중세르네상스영문학
제15권 1호 (2007): 101-138

Remembering Cynthia: The Legacy of Elizabeth I in the Poetry of Aemilia Lanyer and Diana Primrose

Younkyung Kim (University of Minnesota, Twin Cities)

Elizabeth I was one of the most conspicuous women in early modern Europe. Unlike most female members of royal families, she continuously presented herself through diverse channels to the English people after she ascended the throne in 1588. Her portraits, her prayers, and her speeches were circulated among the public, and she staged her very self in her processions throughout the country and in her public addresses. Moreover, while ruling England and its people as an unmarried woman, she also brought significant changes to people's perception of and expectations for the female gender: Elizabeth I existed as an anomaly of gender structure and hierarchy, dominating male subjects who implicitly or explicitly expressed their fear of the "unnatural" phenomenon of female rulership.

To justify her right to rule England and to reduce common anxiety among her subjects, the queen exhaustively used conflicting gender expectations for females as well as the theory of absolute monarchy. As numerous scholars have noted, she was represented by both herself and her people as the mother, wife, or lover of England, a second Virgin Mary, an Amazon, a maid, and at times an old hag.[1] On the other hand, because she was famous for her eloquent speech, rhetoric, and command of several foreign languages, her words and her image as an excellent orator and a master of language produced a new idea of female intellect, education, and writing.[2] This long list of female images and roles played by the queen remained a haunting influence on various sectors of society in the Stuart period, especially on the notion of female authorship and readership. The project of this paper is to trace the images of Elizabeth I and her influence as a gender role model and as a female author on two women poets of the seventeenth century, Aemilia Lanyer and Diana Primrose. In particular, I will address Lanyer's dedicatory poems for her Passion poem, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* and Primrose' "A Chaine of Pearle," a poem that directly memorializes Elizabeth I.

To contextualize the two early seventeenth-century women poets' responses to Elizabeth I as a female ruler-cum-role model, we may benefit from a brief

---

1) Carol Levin's *The Heart and Stomach of a King* has a good summary of the changing representation of Elizabeth I during her reign, and Helen Hackett focuses on the relationship between the image of the Virgin Mary and that of the queen in *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen.* Mary Beth Rose examines the tendency of current studies on the representation of the queen in her article, "The Gendering of Authority in the Public Speeches of Elizabeth I."

2) The inscription on Elizabeth I's tomb by James I praises the queen for her "perfect skill in very many [l]anguages." Quoted in Julia Walker, "Bones of Contention: Posthumous Images of Elizabeth and Stuart Politics," *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana*, ed. Walker (Durham: Duke UP, 1998) 256.

sketch of how the queen was perceived in a variety of ways in her lifetime and after her death. During her reign, the monarch herself provided diverse, often conflicting images of herself that ranged from a meek maid to belligerent Judith in order to meet the needs of different political situations, and groups with disparate political or religious credos picked up and appropriated these images of the queen for their own interests. Certainly, these two sides, the queen's self-representation and the people's varying appropriation of her images, interacted with each other and changed according to shifts in the political and diplomatic situation throughout her reign.

For example, though they were the most notable attributes of the queen, even the images of a virgin and a mother, respectively, were far from consistent in Elizabeth I's own words as well as those of her courtiers and enemies mainly because the value of the two concepts, virginity and maternity, always fluctuated and remained open to controversy. It may have been easier for Elizabeth I to utilize the positive connotations of virginity such as moral piety, gentleness, and sexual innocence soon after she succeeded Mary Tudor and was still able to marry and conceive. The value of virginity, however, could no longer be so high when the queen grew old even though, notwithstanding drooping breasts, she still dressed like a maid and obstinately refused to name a successor to the panic of her people. Even the image of a mother was not always positive because, as Mary Beth Rose points out, there also existed a deep-rooted prejudice that mothers could not properly serve in the public domain (1079).

Images of Elizabeth I became even more diverse after her death, for she could no longer control her representations, and some issues concerning her representations, no longer mattered to the public. Though anti-Elizabethan pamphlets appeared even during her lifetime, especially in Catholic circles, upon her death, the queen became more vulnerable to such derogatory terms. On the

other hand, some authors may have felt more comfortable with praising her excessively because, as Helen Hackett points out, praising or deifying a dead figure needed not be viewed as despicable flattery (226). Moreover, because James I succeeded her without any civil war, it became possible to praise Elizabeth I's virginity without feeling anxiety over her sexuality or capability to marry and to conceive an heir.

Of course, changes in the political situation and the people's response to them during the reigns of James I and Charles I are of immense importance in understanding the posthumous representations of the queen. The high expectation and comfort that James I brought at his succession and the disappointment (or at least disillusion) that this Scottish-born king and, later, Charles I's French, Catholic consort, Henrietta Maria, caused in many Englishmen can explain the inflation and deflation of the queen's popularity to a considerable extent. Jacobean and Caroline pacifist policies continuously disappointed some zealous Protestants who hoped that their own country would espouse the Protestant cause in Continental politics, and this group tended to remember Elizabeth I's reign as a golden age, indeed, of right government and true religion, idolizing the late queen immensely.

In addition to historical changes in the representation and perception of the queen, the factor of gender can be considered. Male and female responses to Elizabeth I as a female ruler differed for several reasons. Most of all, though men and women alike regarded Elizabeth I as an extraordinary case, psychological reaction to the unprecedented phenomenon of a woman's dominance over men could not be the same, for more men could be much more nervous about a female monarch who threatened their gender identity. The possibility of identification and emulation also differed depending on the gender of those who perceived and represented the queen: unlike male authors, who

were always aware of the distance between the queen and themselves, more women could embrace Elizabeth I as a new gender role model, hoping to emulate the queen. Third, this gendered perspective resulted from the different relationships that men and women had with gender-coded rhetorical strategies and conceptual models. For instance, the Petrarchan love language that Elizabeth I's male subjects exploited to facilitate their relationship throughout her reign was utterly useless to her female subjects (McBride 50-51). On the other hand, the queen's image of motherhood may have been much more attractive to female authors who had or could have similar experiences.

In addition to disparate female and male perspectives in appreciating Elizabeth I's achievements, there may have been a difference between the sexes in the amount of interest in addressing the memory of the queen. Interestingly enough, as Lisa Gim reports, after Elizabeth I's death, more women writers actively wrote about the queen than did their male counterparts (189). Some speculations about this phenomenon are possible: basically, because Elizabeth I was no longer available as a patron, a number of professional male writers may not have been interested in praising the queen. As for women writers, because the number of those who published their works increased in the seventeenth century when the social suspicion of print began to disappear, it should be no surprise that their celebration of the queen's legacy was more noticeable than in the sixteenth century.[3)]

In fact, even this relative increase in female publication could be the very

3) While, in the early seventeenth century, male authors gradually moved toward print culture, feeling less uncomfortable with publishing their works because notable figures such as Sir Philip Sidney had published his writings, several female authors' publications also appeared, for example, Lanyer's *Salve* (1611), Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Miriam* (1613), and Lady Mary Wroth's *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania* (1621).

result of Elizabeth I's reign. Earlier women authors exposed themselves to the possibility of criticism when they wished to circulate their works in manuscripts or, even worse, to make them public in print, risking their reputation as gentlewomen.[4] By contrast, seventeenth-century women writers had as their model Elizabeth I, who after all published her works, encouraging the public to read them, and was praised as a great poet and orator by her contemporaries. Regardless of whether the praise for the queen's rhetorical skills and language was sincere or not, the very existence of an available precedent may have created an advantageous environment for seventeenth-century women authors.

In the rich tradition of works memorializing Elizabeth I, Lanyer's *Salve* and Primrose' "A Chaine of Pearle" stand as interesting cases of women's responses to the queen and her gender politics. Published, respectively, in 1611 and 1630, the two poems show somewhat typical nostalgia for the Elizabethan Golden Age in the Jacobean and Caroline periods. Praising Elizabeth I's chastity and piety as well as her concern for the English people, these two female poets also share some of female poets' responses to the queen such as a fervent desire to emulate the example set by the female monarch. At the same time, however, disparity in their respective social, historical environments, polemical positions, and scope reveals several differences as well. Praising contemporary noblewomen such as Queen Anne and her patron, Countess Cumberland, Lanyer presents Elizabeth I as a somewhat distant but authoritative being whose work can benefit women of later generations and also sanction her own poetry. Though she likewise praises the late queen's virtue as an excellent model for

4) Warning against a tendency that focuses only on the repressive aspects of female publication, Jennifer Summit argues that Elizabethan women used manuscripts in both private and public ways. Jennifer Summit, "'The Arte of a Ladies Penne': Elizabeth I and the Poetics of Queenship," 93-98.

ordinary women, Primrose presents and loudly extols numerous specific examples of Elizabeth I as a Protestant monarch in the political situation around 1630, when some of Charles I's subjects began to feel dissatisfaction with his rule and his French, Catholic wife.

In writing a Passion poem, *Salve*, because she was never high in social position and the publication of poetry demanded considerable courage of a mere middle-class woman, Lanyer took great care to present the volume along with famous female figures, in some cases wishing for their patronage.[5] In both the Passion poem and dedicatory poems to her female patrons attached to it, Elizabeth I remains a figure from a mythical past somewhat detached from contemporary noblewomen and current patrons whom the poet could meet in

5) In brief, Lanyer, the daughter of an Italian musician who worked for the court, became a mistress of Lord Hundson (then 45 years her senior) in 1587 and finally married Alphonso Lanyer due to pregnancy. The poet's book includes eleven prefatory materials, nine dedicatory poems, a dedicatory letter to Lady Margaret, Countess Dowager of Cumberland, who was Lanyer's patron, and the final prefatory polemic prose, "To the Vertuous Reader," in which the poet defends women's role in society and Biblical history in general in a proto-feminist way. Lanyer's dedicatees are as follow, in the order that they appear in the volume: Queen Anne, Princess Elizabeth, Arbella Stuart, Susan Bertie (Countess Dowager of Kent), Countess of Bedford, Countess Dowager of Cumberland, Countess of Suffolk, Countess of Dorset (Ann Clifford, Lady Margaret's daughter). Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, is praised in "The Authors Dreame to the Lady Marie, the Countess Dowager of Pembrooke." Some of them are praised for their nobility and moral virtue, but, as is the case with Mary Sidney and Lucy Bedford, Lanyer finds examples of female intellect and writing in her dedicatees.

See Susanne Woods' biography, *Lanyer: A Renaissance Poet*, for the poet's early life, education, and her relationship with the family of the Countess Dowager of Cumberland. Kari Boyd McBride and Su Fang Ng examine Lanyer's dedicatory poems in terms of her social positioning and authorial identity. Kari Boyd McBride, "Sacred Celebration: The Patronage Poems," *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1998) 60-82; Su Fang Ng, "Aemilia Lanyer and the Politics of Praise," *ELH* 67 (2000): 433-51.

reality. Because she was born in 1569 and knew the Elizabethan court to some extent, Lanyer fondly recollects her younger years spent in the Elizabethan court, saying, "great Elizaes favour blest my youth" (110).[6] The author, however, does not attempt to make a full-scale assessment of the memorable queen, and indeed, Elizabeth I is treated as a somewhat mythical being, as her images as Cynthia, the phoenix, and Phoebe show, and is removed from the center of the poems. In these works, the queen's absence is a given, and Lanyer's tone is elegiac:

> Sith Cynthia is ascended to that rest
> Of endlesse joy and true Eternitie,
> That glorious place that cannot be exprest
> By any wight clad in mortalitie,
> In her almightie love so highly blest,
> And crown'd with everlasting Sov'raigntie;
> Where Saints and Angells do attend her Throne,
> And she gives glorie unto God alone. (*Salve*, 1-8)

Lanyer's eulogy clearly shows how great the queen was, and the poet emphasizes that the queen does not lose her grandeur as a monarch even in heaven. Placed in paradise, deified, and immortal, Elizabeth I is a higher sovereign than before: now, she is attended by "[s]aints and [a]ngells" and has the privilege to glorify God, and her sovereignty is "everlasting." Nevertheless, although Lanyer's admiration for the queen cannot be doubted, the deified image of Elizabeth I belongs more to heaven than to the real world.

Instead, Elizabeth I continues to hover over Lanyer's poetry in different

6) All quotations of Lanyer's poems are from Woods' edition, and line numbers will be given in parentheses.

forms. The dead queen is memorialized as the "political Madonna" of England (Pearson 47) and serves as the origin of both national identity and a kind of matriarchal community constructed in the poet's dedicatory poems and the Passion poem. In particular, the author shows that the legacy and virtue of Elizabeth I bind later generations. Using Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia, the daughter of James I and Queen Anne, Lanyer directly connects herself and her contemporaries with the Tudor queen:

> Of her, of whom we are depriv'd by death;
> The Phœnix of her age, whose worth did bind
> All worthy minds so long as they have breath,
> In linkes of Admiration, love and zeale,
> To that deare Mother of our Common-weale.
>
> ("To the Lady Elizabeths Grace," 3-7)

Beginning with great eulogy of Elizabeth I, this poem is as much about the excellent dead queen as it is about the living princess. Though in reality the young princess, unlike the erudite Elizabeth I, was trained only in the "feminine" arts,[7] in this work, the function of the princess is to follow the queen's role model and revive Elizabeth I's virtue such as piety and reading in the present. Lanyer emphasizes that, through this princess, who bears the same name, the dead queen can be connected with the poet's own generation. In this poem, represented through the princess of James I, Elizabeth I becomes a transitional figure who existed as a half-mythical and half-historical figure.

---

7) Gim uses the education of Elizabeth Bohemia as an example of the Stuart backlash against women's social and cultural position. Lisa Gim, "'Faire Eliza's Chaine': Two Female Writers' Literary Links to Queen Elizabeth I," *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens*, ed. Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (New York: Oxford UP, 1999) 183-98.

In addition to the direct link between Elizabeth I and the princess, an indirect link between the queen and women of Lanyer's time exists. The major patrons of *Salve*, Queen Anne and the Countess of Cumberland, are described as strong, virtuous, and independent women like Elizabeth I herself. As Kari McBride notes, the first two lines of the poem addressing Queen Anne, "Renowned Empresse, and great Britaines Queene, / Most gratious Mother of succeeding Kings" (1-2), are fairly similar to those dedicated to Elizabeth I (68). Already the mother of two princes when she arrived in England upon James I's ascension in 1603, Queen Anne was usually represented as the king's consort or the mother of the royal children, the traditional roles of female royal consorts (Miller 132-33). In Lanyer's poem, however, Queen Anne appears more like a self-sufficient sovereign as Elizabeth I once did.

Challenging contemporary representations of Queen Anne, Lanyer portrays the queen as possessing diverse excellent qualities including governing skills. For example, the Greek myth of Paris and the three goddesses is employed not only to praise the queen's beauty but also to endow her with the characteristics of a wise and courageous sovereign. In addition to more or less gender neutral gifts from the three goddesses, "State and Dignities" (Juno), "Wisdome" (Pallas), and "Excellencies" (Venus), Lanyer mentions Queen Anne's "fortitude," picking up the "warlike" characteristic of Athena, a nickname for the queen ("To the Queens most Excellent Majestie," 13-15). Though the author does not deny that Queen Anne's production of heirs is praiseworthy (17-18), her description provides a portrait of a queen with well-balanced, wide-ranging virtue by highlighting the queen's regal characteristics such as "fortitude" and "[s]tate" as well as beauty and maternity.[8] As with Elizabeth I, who tried to

8) McBride reads Lanyer's skeptical attitude toward Queen Anne, noting that the queen's ability to produce an heir is mentioned in the poem whereas many Biblical

present herself as an independent, almost androgynous sovereign, Queen Anne is perceived as having both male and female attributes, and she looks as kingly as any ruler.

With a myriad of examples praising the Tudor queen, it is no wonder that Lanyer's delineation of a powerful queen should resemble the blazon of the late queen by earlier works such as Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (Miller 128-31). Conversely, readers who were accustomed to representations of Elizabeth I as Gloriana, Belphoebe, and Cynthia in the epic romance and other Elizabethan panegyrics would have easily detected the similarity between the late and current queens. Just like Elizabeth I as described by earlier poets, Lanyer's Queen Anne is positioned at the center of mythical nature, poetry, art, moral virtue, and honor, and is attended by divine beings such as the muses and Cynthia.

In the middle of the dedicatory poem to the queen, Lanyer urges Queen Anne to "[b]e like faire Phoebe, who doth love to grace / The darkest night with her most beauteous face" (29-30). Here, the image of Phoebe, the goddess of moon who influences creatures with her resplendent glory and greatness, symbolizes the authority of female monarchs over their subjects. Moreover, the phrase is reminiscent of Spenser's famous description of Belphoebe, one of the mythical characters representing Elizabeth I in the epic romance, where the highlight is placed on the way in which her beauteous shining figure suddenly appears from dark woods.[9] This suggestion of emulating Phoebe could also be

---

women were not described in this way (68-69). However, it is a strange idea that the value of female (re)production should be denied in a poem emphasizing matrilineage.

9) "Throughout the wood, that echoed again, / And made the forest ring as it would rive in twain. / Eft through the thick they heard one rudely rush [⋯] Eftsoon there stepped forth / A goodly lady clad in hunter's weed, / That seemed to be a woman

read as a suggestion to emulate the late Queen Elizabeth I, who is frequently called Cynthia and positioned in heaven in this poem.

While Queen Anne is described as a powerful monarch, her husband, James I, is strangely absent from this poem. Though popular symbolism compared James I and Elizabeth I as the sun and the moon, respectively, emphasizing the successor's better qualities through the brighter rays of the sun (Hackett 220), Queen Anne and Princess Elizabeth themselves are called "two such glittering Suns" ("To the Queens most Excellent Majestie," 98). Conventional gendered symbolism of sun/male and moon/female does not work when Queen Anne is described as "repleat with Sov'raigne Majestie" ("To the Queens most Excellent Majestie," 99) and the light from the queen and her daughter is incomparable.

In Lanyer's version of history, as in her presentation of Biblical history from a proto-feminist perspective in the main part, the Passion poem, the maternal line appears to constitute the monarchy, for Princess Elizabeth, "[t]he very modell of [Queen Anne's] Majestie" ("To the Queens most Excellent Majestie," 92), reproduces the mother's fair and virtuous characteristics such as beauty, love, duty, and piety. In addition, Lanyer suggests the possibility of this extended matriarchal monarchy by deliberately creating ambiguity about "our famous Queene" ("To the Lady Elizabeths Grace," 8), which can be a reference to Queen Anne in the real world or to Elizabeth I in the mythic world as Princess Elizabeth's double (Miller 136; Pearson 46-47). In this imaginary group picture of the female monarchs, Elizabeth I again gains her position as "that deare Mother of our Common-weale" ("To the Lady Elizabeths Grace," 7).

---

of great worth, / And by her stately portance, borne of heavenly birth. Her face so fair, as flesh it seemed not, / But heavenly portrait of bright angel's hue" (*The Faerie Queene*, 2.3.19-23). All quotations from *The Faerie Queene* are from A. C. Hamilton's second edition, and either line numbers or page numbers will be given in parentheses.

In addition to Elizabeth I's influence on the representation of female sovereigns, the model of the Tudor queen affects Lanyer's defense of women in general. The poet claims that Biblical history and the current English society have numerous virtuous women and that Elizabeth I is among or at the head of them for her excellent achievements. Lanyer has no hesitation in praising the achievements of strong women in history such as Judith and Deborah (*Salve*, 1465-1504). Certainly both Judith and Deborah were figures whom people used as nicknames for Elizabeth I during and after her life because of her triumph over Catholic countries, as in her victory over the Armada. Considering this fact, it is very likely that the late queen, who quite strongly vaunted her valor against foreign powers, may have prompted the poet to think more positively about militant, heroic women (Levin 131-32; Walker 261).

Moreover, whereas, in the late sixteenth century, male authors such as John Knox and William Shakespeare saw "God's scourge" in wicked women's rule, as in their descriptions of "monstrous" women and Joan of Arc (Marcus 66-74), Lanyer's very polemical prose preface, "To the Virtuous Reader," makes it clear that virtuous, courageous women dominate arrogant, evil men upon the authority of God. Contrasting evil men with virtuous, just women, Lanyer declares, "God himself, who gaue power to wise and virtuous women, to bring downe their pride and arrogancie" ("To the Virtuous Reader," 32-33). In Lanyer's vision, it is not "masculine evil" but rule by a community of good, virtuous women that constitutes providential history (Lewalski 207). Constructing the lineage of religiously just, intellectually excellent, and sometimes even physically powerful women from the Biblical past, through Elizabeth I, and finally to her own time, Lanyer not only corrects gender hierarchy based on prejudicial moral assumptions but also claims her own authority to write about the Passion as a woman poet.

In the main poem on the Passion, which is framed by addresses to the Countess of Cumberland, Lanyer's main patron, the countess' virtue is consistently described through a comparison of her and women in Biblical history. In the part, numerous Biblical women show Lanyer's embracement of strong women and their achievements, and the countess' moral triumph in everyday affairs is presented as powerful because it even surpasses those women's achievements:

> Though famous women elder times have knowne,
> Whose glorious actions did appeare so bright,
> That powrefull men by them were over throwne,
> And all their armies overcome in fight;
> The Scythian women by their power alone,
> Put king Darius unto shamefull flight:
> [⋯]
> Wise Deborah that judged Israel,
> Nor Valiant Judeth cannot equall thee,
> Unto the first, God did his will reveale,
> And gave her power to set his people free;
> [⋯]
> Thou [the Countess of Cumberland] hast the Conquest of all Conquests wonne,
> When to thy Conscience Hell can lay no crime:
> For that one head that Judeth bare away,
> Thou tak'st from Sinne a hundred heads a day. (*Salve*, 1465-1504)

Unlike most contemporary male authors, Lanyer, who is free from male anxiety about fierce women, can enthusiastically report past triumphant moments such as Scythian women's victory over Darius, Judith's beheading of Holofernes, and the countess' war of conscience. Women in both the past and the present show

themselves as invincible conquerors on military and moral battlefields alike, and their victory is sanctioned by God himself, who does not hesitate to show his will through such women. This embrace of images of strong women's dominance over men is a particularly poignant resonance of the military, patriotic heroism of Elizabeth I, who rose as a conqueror in her Tilbury speech, where she boastfully contemned the efforts of Catholic Continental kings.

In depicting the achievements of the heroic women in the Biblical past and her own time, Lanyer also learns from the example of Elizabeth I's exquisite combination of the *humilitas* topos with bravado and bold heroism. In a Passion poem, where the human beings are supposed to humble themselves before the abject state of Christ, Lanyer further develops Elizabeth I's subversive use of the *humilitas* topos. This similar use of the paradoxical inversion of humility and bravado is most evident when Elizabeth I's prayers are juxtaposed with Lanyer's poems. Though both the queen and the poet admit that they are "weaker vessels," they quickly resort to leveling elements in Christianity, using the Christian teaching that the smallest will be the greatest. The two women demarcate or invert gender hierarchy to assert their authority, be it political, moral, or poetic.

Elizabeth I's prayer from around 1562, which was placed together with a Psalm passage on the ultimate defeat of the unjust ("The unjust shall perish without any resting place, and the stopping place of the wicked is perdition," Psalms 37), may be a good example. In the prayer, though she at first imagines herself as a weak woman, she deftly changes into her greater imperialistic ambition based on the unquestionable superiority of Christianity:[10)]

10) All quotations of Elizabeth I's works are from the edition by Leah Marcus, et al., and page numbers will be given in parentheses.

> more yet because Thou hast done me so special and so rare a mercy that, being a woman by my nature weak, timid, and delicate, as are all women, Thou has caused me to be vigorous, brave, and strong in order to resist such a multitude of Idumeneans, Ishmalelites, Moabites, Muhammadans, and other infinity of peoples and nations who have conjoined, plotted, conspired, and made league against Thee, against Thy Son, and against all those who confess Thy name and hold to Thy hold Word as the only rule of salvation. (157)

Elizabeth I represents herself as a humble woman so that, ultimately, she can make the contrast between her humble self and her strong, more drastic self. The clear-cut binary opposition of weak women and military strength is completely inverted through a new type of binary opposites, God's side and God's enemies. Because the prevalence of God's enemies is emphasized through the long list, while following the list and focusing on the new scheme needed for the holy war, readers tend to forget the queen's weakness mentioned at the beginning of the passage. This new contrast of true Christianity and heretic/wrong Christianity provides the queen with a rhetorical strategy to confront challenges against her fragile authority as a female ruler: the religious power of a brave Christian soldier.

In the main Passion poem and dedicatory poems, Lanyer's use of the humilitas topos works in a very similar way. As a middle-class woman author who certainly lacked formal education, social prestige, and clerical authority, she must have needed a way to justify her authority to compose a poem on the daunting theme of the Passion and even to publish her poems. In securing her poetic authority, Lanyer switches from female passivity and humility to bold authorial claims, as Elizabeth I did. In "To the Queens most Excellent Majestie," where she defends herself for writing a poem on "Christ, and [⋯]

his sacred merits," the poet first admits that, without common merits such as "learning," "knowledge," "brain," and "spirit" (131-41), she herself is too weak to write about the holy subject.

After this initial gesture of humility, however, she immediately begins to claim her authority as an author, correcting the traditional hierarchy of male learnedness and female ignorance. Unlike male poets, who "are Scholers, and by Art do write" (149), Lanyer declares that she is led by nature herself:

> And since all Arts at first from Nature came,
> That goodly Creature, Mother of Perfection,
> Whom Joves almighty had at first did frame,
> Taking both her and hers in his protection:
> Why should not She now grace my barren Muse,
> And in a Woman all here defects excuse. ("To the Queens most Excellent Majestie," 151-56)

Here, Lanyer argues that nature is superior to art in that the former precedes the latter in time and can produce perfection. The traditional gendered personification of nature as a woman also strengthens the poet's argument that she wants to defend women and to restore reputation to pristine perfection.[11] She inverts the gendered hierarchy of poetry and learning by using another hierarchy of nature and art, and, after inverting the gendered hierarchy, Lanyer finally appeals to the female authority of Queen Anne, desiring the queen's grace. Through such well-calculated use of humility and successive challenges

11) Woods discusses Lanyer's inversion of nature and art in the context of Renaissance notions of those concepts but somewhat simplifies the complicated debate, saying, "Nature is always female." Woods, "Vocation and Authority: Born to Write," *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*, ed. Marshall Grossman (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1998) 87-88.

to the gendered hierarchy of learning, morality, and politics, the poet successfully defends her task of writing a divine poem as a female author.

To be sure, though Lanyer bases her authority on both nature and the grace of female authority, she is not denying the value of learning, especially reading, for women's moral education partly. Indeed she wishes to base her poetic authority on the fact that her own book can benefit her readers. Because female literacy and education, even in the upper class, were not so eagerly pursued in her time, book reading is continuously encouraged in Lanyer's poem, suggesting her pride in the publication of her own book, too. In "To the Lady Elizabeths Grace," Princess Elizabeth is supposed to learn from "such good workes" (11) and "farre better [b]ookes" (12), and, being young and thus more likely to be educated, must be one of the women readers who can learn more from reading books. Consequently, Lanyer herself can have more pride because she can contribute to the education of none other than the princess through her own book, "first fruits of a womans wit" (13). Thus the poet hopes that the princess' untainted mind will benefit from reading her own book: "O let my Booke by her faire eies be blest, / In whose pure thoughts all Innocency rests" (95-96).

Lanyer's active campaign for women's reading for moral education is understandable since her generation has the example of an especially erudite queen, Elizabeth I. William Scrots' portrait of Elizabeth I as a princess with a book in her hand (circa. 1546-47) and numerous allusions to the classics in her own writing verify that the queen had a serious interest in reading as a way of acquiring knowledge and learned much from her reading.[12] Even if some may

12) Roger Ascham, a renowned scholar who was Elizabeth Tudor's tutor in the 1540s, thus judged his pupil: "Her study of the true faith and of good learning is most energetic. She has talent without a woman's weakness, industry with a man's perseverance." Quoted in Levin's *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, 10.

link a figure holding a book with negative connotations including being intellectually inexperienced or inactive, Lanyer disagrees with and attempts to correct such a position.[13] What the poet wants to inherit from Elizabeth I encompasses this fervor for reading and the mutually beneficial relation between poets and readers, as in the example of Spenser and the late queen, which was clearly expressed in Spenser's letter to Raleigh prefaced to *The Faerie Queene*.[14]

While reading enables female readers to reflect and to learn from the examples in the books that they read, female patron-readers can reward the efforts of the authors by granting grace to them. As for royal readers, Lanyer's own book may very well present to Queen Anne her true images, as a source of moral reflection. In the same way that Spenser's *The Faerie Queen* served Elizabeth I, she also urges her queen to "let her blessed thoughts this book imbrace" (143-44). In addition, in a prefatory poem placed immediately after those addressed to female royal members, "To all vertuous Ladies in generall," which recommends books as a way of moral education to general female readers, Lanyer also asks them for help, "[d]esiring [them] to grace this little [b]ooke" (72). After recommending and praising the virtue of her readers throughout the poem, she acknowledges their right to grace her book and her

13) Walker argues that representations of Elizabeth I with books had the negative meaning of abandoning active pursuits, as in Gheeraerts' portrait of the queen in old age. However, Hackett's discussion of Heywood's play notes that the queen was given no other book than an English Bible in her hand, which must have emphasized her religiosity. Walker 265; Hackett 228.

14) "The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline: Which for that I conceiued shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, then for profite of the ensample: I chose the historye of king Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person being made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of enuy, and suspition of present time" (714-15).

indebtedness to their grace: "such as thou hast chiefly chose, / By whom my Muse may be better graced" (87-88). As Jacqueline Pearson argues, the relationship between female readers and female authors who particularly need their readers' support is a truly cooperative one (49). Writing in the 1610s and having several noble ladies whom she needed to praise for the practical reason of obtaining patronage, Lanyer utilizes the memory of Elizabeth I in a rather indirect way. Twenty years later, however, Primrose turns her attention directly to the queen and tries to revive the memory of the same queen in "A Chaine of Pearle." Primrose, who appears to have been a gentlewoman considering her specific address to gentlewomen as her readers and her knowledge of court life, did not have to depend on patrons, male or female, as Lanyer once did.[15] Moreover, a poet with her political and religious stance—that is, nationalistic and strongly Protestant—could not but resuscitate the dead queen in the 1630s.[16] Around 1630, Charles I's rule began to disconcert some of his subjects, including Puritans,[17] and in

15) Instead of dedicatory poems on patrons, Primrose added a prefatory poem addressing "all [n]oble [l]adies, and [g]entlewomen" in which she expressed her respect and endearment with her present, the poem that looks like jewelry: "To You the Honour of our Noble Sex, / I send this Chaine, with all my best Respects: / Which if you please to weare, for her sweet sake" ("To All Noble Ladies, and Gentlewomen," 1-3). For "A Chaine of Pearle," Dorothy Berry, whom we have not identified yet, contributed a poem that highly praises both Elizabeth I and Primrose. All quotations of "A Chaine of Pearle" are from Wynne-Davis's anthology, *Women Poets of the Renaissance.*

16) Though we do not have much information on Primrose, in the notes to "A Chaine of Pearle," Marion Wynne-Davis speculates about the possibility that the poet may have praised the dead queen more vocally because Gilbert Primrose, a possible relative of Diana Primrose, was treated harshly by Charles I (365). Primrose' antipathy to Catholicism and her national pride are evident from the poem.

17) Though the notorious Duke of Buckingham was assassinated in 1628 to many people's joy, William Laud, who was suspected of Arminianism by many, was appointed the Bishop of London in the same year. In 1629, Charles I dissolved the Parliament, which signaled the beginning of his "personal rule," and also made

particular, since the marriage of Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria, his consort, in 1625, nationalistic and staunchly Protestants were worried about her influence. In spite of the good relationship with Charles I, Henrietta Maria was notorious as a Catholic and a Frenchwoman, and poets with strong Protestant belief, of course, could not conceive of her as a patron of their poetry.[18)]

Faced with a political situation that she could not approve of at all and finding the current queen an inappropriate model due to her religion, Primrose in her retrospective poem displays explicitly anti-Catholic or anti-Spanish and anti-Roman sentiments. An emphasis on the dead queen's good relationship with her counselors and the Parliament is also notable, especially if we consider Charles I's uncomfortable, detached relationship with his subjects. The poet characterizes the political cooperation between Elizabeth I and her government as "concord" and a "bond of loyall love" ("Prudence," 11). She includes her admiration for the past era and government as well as the queen, who showed

---

peace with France (1629) and Spain (1630) rather than espousing the Protestant cause in Continental politics.

18) As several historians note, Henrietta Maria established her Catholic chapel and was allowed to raise her children as Catholics, and Protestants heard in the 1630s rumors of Catholic conversion at court, which seem to have resulted from the queen consort's Catholic practices. In addition, Puritans' criticism of a corrupt, effeminate court culture is related to their fear of Henrietta Maria's cultural influence, which was evident from court masques and musical repertoire in her chapel.

One of the most famous examples of this kind of suspicion of Henrietta Maria's influence on the Caroline court may be William Prynne's indirect critique of the queen for her performance in court masques in his *Histro-mastix* (1633). See Ann Baynes Coiro's discussion of Protestant poets' ambivalent attitude toward the queen in relation to the figure of the Virgin Mary due to the queen's Catholicism and her name, Maria. Ann Baynes Coiro, "'A Ball of Strife': Caroline Poetry and Royal Marriage," *The Royal Image: Representations of Charles I*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1999), 26-47.

her political finesse in her ability to choose "[s]age [c]ounsells" ("Religion," 51).

Like many sincere, strict Puritans of her time, Primrose is immensely interested in the nationalistic Protestant cause: of all virtues listed in her poem, some public and some private, she puts religion first, as Spenser did in his patriotic epic poem, *The Faerie Queen*, in the post-Armada era.[19] One of the most popular images of the queen was that of the defender of the nation and religion in the Tudor and Stuart periods alike (Walker 258-61), and the poet employs this patriotic tradition. In this first section, "Religion," a part longer and much more specific than others, Primrose states that prime achievement of Elizabeth I was to protect her country and the Anglican Church against foreign powers and religion, and flaunts her national pride.[20]

A stark contrast between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church under Elizabeth I is continuously used in Primrose's historical account of the queen's achievements throughout this poem. Primrose first emphasizes that Elizabeth I replaced Mary Tudor, a staunch Catholic, to every Protestant's joy ("Religion," 4), and Catholics are described as fraught with "[s]uperstition, and [a]buses" ("Religion," 6) and "[i]dolatrie" ("Religion," 34). The poet also explicitly accuses the Pope of sending a Bull declaring Elizabeth I a heretic ("Religion," 18-20) and distributing "[s]trange [b]ookes and pictures painting out the Doome / Of his pretended [m]artyrs" ("Justice," 18). English Catholics

19) In this work, Primrose presents ten virtues as ten pearls in a chain or a necklace, and the virtues are, in the order that they appear in the poem: religion, chastity, prudence, temperance, clemency, justice, fortitude, science, patience, and bounty.

20) Other sections of "A Chaine of Pearle" are about 30 lines long, while "Religion" has 54 lines and mentions several historical figures and events during Elizabeth I's reign, especially those related to the monarch's opposition to Catholic powers (25-43).

are despised as "factious Romanist[s]" ("Religion," 17), and their disloyalty is criticized as the most horrible villainy that does not even deserve to be written about. Continental Catholic countries such as Spain and France are continuously castigated for their attempts to attack the sacred national, religious identity of England.

On the other hand, Elizabeth I is extolled for her efforts to protect the true Christian cause. It is she who "bravely did advance / Christs [g]lorious [e]nsigne" ("Religion," 11) against Continental Catholic countries. Primrose elevates Elizabeth I's achievement of protecting the Anglican Church to one for Christianity itself because the queen has protected her people for "[e]vangelicall [p]rofession" ("Religion," 23). The poet proudly concludes her glorification of Elizabeth I's Protestantism by saying, "[s]hee bang'd the Pope, and tooke Gospells part" ("Religion," 46), and also declares the triumph of England over Continental Catholic countries, mocking their "griefe and anger" at their failure to prevail against England ("Religion, 53-54).

Memorializing Elizabeth I in the 1630s, when strict Protestants began to have doubts about Charles I's diplomatic, parliamentary, and religious policy, Primrose is much more detached from the expectation for the new king that was evident among the English people during the earlier Stuart reign. Unlike Englishmen of the 1610s, who felt some joy and excitement at the succession of a relatively young male ruler, James I, and Lanyer, who could appeal to Queen Anne, a figure much more neutral than Henrietta Maria, and the Countess of Cumberland, Primrose may have been accustomed to emerging disappointment with the Stuart pacifist foreign policy among some Protestants. Moreover, because Primrose had an accumulated tradition of the posthumous deification of Elizabeth I, which resurged in works memorializing her throughout the 1620s, partly resulting from Jacobean Englishmen's disillusion

with the king (Hackett 227-78; Walker 256-58), the poet's adulation of the queen is more extravagant. The poet's epideictic poem presents the queen as a divine being, "English [g]oddesse, [e]mpresse of our [s]ex" ("Induction," 13), and eulogizes the Elizabethan Golden age with highly hyperbolic language.

Primrose's hyperbole, however, is accompanied by her historical specificity about Elizabeth I's achievements. Because more materials about the queen's life such as William Camden's *Annales*: *The True and Royal History of the Famous Empress Elizabeth* (1625) were available by then, she was very specific about various events in Elizabeth I's life and shows good knowledge of the queen's own words. After her extensive account of Elizabeth I's relationship with Rome and the Northern Rebellion in "Religion," Primrose goes on to describe the Tilbury speech ("Fortitude," 10-22), the year of the Armada ("Bounty," 9-18), and the queen's Golden speech ("Science," 28-30) as well as her university speeches ("Science," 22-23). Narrating famous phrases and episodes from the late queen's life, which many of her contemporary readers would have been able to identify, Primrose nearly resurrects Elizabeth I in her readers' minds.

In extolling the queen's virtue, Primrose examines it from her female perspective, suggesting the indirect identification of herself and her readers with the monarch, and urging readers' efforts at emulation. In memorializing the queen's life, the poet is concerned about what kind of virtue women can or should possess and what virtue means to women's lives. While she does focus Elizabeth I's public achievements such as her clever handling of international politics ("Prudence," 13-19), the poet simultaneously stresses that the queen's accomplishments include the praxis and embodiment of wisdom that is indispensable also to ordinary women in the period ("Prudence," 27-29).

Primrose also broadens the definition of chastity by looking at the queen's example and defining it as a virtue for all women, and her treatment of this

virtue is at once practical and sophisticated. After triumphantly celebrating the queen's "impregnable [v]irginity" ("Chastity," 21) as a kind of symbol of England's superiority over other countries, the poet links it with ordinary women's lives, emphasizing the similarities and providing the specific circumstances of contemporary women. Primrose first distinguishes among different actualizations of chastity, stating that this virtue is expressed in diverse ways according to stages in the traditional cycle of women's lives (Woodbridge 224-33). While the chastity of "virgins" is "[v]irginall," and that of "[w]ives" is "[c]onjugall," the chastity of "[w]iddowes" can be called "[v]iduall" (27-30). Although the example of Elizabeth I should be cherished, as "God respects / All equally, and all alike affects" ("Chastity," 30), Primrose emphasizes the general aspect of the virtue and recommends it to all women, inviting her readers to emulate the queen.

Her example from a story about a noble lady, who remains loyal to her husband against the temptation of a Spanish ambassador ("Chastity," 32-42) shows Primrose's female perspective on the chastity of Elizabeth I. This episode can be directly linked to the example of the queen as the story was set at the time "when SHEE was gone" ("Chastity," 34). Thus, the lady seems to be an heiress to Elizabeth I's chastity, and this noblewoman's relationship with the Spanish ambassador resembles the queen's relationship with the Spanish monarch including her refusal of the "Spanish Philip" ("Chastity," 15) or the queen's struggle with Spanish ambassadors in her court.

The poet's scorn of the Spaniard, "[t]hat great Don" ("Chastity," 33), with "his Spanish [p]olicy" ("Chastity," 38), as well as her accusation of the Pope's intervention in the marriage negotiation between Elizabeth I and Philip shows that she understands Elizabeth I's political use of her female sexuality in diplomacy very well. Primrose also celebrates chastity as female triumph over

male temptation and emphasizes female agency in preserving this virtue (Gim 195), remembering the triumph of the queen in preserving the virtue. Though the virtue of chastity may in the end be useful for the conservative patriarchal order, the poet explicitly focuses solely on the noble lady and her choice, ignoring her husband and his control over her sexuality entirely. In the story, the lady wins the battle of gender politics with her own wit and moral integrity and scoffs at the foolish guile of the ambassador, and it is she who possesses the "[t]rophie" of the pearl, a symbol of both chastity and her ability to control her intact sexuality.

Even the much more general virtue of temperance is examined as practical wisdom for common women and rulers alike. Aristotelian self-governance or the control of passion and desire is required of all women so that they can avoid men's guile and false courtiers' flattery: "else may we rue / Our yielding to Mens Syren-blandishments, / Which are attended with so foule Events" ("Temperance," 4-6). Inverting the traditional image of Siren as a seductress, Primrose casts the problem of temperance in a gendered mould and connects the relationship between the queen and her male subjects with the real life of every woman.[21] In fact, Elizabeth I's relationship with her male courtiers cannot be easily distinguished from her self-governance as a private person. As is evident from the example of Essex, who, as a male subject, used amatory language excessively but in the end revolted against the queen, judging male guile and managing a good government are not separate activities to the female ruler (Levin 123). Using the concept of temperance quite broadly, Primrose extends the example of the queen, who managed to achieve "sacred [c]oncord" and "sweet [s]ymphonie" in her court ("Temperance," 36), to ordinary women of her

21) Wynne-Davies argues that the "foul events" may allude to unwanted pregnancy and disgrace. Wynne-Davies 332.

own time.

In addition to depicting the queen's virtues from a female perspective and connecting them with contemporary female readers, Primrose also sensibly captures Elizabeth I's playing with both male and female gender expectations and even welcomes the masculine qualities of the monarch. Just as the queen did in her self-representation, the poet alternately employs male and female images in depicting the queen's diverse aspects. Elizabeth I is a brave lion, a militant warrior, and a second Henry ("Fortitude," 23) because she is presented as one of the greatest monarchs ever to protect England against foreign powers. On the other hand, the queen is also the most beautiful English rose, a traditional symbol of female beauty as well as of the Tudor monarchy ("Bounty," 1-3), an angel, and a woman fighting against her enemies with a distaff, a very feminine weapon ("Bounty," 16).

In particular, Primrose's juxtaposition of Phoebus and Elizabeth in the induction poem (1-9) shows the poet's efforts to merge male and female characteristics. Although, in this juxtaposition, Primrose is aware of the contrast between Phoebus, who is a divine male, and Elizabeth I, a mortal female, at some point, the queen absorbs the attributes of the god. She thus becomes as self-sufficient as Phoebus, defeating all other monarchs, and peerless as the imperial conqueror of the world: Elizabeth I is "Englands brightest [s]un" and an "English [g]oddesse" (7-13). As has been discussed above, while the symbol of the sun was used to praise James I as opposed to Elizabeth I, who had been presented as the moon, the source of weaker rays (Hackett 220-21), Primrose appropriates the image of the sun god for the queen, emphasizing her inimitable, dazzling glory. The male sun god's famous poetic talent ("Apollo's Quill," 18) is presented mainly to praise the queen's worth. In the section "Clemency," the queen's mercy on her subjects is also shown as her magnanimous, masculine

attribute through the image of a noble lion's liberality: "the Kingly Lyon with his foe, / Which once prostrate, he scornes to worke his woe" (17-18).

To be sure, Primrose embraces Elizabeth I's feminine as well as masculine characteristics. She praises the queen's concern to protect her country and ability to maintain a harmonious relationship with the Parliament by exploiting gendered language and traditional images of women such as gentleness, love, and maternal care. As is shown by her repeated claims, Elizabeth I's relationship with her subjects is characterized as mutually beneficial, and Primrose continuously emphasizes the queen's love for her subjects, which guarantees their love and voluntary loyalty in return:

> [⋯] deeming her best Treasures
> Her Subjects Love, which shee so well preserv'd,
> By sweete and milde Deameanor, as it serv'd
> To guard Her surer, then an Armie Royall;
> So true their Loves were to Her, and so Loyall. (27-32)

Emphasizing the affective aspects of the queen's feminine characteristics such as "sweete and milde [d]eameanor" and contrasting her wise notions of loyalty with simplistic, ideas of power based on the most masculine method, the "[a]rmie" (30-31), Primrose praises the queen's feminine rule.

Though the queen's attractive feminine characteristics such as her gentle attitude are presented as assisting her rule, her agency as a monarch and her ability to rule the country are never questioned in this poem. Indeed, Primrose views Elizabeth I as a very capable and protective ruler of the country, and her smooth communication with her counselors is presented as truly significant in critical historical moments ("Prudence," 3-6). The monarch's gender also adds a peculiar note to the poet's praise of the diligent care of Elizabeth I, who

frequently presented herself as the mother of the country: “Thus rul’d SHEE prudently with all power, / With Argus Eyes forseeing every houre / All dangers imminent” (“Prudence,” 14-16).

Moreover, as Lanyer does in describing strong and righteous women in Biblical history in her prefatory poems and *Salve*, Primrose does not hesitate to extol Elizabeth I’s “transgressive” acts or inversion of gender hierarchy because, like most Elizabethan Englishmen, the poet, with a nationalistic, Protestant stance, can discover a fairly positive aspect in the queen’s nearly masculine dominance over foreign powers and Catholics (Gim 192-93). In the section dealing with “[f]ortitude,” an evidently masculine virtue, Primrose describes the queen as “undaunted”(3) and “full of [a]we”(7), stating that the female monarch possesses the “[v]alor” of “[g]reat Henry [VIII],” which can equal that of any of the “[w]arlike [p]rinces” of Europe (23-26).

Likewise, in the last section, “Bounty,” which praises the queen’s diplomatic relationship with Continental countries, a militant and imperial Elizabeth in the political battlefield is highlighted through traditional images of terrifying and authoritative but magnanimous ruler. Primrose declares that the queen’s “Princely Bounty shining every-where [⋯] made her Fame with Golden Wings to fly / About the World, above the Starry Sky” (4-6), and lists all Continental countries that sought help from this English monarch (7-8). The poet again continues to depict Elizabeth I’s triumph over the Spanish king, stressing the latter’s misery and the queen’s dominance over “[s]ea and [l]and” (14).

In the earlier part of this section, the queen’s excellent bountifulness is analogized with the flowers of England such as the rose and the lily, unmatchable “For milke-white Lustre, and for Purple Grace” (1-3), which makes her look somewhat like a romance heroine or the Virgin Mary. Along with this description, Elizabeth I’s conquest is represented as the triumph of female over

male, as the queen beats the Spanish king with the toy-like female tool of a "distaff" (13-14). Rewriting from a female perspective the famous episode of Radigund and Artegal in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, where the male poet expresses his disgust with and fear of the inversion of gender hierarchy by the powerful Amazons in a way not too dissimilar from that of his own queen, Primrose adds a witty and triumphant note to her episode.[22] Because the enemy of the queen is a foreign "tyrant" (15) whose moral, religious claim is weak (at least in the English people's eyes), and the queen's victory enhances the pride of her country, the poet cheerfully endorses Elizabeth I's inversion of gender hierarchy.

In addition to using both male and female images in her description of Elizabeth I in a way similar to the queen's own self-presentation, Primrose captures the effects that the queen ultimately purposed to bring to her rhetoric and highlights how the queen's language works in a very gendered way. For example, in reconstructing the Tilbury speech episode in the section "Fortitude," the poet closely follows Elizabeth I's rhetorical strategy in the latter half of the speech. In the famous speech that she gave immediately after the defeat of the Armada in 1588, the queen solemnly declares:

> Wherefore I am come among you at this time but for my recreation and pleasure, being resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live and die amongst you all, to lay down for my God and for my kingdom and for my people mine honor and my blood even in the dust. 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—and take foul scorn that Parma or any prince

22) "Amongst them all she placed him most low, /And in his hand a distaffe to him gaue, / That he thereon should spin both flax and tow; / A sordid office for a mind so braue. / So hard it is to be a womans slaue" (*The Faerie Queene*, 5.5.23.1-5).

of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm. (326)

Here, Elizabeth I presents herself simultaneously as a loyal warrior and a martyr who fights and dies for her own people, mixing masculine bravado and military heroism with feminine passivity and religious devotion to the demand of her own country. The queen's use of the gesture of a weak, humble woman laying herself before both God and her people immediately changes into the assertion of her authority as the monarch of England over "Parma or any prince of Europe." She flaunts her triumph as England's triumph over Continental countries, agitating the nationalistic sentiments of her people with her emphasis on their shared Englishness.

Similarly, in her poem, Primrose clearly foregrounds this majestic image of a monarch that Elizabeth I wanted to build by reusing the queen's language and rhetorical skills:

[…] that Heroicke March of Her's and Speech
At Tilbury, where Shee did All beseech
Bravely to fight for England, telling that
That what their Fortune was, should Hers be then.
And that with full Resolve Shee thiter came,
Ready to win, or quite to loose the Game.
Which words deliver'd in most Princely sort,
Did animate the Army, and report
To all the Word Her Magnanimity,
Whose haughtie Courage nought could terrify. ("Fortitude," 13-22)

After emphasizing the fact that, risking her life, Elizabeth I heroically advanced to the battlefield as if she were a marching soldier, Primrose also notes the queen's patriotic sentiments that stem from her complete identification with her

own people. Just as the queen herself said that she wanted to "live and die" with her people in the Tilbury speech, the poet stresses the fact that the queen and her people share the same fortune. Primrose also reproduces some of Elizabeth I's rhetoric, using the queen's own word "resolve" and her valiant, determined attitude, which risks everything and is ready to accept any consequence of the battle (18). Moreover, the increasing bravery of this passage resembles that of the Tilbury speech. Just as Elizabeth I starts with "the body but of a weak and feeble woman" but ends with scorn for all Continental countries, the poet gradually accentuates the queen's heroism. Primrose intensifies the monarch's militant valor, shifting the focus from her march to her encouragement of the army, which finally would be known for its "haughtie [c]ourage" (22).

Because Elizabeth I was a phenomenal figure in terms of her political role and as a gender role model, later generations showed appreciation for her achievements in diverse ways, presenting her in a manner that reflects both the influence of the queen and their own sociopolitical situation. Writing in the early Jacobean period, when the assessment of Elizabeth I may have been somewhat premature and still politically sensitive, Lanyer chooses to connect with the late queen in a more or less indirect way, especially through current female royal members or patrons who emulated Elizabeth I's virtue. Nevertheless, the deified queen occupies a central position, symbolizing the highest status that women can achieve, be it literary or moral, and inspiring the poet daringly to write a poem on the Passion. Around 1630, probably dissatisfied with Charles I's policy and Catholic consort and equipped with more exact knowledge of the late queen's life, Primrose even more boldly expresses her nostalgia for the triumphant Protestant monarch and the glorious Elizabethan age.

The examples of Lanyer and Primrose also show that women writers in particular constructed their memory of Elizabeth I in a way different from that of male authors, for the very model of the queen taught to them new notions of readership and authorship as well as a new type of female identity. Though, due to her insecure social position, Lanyer prefers a more exclusive female readership and is more defensive about her writing, both poets similarly affirm that eloquence and reading benefit women and create a collaborative relationship among them. Female patrons and readers are clearly on the poets' minds as they compose these works, which is evident from Lanyer's endeavors to address several female patrons and from Primrose' efforts to find practical morals for contemporary readers.

Though deified as Cynthia, Elizabeth I reappears in the examples of virtuous women such as Queen Anne and the chaste noble lady in Primrose's poem, and the readers of these works are encouraged to participate in the tradition of virtuous females initiated by the queen herself, in turn endorsing the poetry of Lanyer and Primrose. In spite of the different scope of the works and the disparate political and social circumstances of the two poets, Lanyer's *Salve* and Primrose' "A Chaine of Pearle" demonstrate the strong, enduring influence of the female monarch on the imagination of women authors of the seventeenth century. These poems are good examples of how early modern women authors constructed their literary positions based on models established by pioneering predecessors and also prove that, though the memorable queen was dead, her specter carved out a corner in the history of early modern England.

주제어: 엘리자베스 1세, 에밀리에 레니어, 다이아나 프림로즈, 역사적 재현, 여성 군주, 여성 독자층, 시적 권위, 개신교주의

Bibliography

1. Primary Texts

Elizabeth I. *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*. Ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000.

Lanyer, Aemilia. *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer:* Salve Deus Rex Judæorum. Women Writers in English 1350-1850 Ser. Ed. Susanne Woods. New York: Oxford UP, 1993.

Primrose, Diana. "A Chaine of Pearle." *Women Poets of the Renaissance*. Ed. Marion Wynne-Davies. London: J. M. Dent, 1998.

2. Secondary Texts

Coiro, Ann Baynes. "'A Ball of Strife': Caroline Poetry and Royal Marriage." *The Royal Image: Representations of Charles I*. Ed. Thomas N. Corns. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1999. 26-47.

Gim, Lisa. "'Faire Eliza's Chaine': Two Female Writers' Literary Links to Queen Elizabeth I." *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens*. Eds. Susan Frye and Karen Robertson. New York: Oxford UP, 1999. 183-98.

Grossman, Marshall, ed. *Aemilia Lanyer: Gender, Genre, and the Canon*. Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1998.

Hackett, Helen. *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*. New York: St. Martin's, 1995.

Levine, Carole. *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1994.

———. The Reign of Elizabeth I. New York: Palgrave, 2002.

Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer. "Of God and Good Women: The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer." *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*. Ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay. Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 1985. 203-24.

Marcus, Leah. "Elizabeth." *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and Its Discontents*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California P, 1988. 51-105.

McBride, Kari Boyd. "Sacred Celebration: The Patronage Poems." In Grossman 60-82.

Miller, Shanon. "'Mirrours More Then On': Edmund Spenser and Female Authority in the Seventeenth Century." *Worldmaking Spenser: Explorations in the Early Modern Age*. Ed. Patrick Cheney and Lauren Silberman. Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 2000.

Ng, Su Fang. "Aemilia Lanyer and the Politics of Praise." *ELH* 67 (2000): 433-51.

Pearson, Jacqueline. "Women Writers and Women Readers: The Case of Aemilia Lanier." *Voicing Women: Gender and Sexuality in Early Modern Writing*. Ed. Kage Chegdzoy, Suzanne Trill, and Melanie Hansen. Keele, UK: Keele UP, 1996. 45-54.

Rose, Mary Beth. "The Gendering of Authority in the Public Speeches of Elizabeth I." PMLA 115.5 (2000): 1077-82.

Summit, Jennifer. "'The Arte of a Ladies Penne': Elizabeth I and the Poetics of Queenship." *English Literary Renaissance* 26.3 (1996): 395-422. Rpt. *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. 79-108.

Walker, Julia M. "Bones of Contention: Posthumous Images of Elizabeth and

Stuart Politics." *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana*. Ed. Julia Walker. Durham: Duke UP, 1998. 252-76.

Woodbridge, Linda. Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540-1620. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1984.

Woods, Susanne. "Vocation and Authority: Born to Write." In Grossman 83-98.

———. *Lanyer: A Renaissance Woman Poet*. New York: Oxford UP, 1999.

Wynne-Davies, Marion, ed. *Women Poets of the Renaissance*. London: J. M. Dent, 1998.

Remembering Cynthia: The Legacy of Elizabeth I in the Poetry of Aemilia Lanyer and Diana Primrose

Younkyung Kim

Abstract

Elizabeth I greatly influenced later women writers by setting an example as a female author and intellectual in addition to playing the unprecedented role of a female ruler. The present paper examines the queen's influence on Aemilia Lanyer's dedicatory poems to her Passion poem, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (1611), and Diana Primrose' "A Chaine of Pearle" (1630). The two poets present the queen as a woman with intellectual and religious authority and, unlike most contemporary male authors, view her possession of both "female" and "male" qualities positively, praising the monarch's nearly masculine strength. These works also show the influence of Elizabeth I's rhetorical strategies such as the use of the *humilitas* topos, sometimes echoing the queen herself. The poets consistently persuade readers to follow the erudite, virtuous queen's example by reading and thus emphasize the value of their own books and a female readership.

Because of disparities in their social, historical situations, however, Lanyer and Primrose differ to some extent in their access to and presentation of Elizabeth I's life. As a middle-class woman poet, Lanyer was truly dependent on the authority of her patrons in the Jacobean court and society. Consequently, she remembers the late queen mostly as a symbol of a nostalgic past who serves as the origin of the community of virtuous females found in the Biblical past and the poet's own society. Primrose, whose Protestant leanings conflicted with Caroline politics such as Charles I's pacifism and his French, Catholic consort,

much more directly praises Elizabeth I, expressing nostalgia for the queen's Protestantism and successful relationship with her subjects.

Key Words

Elizabeth I, Aemilia Lanyer, Diana Primrose, historical representation, female monarchs, female readership, poetic authority, Protestantism