husbands who put adulterous wives to death, Marguerite writes: "Assez en est, qui pour venger leur tort, / Par le juges les on fait mettre a mort",[24] (here truly a nerve is touched), Elizabeth reverses. It is not the husbands, through the judges, who send their adulterous wives to their death, but in a paradoxical judgement "the judges condemne him, them to die", meaning the husbands.[25]

Thus, in Elizabeth's translation, Marguerite's mystical poem is transformed into the impartial evocation of a God who unlike Henry VIII is a great king and a good judge with his daughter—and who does not kill the adulterous wife.

Incest and adultery with brother and sister were the hot topics of Henry's reign. If Henry wanted to dissolve his binding contract with Catherine of Aragon, it was because their marriage was the fruit of incest: he had convinced himself of it. Marrying the wife of one's own brother, as Henry had done upon Arthur's death and as Claudius does after the death of his brother Hamlet, is an act of incest.

Anne Boleyn rose to the crown because of a charge of incest; and she was to fall on a charge of incest as well. Having failed to deliver a male heir, Henry punished her as adulterous and incestuous: she had fornicated with other men, including her own brother. Elizabeth was not the daughter of Henry, but of Lord Rochford. In 1536, by an act of Parliament, Henry declared her "Bastard".

But she was already a 'bastard' for those who had not recognized the union of Anne Boleyn with Henry, such as Thomas More for example. In addition, having been born less than nine months after the wedding,

[23] l. 468. See Shell, 1993, 109.

[24] ll. 587–8.

[25] Shell rightly emphasizes that this is the most crossed-out and rewritten part of the manuscript (Shell, 1993, 108).

she had in any case been conceived outside the legitimate marriage bond. The charges of incest and bastardy were the order of the day for Elizabeth as a child. As though incest were a kind of disease, it infected all the ties of kinship around her. And the most infected body was precisely that of her father Henry, who had not only married his dead brother's wife, but had also been the lover of Mary Boleyn, before marrying her sister Anne. So that Anne was his sister in addition to being his wife. The doctrine of carnal contagion stained the Tudor bloodline.

Elizabeth was in effect in the position of Sophocles' Antigone:[26] torn between the horror of incest and devotion to a family built on such a perversion. And *Le Miroir* was not just a particularly difficult text for an adolescent girl; it was an explosive one for a girl who had had her mother beheaded for adultery and a father who was distant, strange, difficult—adulterous and incestuous.

But it was also a therapeutic text, a kind of training for re-thinking the taboo of incest. It appears from a reading of *Le Miroir* and *The Glass* that nothing can be done against incestuous desire. No human can be a bulwark against such a drive, or impulse. Only the grace of God can bring salvation. The sinful soul cannot save itself by its own efforts. But when it recognizes itself, according to the Scriptures, as mother, sister, daughter, bride of God, thanks to a special logical or psychological metamorphosis, then it can sublimate a sensual physical impulse into a spiritual one.

Elizabeth cannot but like the feeling of universal kinship: if all of us—"indifferent children of the earth", as we are christened in *Hamlet* (II.2)—are children of God, then no-one can call her bastard.

Thus, in *Le Miroir*, the earthly sin of incest undergoes a heavenly sublimation. And in a mystical impetus, the sensual fires of physical love are transmuted into ardent flames that clasp the creature to God in a quadruple incestuous relation, not only lacking profanity, but even acquiring sacredness, so that the woman who is the subject of such transportation will take on the features of the Virgin Mary—mother and sister of the Son, and daughter and bride of the Father.

In truth, reading *Le Miroir*, at times we think of Marguerite as a Fury, a Maenad, rather than Mary. In fact, there were some who considered her books heretical, and if they escaped burning, it was *in extremis*, thanks to the 'incestuous' intervention of her brother King Francis.

[26] Shell, 1993, 16.

Sponsa Angliae

Rather than an exercise in translation, for Elizabeth, who was so young, translating *Le Miroir* was an intellectual exercise that placed her in a great, dim theater. Like a half-scared, half-excited infant, she translated French words into English words, one after the other, while the meaning of the whole performance perhaps escaped her. On the wooden stage depicted by *The Glass*, members of the royal and real family (real in the sense that it is her own true family), father, mother, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters, all more or less victims or purveyors of sexual abuse, act out their roles. But taking away the father and putting God at centre stage changes everything. God, a new Proteus, maintains the family ties in changing fluctuating forms, projecting the procreative bonds on a celestial screen of extravagant but constant paradoxes. God is both *kin and kind*, Hamlet would say.

We are all brothers—did Jesus not say so? Therefore Marguerite is right: incest is universal. Does the New Testament not say that man and woman must deny ties of physical relationships—even hate their father and mother—and replace those ties with others, non-human but divine? Does Jesus not say (Luke 14:26) that "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple"?

Perhaps the child princess did not fully understand the intellectual framework of *Le Miroir*, where Marguerite of Navarre reveals her own spiritual libertinism, but surely she instinctively and with incomparable insight perceived in the reasoning the beginning of a new ideal and real organization of political power—which she would arrive at thanks to a new conception of *kingship* that would have to pass through a different idea of *kinship*. And if this happened, it was *also* because Elizabeth was personally involved in such questions.

Thus, it happens that thanks to a book, *Le Miroir*, and its translation, *The Glass*, a young woman destined to govern the world—her world, her island—in translating was transported to form her own spirit; and by the same token, through translation an ideology of love and power informed and transformed the political identity of the English nation.

It is not by chance that upon becoming queen, Elizabeth presented herself as *mother and spouse* of England: Elizabeth *sponsa Angliae*. In this sense, the reading of *Le Miroir* and its translation

into the *Glass* was an important experience for Elizabeth. It paved the way to a reflection about herself: "The part that I wrought in it", she would write in the dedication to Catherine, was as "well spiritual as manual".[27] True. Very true.

Marguerite died on 21 December 1549. In the meantime, Catherine Parr had entrusted Elizabeth's manuscript to the theologian John Bale, who changed the title into the more reassuring *A godly medytacyon of the Christen Soule* and added alterations that Elizabeth might not have seen before the printing in 1548 at Marburg. In that edition of the *Speculum*, an engraving depicts Elizabeth with Bible in hand, kneeling before Christ in the pose of Mary Magdalene. The image is evocative and opens up a mine of allusions. Within a certain apocalyptic vein, from the most secret folds of the religious imagination, contradictory and emblematic female images come to the surface in all their ambiguity and promiscuity. Elizabeth is presented there as a simple and devout woman in a severe, decorous and Protestant attitude.

However, we cannot but note that times change and a certain Protestant chauvinism gives way to a kind of *gynophilia*. Protestant women, it is true, had to be remissive, obedient and silent—and obey their husbands. But many of them were fast-talking ladies, who by lending their tongue to the Gospel, or other more or less sacred texts, gained glory.

Elizabeth would inherit and exploit this tradition of apologetic *gynophilia*. In propaganda sympathetic to her, she was often presented as victim and chosen one.[28] Her very survival would be glorified as a sign of divine favour, in the guise of a miracle. If she had escaped death it was a sign of Providence. God was a good and gentle father and loved her.

In any case, since God was a good father, Elizabeth acceded to the throne and ruled. At this point, some touching up was necessary to the image of the pious and devout, silent and remissive woman. Yes, of course, the woman would nevertheless always have to be conscious of her sins and failings, but she would also be able to trust in the help of her Father in heaven, who would sustain her in her efforts to improve and redeem herself. This was what was preached at the time.

[27] Shell, 1993, 112.

[28] As early as the 1563 edition of *Acts and Monuments*, Foxe presents her as such.

Thus in a prayer Elizabeth addresses to God she says: "Hear the most humble voice of thy handmaid (…) thou art gracious and merciful (…) grant me grace to live godly and govern justly".[29] She trusts her merciful father, most glorious king and Creator, and celestial husband and spouse, whom she addresses resorting to terms that she had first pronounced in translating *Le Miroir*.

In the later years, from time to time Elizabeth must have thought of Marguerite; after all, she helped her nephew Henri de Navarre to the crown. Perhaps she had read the *Heptaméron* in French, published in the year of her ascension to the throne. Certain tones *à la* Marguerite recurred in her prayers. Her translation of *Le Miroir* continued to be reprinted. And perhaps, going back to her *Glass*, she sees reflected in it the image of a woman with neither husband nor child, but who had had England for her spouse.

Defying heresy, in fact, Elizabeth the bastard, *sponsa Angliae*, had made England a free and sovereign nation. She would rule her island as a husband rules his wife, and as a just ruler governs a free *polis*. She would seek the foundations of the union within the matrimonial bond. Francis I—brother of Marguerite of Navarre—also called himself *maritus rei publicae*. A fine political theorist like Bodin would prefer the metaphor of the monarch's marriage to the *corpus politicum*, rather than that of the bishop's to the *corpus mysticum*.

The coronation ring, which until then had been interpreted as the *signaculum fidei*, would for Elizabeth become the wedding ring, and the *corpus mysticum* of the kingdom her true spouse. In her investiture speech in Parliament, displaying it as though it were a wedding ring, Elizabeth would say that she had chosen her kingdom as her spouse.

Having been traumatized as a child by family events as she was, the human bond of matrimony, union with a man in the flesh, was for her out of the question. She would be the spouse of no-one, in order to be the spouse of her island. The illegitimate daughter of the incestuous and adulterous Anne Boleyn, Henry's bastard, would remain chaste, virginal and unmarried—if not with her kingdom.

[29] *A Book of Devotions, Composed by her Majesty, with Translations by the Reverend Adam Fox*, with a Foreword by the Reverend Cann J. P. Hodges (Gerrard Cross: Colin Smythe, 1970), 19.

CHAPTER 11

Queen Elizabeth and the Power and Language of the Gift

Carole Levin

Though in the spring of 1575, Queen Elizabeth told the French ambassador, Bertrande Salignac, Sieur de La Mothe Fenelon, when he presented her with three embroidered nightcaps from Mary Stuart, that she liked to take with both hands and give with her little finger,[1] she was at times lavish in her gift giving. She was also well aware that the motivation for most of the exquisite and expensive gifts given to her once queen were, as Lisa Klein points out, seldom "pure devotion, duty, or generosity".[2]

The giving of gifts has so many resonances and ramifications. Does the person who gives the gift have more power or does the recipient? Does it make a difference if the gift is valuable or not; or if the giver

[1] Despatches of La Mothe Fenelon, March 11, 1575 in Agnes Strickland and Elizabeth Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England from the Norman Conquest*, new ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 409.

[2] Lisa M. Klein, "Your Humble Handmaid: Elizabethan Gifts of Needlework," *Renaissance Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (1997): 459–93; 460.

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created the gift personally? Does it make a difference if the person giving it has more or less status than the recipient? These questions were very pertinent in the early modern period. Particularly for royalty, gifts had great political significance in terms of power and relationships. They pondered on what gifts were given and by whom? Were the gifts accepted, were they reserved for personal use and were they shown off? Were they worth more than what was given in return? Were the gifts either not accepted or had their acceptance been treated ambivalently? Were gifts only objects or could they be something else? Who truly had the power in the gift exchange?[3] Going all the way back to Medea, and her gift of the poisoned gown to Jason's new wife, gifts could also be dangerous. As queen, Elizabeth I was well aware of all the ambiguities and uses she could make in giving and receiving gifts; how she had a range of motivations when she gave gifts; and how those who gave gifts to her were all too often hoping for patronage, good will, or to influence a decision. Elizabeth knew too well how, on the one hand, someone could produce a lavish gift, while on the hand be conspiring against her at the same time.

Those around the queen made it clear to others that Elizabeth preferred personal items, such as beautiful clothing or jewelry, rather than purses of gold, as gifts, and as her reign progressed more and more often these gifts were lavish apparel, such as embroidered gowns and exquisite expensive rings or pendants created specifically for Elizabeth.

The complexity of the gift exchange was something that she had started to learn early. In 1544, though we do not know the reason why, Henry VIII was upset with Elizabeth and banished her from court. Through the influence of the king's sixth wife, Katherine Parr, this breach was overcome. That year, at the age of eleven, Elizabeth translated Marguerite de Navarre's poem, *The Mirror of the Sinful Soul*, wrote out the translation in a beautiful hand, and embroidered a book cover for the queen's New Year's gift. The next year she also did a translation for her father, taking Katherine's own *Prayers and Meditations*, and translating it in Latin, French and Italian. This gift also had a beautiful

[3]For more on theories about gifts in this period, see Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Gadi Algazi and Valentin Groebner, eds., *Negotiating the Gift: Pre-modern Figurations of Exchange* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprech, 2003).

embroidered cover. The young Elizabeth, likely anxious over her situation, was using gifts she created herself to attempt to secure her position, and was well aware of Katherine's help with her father.[4] Elizabeth further learned of the power relationships in gift giving in some of her interactions with her half-sister Mary. Elizabeth grew to understand that some of the most important gifts might not be objects but advice or promises. This essay begins with some examples from before Elizabeth was queen, and then for the most part focuses on gifts involved with two particularly fraught relationships of Elizabeth's once she was ruler: with her cousin Mary Stuart and with Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, especially after his return from Ireland, focusing on the gifts given by his female relatives. While Elizabeth gave and received many gifts to and from the men of her court, the gift exchange system for early modern women, as Jane Donawerth has thoughtfully explained, was of especial significance as a political system and social space.[5]

The material gifts focused on in this essay are those of clothing and jewelry. However, I also argue that some of the most important gifts offered, asked for, accepted or refused were not objects at all, but promises and advice. Much of the evidence for this essay comes from letters, and as Rayne Allinson has so eloquently put it, letters themselves, especially holographs, "were a particularly personal kind of gift, since they embodied a trace of the monarch-author's metaphysical presence".[6]

Her Sister Mary's Gifts to the Young Elizabeth: Difficult Lessons Learned

Gifts to and from Henry VIII's fifth wife, Katherine Howard, to the king's two daughters may have been particularly instructive to the child Elizabeth. She saw how her father lavished his young bride with gifts, and in turn how the queen gave gifts. But one gift to Elizabeth was a

[4] For more on the significance of these gifts see Susan Frye, *Pens and Needles: Women's Textualities in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 31–41; Klein, 1997, 476–83.

[5] Jane Donawerth, "Women's Poetry and the Tudor-Stuart System of Gift Exchange," in *Women, Writing, and the Reproduction of Culture in Tudor and Stuart Britain* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 3–18.

[6] Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke: Palgave Macmillan, 2012), 91.

brooch described as a "little thing worth".[7] She also gave the child a pair of beads. Elizabeth was only eight years old, and though Elizabeth was Katherine's cousin through her mother Anne Boleyn, and she was supposedly fond of her, Katherine was not extravagant in the gifts to her youngest step-daughter.

But Katherine's relationship with Elizabeth's older half-sister was more troubled. Katherine was about six years younger than Mary. Katherine complained to her husband that Mary, older than she, did not treat the new queen with the same deference she had shown her two last step-mothers, Jane Seymour and Anne of Cleves. Henry retaliated; two of Mary's favorite women were forced to leave her service, and one died soon after—of grief it was said. Eustace Chapuys, Charles V's ambassador and Mary's ally, advised her that she needed to placate Katherine, as the young queen was the one with the power, and Mary gave Katherine an expensive new year's gift. This eased the tension enough that Katherine in return gave Mary a gift of a pomander with a clock on it set in rubies and turquoise. While the pomander originally was hung on a gold chain set with pearls, Katherine reserved the necklace for herself.[8] While no doubt Mary accepted the pomander with appropriate appreciation and grace, she does not appear to have truly valued the gift, as she soon passed it on to her eight-year-old half-sister. Regifting happened in the sixteenth century as well as the twenty-first, and while the child Elizabeth may well have been delighted with the expensive trinket, she may also have observed that a gift could also be a condescending slap in the face. In spite of all the gifts she received, not long after, Katherine Howard fell from Henry's favor so devastatingly that she lost her head, which would have surely provided the young Elizabeth with other lessons as well.

Elizabeth had other gifts from her half-sister besides the pomander, and as Elizabeth grew up she had to consider what gifts from Mary meant. In July 1553, after the death of their brother Edward, and John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland's failed coup to make their cousin Jane queen, Elizabeth was welcomed at Mary's court. But just as she had seen how carefully Mary had to negotiate court politics when Katherine

[7] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, vol. 16: 1540–1541 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1898), item 1389.

[8] L & P, 16, item 1389.

Howard was queen, so too did Elizabeth have to watch herself at Mary's court.

Ten days after Mary was proclaimed queen, Elizabeth came to London to await Mary's triumphant entry. On July 31, Elizabeth and her retinue rode out to Aldgate to welcome the new queen into the city. In her first euphoria at her succession, Mary welcomed her younger half-sister ebulliently and with much affection. When Mary rode in state a few days later, Elizabeth, in a position of great honor, was positioned immediately behind the queen, and at a number of public appearances Mary held Elizabeth's hand and gave her a place of honor by her side.[9]

But the pleasant relationship between the sisters did not last. Within a few months Mary had become more and more suspicious of her sister, who showed great reluctance to convert to Catholicism, and when Elizabeth finally felt pressured to attend mass, she publicly complained of a stomachache. Mary began claiming that indeed Elizabeth was not her sister at all, but the bastard child of Anne Boleyn and her musician Mark Smeaton. Mary asserted it was a scandal that Anne Boleyn's daughter, a bastard, hypocrite, and heretic, was next in line for the throne. Instead of continuing to give her sister precedence over the other ladies at court, Mary ceded that honor to their cousin Margaret, Countess of Lennox, and even to their other cousin Frances, Duchess of Suffolk, mother of convicted traitor Lady Jane Grey.

Elizabeth found the situation at court so distressing that she asked to leave court to spend time at her residence at Ashridge. But Elizabeth begged to see Mary before she left. While Elizabeth assured her sister that she was becoming devoted to Catholicism, Mary was not convinced. Mary gave Elizabeth a gift of a coif of rich sables, but this was hardly out of sisterly affection. The Spanish ambassador, Simon Renard, one of Mary's most intimate advisors, had suggested that it would be better for Elizabeth not to leave court feeling disaffected. Renard wrote to Charles V that the "Queen, too, on her side has dissembled very well, and has given the Princess a very beautiful sable wrap". But as beautiful and luxurious as the sable may have been, Elizabeth was all too aware of someone of more power giving a valuable gift to someone of less power

[9] BL, Harley Ms 419, fol. 1371 in T. S. Freeman, "'As True a Subiect Being Prysoner': John Foxe's Notes on the Imprisonment on Princess Elizabeth, 1554–1555," *English Historical Review* 118, no. 470 (2002): 104–16; 107.

to demonstrate superiority rather than to express affection. Elizabeth instead told Mary the gift she really desired. What Elizabeth wanted from her sister was the promise that she would allow Elizabeth to defend herself in person if Mary heard anything about her to her discredit. As Renard heard, "When she was leaving she entreated the Lady Queen not to put faith in bad reports of her without hearing her defence, so that she might have an opportunity of proving her innocence".[10] The French ambassador Antoine de Noailles also reported to the king of France, Henry II, that before she left, Elizabeth entreated Mary, "not to put faith in stories to the disadvantage of the Princess without giving her a hearing", though his added assurance that "the two sisters were completely reconciled" is highly problematic,[11] as by this time Mary was convinced, she told Renard, that she feared Elizabeth would bring about great evil. Indeed, if Mary had given the gift of this promise, which Elizabeth claimed she had, it was a worthless gift, as when Elizabeth was forced to return to court after the Thomas Wyatt rebellion, Mary refused to see her, and Elizabeth was sent to Tower without having the opportunity to defend herself. The day she was supposed to be taken to the Tower, Elizabeth begged to be allowed to write to Mary first. Henry Radcliffe, second Earl of Sussex, agreed, since she too was a king's daughter. Elizabeth reminded Mary of her request to see her:

> If any ever did try this old saying, "that a king's word was more than Another man's oath," I most humbly beseech your Majesty to verify it to me, and remember your last promise and my last demand, that I be not condemned without answer and due proof (…) And therefore I humbly beseech our Majesty to let me answer afore yourself.[12]

Elizabeth also reminded her sister about Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset's execution of his own brother Thomas: "In late days I heard my Lord of Somerset say that if his brother has been suffered to speak

[10] Royall Tyler, ed., *Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain: Edward VI and Mary 1533* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1916), 418.

[11] Frank Mumby, *The Girlhood of Queen Elizabeth, A Narrative in Contemporaries Letters* (London: Constable, 1909), 97.

[12] Queen Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 41.

with him he had never suffered". The letter only postponed her trip to the Tower by one day; Mary refused to see her sister. The promise that Mary had given Elizabeth, which she broke, was of far more value to Elizabeth than the most exquisite sables, and the loss of that promise far more devastating than any material loss. Elizabeth never forgot this experience. In 1575, she told La Mothe Fenelon of "the distress in which she was plunged when the late queen, her sister, in consequence of some misconceived words regarding her, had caused her to be examined in the Tower".[13] While Elizabeth expected she might not survive, "This night (…) I think to die",[14] she did succeed her sister at the age of twenty-five, and became the queen in power, giving and receiving gifts.

Gifts to and from Her Cousin—Another Problematic Mary

If Elizabeth—before she became queen—was a problem to her sister Mary, with gifts part of the language of power, once Elizabeth herself was queen, she had to deal with her cousin Mary, Queen of Scotland. Elizabeth had begged her sister Mary for the gift of a meeting if she were ever accused. With Mary Stuart, the two exchanged gifts as part of their power exchange and negotiations for close to three decades but in the end they never met face to face, and the gift exchange was one of the only ways in which they knew each other.

Mary had spoken contemptuously of Elizabeth while in France and briefly its queen consort. But after the death of Francis II, Mary returned to Scotland and the power dynamic shifted. One very important gift exchange between the two queens was that of their own portraits, and it was one where Elizabeth worked hard to maintain political control over the situation. The exchange of portraits was a means to establish royal friendship, and Mary requested that Elizabeth send her image to her. But Elizabeth demanded that Mary first send *her* her portrait before the English queen would dispatch one. Mary did quickly send her portrait; Elizabeth delayed a year before returning the favor in 1562.[15]

[13] Despatches of La Mothe Fenelon, vol. VI, 348 in Strickland, 2010, 409.

[14] John Fox, *The Book of Martyrs: Containing an Account of the Suffering and Death of the Protestants in the Reign of Mary the First* (London: John Hart and John Lewis, 1743), 903. In this edition, Foxe's name is not spelled with the customary "e".

[15] Heal, 2014, 167.

As the newly widowed queen of Scotland, Mary challenged Elizabeth as the most eligible marriage prize in Europe. She might marry a Hapsburg relative of Phillip II of Spain, or back into the French royal family. Elizabeth believed Mary's marriage alliance could be dangerous for England. In November 1563, Elizabeth's ambassador Sir Thomas Randolph, who had been back in England, returned to Scotland to let the Scottish queen know that Elizabeth considered an English husband to be the most appropriate, and certainly not a foreigner from Spain, France, or Austria. Mary had been ill but consented to see Randolph, especially as she heard he was bringing her a gift from the English queen, referring to Elizabeth as "of so good a mynde as my ssyter bearethe me".[16] To soften such a demand on controlling whom she might marry, Randolph also brought Mary a diamond ring as a token of affection from Elizabeth, meant to renew the friendship between them.

Mary declared herself delighted with the gift, and John Guy argues that for Mary it symbolized Elizabeth's role as "lover" to the Scottish queen, stating that evidence for this was that Mary often kissed the ring on her finger, and declared that this ring, along with the ring given her by her dead husband Francis, was one she would never remove: "two jewels I have that must die with me and willingly shall never [be] out of my sight". She also kissed the letter from Elizabeth that came with the ring.[17] But Mary also publicly expressed a very different reaction to Elizabeth's demand and gift. She called for Lord Argyle and publicly told him and the others with her that "Randolphe wolde have me marie in England". Clearly prepared for this cue, Argyl answered "Is the Queen of Englande become a man?" as if otherwise it was an enormous insult to Mary.[18]

The most precious gift from the English queen's point of view that Elizabeth offered Mary Stuart was her favorite, Robert Dudley, a gift she had great ambivalence about actually delivering. Since Elizabeth believed anyone Mary married might mean a threat to England, she suggested that Mary consider Robert Dudley, to whom Elizabeth had just given the title Earl of Leicester. She told James Melville that she esteemed

[16]Thomas Randolph to William Cecil December 31, 1563 *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1900), II, 27.

[17]John Guy, *My Heart Is My Own: The Life of Mary Queen of Scots* (New York: Fourth Estate, 2004), 178, 179.

[18]Thomas Randolph to William Cecil December 31, 1563 *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland*, II, 27.

Dudley "as her Brother, and best friend, whom she would have her self married, had she ever minded to have taken a Husband". While they discussed the potential marriage, Elizabeth was playing with "a fair Ruby, as great as a Tennis ball". Melville suggested that she send it to Mary as a token, but Elizabeth refused, saying instead that "if the Queen would follow her counsel, that she would in the process of time get all that she had".[19] Though a few years previously, Mary, while queen of France, had called Dudley a murderer after the death of his wife Amy in 1560, suggesting he killed Amy to marry Elizabeth, in 1564 she stated that she would marry Dudley if Elizabeth named her, Mary, her heir. But we do not know how serious Mary was—nor how serious Elizabeth was—and Dudley was unwilling, hoping still to marry the English queen.

Instead of Dudley, Mary married her cousin Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley. While it may seem that this marriage would strengthen Mary's claim to the English throne, since her now husband was also a grandchild of Henry VII, it turned out to be a disaster, with Henry's arrogance soon alienating his wife. The relationship worsened when he participated in the murder of her Italian favorite David Rizzio in front of the pregnant Mary Stuart. After the birth of her son James on June 19, 1566, Mary was even unhappier her marriage.

Mary asked Elizabeth to be her son's godmother, and Elizabeth sent a beautifully designed pure gold font, said to be of exquisite workmanship. The font also had many precious stones and weighed 333 ounces. It was valued at £1000. But Mary delayed the baptism until December and then loudly professed herself unhappy with Elizabeth's gift, as James was now too large to use the font, apparently hinting that she wanted another gift. Mary also put James Hepburn, an avowed Protestant, in charge of the arrangements for the baptism. Elizabeth wrote to her representative, Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, suggesting that since James was now too big, Mary should save the font for her next child. But the chance of a second child may have seemed unlikely, given Mary's feelings toward Lord Darnley, who refused to attend the baptism.

[19] *The memoires of Sir James Melvil of Hal-hill containing an impartial account of the most remarkable affairs of state during the last age, not mention'd by other historians, more particularly relating to the kingdoms of England and Scotland, under the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, and King James: in all which transactions the author was personally and publickly concern'd: now published from the original manuscript* by George Scott, Gent (London, 1683), 46.

By 10th February 1567, Darnley was dead, found strangled outside his home at Kirk o' Field, after an explosion in the house. Most were convinced it was Bothwell who had murdered Darnley. In the meantime, Mary had the font sent to the mint and melted down.[20]

Despite this insult, Elizabeth had not finished offering gifts to her cousin. If the most precious gift she offered Mary was Robert Dudley, the most valuable was the solid advice about dealing with the murderers of her husband. Despite the grief and shock Elizabeth expressed for Darnley, she lets Mary know, "I cannot dissemble that I am more sorrowful for you than for him," adding:

> I would not do the office of faithful cousin or affectionate friend if I studied rather to please your ears than employed myself in preserving your honor (…) I exhort you, I counsel you, and I beseech you to take this thing so much to heart that you will not fear to touch even him whom you have nearest to you if the thing touches him, and that no persuasion will prevent you from making an example out of this to the world (…) Praying the Creator to give you the grace to recognize this traitor and protect yourself from him as from the ministers of Satan, with my very heartfelt recommendations to you, very dear sister.[21]

But this was a gift that Mary had no interest in accepting. Instead, within a few months she was Bothwell's wife, and a few months after that was forced to abdicate the crown of Scotland and imprisoned. Using her considerable charm, Mary managed to escape. She got to Dundrennan and hid in the abbey, then writing an urgent appeal to Elizabeth for help. She had with her the diamond ring Elizabeth had sent her in 1563 and she returned it with the message, hoping that this token would serve to redeem Elizabeth's love and friendship.[22] Soon after, her army was defeated, and, greatly fearful of recapture, she made the decision not to wait for a ship to take her back to France, but instead crossed over into England. As she would find, the returned gift of the ring did not get Mary what she wanted.

When Mary fled to England, she wrote to ask Elizabeth for help and particularly for clothes—which Elizabeth did not wish to give.

[20] Philippa Glanville, *Silver in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (London: V & A Publishing, 1990), 28.

[21] Queen Elizabeth I, CW, 116.

[22] Guy, 2004, 357.

At Workington Hall, the Curwen family offered Mary refuge and hospitality. Though in her letter to Elizabeth, Mary would claim she had only the clothes in which she had escaped, in fact, Lady Curwen had generously provided the Scottish queen with some of her own clothes. Mary was, of course, not only asking Elizabeth for dresses fit for a queen but, even more importantly, the gift of her compassion that would take the form of an army to put Mary back on her throne.

> I entreat you to send for me as soon as possible, for I am in a pitiable condition, not only for a Queen but for a gentlewoman, having nothing in the world but the clothes in which I escaped (…) as I hope to be able to show you, if it please you to have compassion on my great misfortunes, and to permit me to come and bewail them to you.[23]

Mary signed her letter, "Your very faithful and affectionate good sister and cousin and escaped prisoner," hoping this might make Elizabeth more amenable to her request for gifts. Yet the gifts she was requesting had great symbolic power; by asking for Elizabeth's clothes she was also implying her equality with Elizabeth and the possibility that by wearing the English queen's clothes she could replace her.

While Mary wanted clothes fit for a queen, what she most wanted was to be allowed to visit Elizabeth, just as Elizabeth, as sister to the reigning queen, had begged to see Mary. But now in Mary I's place, Elizabeth was extremely reluctant. She may well have remembered her own letter to her sister, with the statement about the duke of Somerset and his brother Thomas. Elizabeth did not want to give Mary the status of the visit, or put herself in a position where she felt pushed to help Mary, but even then she may have felt it was in her own emotional best interest not to meet Mary personally. Similar to Elizabeth's letter to her sister, in November 1569, another very dangerous time, Mary wrote to her cousin to redeem what she felt had been the gift of a promise made to her. "Call to mind the offers of friendship which you have made me, and the friendship which you have promised me".[24] Nineteen years after

[23] J. Keith Cheetham, *On the Trail of Mary Queen of Scots* (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 1999), 115.

[24] Aleksandr Iakovlevich and William B. Turnball, eds., *Letters of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland: Selected from the "Recueil des lettres de Marie Stuart": Together with the Chronological Summary of Events During the Reign of the Queen of Scotland* (London: C. Dolman, 1845), 190.

Mary's arrival in England, when she had her cousin executed, Elizabeth most likely—if she thought back to that early time—knew she had made the right decision in refusing to meet the Scottish queen.

Mary was soon moved from Workington Hall to Carlisle Castle under the escort of Sir Richard Lowther. Thomas, Lord Scrope, the Governor of the Castle, was at court, so Lowther, the Deputy Governor who Scrope had appointed, was in charge. While he outwardly treated Mary with the courtesy due a royal guest, he privately considered her to be Elizabeth's political prisoner.[25]

Elizabeth did send some clothing to Mary, but apparently not such as were "fit for a queen", at least not in Mary's eyes. According to the item among the warrants for the Wardrobe of Robes, Elizabeth had ordered "Sixteen yerdes of blak taphata Delyvered by our Commaundement to our trustie and right welbeloved Counsailor Sir Fraunces Knolles knight vice chamerlen of our Chamber, for the Quene of Scottes, of our greate guarderobe".[26]

Lord Scrope and Sir Francis Knollys apparently felt embarrassed by what they produced, and Mary was not impressed. Mary's lady Mary Seton treated the items with contempt, and Knollys felt the need to say that clearly there had been some mistake—Queen Elizabeth had thought her Scottish cousin had wanted clothing for her maid. Guzman de Silva informed Philip II that he had heard there were two worn out chemises, some black velvet and a pair of shoes. Mary informed the French that it was some linens. But Janet Arnold and May-Shine Lin both intriguingly argue that when Elizabeth chose for Mary she was not simply insulting Mary by sending her inferior clothing; rather, it was a more significant comment in that these could become the clothes of mourning. Since Mary had not taken Elizabeth's advice to properly mourn her husband, Lord Darnley, after his death, she would do well to do so now, and thus

[25]The following year, however, he supported Mary in the rebellion led by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, and also may have been involved in the Ridolfi plot. But despite his time in the Tower, where he recognized that the treatment he received was comfortable, he was released in 1573. Lowther redeemed himself in the government eyes because of his bravery during the Armada.

[26]Janet Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd: The Inventories of the Wardrobe of Robes Prepared in July 1600, Edited from Stowe MS 557 in the British Library, MS LR 2/121 in the Public Record Office, London and MS. V.b. 72 in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC* (Leeds: Maney, 1988), 98.

the black fabric was quite appropriate for what Elizabeth wanted Mary to understand. Arnold adds that Elizabeth "might as easily have sent some plain black gowns of her own", but she had learned from James Melville that Mary was far taller than Elizabeth, "and probably larger in the waist since the birth of James".[27]

Whatever Mary thought of the gift of the clothes, she continued to beseech and demand that the queen allow her to come to court, or if not that, then to go to more hospitable hosts in another country. But Elizabeth was convinced that in a dangerous, unstable situation, her best solution was to keep Mary in England, fairly well treated, but without freedom. The inquiry into Darnley's death, first held at York with Elizabeth's commissioners, Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and Sir Ralph Sadler, and later moved to Westminster, produced lots of charges, but was inconclusive, and Elizabeth informed Mary that the only solution was to "move her to 'more honorable and agreeable' surroundings in Tutbury", effectively putting Mary under house arrest, though she allowed her to retain her regal dignities, such as a cloth of state and about forty servants.[28]

Mary began what she would long continue: gifts constructed for Elizabeth with the clear motive of being treated as a queen, given audience and then her freedom. In 1570, John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, who had represented Mary at the inquiry, brought Elizabeth a number of gifts that Mary had made for her. Elizabeth praised them "principally", Ross thought, because they had been created "with her own hands". Elizabeth promised the gifts would remain continually with her and offered to send Mary a ring in return. Ross wrote, "But I answered, we required not to have the ring". What Mary instead wanted was Elizabeth's "aid and support," and however pleasant the English queen was to the bishop, this was not a gift she was willing to make.[29]

And Elizabeth in the years she had Mary as a guest was for a long time equally determined to not be pressured into Mary's execution;

[27] Arnold, 98. May-Shine Lin, "Queen Elizabeth's Language of Clothing and the Contradictions in Her Construction of Images" (last accessed May 3, 2017), http://www.his.ncku.edu.tw/chinese/uploadeds/383.pdf.

[28] Allinson, 2012, 83.

[29] Bishop John Ross "Audience with Elizabeth" June 28, 1570, *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland*, 3 (London: His Majesty's Stationery office, 1903), 323.

yet her feelings had hardened, particularly after the 1571 Ridolfi Plot. Elizabeth knew of her cousin's complicity since Walsingham had discovered a hoard of letters, in a cypher he was able to break, which implicated Mary. Yet despite that, Mary continued to pepper her cousin with letters protesting her innocence. Mary even scolded Elizabeth about her lack of compassion. For some time, Elizabeth refused to respond, finally explaining to Mary that she had been silent because of the vindictiveness of Mary's language in her letters. The Earl of Leicester's 1572 new year's gift, according to Guerau de Spes, then the Spanish Ambassador, demonstrates that he knew how angry this had all made Elizabeth. De Spes described the gift as:

> a jewel containing a painting in which the Queen was represented on a great throne with the queen of Scotland in chains at her feet, begging for mercy, whilst the neighbouring countries of Spain and France were as if covered by the waves of the sea, and Neptune and the rest of them bowing to this Queen. With these vanities they flatter the Queen to the top of her bent.[30]

Leicester knew the queen well enough to figure such an image would be valued. Alas, this appears to be the only record of this gift,[31] which is unfortunate. The reason for Leicester's gift may well have been in response to the fact that Elizabeth was becoming more and more angered by her Scottish cousin, and concerned over what Mary's presence in England meant to the country's relations with the Catholic continental powers.

As Mary's house arrest continued, as well as the time she spent on conspiracies and letter writing, she also did a great deal of embroidery, much of it as gifts. But while she made beautiful items for Elizabeth in her efforts to get to see the queen and gain her freedom, some of her other embroidered gifts did have very different motives, which proved very distressing to Elizabeth, and made the English queen much more reluctant to believe Mary's gifts to her were in any way sincere.

[30]London, 9th January 1571/1572; Martin A. S. Hume, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Spain (Simancas)*, vol. 2, 1568–1579 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1894), 290.

[31]I am deeply grateful to Jane Lawson for her help about this item and so much else that has to do with gifts, especially new year's gifts.

For the Duke of Norfolk, as she was conspiring to marry him, there was an embroidered cushion, "which was wrought with the Scottish Queen's own hands," to show her affection. It had the design of a hand cropping a barren vine, thus allowing a fruitful one instead, with the motto "Virescit Vulnere Virtus"—"Virtre flourishes by wounding". This appears such a clear message that the barren Elizabeth should be destroyed so that the fruitful Mary could replace her that the cushion was used as evidence at Norfolk's treason trial.[32] Clearly, while she was creating exquisite gifts to send to Elizabeth as a means to get her cousin to invite her to court, and eventually allow her to be released, her other work was moving in a completely different direction.

For Elizabeth, Mary often sent elaborate and expensive gifts of needlework. In 1574, she begged the French ambassador, Fenelon, to send her supplies: "I must give you the trouble of acting for me in smaller matters, viz to send me as soon as you can 8 ells of satin of the colour of the sample of silk which I send you, the best that can be found in London". Mary, who also requested double silver thread, was in a real hurry to get started on this project, as she asked to have it within fifteen days.[33] Mary apparently dedicated much time and skill to the project, and then asked the ambassador to present her gift to the queen, "as evidence of the honor I bear her, and the desire I have to employ myself in anything agreeable to her". La Mothe Fenelon wrote to Charles IX, letting him know that Mary was in good health, and "yesterday I presented on her behalf a skirt of crimson satin, worked with silver, very fine and all worked by own hand", to Elizabeth. Fenelon assured Charles that Elizabeth found the present to be lovely and that she would prize it very much. He added of the English queen, "that she seemed to me that I found her much softened" toward her Scottish cousin.[34]

The following year, Fenelon was again the conduit for Mary Stuart's gifts. As a new year's gift, Mary created for Elizabeth what was said to be a very elegant headdress, along with a collar, cuffs, and "other little pieces en suite". The ambassador reported that the queen had received

[32] Dr. Thomas Wilson to Lord Burghley 8 November 1571, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honorable the Marquis of Salisbury, Preserved at Hatfield House* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1883), I, 564. Susan Frye, 2010, 52; Margaret H. Swain, *The Needlework of Mary, Queen of Scots* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1973), 75.

[33] Arnold, 1988, 95; Swain, 82.

[34] Arnold, 1988, 95; Swain, 83.

them with amiability and greatly admired and enjoyed her gifts. Pleased with the reception of these gifts, and hoping that the "softening" he had seen earlier was continuing, in the spring, Fenelon brought to Elizabeth three nightcaps that Mary had embroidered for her. This time, however, he had to keep them himself for some time; Elizabeth—or her Council—was not ready for the English queen to accept another gift. Elizabeth told the ambassador "that great commotions and jealousies had taken place in the privy council", because she had previously accepted Mary's gifts.[35] This time, perhaps for that reason, she did not show the same enthusiasm. Or perhaps, despite her pleasure in the exquisitely embroidered items, the queen was tired of gifts that were always also demanding something she did not want to give. As Susan Frye points out, "Mary's many attempts to reach Elizabeth were all marked by gifts, and all ended in disappointment".[36]

If the relationship between Elizabeth and Mary Stuart was difficult in the 1570s, it became even more fraught in the following decade, climaxing with the 1586 conspiracy orchestrated by Sir Anthony Babington, and involving Mary. Though asserting that as a queen, the English had no right to try her, Mary was found guilty. On December 19, 1586 the Scottish queen wrote her last letter to Elizabeth, promising to return a jewel that Elizabeth had given her and stating that she would "supplicate still further a last request, which I have thought for many reasons I ought to ask of you alone, that you will accord this ultimate grace, for which I should not like to be indebted to any other". But even as Mary was preparing to ask for one last gift, she had to also use whatever rhetorical claims she might have to put herself above the English queen: "I know that you, more than any one, ought to feel at heart the honour or dishonor of your own blood, and that, moreover, of a queen and a daughter of a king". In the end it was not so much a request as a demand:

> Then, Madame, for the sake of that Jesus to whose name all powers bow, I require you to ordain that when my enemies have slaked their black thirst for my innocent blood, you will permit my poor desolated servants altogether to carry away my corpse, to bury it in holy ground with the other

[35] Strickland, 2010, 410.

[36] Frye, 2010, 51.

> queens of France, my predecessors (…) refuse me not this last request, that you will permit free sepulcher to this body when the soul is separated, which, when united, could never obtain liberty to live in repose, such as you would procure for yourself; against which repose – before God I speak – I never aimed a blow: but God will let you see the truth of all after my death.[37]

This was a gift that Elizabeth was not willing to bestow on the dead Mary. To have her buried in France among queens would have been politically symbolic in a way that Elizabeth would have seen as harmful to English interests. But the language of queenship and demand that Mary used in her final letter would have made Elizabeth even less willing to grant this final gift.

While Elizabeth was dealing with Mary Stuart, she also used the language of the gift—of requesting a gift—as a way of demonstrating power in an interaction with Mary's mother-in-law from her first marriage, Catherine de Medici, Queen Mother of France. Elizabeth sent Roger, Lord North to France in October 1574 as a special ambassador to congratulate the new king, Henry III. He was there until December and, known for his tact and astute political understanding, negotiated a renewal of the Treaty of Blois. However, some events were beyond his ability to be tactful about.[38] He was so outraged by a buffoon dressed to look like Henry VIII that he publicly spoke out against it. Lord North was also quite skeptical about Catherine's public acclaim of Elizabeth, with what he saw as deliberately exaggerated praise of his queen's beauty and accomplishments, but "spoken with covert derision".[39] But even worse was what he heard took place in the queen mother's private chambers.

Elizabeth was furious about the buffoonish take on Henry VIII when she learned of this. In front of the whole court, she loudly chastised La

[37] Agnes Strickland, ed., *Letters of Mary Queen of Scots: Now First Published from the Originals Collected from Various Sources, Private as Well as Public, with an Historical Introduction and Notes* (London: H. Colburn, 1843), II, 200.

[38] Conyers Read suggests that Lord North, an ally of the Earl of Leicester, may have emphasized the insults as he would have considered supporting the Huguenots more important than placating the French monarchy. *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), I, 288.

[39] Frances Bushby, *Three Men of the Tudor Time* (London: D. Nutt, 1911), 68.

Mothe Fenelon. "She raised her voice in great choler, and tolde so loud, that all (…) could hear her discourse, adding with very gross words, 'that the queen-mother should not have spoken so dishonorably, and in derision of so illustrious a prince as her late father'". But Elizabeth waited until she had a private interview with the French ambassador to inform him "how she had heard that two female dwarfs had been dressed up in the chamber of Catherine de Medicis, and that the queen and her maids had excited them to mimic her [Elizabeth] and ever and anon, throw in injurious words, to promt the vile little buffoons to a vein of greater derision and mockery". Having dwarfs at court was quite fashionable in the sixteenth century, and many were what we would term as cases of 'proportionate dwarfism', as these people were very small, though appeared normally proportioned. Others were 'disproportionate', with one or more of their body parts being relatively quite small or large. Elizabeth's own dwarf, Thomasina, was very small but beautifully proportioned, and Elizabeth would have her own dresses cut down and remade as gifts for Thomasina when she was tired of them. Catherine's dwarfs too were very small but otherwise well proportioned. This mockery was a great insult. What could the embarrassed ambassador do but deny and deny again. He assured Elizabeth "that to his certain knowledge the Queen-mother of France, had been unwearied in praising her English Majesty's beauty and good qualities to her son, the King of France". He stated—which of course both knew was a ridiculous comment about the special ambassador—that this misunderstanding was due to "milor North's utter ignorance of the French language". Elizabeth agreed that this must be the reason, and she begged La Mothe Fenelon that she in the future be excused, "if, out of ignorance of the French language, she herself, had made use of any unbecoming phrases" about Catherine.[40]

But despite this supposed rapprochement, and the recognition that in fact both Elizabeth and Lord North were superb linguists, Elizabeth did not forget the insult, and she brought it up again forcefully the following year at the time of the marriage of Henry III and Louise of Lorraine. She so harangued the French ambassador that Henry himself finally sent a letter of apology to her. Then she finally agreed that all had been misinterpreted by Lord North, since, she had recently learned, the dwarfs were very pretty and well-dressed. Indeed, Elizabeth explained to

[40]Agnes Strickland, *Life of Queen Elizabeth* (London: J. M. Dent & Co., 1906), 369.

the ambassador, Catherine should send the dwarf who had played her to Elizabeth as a gift, and she would receive her with great kindness. Catherine never sent the woman dwarf to Elizabeth, and quite probably Elizabeth never expected her to, but, by requesting this gift, the English queen had finally devised a perfect way to put the French queen mother in her place.

At the End of the Reign, Another Difficult Gift Exchange

As is clear from the experiences with Mary Stuart and Catherine de Medici, Elizabeth was all too aware of how gifts might be asked for, given or not accepted, and used as a way to try to determine a political outcome. This was especially clear after the Earl of Essex's disastrous return from Ireland in 1599 and his fall from power. Frances, Lady Essex offered the queen a jewel in November 1599, but Elizabeth refused to accept it. In January a "very rich jewel" was offered on Essex's behalf, but it "was neither received nor rejected". Essex's sister and close confidante, Penelope, Lady Rich, also attempted to use gifts to as a means to help her brother but with little more success. On 12 January 1600, Rowland Whyte reported, "Lady Rich earnestly supplicates for leave to visit [Essex]. She writers her Majesty many letters – sends many jewels and presents; her letters are read, her presents received, but no leave granted". Essex's mother, Lettice, dowager Lady Leicester, also sent Elizabeth a "rich new year's gift", that Elizabeth accepted, apparently with pleasure, but with no favor for her or her son. A few months later, Lady Leicester spent more than £100 on what has been described as a spectacular dress as a gift for Elizabeth, and asked Lady Mary Scudamore to present it to the queen, since Elizabeth had not allowed her to come to court. Lady Leicester hoped Elizabeth's pleasure in the gown would allow her to come into Elizabeth's presence, kiss her hands, and presumably beg for forgiveness for her son. But though Elizabeth was impressed by the gown, she declared that she could never accept or reject it, since "that things standing as they did at present, it was not fit for [Lady Leicester] to desire what she did".[41]

[41] Heal, 2014, 120; Charles Lethbridge Kingsford and Algernon Sidney, *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1925), II, 418, 427, 434.

Yet all too much like Mary Stuart, at the same time that Lady Rich was showering Elizabeth with adulatory letters and costly gifts, she was secretly writing to James VI about Elizabeth's overweening vanity, and Robert Cecil—as Walsingham had before him—had managed to obtain copies of the letters. Elizabeth ordered Lady Rich confined to her own house, and considered other retaliations. The expensive and lavish gifts had done no good at all.[42] In 1601, after his failed rebellion, Essex was executed.

Gifts could bring great pleasure but especially at the Tudor court, had other meanings as well, and we can hardly not be aware that when we look at some of those who gave and received gifts in this essay, there was also great danger involved. Elizabeth herself was in the Tower at a time during the reign of her sister Mary, and both Mary Stuart and the Earl of Essex died by the executioner's sword—no matter how lavish were the gifts given by them or on their behalf. In understanding gifts as the language of power, Elizabeth stayed in control, taking with both hands and giving with her little finger.

[42] Kingsford, *De L'Isle and Dudley*, II, 658.

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