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WARRING MODELS OF FEMININITY

An examination of the iconography and gender representation of Mary I and Elizabeth I

by

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Between 1553 and 1603, England experienced the reign of its first female rulers. Mary Tudor and Elizabeth Tudor were distinct in that they were women occupying traditionally male positions during a time when women were disenfranchised, marginalized, and infantilized. For the first time, England had to face the rule of a female king, during a time period in which female rulers were contested.

Mary I and Elizabeth I's reigns were remarkably different. The difference between their reigns can be discussed and explained through the contrasts in their gender representation and iconography. The varying portrayals of Mary and Elizabeth during this time exemplify the differences in their political policies, views, and reigns. By using iconography and theories of gender representation, a conclusion can be made about the specific nature of their reigns based on representations through their speeches, accounts of public appearances, and the iconography adopted by the realm as a whole. The difference in the iconography between Mary and Elizabeth points to the adoption of two different models of femininity, namely motherhood and maidenhood, which further shaped the course of their reigns.

Tudor England has been the subject of much academic scholarship, and Elizabeth I and Mary I have received their fair share of the attention. It would have been functionally impossible to review all of the secondary source material on these women, either separately or together, as well as taking into account material on the time period in general. While that is not to excuse any oversights of important critical sources, it does explain a certain level of specificity and care taken when choosing sources and the limited scope of the secondary sources considered. Within the massive amount of scholarship on Tudor England and the Elizabethan era, sources were chosen with care

from within current trends of considering both Mary and Elizabeth within the contexts of gender, women's and sexuality studies. In addition, the work of the foremost scholars on the period has also been included.

David Loades, author of *The Tudor Court*¹, is an important historian in the scholarship of the era and has made many contributions to academia on the subject of both Mary and Elizabeth. His work in *The Tudor Court* is specific to this project as he raises interesting points on court life and whether or not the English people would have welcomed a sole female ruler. He also offers interesting comparisons between Mary I and Elizabeth I, particularly in the ways in which they dealt with their femininity within the political sphere and in their personal lives. Specifically he posits that Mary accepted her womanhood and her traditional inferiority to the men in her life. Elizabeth, by contrast, can be seen as, at the very least, denying that inferiority, if not also her femininity. Loades suggests that Mary served as a daughter of the church and maternal figure, while Elizabeth attempted to become the embodiment of a symbol for the realm.

John N. King has written several books about the Reformation in England, and about Elizabeth I and Mary I. In *Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in an Age of Religious Crisis*², he provides a thorough discussion of the development and enforcement of Tudor symbolism through art, literature, and imagery. Most intriguing for the purposes of this project is a discussion of "The Godly Queens," exploring in depth Elizabeth I and Mary I as queen regnants and the defense of the right of women to rule. This chapter is also important for the discussion of the images of Mary and Elizabeth in the public view and their comparisons with the Virgin Mary, female saints, and other

¹ David Loades, *The Tudor Court* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Book, 1987).

² John N. King, *Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in and Age of Religious Crisis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

biblical women. Important to King's argument is a discussion of Elizabeth I as the archetypal virgin, as discussed through the iconography of her reign and her representation in scholarship. King represents an important move from a discussion of Mary I and Elizabeth I as merely outliers to a consideration of iconography and models that may have worked in their favor as they sought to keep the throne, particularly as the growth of women and gender studies becomes an important part of academia.

Building upon the framework initiated by King, Carole Levin's *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*³ can be seen as an exemplification of the intersection between women and gender studies and history. Levin examines the possibility that Elizabeth I may have seen a genuine need to be viewed as a man to retain her hold on the throne. This need compelled Elizabeth to strike a delicate balance between the representation of self as neither overtly feminine, nor unfeminine enough to seem 'unnatural'. While primarily a source discussing Elizabeth I, it is impossible to discuss one queen regnant without including the other to some extent, which will provide the basis of comparison for my project. Levin has written extensively on Tudor women and the expectation of female behavior, as well as the impact of sexuality on politics in the Renaissance and the Middle Ages.

While not necessarily groundbreaking in the study of the historiography of Mary I and Elizabeth I, John Guy's *The Tudor Monarchy*⁴ offers a strong historical background and context in which to place my primary sources, as well as discussing more specifically the political climate at court during Elizabeth I. Compiled within *The Tudor Monarchy* is another important source to my argument, Sydney Anglo. Much like John N. King, John

³ Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994).

⁴ John Guy, ed., *The Tudor Monarchy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

Guy specializes in the Tudor period and has written extensively on the subject. He is currently a professor at Cambridge University.

Sydney Anglo's *Spectacle Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy*⁵ offers a unique look at the role of pageantry to policy creation and political movements within the Tudor era. Ordered by theme rather than chronology, he discusses the importance and ideas behind court festivals as well as their form and purpose, which will be particularly relevant for this project. His work on the decline of court festivals during the Reformation and a discussion of the place of pageantry during Mary I after her marriage to Philip II of Spain is especially pertinent. Anglo's work is indicative of a shift towards placing more and more importance on the goings on at court and their impact on Tudor politics.

Barry Reay's *Popular Cultures in England: 1550-1750*⁶ focuses more broadly on the attitudes and beliefs of the English people between 1550-1750. Reay also discusses in depth the importance of festivals, masques, and dramas during this period for both the common people and the nobles at court, as well as the interactions that the public may have with these events. This becomes important to the examination of the primary sources regarding entrances to cities by both Mary and Elizabeth, and the part that may have played in the role of affirming their rule in the eyes of the public. Reay states that the purpose of progresses and processions was "to proclaim order" and provide "visual representations of hierarchy."⁷ Using Reay to set the stage for the primary documents will

⁵ Sydney Anglo, *Spectacle Pageantry and Early Tudor Policy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

⁶ Barry Reay, *Popular Cultures in England: 1550-1750* (London: Longman Limited, 1998).

⁷ Reay, 151.

be imperative to interpret the reaction of the citizenry to the iconography introduced (or reintroduced) by Mary and Elizabeth.

The culmination of the growing importance of tradition and social etiquette in scholarship is found in Anna Bryson's *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*.⁸ Bryson presents the important idea that, in the context of early modern social codes, "manners should be taken seriously," and the neglect of manners by historians studying these time periods is nothing short of a vast oversight.⁹ While predominant schools of thought in modern academia may avoid placing importance upon manners and social etiquette as important indicators to understanding the past, they are extremely important for placing actions and ideas within a contextual framework different from our own. Civility and courtesy during the Tudor era played a large role in political conduct, and cannot be ignored when attempting to understand modern and early modern culture. Bryson's book is invaluable to placing actions within their correct historical context and is very much in line with the conclusions that can be drawn from public appearances and statements.

While scholars familiar with the Tudor era will note that Mary and Elizabeth were not the only children of Henry VIII to rule, it is important to make a distinction between Edward VI and his sisters on a basis other than gender. Edward VI ruled for six short years, and was nine years old when he was assumed the throne.¹⁰ Concerned about the passing of the crown to a young boy, Henry VIII made arrangements before his death for a regency council, made up mostly of Edward VI's maternal uncles. Political reforms

⁸ Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

⁹ Bryson, 2-3.

¹⁰ Anglo, 281.

instituted during his reign were the result of the regency council and the political machinations of his family. Arguably, due to the chaotic nature of England during this time, there was not much lasting policy change established during Edward's reign other than Protestant reform. While Edward VI is important in the overarching study of the Tudor monarchy, he does not have a place in this project due to the reasons discussed above.

In the grand scheme of court society, manners and etiquette were vitally important and the Tudor court was no different. Modern conventions may write off manners and traditions as remnants of a time gone by, however tradition and etiquette is extremely important to placing the reigns of Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth in their rightful context. As Anna Bryson suggests, the neglect of manners in contemporary historical work may have seriously limited academic understanding of "early modern society, characterized as it was by a striking preoccupation with manners."¹¹ In the focus of this project, court etiquette would have served as a system of rules that both Mary and Elizabeth were bound to follow, or not with appropriate consequences, in order to support their legitimacy and the strength of their reigns.

Not all pleasures of the court, however, were held within the privacy of their palaces. Civic pageantry and festivities were extremely important to Tudor court society, though the actual appearance of a monarch before the public was rare, and therefore a special cause for celebration.¹² Monarchs and nobles would appear before the public during several events, most notably as a part of "royal progresses when [the monarchs] toured their kingdom, marking out their domains," or as a part of festivities for a

¹¹ Bryson, 3.

¹² Reay, 143.

significant event in their lives, such as a marriage, funeral, or entrance into a city.¹³ Festival books marking these events are important historical documents that survive. While not unique to England, they are an important resource for understanding the role of traditional pageants and royal processions in Tudor court life. They are accounts of important occasions “issued by or with the approval of court, city, or religious authorities.”¹⁴ These primary sources play an important part in the analysis of the differences in iconography and gender representation during the reigns of Queens Mary and Elizabeth by providing a solid basis of comparison between speeches made and pageants held by the two queens.

While England had previously experienced the temporary reign of a queen, it was typically during situations where the king was abroad and intending to return to assume the throne once again. The situation was entirely different in 1553. After a short and tumultuous reign, Edward VI died, unmarried with no male heir to throne. The only legitimate and acknowledged children of Henry VIII were Mary I and Elizabeth I, his daughters by Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn respectively. In the chaos that followed the death of Edward VI, Mary moved quickly to secure her place on the throne.

After the passing of Edward VI, the scramble for the throne was tumultuous, resulting in Lady Jane Grey, his cousin, being proclaimed queen, later to be replaced once the common people rallied in favor of Mary Tudor.¹⁵ Mary, upon hearing that Edward VI had been ill for some time, had made prior arrangements to secure the throne and had retreated back to her estates where she knew she would be supported by the

¹³ Reay, 143.

¹⁴ British Library, “Treasures in Full: Renaissance Festival Books,” accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/basics.html>.

¹⁵ John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments*, 1576. HRI Online Publications. Accessed April 13, 2015. <http://www.johnfoxe.org/>

citizenry, declaring herself Queen.¹⁶ By July 1553, Mary had mustered a military force in Suffolk and planned to march upon London. Support for Jane Grey collapsed and both she, and the architect of the scheme, John Dudley, were imprisoned in the tower of London. In August 1553, Mary returned to London to assume the throne.

Mary was a devout Catholic, like her Spanish mother. The break from the Church in Rome was a source of great discomfort for her. Protestants in England, such as John Foxe, feared that Mary would repeal the laws that had been put in place and “alter religion... and so bryng in the Pope, to the vtter destruction of the realme.”¹⁷ His fears were realized. Soon after her ascension to the throne, she began repealing the Protestant reforms put in place by Edward VI and his regency council. Her devotion to Catholicism was not necessarily a large part of her unpopularity, but her commitment to the papacy and to restoring Church lands and holdings within England earned her the animosity of the nobility.¹⁸ After the break with Rome, Church lands had become private holdings and many nobles stood to lose wealth and influence if the Catholic Church was returned to power in England.

Mary and her advisors began searching for a suitable husband for her almost immediately. Like her father, Mary considered marrying to produce an heir, in order to secure the throne for herself and her descendants, to be a top priority.¹⁹ She married Phillip II of Spain in 1554. However, Mary’s marriage was extremely unpopular with

¹⁶ Foxe contends that during this time Mary earned the support of the citizenry by promising not “attempte the alteration of the religion.” If this was the case, Mary would have gone back on her word almost immediately after taking the throne. However, other sources do not report this and it is unclear whether or not Foxe received untrue information secondhand, or whether he was in the right. See Foxe, Book 4, 969.

¹⁷ Foxe, Book 5, 969.

¹⁸ Guy, 91.

¹⁹ Anglo, 323.

nobility and common people alike; Spain had long been considered one of the traditional enemies of England. Mary's unpopularity increased as she made clear her intention to reunite with the Church in Rome.

The distinctive characteristics of Mary's reign can be seen and exemplified in the primary documents discussing her views on religion and her marriage to Philip II of Spain. While in the Anglican tradition, the king is the head of the Church of England, Mary truly believed that the Pope was the one true head of the Church and by turning away from Rome, the people of England were turning away from God and exposing themselves to "great unquietnes [and] much discord," as religious differences deepened.²⁰ Mary's break from Protestantism was a break in tradition, albeit a tradition that had only been present for the last thirty years. Her wish to return England to Catholicism might have been tolerable if not for her vehement intolerance and persecution of Protestants once she came to the throne. It was her treatment of Protestants that led her critics to refer to her by the moniker 'Bloody Mary.' It is important to note, however, that Mary's interest in restoring the Catholic Church in England was an important part of her unpopularity, and an issue that Elizabeth I (as a Protestant) did not have to face. Mary faced the challenge of converting England, which had officially been Anglican Protestant since 1534 and had remained Protestant under Edward, back to Catholicism. Elizabeth continued the tradition of Protestantism which had been the status quo.

In "An Acte for the Repeale of certayne Actes made in the tyme of kyng Edward the Sixt," Mary repealed numerous acts such as restrictions upon the Sacrament, the

²⁰ Mary I, Queen of England, "An acte for the repeale of certayn actes made in the tyme of Kyng Edwarde the Sixt," 1553. Early English Books Online. Accessed April 16, 2015. http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:33149711

observation of holy days, rules for the election of religious officials, provisions for the marriage of priests, and legitimization of the children of priests.²¹ Interestingly enough, she does not cite herself as the head of the Church which would have passed to her by right upon the death of Edward VI. Rather, she cites the Church of England as having been left to her by “forefathers” who had “lefte by the authoritie of the catholike Churche.”²² Despite the act of Parliament being relatively short at only two pages, an entire paragraph is spent listing out the acts which are to be repealed, down to the specific session of Parliament that was sitting when those acts had been passed. While Mary could have relied upon her inherited position as Head of the Church of England to provide her the authority to repeal such acts, she instead relied upon her secular authority of Queen of England and the support of “the Lordes spirituall and temporall.”²³ In another document, this time supported by both Mary and her husband, Philip II of Spain, she relies upon not only secular authority but also Philip’s authority as her husband when outlawing books by John Calvin, Erasmus Sarcerius, and Thomas Cranmer, among others.²⁴ Despite the fact that Mary was the queen regnant and had the only valid claim to the throne, the act is passed by “[t]he kyng and quene, our soveraygne Lord and Lady.”²⁵

²¹ Mary I, Queen of England, “An acte for the repeale...”

²² Mary I, Queen of England, “An acte for the repeale...”

²³ Many of the men whose books were banned in this act are prominent Protestant reformers or theologians. In the case of Thomas Cranmer, he was a leader of the English Reformation and lived during Mary’s lifetime. He served as the Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry VIII and helped support the case for the annulment of the marriage between Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, Mary’s mother. After Mary’s accession to the throne, he was tried and convicted of heresy and treason and executed. See Mary I, Queen of England, “An acte for the repeale...”

²⁴ Mary I, Queen of England, “By the Kyng and the Quene whereas by the statue made in the seconde yeare of Kyng Henry the Fourth, concernyng the repression of heresies...” 1555. Early English Books Online. Accessed March 31, 2015. http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:33150817

²⁵ Mary I, Queen of England, “By the Kyng and Quene ...”

This supports a traditional mindset in keeping with the idea of a husband ruling over a wife, and would have been done with Mary's approval.

Her dependence upon secular power as the Queen of England, rather than her right as the Head of the Church, was a result of her devoutness and piety. Mary could have smoothed her way to pass further religious reforms in the future by taking less aggressive pro-Catholic measures. It is also possible that her reluctance to draw upon any perceived power as head of the Church led to her portrayal in iconography as "God's handmaid" rather than the more imposing "Defender of the Faith" that Henry VIII was known for before breaking with the Church.²⁶ The image of Mary as a 'handmaid' of God is feminine in nature and does not inspire the awe or fear that more militant and aggressive titles may have stirred. As such, this is one indication that Mary preferred to represent herself as a woman rather than falling back upon the traditional representation of the King.

Additionally, and arguably in contrast to the role that Elizabeth took, Mary sought to convey the image that she was the mother of the realm, aligning herself with archetypal images of motherhood rather than maidenhood. In her speech at the Guildhall in 1554, in the midst of Wyatt's Rebellion,²⁷ Mary alluded to herself as the mother of the kingdom, saying,

I cannot tell how naturally a mother loveth [a] child, for I was never the mother of any; but certainly, if a Prince and Governor may as naturally and earnestly love

²⁶ King, 191.

²⁷ Wyatt's Rebellion was led by Thomas Wyatt in 1554, and arose out of protest against Mary I's upcoming marriage to Philip II of Spain. While her marriage is the assumed trigger for the rebellion, it is important to note that the rebellion's leaders were all Protestant. There may have been religious motivation for the uprising in addition to unhappiness over her insistence on marrying Philip.

her subjects as the mother doth love the child, then assure yourselves that I, being your lady and mistress, do as earnestly love and favour you.²⁸

The image of Mary as a mother figure continues in the iconography of the time and has very different connotations than the image of a fatherly king, particularly in lieu of the fact that Mary had no children and no heir apparent to the throne. Both Elizabeth and Mary were associated with biblical female figures in an attempt to justify the legitimacy of their reigns. Mary, however, was more commonly associated with the Madonna and Child, alongside the device of St. George slaying the Dragon (an image associated with the defeat of paganism).²⁹ Mary's association with the Madonna and Child, rather than simply the Virgin Mary, is specific due to the fact that she had no children and married Philip II rather late in her life, with no guarantee that she would produce an heir to the throne.

Mary's image as a mother was particularly pertinent after her marriage to Philip II of Spain, a move that was extremely unpopular with the nobility and the citizenry at large. Wyatt's rebellion was, in part, motivated by her unpopular marriage in addition to her religious reforms. Despite issuing an act of Parliament to punish naysayers and critics of the Crown, her marriage remained unpopular. "By the Queene where the Queenes most excellent Maiestie hath lately concluded a mariage..." is an edict from 1554, directly addressing the response to Mary's marriage by "diverse lewde and sediciouse personnes" seeking to sow discord within the realm.³⁰ Any person caught

²⁸ John Foxe, "The Oration of Q. Mary in the Guild Halle," University of Sheffield, accessed 4 March, 2015.
<http://www.johnfoxe.org/index.php?realm=text&gototype=modern&edition=1570&pageid=1618>

²⁹ King, 185.

³⁰ Mary I, Queen of England, "By the Queene where the Queenes most excellent Maiestie hath lately concluded a mariage..." 1554. Early English Books Online. Accessed March 4, 2015.

treating the Prince or any of his entourage with “any manner cause of strife or contention...taunting words, unseemly countenance, or by any other wayes or means whereby lack of frendeshyp or good will,” would earn the Queen’s displeasure and be committed to prison without bail.³¹ This is an interesting document since after her marriage to Philip, most Parliamentary acts began with the traditional form: “By the Kyng and Quene...” with Philip’s title as King of England cited before Mary’s, indicating his importance and his dominant role as a male, despite not being from England or having any claim to the throne beyond his marriage to the Queen regnant. It is possible that this document retains the introduction of “By the Queene,” due to the personal nature of the request. It is one of the last surviving documents to use this form during Mary’s reign.

After Mary’s death following long illness in November 1558, the scramble for the throne started again, though Elizabeth I was far better situated than her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots. Philip II had exerted himself to align with Elizabeth and had contacted her before Mary’s death, alerting her of her sister’s illness and the possibility that she would soon pass away, leaving the throne open for the taking. Philip, who had never been crowned King of England regardless of his name on legislative documents, would lose all power once Mary died, particularly since they did not have any children. It was in his best interest to get into Elizabeth’s good graces, and he attempted to court her after her coronation.

Primary documents from the time of Elizabeth’s reveal a different monarch than Mary. Elizabeth was primarily focused on solidifying her hold on power and calming

http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:33150885

³¹ Mary I, Queen of England, “By the Queene...”

religious tumult in England. In her first published speech, addressed to some of her gathered lords at Hatfield House before her coronation, Elizabeth made clear that while she would accept, and even welcome, the advice of the nobility, she considered her ascension to the throne commanded by God and she was “ordained to obey His appointment,” and to “be the minister of His heavenly will in this office.”³² Additionally, she required her lords to be “faithful hearts in [service to the realm] as from time to time shall be in your powers towards the preservation of me and this commonwealth,” implying that preservation of her reign would be the safeguarding of England itself.³³

Perhaps wisely, Elizabeth stated early on in her reign that she had no wish to marry. Within the first years of her reign, she made several speeches to Parliament regarding their petition that she marry, each insisting more and more vehemently that she would not do so, and that she would remain “[a] virgin pure until her death.”³⁴ While she entertained several courtships during her lifetime, many of them were politically relevant and important, regardless of any emotional attachment on her part.³⁵ Her decision not to marry was counter to any conventional wisdom or belief of the time that women could live independently outside the state of marriage.

In later speeches, particularly her addresses and responses to the Parliament in regards to her marriage, Elizabeth explicitly addressed the problem of securing an heir, saying that “the realm shall not remain destitute of an heir that may be a fit governor,” despite her intention to remain unmarried.³⁶ In an alternate version of the speech,

³² Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 52.

³³ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 52.

³⁴ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 60.

³⁵ Levin, 39.

³⁶ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 58.

Elizabeth contends, “I am already bound to a husband, which is the kingdom of England.”³⁷ In comparison to Henry VIII, whose manic concern for a male heir led him to break from the Catholic church and marry six different women, and Mary, who married quickly after ascending to the throne in order to produce an heir, Elizabeth’s lack of concern seems rather blasé, particularly during a time when men were seen as God’s representative and the ruler of their family.³⁸ Women with typically dominant male roles, such as those who wore breeches or beat their husbands, were associated with adultery, unruliness, and strife against God.³⁹ Knowing this, and that her marriage was a matter of state rather than simply a woman’s place in the natural order, Elizabeth purposefully sought to promote the image of herself as married to the realm rather than unmarried and single.

Elizabeth was not hesitant to call upon her sex as an example of weakness, calling herself a “woman wanting both wit and memory,” when answering a House of Common’s petition that she marry and give the realm an heir.⁴⁰ She also referenced her youth and innocence by saying that “[t]he weight and greatness of this matter might cause in me... some fear to speak and bashfulness besides, a thing appropriate to my sex.”⁴¹ That said, she insisted that God had seen fit to place her on the “princely seat and kingly throne,” which forced her to deal with such matters and to reassure the Commons of the safety of the realm.⁴² Elizabeth acknowledged the conventional wisdom that the female body is weaker than the mans on several occasions during her reign, but often followed

³⁷ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 59.

³⁸ Reay, 20.

³⁹ Reay, 20-21.

⁴⁰ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 70.

⁴¹ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 70.

⁴² Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 70.

up this acknowledgment with a reassurance that God himself has ordained her as ruler of England, unworthy as she may be. Her self-description as ‘weak’ or ‘bashful’ was restricted to purely domestic audiences, excepting the cases when she was refusing a courtship. By calling herself weak and using self-deprecating language, Elizabeth was reaffirming her representation as a woman and perhaps even playing upon the paternalistic views of her Parliament. This could only have been done intentionally, with an eye towards paternalism and how it was likely to spur the men of Parliament to react in return.

The rhetoric surrounding Elizabeth as ‘mother’ of the realm also seems to be prevalent in the petitions written to her from Parliament, though it is unclear whether that discourse was adopted from the earlier fashion of addressing Mary in that way. While Elizabeth had no biological children and would die childless, she claimed in one speech that all the people of England were her children and that she was occupied enough taking care of them.⁴³ While the petitioners of Parliament argued that her lack of an heir was a safety issue for the people of the realm and cited other childless monarchs as an example, it is arguable that the common people of England cared little that Elizabeth was childless.⁴⁴ Elizabeth was very popular during her reign, and even before her coronation. In a document recording the procession preceding her coronation and describing her entrance into London, the common people are described as greeting her with “prayers,

⁴³ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 59.

⁴⁴ Unknown. *The Lords’ Petition to the Queen*, ca. February 1563, National Archives, State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth 12/27/35[A], fols. 135r-138v, reprinted in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 81.

wishes, welcoming cries, tender words, and all other signes.”⁴⁵ While such a document ought to be taken as biased due to the fact that festival books were often state-produced and distributed, it certainly paints a picture of a happy citizenry not at all concerned with the sex of their soon to be crowned ruler – perhaps they were pleased that Elizabeth, by all accounts, was not nearly as religiously fanatic as her sister and did not have the strike against her of a foreign marriage.

Unlike Mary, Elizabeth was a Protestant who favored a more moderate approach to religion in a time when most people were extremely zealous.⁴⁶ While Mary tended to shy away from her image as “head of the Church,” which was anathema to Catholic belief, Elizabeth embraced that image. She had been raised Anglican Protestant, and upon assuming the throne adopted the title of “Defender of the Faith,” just as Mary I and Henry VIII had before her (despite the fact that the title had been awarded to him by the Pope). She also adopted the title of “Supreme Governor over the Church of England,” which was a compromise decided upon by her Parliament, which was composed of papists as well as Anglican Protestants.⁴⁷ Elizabeth was deeply religious and often alluded to God in her speeches, particularly relating to her appointment by Him as the sole monarch of England. Both Elizabeth and Mary utilized the traditional ability of monarchs to heal wounds through ‘royal touch,’ but the ability was especially pertinent to Elizabeth’s representation as the Virgin Queen, and her close iconographic representation

⁴⁵ S. Busby, “The Royall Passage of her Maiesty from the Tower of London, to her Palace of White-hall, with al the Speaches and Deuices, both of the pageants and otherwise, together with her Maiesties seuerall Answers, and most pleasing Speaches to them all,” London, 1604, from “Treasures in Full: Renaissance Festival Books.”

⁴⁶ Levin, 17.

⁴⁷ Levin, 14.

as the Virgin Mary.⁴⁸ Divine power was not unheard of among female saints and it was upon that association that Elizabeth called, seeking to align herself with women who had been gifted in reward for their chastity.

Perhaps more interesting was Elizabeth's self-identification as a "prince" rather than a "princess" of the realm. Upon numerous occasions she identified herself with the masculine descriptor of 'prince,' even alluding to manly honor by saying, "I will never break the word of a prince spoken in public place for my honor[']s sake," despite the fact that as a woman, she would already have no masculine honor to defend.⁴⁹ Self-identification with the masculine role of 'prince' over 'princess' may have been an intentional disassociation from her sex in order to wield more authority. Her word choice appears to be intentional since, in other speeches, she refers to herself as a "lady" or a "woman," and plays upon the various expectations that would have come with adopting that role.⁵⁰ This association with 'princehood' seems to be an individual choice rather than a regime standard; in the festival book for her entry into London before her coronation, she is described as either, "the Lady Elizabeth," or "her Grace," or "the Queenes Maiesty," all three of which are traditional terms of address for female monarchs, whether they are sole rulers or at the side of a king.⁵¹

When placed side by side, Mary I and Elizabeth I represent two warring female models in English history. Mary I arguably represented the 'mother figure' while Elizabeth firmly occupied the place of the 'virgin.' While both Mary and Elizabeth were

⁴⁸ Levin, 16.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, 95.

⁵⁰ Richard Mulcaster, *The Passage of Our Most Dread Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth Through Westminster the Day Before Her Coronation*, reprinted in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 53.

⁵¹ Busby, "The Royall Passage of her Maiesty from the Tower of London."

associated with imagery surrounding the Blessed Virgin, Elizabeth intended to be represented in speeches as a virgin figure and arguably encouraged the rise of the cult of personality that grew around her as the Virgin Queen, and her associations with the Virgin Mary. Mary I, on the other hand, tended to favor imagery that was more Catholic in nature and dependent upon the image of motherhood, such as her association with the Madonna and Child, or her expression of herself as the mother of all England.⁵²

A stark comparison of Mary and Elizabeth side by side can be seen in *An Allegory of the Tudor Succession: The Family of Henry VIII* (see figure 1).⁵³ Dated around 1590, this oil and panel piece is a depiction of Henry VIII flanked by his children. Though Elizabeth would have been old at the time of the painting, she is pictured as a young woman dressed in white and gold, standing on Henry's right side with her brother, Edward VI. In contrast, Mary is painted as a dour, older woman, and is placed on Henry's left side with Philip II of Spain. The look on Elizabeth's face appears to be serene, while Mary seems to be frowning. Henry VIII's expression is more oriented towards the right side of the painting, and all of the figures on that side of the painting are in white and gold, suggesting purity and majesty. Mary and Phillip still retain the gold in their clothing, but are painted as wearing all black. This is not unusual for the representation of Mary in portraiture. While there are few confirmed portraits of her, she is often pictured as a frowning, stern woman, dressed in black. This is consistent with portraits painted during her reign, such as Anthonis Mor's *Mary Tudor, Queen of England*, painted in

⁵² Foxe, "Oration of Q. Mary at the Guild Hall."

⁵³ Unknown Artist, *An Allegory of the Tudor Succession: The Family of Henry VIII*, ca. 1590, oil on panel, 45 x 71 ¾ in., Yale Center for British Art. See figure 1.

1554 near the end of her life (see figure 2).⁵⁴ This image of Mary directly contrasts with the typical representation of Elizabeth, who is usually painted in white and wearing a serene, or calm, expression, such as in the *Portrait of Elizabeth I, Queen of England*, painted in 1558 near the beginning of her reign (see figure 3).⁵⁵ Extending the difference a bit further, it could be reflective of the overall depiction of Mary and Elizabeth during their reigns; Mary as the stern mother, and Elizabeth as the pure and innocent virgin. In a contemporary account of Mary's appearance written in the last year of her reign, she is described as having "wrinkles, caused more by anxieties than by age, which make her appear some years older, her aspect, for the rest, is very grave."⁵⁶ Elizabeth, for comparison, is described by the same source to be, "comely rather than handsome... tall and well formed, with good skin."⁵⁷ It is possible that the image of Mary as the mother of the realm arose out of necessity rather than choice, based upon her appearance and her age when she took the throne.

It is interesting to observe that Mary and Elizabeth adopted two different female models when they were subject to the same criticism. One of the top critics of female rule, John Knox, wrote in response to Queen Mary's reign but published at the beginning of Elizabeth's. In his *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous regiment of Women*, he cites many reasons why the rule of women was abhorrent to him, mostly

⁵⁴ Antonis Mor, *Mary Tudor, Queen of England*, ca. 1554, painting, Museo del Prado. See figure 2.

⁵⁵ School of Marcus Geeraerts the Younger, *Portrait of Elizabeth I, Queen of England*, 1558, painting on canvas, 176 x 144 cm, Galleria Palatina. See figure 3.

⁵⁶ 'Venice: May 1557, 11-15,' in *Calendar of State Papers Relating To English Affairs in the Archives of Venice*, Volume 6, 1555-1558, ed. Rawdon Brown (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1877), 1041-1095, accessed April 15, 2015, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol6/pp1041-1095>.

⁵⁷ 'Venice: May 1557, 11-15.'

based in religion.⁵⁸ Knox writes extremely clearly that the rule of “Wicked Woman [Mary I],” is contrary to the advice of the prophets and is a crime against nature and God.⁵⁹ Women have been given a punishment by God as a consequence of the Fall, in two parts; one, the pain of childbirth and two, subservience and subjugation to men (namely her husband or father).⁶⁰ It is upon this latter point that the focus of Knox’s argument rests. Furthermore, he cites examples of women in leadership positions from the Bible seemingly to prove that while there were exceptions to this, it was only through God that women could be given permission to rule.⁶¹ Knox would eventually have to face consequences for what he wrote, as evidenced by a letter written to Elizabeth I in July 1559 regarding *The First Blast of the Trumpet*.⁶² While he does not recant any of the statements made in his earlier text, even going so far as to say that he was not, “mynded to retract or to call any principall point or proposition,” of the text, Knox does concede that Elizabeth I could be an exception given to England by God, adopting similar rhetoric to what she herself used to justify her reign.⁶³ It is unclear whether Knox truly did believe

⁵⁸ John Knox, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous regiment of Women*, ed. Edward Arber (1878). Project Gutenberg. Accessed March 31, 2015.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9660/9660-h/9660-h.htm>

⁵⁹ Knox, *The First Blast...*, Preface.

⁶⁰ Knox, *The First Blast...*, The Declamation.

⁶¹ Knox specifically cites Deborah and Huldah as examples of the ills that can befall society when women are in charge. Deborah was a female prophet and judge who is mentioned extensively in the book of Judges. Similarly, Huldah was also a female prophet mentioned in the book of Kings and Chronicles. Knox also cites the example of the Daughters of Zelophehad, who brought the issue of female inheritance and right to rule before Moses, who later brought the case to God. While He said that their case was just, the daughters were advised to marry men within their clan to preserve the property they had inherited. (Num. 36:10-11) These examples appear to be of women who are above the rule only due to their gifts given by God. Knox does not elaborate upon these examples. See Knox, *The First Blast...*, Answers to Objections.

⁶² John Knox, *Declaration to Queen Elizabeth*, ed. Edward Arber (1878). Project Gutenberg. Accessed April 14, 2015. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9660/9660-h/9660-h.htm#20july>

⁶³ Knox, *Declaration to Queen Elizabeth*.

Elizabeth I to be an exception, or whether he was concerned for his safety in the face of the Queen's displeasure.

Supposed subservience to men is brought up often as justification against Mary and Elizabeth's reigns, and is dealt with in two different ways. In the example of Mary, she subjected herself to marriage and calmed protesters by conforming to traditional gender expectations and power structures, despite creating more protests by choosing her husband unwisely. Elizabeth rejected the idea of marriage and built upon the dual ideas of her marriage to England and her eternal virginity as mandated by God, though she alluded to popular thought by using the discourse of 'weakness' when discussing her body. When faced with a similar problem, these two women came up with unique and different solutions that arguably shaped the character of their reigns, and their solutions were expressed primarily through the varying iconographic associations and personal gender representations expressed in their speeches and public appearances.

In conclusion, Queens Mary I and Elizabeth I are important examples of how gender representation through iconography and speeches can be used to shape the character of a reign. The specific nature of Mary's reign, as characterized by her unpopular marriage to Philip II of Spain and her reaction to Anglican Protestantism due to her Catholic roots, can be well expressed and seen through her expression as a mother of the realm and her iconographic roots to the Madonna and Child. Elizabeth I, on the other hand, had a reign that was associated more with religious tolerance and the cult of the Virgin Queen that grew around her, and fittingly she was more associated with the Virgin Mary and as bound in matrimony to England itself rather than any mortal husband. The female roles adopted by Mary and Elizabeth regarding motherhood and

virginity shaped the nature of their reigns. It is undeniable, however, that it was their unconventional circumstances as female rulers in a male-dominated age, and their expression of that female-ness that has captured modern thought and makes them a popular subject of study even to this day.

Appendix



Figure 1: Unknown Artist, *An Allegory of the Tudor Succession: The Family of Henry VIII*, ca. 1590, oil on panel, 45 x 71 $\frac{3}{4}$ in., Yale Center for British Art. Reproduced from ArtSTOR, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 16, 2015).



Figure 2: Antonis Mor, *Mary Tudor, Queen of England*, ca. 1554, painting, Museo del Prado. Reproduced from ArtSTOR, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 16, 2015).



Figure 3: School of Marcus Geeraerts the Younger, *Portrait of Elizabeth I, Queen of England*, 1558, painting on canvas, 176 x 144 cm, Galleria Palatina. Reproduced from ArtSTOR, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 16, 2015).

Primary Source Bibliography

British Library. "Treasures in Full: Renaissance Festival Books." Accessed October 16, 2014. <http://special-1.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/search.aspx>.

This primary source collection contains festival books between 1475-1700. Festival books describe ceremonies and celebrations and are issued with the approval of court, city, or religious authorities. Festival books can be as detailed as eyewitness accounts of an event, or simply a list of names of those who attended the event. Digitized online are resources for royal entries into cities, documents describing the coronation of Elizabeth, festival books for the entry into London of Philip II and Mary after their marriage. These may provide an eyewitness account of the traditions observed during these events, as well as the attitude of the people towards the monarchs.

Busby, S. "The Royall Passage of her Maiesty from the Tower of London, to her Palace of White-hall, with al the Speaches and Deuices, both of the pageants and otherwise, together with her Maiesties seuerall Answers, and most pleasing Speaches to them all." London, 1604. From "Treasures in Full: Renaissance Festival Books." Accessed October 16, 2014. <http://special-1.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/search.aspx>.

A contemporary account of Elizabeth's passage through London during her coronation and the speeches and pageants given in her honor. Particularly interesting is how the crowd rejoiced, however this source ought to be read with an awareness of bias. Festival books were often state funded and produced as mementos of important days in the monarchs lives.

Elizabeth I. *Collected Works*. Edited by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

An extremely thorough collection of the speeches, letters, prayers, songs, and other written documents produced by Elizabeth I (or relating to Elizabeth) during her reign.

Foxe, John. "The Oration of Q. Mary in the Guilde Halle." University of Sheffield. Accessed March 4, 2015. <http://www.johnfoxe.org/index.php?realm=text&gototype=modern&edition=1570&pageid=1618>

In this source, John Foxe recounts a speech made by Queen Mary at the Guildhall in London, in the midst of Wyatt's rebellion. This speech, one of the few of Queen Mary's speeches to be recorded, is extremely important for identifying

the imagery and iconography that she relied upon to try and boost her popularity with the people. In this instance, Mary was trying to beseech her fellow Englishmen to fight for her against a rebellious force that wanted to depose her. Apparently, it was highly successful as Wyatt's force was stopped on the outskirts of London and the rebels were captured and executed.

John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments*, 1576. HRI Online Publications. Accessed April 13, 2015. <http://www.johnfoxe.org/>

Foxe's Acts and Monuments are an important Protestant text that also happens to provide a record of Mary's reign and the one surviving speech that she made (cited above). As a note, Foxe was a Protestant martyr and should be read with an awareness of his bias against Mary, who was attempting to restore Catholicism in England.

Knox, John. *Declaration to Queen Elizabeth*. Edited by Edward Arber (1878). Project Gutenberg. Accessed April 14, 2015. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9660/9660-h/9660-h.htm#20july>

The letter that Knox wrote Elizabeth I after she expressed her displeasure with his book, 'The First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous regiment of Women.' Knox contends that it is possible that Elizabeth is an exception due to the fact that she had been granted the crown by God, but refuses to recant his earlier statements.

Knox, John. *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous regiment of Women*. Edited by Edward Arber (1878). Project Gutenberg. Accessed March 31, 2015. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9660/9660-h/9660-h.htm>

Knox provides important example of the protests that Mary I and Elizabeth I taking the throne inspired in religious men of the time. His treatise against women rulers was originally meant to be a response to Mary taking the throne, but was not published until after Elizabeth's coronation. Knox would later be forced to issue an apology to Elizabeth, though he refused to recant his statements.

Mary I, Queen of England. "An acte for the repeale of certayn actes made in the tyme of Kyng Edwarde the Sixt." 1553. Harvard University Library. Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Accessed November 23, 2014. http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:33149711.

This act was passed shortly after Mary took power to repeal specific acts that were passed by her brother, Edward VI, in his short duration on the throne before his death. The acts specifically appealed were those pertaining to the election of bishops, the marriage of the clergy, and administration of Holy Communion. This act is significant due to Mary's fervor towards religion and reuniting England with the Catholic Church. The attempted return to Catholicism is a characteristic part of her reign and one of the ways in which she differs from Elizabeth.

Mary I, Queen of England. "By the Kyng and Quene where as by the statute made in the seconde yeare of Kyng Henry the Fourth, concernyng the repression of heresies..." 1555. Society of Antiquaries. Accessed November 23, 2014. http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:33150817.

Another act that was passed during Mary's reign, with an eye towards religion, this act sets up extreme punishments and outlaws the carrying and reading of certain texts (notably any text by John Calvin or Martin Luther). Mary was not known for her religious tolerance and this is an example of how she sought to return England to Catholicism, while Elizabeth was much more tolerant and a Protestant. Additionally, the introduction of 'by the Kyng and Quene' is significant in pointing out Mary's willingness to conform to traditional norms of marriage during the time.

Mary I, Queen of England. "By the Queene where the Queenes most excellent Maiestie hath lately concluded a mariage ..." 1554. Society of Antiquaries. Accessed February 11, 2015. http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:33150885.

This primary source is an edict that was issued shortly after Mary's marriage to Philip II of Spain and concerns the general treatment of the new prince and his train (the attendants that travelled with him). This document can be used to exemplify how England received their new King, as the relationship between England and Spain was typically very strained.

Mulcaster, Richard. *The Passage of Our Most Dread Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth Through Westminster the Day Before Her Coronation*. Reprinted in *Elizabeth I, Collected Works*. Edited by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Mulcaster's account of Elizabeth's entrance and passage through Westminster before her coronation provides an important contemporary example of Elizabeth's self-representation as a woman being situation specific. During and before her coronation, she referred to herself (and was referred to) with feminine identifiers such as 'lady'. After her coronation, she adopted 'prince' and 'kingly'

in certain speeches to Parliament. This source points to the intentionality of the rhetoric she used.

Unknown. *The Lords' Petition to the Queen*. Circa February 1563, National Archives, State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth 12/27/35[A], fols. 135r-138v. Reprinted in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*. Edited by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

The original petition that Elizabeth was responding to in one of her speeches regarding the matter of her marriage. This petition is important over the others because it cites other childless rulers as examples of the chaos that would be caused by Elizabeth dying without an heir, making her marriage imperative for the safety of England.

'Venice: May 1557, 11-15.' In *Calendar of State Papers Relating To English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Volume 6, 1555-1558*. Edited by Rawdon Brown. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1877. Accessed April 15, 2015.
<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol6/pp1041-1095>.

A collection of correspondence of the Venetian Ambassador to England during the time of Mary I and Elizabeth I, which includes descriptions of both queens and their relationships with each other, as well as his personal opinion on Mary's pregnancy, Philip's relationship with Elizabeth, and thorough descriptions of the political situation in England at the time.

Secondary Source Bibliography

Anglo, Sydney. *Spectacle Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.

Anglo presents a discussion of the importance of what he calls 'spectacle pageantry' to policy and political motions within the Tudor era, and breaks his work into ten parts, which appear to be ordered by theme rather than chronologically. For my purposes, the part pertaining specifically to court festivals and their form and purpose, as well as the section pertaining to Mary I and Phillip will be particularly relevant to my thesis. Discussion of Elizabeth may be found further in other parts, and there is a section pertaining to Elizabeth's mother, Anne Boleyn, and the decline of court festivals during the Reformation.

Bryson, Anna. *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

This work discusses the development and meaning behind ideas of civility and courtesy during Tudor and Stuart England, with a special focus on the importance of placing manners in a historical context. Bryson also posits the idea that manners are invisible to those within a society and evident to all others outside. This source may be useful in placing Tudor manners and court traditions in context. The source also includes a useful section on the historiography of the study of manners and the importance of this study in the understanding of modern and early modern culture.

Guy, John, ed. *The Tudor Monarchy*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1997.

Guy offers a reader of material on the Tudor Monarchy, as the book suggests, though only two (or at most, three) articles are relevant for my purposes. The article "Court and polity under Elizabeth I" and "Favourites and factions at the Elizabethan court" may have information of context that might be important to placing the festival books in their appropriate historical context and providing background information to try and create comparisons between Elizabeth and Mary.

King, John N. *Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in an Age of Religious Crisis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.

This source provides a thorough discussion of the development and enforcement of Tudor iconography through literature, art, and imagery. Perhaps most intriguing about this source is its entire chapter on "The "Godly" Queens" which discusses in depth Elizabeth and Mary as the first queen regnants and the defense

of the right of women (especially royal women) to rule. The chapter discusses the images of Elizabeth and Mary and their comparisons with the Virgin Mary, many female saints and other biblical women, and the differences between their comparisons.

Levin, Carole. *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.

This source discusses the construction of Elizabeth I as a female ruler in regards to the gender norms of the time. It examines the possibility that Elizabeth may have seen a genuine need for her to be viewed as a man to retain her hold on power and the delicate balance of a representation of self that is not overtly feminine but also not so unfeminine as to seem “unnatural”. This source, while primarily about Elizabeth, also includes many mentions of Mary which may be useful for comparisons between the two. Levin also relies on “many sources” to evaluate Elizabeth, including tracts and pamphlets, religious works, Parliamentary statutes, sermons, homilies, diaries, gossip, rumour, calendars, liturgy and recorded dreams about Elizabeth.

Loades, David. *The Tudor Court*. Totowa: New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Book, 1987.

Contains information about both Mary I and Elizabeth I and has interesting theories about whether or not the greeting of a Queen regnant would have been an unprecedented event for the English people, and whether or not they would have welcomed a Queen as sole ruler. Loades also provides a light comparison between Mary and Elizabeth, including the idea that Mary accepted that because she was a woman, she ought to be inferior to the men in her life. Loades is an extremely credible source; he is a historian who specializes in the Tudor era and is now an honorary member of the history faculty at University of Oxford. His prominence within the field justifies this source as a worthwhile inclusion to a project about Mary and Elizabeth.

Reay, Barry. *Popular Cultures in England: 1550-1750*. London: Longman Limited, 1998.

Reay focuses broadly on the attitudes and beliefs of the English people between 1550-1750. This source may be too contemporary for Mary, who died in 1558, but could also be useful for making inferences of feelings at the end of her reign and the beginning of Elizabeth's.