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# The letters of Elizabeth I: Rhetoric for ruling

Anna M. Patton

*Eastern Illinois University*

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The Letters of Elizabeth I:

Rhetoric for Ruling

(TITLE)

BY

Anna M. Patton

**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

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IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
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2009

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# The Letters of Elizabeth I:

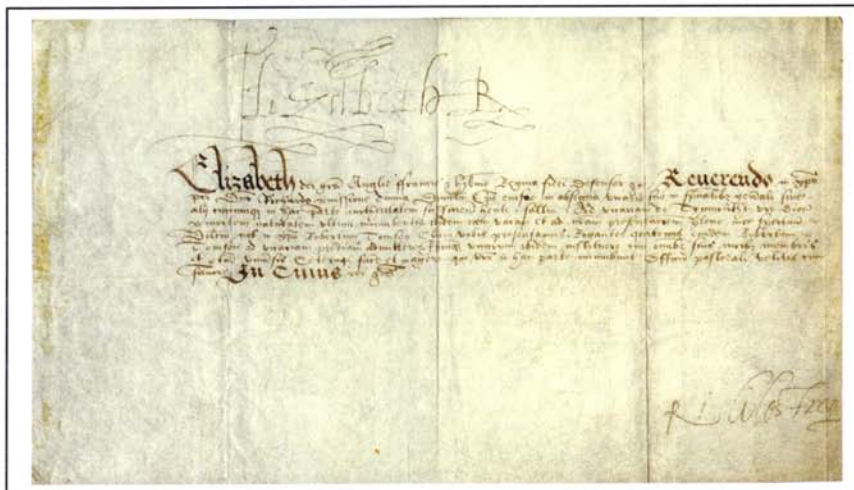
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Rhetoric for Ruling

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Anna M. Patton

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is an investigation of the rhetorical skill of Elizabeth I of England, focusing primarily on her letters. Elizabeth's rhetorical prowess is well documented; scholars have spent ample time dissecting her political speeches as well as her historical significance in literary, political and historical studies. Although her speeches provide a firm foundation from which to examine Elizabeth and her relationships with her people, her letters are even more pertinent when examining those relationships Elizabeth sought to establish during her reign. Elizabeth's politics and relationships are enhanced and developed by her ability to manipulate those around her with her words. By exploring the rich rhetorical tradition cultivated by the humanist education given to Elizabeth, one can begin to elucidate how Elizabeth was able to use her rhetorical ability found in her letters to answer the following questions concerning Elizabeth's rhetoric: How did her rhetoric respond to key historical events and people during her reign? What policies did she establish with her rhetoric? How did she present herself to her subjects with her letters? How did her rhetoric affect her relationships with her people? The answers to these questions show Elizabeth's rhetorical adroitness to be the cornerstone of her reign.

For my loving husband and best friend, Dustin L. Patton

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I must give my eternal thanks and gratitude to my director, Dr. Julie Campbell for her endless patience and incredible support during this writing process. Additionally, I wish to thank my committee members, Dr. Linda Coleman and Dr. William Searle, for their advice and guidance. I must also offer my appreciation to the Graduate Studies Committee, EIU English Department Faculty, and fellow graduate students for their assistance and encouragement. And to Deeanna, Sharon, and Stacy, words cannot adequately express my appreciation for all of your help. I am incredibly blessed to have you in my life, both personal and professional.



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## Introduction

From the moment of her ascension, Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) shifted the course of human history with her words. Since her death, scholars have approached and examined her life, reign, and rhetoric from a multitude of perspectives (Levin 1). In the Preface of *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, Leah Marcus claims that regardless of Elizabeth's historical importance, her "production as a writer has been considered only piecemeal" (xi). She goes on to note that "biographers describe her [Elizabeth's] impressive education and stress instances of her unusual verbal and linguistic powers but seldom offer more than cursory attention to the content of her writings" (xi). Because her writings are key artifacts of her reign, one of the most enticing methods for studying Elizabeth's representation of her political self is to analyze the rhetorical devices that she used not only in her speeches, which scholars have spent ample time dissecting, but more specifically in her letters, which have been less thoroughly examined.

Using her words to manipulate and control the people around her was one of Elizabeth's specialties and legacies. Janel Mueller notes in her article, "Textualism, Contextualism, and Elizabeth I," that the "Henrician manner was to elicit dependency and trust through material and verbal displays of ceremonious splendor and largesse...[and] Henry's last inheritor, Elizabeth, appropriated her father's tactics..." (26). Elizabeth certainly knew how to manipulate a crowd with her "ceremonious" and "splendorous" speeches, but she also could be subtle as well, using her letters as vehicles to maintain control over her subjects. According to Marcus in *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*, the companion work to *Collected Works*, closely examining Elizabeth's letters can lead scholars down two paths: "the study of her

manuscript revisions to track her political and rhetorical strategies of self-representation at key junctures, and the study of her spelling, vocabulary, and phrasing for clues to how she spoke” (xxi). For my purposes in this study, it is the former option Marcus mentions that proves to be tantalizing and generates several questions: How does Elizabeth use rhetoric to reflect and respond to the historical events, or key junctures, that encompassed her reign? What roles does she present herself in to her subjects with her letters? What policies does she effectively establish with her rhetoric? The answers can be found through a careful study of the rhetorical influences on Elizabeth as well as the rhetoric she used in the letters. As Marcus notes, “Analysis of Elizabeth as a verbally self-cognizant and self-determining presence within her texts have already begun to appear” (xxi). The rhetorical strategies in question affirm Elizabeth as a powerful, pragmatic ruler who maintained a formidable influence in the sixteenth-century political world and also show her a political leader willing to embrace prescribed roles on her sex to assert her authority. Essentially, Elizabeth used her letters as the conveyances that set into motion the politics of her reign and allowed her to deviate from role to role as a means to preserve her political control.

Letters, for Felix Pryor, hold a special significance: “Letters, those emissaries of self that will eventually be snuffed out, are the paper-and-ink embodiments of this everyday world. This is the miracle of the letter written by the long-vanished selfhood of Elizabeth, or—viewed from a Larkinesque angle—its horrible poignancy” (7). Pryor notes in *Elizabeth I: Her Life and Letters*: “there is something strange about these pieces of self-writing, as there is about an old photograph. It is almost as if we have here, displayed on our market stall, a set of vanished selves” (7). Letters, unlike speeches,

poetry, or books, are commonly meant as a direct, interpersonal interaction. Pryor defines a letter as a “manuscript with a destination” or a “two-way transaction” (7). He notes that most manuscripts are written with a specific person in mind. Elizabeth was certainly an inexhaustible letter-writer, writing hundreds of letters in her lifetime. In G.B. Harrison’s opinion, compared to Elizabeth, no one was “more expert in writing letters which should convey the widest variety of possible meanings” (xi). She wrote to “command, to exhort, to censure, to persuade, and sometimes to prevaricate” (Harrison xiv). In other words, letters were not just personal correspondence for Elizabeth; they were also an essential part of her reign. Elizabeth exploited the epistolary medium as a method to assert herself as the authority in England. The study of Elizabeth’s letters allows readers “the opportunity to observe Elizabeth’s compositional habits through the material traces of the languages she knew and used—her choice of vocabulary and phrasing, her vagaries of spelling and punctuation, her sometimes heavy revisions and redrafting” (*Collected Works* xiii). Studies of these revisions and word choices can allow scholars to scrutinize Elizabeth’s rhetorical devices and strategies and note the ways they relate to Elizabeth and the relationships she wished to develop with her people.

Elizabeth’s letters can be arranged into four groups: letters by Elizabeth herself; letters written by ministers or secretaries fully instructed by Elizabeth, who would either correct their renditions and/or dictate the contents; letters approved and signed, but not directly dictated; and documents of “administration and routine” (Harrison ix-x). Many letters written for Elizabeth were those that focused on routine, everyday administrative procedures. However, Pryor maintains one can be “fairly sure that she read what she signed; if nothing else, her fantastically elaborate signature would have given her pause

for thought” (7). Elizabeth did not utilize a “dry stamp,” preferring instead to sign each document with her own hand (Pryor 14). She did not, like her Tudor predecessors, “take the easy option and delegate her sovereignty and moral agency to a stamp” (Pryor 14). Elizabeth wanted to be sure that her signature was a true reflection of her wishes and commands. According to Harrison, at all times Elizabeth “scrutinized important drafts and corrected them,” but the letters written later in her reign “seem to carry more of her vigorous phrasing than in the earlier years” (xii). Because Elizabeth did dictate many of her letters and signed several that were drafted by her secretaries, Marcus notes:

It is often impossible to separate the queen’s ‘authentic’ voice from an official style that she developed in conjunction with her secretaries and principal ministers that was used with equal facility by all of them. The texts of Elizabeth’s letters are usually more stable than the speeches, if only because a given letter would usually be sent out only once. [...] Even the queen’s most seemingly personal letters in her own hand—such as the love letters to the duke of Alençon—were often copied and incorporated into government archives. (*Collected Works* xiii)

Despite this fact, reliability of the letters and Elizabeth’s voice should not be doubted. To counter arguments against the validity of the letters’ authorial voice, Marcus suggests:

Indeed, given the existence of a considerable body of material in Elizabeth’s hand, along with meticulous contemporary records of [for example] the queen’s delivery of many of her speeches, questions of authorship may actually be somewhat less intractable in her case than in many others of the same era. Her writings present an interesting and valuable example of the ways in which individual agency intersects with various cultural domains in creation of literary texts. (*Collected Works* xiv)

In other words, just because Elizabeth dictated many letters or had someone else write them for her does not lessen her authorial voice or claim on the letters. Elizabeth’s letters are just as dependable (if not more so) as other works from the Renaissance Period. Her letters can be trusted to represent the political figurehead Elizabeth wished to present, and

they can be used as a means to garner new insights into her life and reign. This is particularly true when the letters are those she herself wrote.

There are five requisite sources to consider when undertaking the challenges posed by studying Elizabeth's letters. All five works offer thirty-five years of research on the transcriptions of Elizabeth's letters which provide a firm base with which to begin, and three offer commentary on the historical significance of the letters. *Elizabeth I: Her Life in Letters* (2003) by Felix Pryor offers historical commentary on transcribed copies of letters to Elizabeth as well as Elizabeth's letters themselves. Maria Perry's *The Word of A Prince: A Life of Elizabeth* (1990) uses the letters to offer a "more cohesive and less baffling" portrait of Elizabeth by framing their historical context. G.B. Harrison's *The Letters of Queen Elizabeth I* (1968) attempts to offer an anthology of select letters also placed in their historical context with some historical commentary. Harrison chose letters for his anthology that he felt showed Elizabeth "as woman and ruler," letters that were "personal" and "significant" as well as official letters that "showed her statecraft in the various crises and problems of her reign" (x).

Two works already mentioned, *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* (2000) and *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals* (2003) provide transcribed letters from early drafts and even some originals. Marcus notes that the chronological arrangement of materials in the anthologies "is intended to facilitate a developmental approach to Elizabeth's literary output" and that "readers have the opportunity to weigh for themselves certain of the critical challenges and choices that we as editors confronted in transcribing Elizabeth's original texts for this volume [*Autographs*] and in modernizing and translating them for the *Collected Works*" (xiii). Marcus, Mueller, and

Rose stress their rigorous standards, including dating texts back to the earliest manuscripts when selecting material for their *Collected Works*. They do not include “famous letters whose attribution is suspect.” They present a range of Elizabeth’s “best known and securely attributed letters” as well as lesser-known letters that “demonstrate the queen’s epistolary range” (xiv-xv). The companion piece to *Collected Works* includes Elizabeth’s writings that “survive in her own handwriting” as well as her foreign language compositions that “have been preserved by other hands” (xi). These two sources in particular allow immediate and reliable access to Elizabeth’s letters that before now may have proven difficult for some scholars.

All five works are rich in their historical content and provide a sound framework with which to work. However, these sources offer little analysis of the rhetoric found within Elizabeth’s letters and have largely been utilized to provide an historical glimpse of Elizabeth. Marcus claims that historians generally look at Elizabeth’s letters as “documents of policy—evidence charting the queen’s relations with Parliament, the Privy Council, and other political bodies” (*Collected Works* xi). Elizabeth’s writing is “almost always occasional in nature: embedded in, and immediately responsive to, specific political situations” (*Collected Works* xii). Literary scholars typically focus on letters to “analyze the strategic gendering of Elizabeth’s self-representation and the ways in which her subjects received and accommodated their powerful queen” (*Collected Works* xi). What I propose is to combine both strategies, Elizabeth’s relationship with ‘political bodies’ and her subjects, specifically within the framework of Elizabeth’s rhetorical style and strategy. This combination allows scholars to look at the cause and effect of the rhetoric and can help engender conclusions about Elizabeth and her leadership.

In order to examine these strategies I have divided Elizabeth's letters into three categories: letters to other monarchs, letters to her Privy Council, and letters to other subjects. Each group posed interesting and complex issues for Elizabeth to consider when trying maintain control during her reign. Audience plays an integral role in rhetoric: it is the audience that forces the rhetorician to shape his or her words to maximize persuasion. Before the letters can be examined for their rhetorical aptitude, however, a brief survey of the classical humanist rhetorical tradition is warranted. This provides an historical lens which allows a more thorough examination of Elizabeth's rhetorical skill. Each subsequent chapter explores the rhetorical strategies Elizabeth utilized in her letters, focusing on specific portions of her letters in conjunction with historical and biographical factors as a means to garner a clearer understanding of the policies and relationships Elizabeth engendered with her rhetoric.

"Rhetorical Traditions and Influences" is the focus of the first chapter, which covers a brief survey of rhetorical history. The primary purpose of this chapter is to delineate the meaning of rhetoric for both Renaissance England and contemporary readers. This survey also examines specific rhetorical influences on Elizabeth, namely Aristotle and Cicero, and seeks to illuminate the classical tradition which fostered Elizabeth's rhetorical capacity. The Greco-Roman rhetoricians had a profound impact on the Renaissance humanist education, and because Elizabeth was trained as a Tudor prince, she would have been fully aware of such persuasive rhetorical traditions. With her education, Elizabeth would have been trained to use rhetorical concepts like *pathos*, *logos*, and *ethos* while developing relationships with her people and other monarchs. Elizabeth used this ideology to establish her policies for England.



In the second chapter, “Common Rhetorical Strategies: Gender and Religious Rhetoric,” I examine how gender and religious rhetoric played a prominent role in Elizabeth’s rhetorical approaches in all of her letters. Sixteenth-century England was mired in religious politics and rhetoric, and as a female ruler, Elizabeth was in an especially precarious position. Elizabeth embraced her role as a female monarch while at the same time rhetorically aligning herself with her male contemporaries. She also made use of common religious rhetoric which she used as a means to remind her subjects and fellow monarchs of her providential place in the world.

The third chapter is focused on “Letters to the Privy Council.” Elizabeth was extremely close and loyal to her Privy Council. This special relationship allowed advantages for both parties; however, their close proximity to Elizabeth also meant that the men had to clearly appreciate the roles and expectations Elizabeth had for them. Juxtaposing Elizabeth’s relationship with her Privy Council and Aristotle’s treatise on political community clarifies the bond Elizabeth had with these men. Her rhetorical strategy is clear-cut and forthright: she relied on the advice from this group of select politicians to help her make decisions. But, she also used and manipulated them to further her own agenda and policies.

In “Letters to Other Subjects,” the fourth chapter, I explore the unique relationship Elizabeth created with her English subjects, including her nobility and court. Elizabeth needed to preserve the loyalty of her subjects. When Elizabeth came into power, she understood England’s precarious condition; sometimes Elizabeth had to make practical decisions that may not have pleased everyone to ensure the stability of England. Elizabeth saw herself not only as the leader of her nation, but also as its protector.

Paradoxically, in her letters she would rhetorically lower herself while yet upholding her elevated state as queen. Her rhetoric endeared her to her people, and Elizabeth used her rhetoric to manipulate her subjects.

“Letters to Other Monarchs” is the focus of the final chapter. Elizabeth’s relationships with other monarchs were quite complicated and multifaceted. On the one hand, Elizabeth had to assert her authority as a fellow monarch: she had to remind the other sovereigns, particularly neighboring kings, that she too held the same position as they did and expected them to treat her with the respect due to her as a divinely chosen queen. On the other hand, Elizabeth was a single, beautiful, powerful woman, an attractive marriage prospect for many of those same neighboring kings. Elizabeth understood this dichotomy and exploited it with her rhetoric. Elizabeth also had a complex relationship with Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, and Mary’s son, James (who later became Elizabeth’s successor). Elizabeth’s letters cultivated her relationship with James; her letters to Mary attempted to remind Mary of Elizabeth’s power.

Analyzing Elizabeth’s letters shows her to be an effectual, pragmatic ruler. Her rhetoric allowed Elizabeth to control her government and maintain political influence in the sixteenth-century. Her rhetoric also helped her preserve the loyalty of her people. By incorporating classical rhetorical strategies espoused by the humanists, Elizabeth aligned herself with other highly educated contemporary monarchs and preserved her authority. As a true pragmatist, she had to continue to establish her dominant rule not only through her actions, but her rhetoric as well.

## Chapter 1: Rhetorical Traditions and Rhetorical Influences

Before one can begin to analyze the rhetoric Elizabeth used in her letters, a brief look at the history of rhetoric allows one to elucidate exactly what rhetoric means today as well as what it meant for Sixteenth-Century England. This overview includes consideration of specific rhetorical influences on Elizabeth. The term 'rhetoric' can have several connotations and for many is not easily definable. In *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Edward P.J. Corbett calls rhetoric "the art or the discipline that deals with the use of discourse, either spoken or written, to inform or persuade or motivate an audience, whether that audience is made up of one person or a group of persons" (1). Rhetoric is not only the delivery (eloquence) but also the way an argument is arranged so that the rhetorician can maximize persuasion. To some, rhetoric is a trainable art. Rhetoric is either a means to truth or just a means to manipulate or persuade an audience, regardless of truth. Traditionally, the art of rhetoric focuses on "formal, premeditated, sustained monologues in which a person seeks to exert an effect on an audience" (Corbett 1). Walter Ong refers to the term's etymology to explain:

The original Greek *rhetorike* refers directly not to writing but to oral performance, public speaking, skills which had constituted the major objective of intellectual training for the elite of ancient Greece. Rhetoric is thus the 'art' developed by a literate culture to formalize the oral communication skills which had helped determine the structures of thought and society before literacy. ("Tudor Writings" 40)

Classical rhetoric studies do tend to focus on oratory, chiefly due to the oratorical nature of ancient Greek society. However, rhetoric naturally evolved to include written forms of communication as well. Classical rhetoric tended to focus on persuasive discourse. Eventually, other forms of discourse, including informative and expository, were

included in the rhetorical cannon. Modern connotations of rhetoric include associations with compositions with particular themes and styles such as figures of speech and sentence patterns, as well as dry, “bombastic” language (Corbett 1). Essentially, rhetoric is the “manipulation of words” used to elicit a response from the audience (Corbett 1). Although today the term rhetoric sometimes evokes negative associations, during Elizabeth’s lifetime rhetoric was an essential part of the core curriculum in education and was highly valued. Corbett notes:

Although classical rhetoric has largely disappeared from our schools, there was a time when it was very much alive. For extended periods during its two thousand year history, the study of rhetoric was the central discipline in the curriculum. Rhetoric enjoyed this eminence because, during those periods, skill in oratory or in written discourse was the key to preferment in the courts, the forum, and the church. (16)

In effect, the art of rhetoric has evolved; each movement within the tradition builds from prior ideas and progresses into a different branch of the same tree. It is from this rich tradition that Elizabeth acquired her vast rhetorical knowledge and ability.

The tradition of rhetoric began in ancient Greece around the fifth century B.C.E. (Bizzell 1). The general focus tended to be on oratory and oratorical skills. Corbett reveals that Corax of Syracuse is generally considered the “first formulator of the art of rhetoric,” which was designed for citizens who needed to plead a case in court (490). Shortly thereafter, Greece began to experience an “intellectual flowering” that led to an interest in rhetoric (Bizzell 21). The Greek Sophists emerged and utilized rhetoric for practical reasons, particularly debates. The Sophists did not believe that human beings could know absolute truth; therefore, truth must be elicited through the examination of opposing arguments. The Sophists endorsed the idea of *kairos*, the belief that “the

elements of a situation, its cultural and political contexts, rather than transcendent unchanging laws, will produce both the best solutions to problems and the best verbal means of presenting them persuasively” (Bizzell 24). Gorgias and Isocrates are generally considered the most influential Greek rhetoricians of this period. The focus on style, specifically antithesis and parallelism, greatly inspired later rhetoricians Quintilian and Cicero, both of whom shaped the study of Tudor rhetoric. As a direct reaction to the Sophists, Plato surfaced with his treatises in support of absolute truth. For Plato, the seeking of truth was the only acceptable form of true rhetoric. Plato did not care for the Sophists, accusing them of merely “entertaining” or “manipulating” their audiences (Bizzell 29). False rhetoric, or Sophistic rhetoric, “cannot be an art because it does not rest on universal principles” (Corbett 492). For Plato, true rhetoric searches out truth, whether it is truth given by a moral, knowledgeable orator to an unknowledgeable audience, or it is the working out a truth through dialogue and collaboration (as seen in *Phaedrus*) (Bizzell 29).

Perhaps the most referenced and significant of classical rhetoricians, particularly for the Renaissance period, are Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. These three men shifted rhetoric away from the subjective search for truth to the objective philosophical functionality of rhetoric and basically classified rhetoric into separate, defined categories. Aristotle was more concerned with the invention of argument, not necessarily the style or eloquence of the orator (Corbett 493). According to Bizzell, Aristotle was most concerned about sorting through “what was known about rhetoric in his own day” and putting “what was useful in usable order” (30). Aristotle is one of the first rhetoricians to stress the importance of audience and developed the concepts of *logos* (logic), *pathos*

(emotion), and *ethos* (ethics). Aristotle differed from prior rhetoricians in that he did not focus on truth, good rhetoric, or bad rhetoric; rather, he focused on functional rhetoric. According to Corbett: “Perhaps the key to understanding Aristotle’s approach to rhetoric is the recognition that probability is the basis of the persuasive art. Orators often based their arguments on opinions, on what people believed to be true rather than on what was demonstrably and universally true” (493). Aristotle felt that rhetoric was “the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject” (181). This definition is not limited to argumentative forms; as Corbett reveals, Aristotle’s definition was much more expansive:

When one is reminded that the Greek word for persuasion derives from the Greek verb “to believe,” one sees that Aristotle’s definition can be made to comprehend not only those modes of discourse that are “argumentative” but also those “expository” modes of discourse that seek to win acceptance of information or explanation. (1)

Aristotle’s systematic approach to rhetoric influenced later rhetoricians Cicero and Quintilian, as well as others in the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and modern times (Corbett 493). The anonymous work *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, which focused on the use of Latin in rhetorical studies, strongly influenced the rhetorical tradition of the Renaissance. According to Bizzell, it is the “oldest surviving complete rhetoric manual in Latin” (241). It provides details on forensic, deliberative, and ceremonial oratory as well as arrangement, delivery, memory, and style (Bizzell 241). In many ways, this work functions as a transition between the Greek rhetoricians and the rise of rhetoric in Rome. This work was eventually used as the “basic elementary text in English grammar-school curriculum when rhetoric had its great revival during the Tudor Age” (Corbett 495). The style of *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* closely resembles the rhetorical works of Marcus

Tullius Cicero. In fact, until the early Renaissance, many attributed the work to Cicero. In his works Cicero also categorized rhetoric and developed a process for composing a speech: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. His style is typified by the amplification of phrases and clauses (Bizzell 241). Cicero also stressed the importance of eloquence for the orator; that is, he or she must be able to deliver his or her speech in an efficient and appealing manner. Cicero felt that the rhetorician should be grounded in varying areas of knowledge; he essentially “broadened the scope” of rhetoric (Corbett 495). As Bizzell notes, Cicero’s rhetorical authority was extensive:

Although he may have had no stylistic imitators in his own day, Cicero exerted great influence in the later classical period and dominated the study and practice of rhetoric up to the Renaissance, remaining strongly influential thereafter. His style in Latin stands as a model of excellence, and his political career has become synonymous with high-minded patriotism. Cicero, in his rhetorical theory, collected most of what was known about Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle, gave it his own political stamp, and transmitted it both through Quintilian and through his own works, which along with *Rhetorica ad Herennium* were by far the most widely read of any classical rhetorical treatises up to the Renaissance. (285-6)

Marcus Fabius Quintilian was a close follower of Cicero and called for his students to emulate Cicero’s style. Quintilian believed that the orator should have a “strong, moral character,” and it was his insistence on the “intellectual and moral training of the aspiring orator” that made him one of the two “most potent classical influences on rhetorical education in England and America” (Corbett 496). Quintilian’s contribution to rhetoric is grounded in pedagogy; his *Institutes of Oratory* is very much a handbook or manual for the education for young orators. Some readers regard Quintilian’s work as an “interdisciplinary effort involving educational psychology, sociology, literary criticism, and moral philosophy” (Bizzell 361). Regardless of the lack of originality of Quintilian’s

work, more than one hundred editions of his *Institutio Oratoria* were sold by the end of the sixteenth century (Corbett 495).

While the classical rhetoricians provide the foundation of Elizabeth's Renaissance rhetoric, works from the Middle Ages also contributed to its development. The Middle Ages' rhetorical tradition was influenced by the "second-century Sophistic" movement and became a "scholastic exercise" rather than a "practical art" (Corbett 497).

Concerning Elizabeth, perhaps the two most influential shifts in the tradition stem from the influx of Christianity and the emphasis on epistolary rhetoric. Corbett reveals that "the province of rhetoric became principally a study of the art of letter writing (*ars dictaminis*) and of preparing and delivering sermons (*artes praedicandi*)" (Corbett 497).

Augustine stressed the importance and benefits of rhetoric to Christianity. In *On Christian Doctrine* Augustine instructed Christian leaders in "biblical hermeneutics and also in a homiletics that makes significant use of classical rhetoric" (Bizzell 434). It was also Augustine who concentrated on epistolary texts, particularly those of St. Paul (Corbett 498). The later Middle Ages saw the transference back to classical texts and the emergence of universities.

This excursion through rhetorical history now brings us to the Renaissance. But before the focus shifts to Elizabeth's time, it is important to mention two men who had a "marked influence" on England's rhetorical development (Corbett 499). Desiderius Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives, referred to as "Continental Rhetoricians" by Corbett, also shaped the rhetorical tradition of England and Elizabeth. Corbett notes that Erasmus did more for the English curriculum than prior rhetoricians and that Erasmus espoused the use of a commonplace book and wrote the *De Copia*, which was widely used as a



textbook in the Tudor schools (499). The significance of *De Copia* is vital to Tudor learning. Corbett imparts that “the matter of *copia* became one of the major concerns of Tudor education. The Latin word *copia* meant literally ‘Plenty, abundance’; in a more particular sense, the phrase *copia dicendi* or *copia orationis* meant ‘fullness of expression’” (499). This ‘abundance’ (generally of knowledge) allowed the Tudor rhetorician to maximize his or her ability to persuade and/or manipulate an audience. Elizabeth was renowned for her “abundant” knowledge and regularly recalled pertinent information impromptu. As Walter Ong relates, a storehouse of information was critical for the Renaissance orator:

Doctrines of invention, rhetorical and dialectical or logical, had encouraged the view that composition was largely, if not essentially, an assembling of previously readied material. The humanists had reinforced this view with their doctrine of imitation and their insistence—not new in actuality but only in conscious emphasis—that antiquity was the storehouse of knowledge and eloquence. (“Oral Residue” 149)

Erasmus also composed a text on letter writing, *Modus Conscribendi Epistolas*.

According to Corbett, Erasmus felt that letters should be the first form of writing for students who had mastered rhetorical skills (500). Vives, too, influenced English education and was the personal tutor of Mary Tudor. Vives “exercised an influence on English rhetoric...by which he helped to set the pattern of the rhetorical curriculum” (Corbett 500). Vives also contributed *De Conscribendis Epistolas* to epistolary rhetoric. These two works undoubtedly influenced Elizabeth’s epistolary rhetorical skill.

It is clear from an inclusive inspection of traditional Renaissance education that classical rhetoric played a major role in the curriculum. Walter Ong’s article, “Tudor Writings on Rhetoric” and *The Education of Queen Elizabeth I of England* by Lenore

Marie Glanz both stress the impact of the classical rhetorical tradition on Renaissance education. According to Walter Ong, the literature of the Tudor age “has some of its deepest roots in the rhetorical tradition” (“Tudor Writings” 39). The Renaissance experienced a massive explosion of intellectual pursuits that led many to rediscover classical ideals and art. This included the rhetorical tradition. “The revival of rhetoric in Tudor England,” notes Ong, “was part of the general Renaissance revival of the art” (“Oral Residue” 51). Because the Renaissance was still largely oratory, “the rhetorical tradition, which in the academic world has so largely controlled the concept and practice of expression from antiquity, strongly supported the oral set of mind in Renaissance culture” (“Oral Residue” 146). This strong oral tradition and interest in rhetorical tradition provided the backdrop for Elizabeth’s education. Glanz’s text traces Elizabeth’s instruction from age seven until the end of Elizabeth’s life in 1603.

As a woman, Elizabeth’s (and her sister Mary’s) education differed from others of her sex. Although more women in the Renaissance were being educated than ever before, the education for women tended to focus on religious piety and purity. It appears that Elizabeth shared her studies not only with her older sister Mary, but also her younger brother Edward. Indeed, Elizabeth was trained as a prince. Both Elizabeth and Mary were “instructed by masculine tutors as strictly as if they had been sons” (Glanz 11). This was a shift from traditional views that limited the education of women to “religion, filial piety, good manners, and the care of the household” (Glanz 13). Glanz claims that Sir Thomas More as well as the prominent Spanish educator Juan Luis Vives opened the way for the emphasis on learning for women. According to Glanz, Vives felt that “learning gave a woman virtuous occupation” (19). Juan Luis Vives had a profound

impact on the learning of the Tudor children; in fact it was he who suggested the study of Quintilian start around age four or five and the study of Aristotle around the age of seven (Glanz 5). Under the supervision of her stepmother, Catherine Parr, Elizabeth received a “superior education” and learned several languages including Latin, Greek, Spanish, French, and Italian (Glanz 23). Elizabeth’s education was also influenced by the “Cambridge group” of scholars which included such foremost men as Roger Ascham, William Cecil, William Grindal, Nicholas Bacon, Richard Cox, and John Alymer (Glanz 28).

Glanz indicates the general curriculum was based on grammar, rhetoric and logic. Students would begin by translating Latin phrases in notebooks and studying works like Erasmus’ *Colloquies*. Latin played a major role in a Renaissance education since it was considered “necessary to aid the scholar in better understanding his own language” (Glanz 21). Ong notes that “Tudor training in rhetoric” was “more remarkable because it was imposed in a second language, Latin, with a sprinkling of a third language, Greek” (“Tudor Writings” 46). Cicero himself espoused the use of Latin in the rhetorical tradition. Latin was not limited to oratory; it was also utilized in writing. Ong writes that Latin was “totally controlled by writing no matter how much it was used for speech, and produced other special kinds of drives toward the oral within the academic world” (“Oral Residue” 147). After intense study of Latin and grammar rules, students would move to logic and rhetoric and focus on Cicero. Critical classical rhetorical works like Cicero’s *De Oratore*, Plutarch’s *De Liberis*, and especially, Quintilian’s *De Institutione Oratoria*, “influenced the pedagogy of Renaissance educators” (Glanz 13). Glanz also discloses that “in addition to these subjects, Elizabeth may have been present when John Cheke

read with Prince Edward Cicero's philosophical works and Aristotle's *Ethics* and, also, instructed him in the history, laws, and constitution of England" (Glanz 38).

Elizabeth's renowned tutor, Roger Ascham, drew on Quintilian's pedagogical ideas for Elizabeth's curriculum (Glanz 44). Ascham's "tutorial system" also included the "orations of Cicero" which were juxtaposed with Isocrates and other Greeks (Glanz 50). He endorsed translations and imitation, particularly aligned with Cicero's *De Oratore*, but felt that training in Latin should be postponed until a later age. Translations and imitations allowed the transference into the "modern consciousness" of the finest of "classical antiquity largely by just such a process of decomposition and recomposition" ("Oral Residue" 149). The ultimate goal of the rhetorical curriculum, then, was "to get them to take a stand, as an orator might, and defend it, or to attack the stand of others" ("Oral Residue" 147).

Elizabeth's education also had a heavily protestant rhetorical and historical influence. Many of her imitation exercises included the translations of religious poems and stories. The rhetorical educational program did not just emphasize oration; during the Renaissance there was a focus shift to composition: "Rhetoric was no longer focused so dominantly as it had been in antiquity on oral performance but had become more or less continuous with advanced instruction in grammar, leading to what is still called theme, writing, as well as to declamations or orations" ("Tudor Writings" 42). These compositions included epistolary exercises as well. Ong affirms that "the art of letter writing, part of the *ars dictaminis* developed in the medieval schools for notaries and officials, had picked up this oratorical structure and applied it to letters" ("Tudor Writings" 43). Letters played a prominent role in the Renaissance community. Letters

were generally “the only record of laws or commercial transactions and hence legal standing” (Bizzell 444). Corbett comments, “In that age which lacked our means of rapid communication and transportation, diplomatic and business affairs were promoted principally through letters[...]. There is as much rhetoric involved in some kinds of letters as there is in most elaborate campaign oratory” (500). In other words, letters not only dictated the day to day business behind the scenes, but also worked as propaganda materials to strengthen the vitality of the controlling party.

During their rigorous education Elizabeth and Edward exchanged letters in Latin to strengthen their “linguistic abilities” (Glanz 34). From these communications Elizabeth “acquired a Ciceronian style” that remained with her and made her letters “read like orations” (Glanz 34). In her letters, Elizabeth utilized “sententious sayings which often made her writings seem obscure and involved” (Glanz 34). Elizabeth regularly used rhetorical tropes which showed her “unarguable adroitness” and her “great rhetorical skill” (Green 1000). Harrison asserts that “the literary style of her letters was as varied as her character. When she was writing coyly, or for effect, or to hide her thoughts and intentions, she was diffuse and affected, hunting the metaphor tediously, and indulging in sententious conceits and flourishes of wit” (Harrison xv). To “adorn” her thoughts, Elizabeth would place a “word or phrase at the beginning or end of a sentence for emphasis” (Green 997). She would quote from Greek and Roman mythology, the Bible, and other popular humanist fields. Furthermore, one of Elizabeth’s tutors stated that Elizabeth favored a style of writing “that grows out of the subject, chaste because it is suitable, beautiful because it is clear. She admires, above all, modest

metaphors and comparisons of contraries well put together and contrasting felicitously with one another” (as qtd. in Glanz 34).

Metaphors and elaborate writing styles were common in Elizabeth’s letters. In a letter to her father, Henry VIII, Elizabeth wrote:

As an immortal soul is superior to a mortal body, so whoever is wise judges things done by the soul more to be esteemed and worthy of greater praise than any act of the body. And thus, as your majesty is of such excellence that none or few are to be compared with you in royal and ample marks of honor, and I am bound unto you as lord by the law of royal authority, as lord and father by the law of nature, and as greatest lord and matchless benevolent father by the divine law, and by all laws and duties I am bound unto your majesty in various and manifold ways, so I gladly asked (which it was my duty to do) by what means I might offer to your greatness the most excellent tribute that my capacity and diligence could discover. (9)<sup>1</sup>

At a young age, Elizabeth displayed her rhetorical adroitness. Because she sought to keep in favor, Elizabeth praised her father using superlatives while gently reminding Henry of her bond to him. Even at this point she was keenly aware of her position and sought rhetorical ways to manipulate her audience and maneuver herself into a firm standing. Elizabeth continued this rhetorical approach with her brother. Elizabeth opened several of her letters to Edward VI with commanding similes:

Like as the rich man that daily gathereth riches to riches, and to one bag of money layeth a great sort till it come to infinite, so methinks your majesty, not being sufficed with many benefits and gentleness showed to me afore this time, doth now increase them in asking and desiring where you may bid and command, requiring a thing not worthy the desiring for itself but made worthy for your highness’ request. (35)

Like as a shipman in stormy weather plucks down the sails, tarrying for better wind, so did I, most noble king, in my unfortunate chance a Thursday pluck down the high sails of my joy and comfort, and do trust one day that as troublesome

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<sup>1</sup> All letter excerpts are from Marcus, Leah and Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, eds. *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2000.

waves have repulsed me backward, so a gentle wind will bring me forward to my haven. (38)

Again Elizabeth seized the opportunity to flatter her brother as a means to sustain his favor. She referred to him (or a place with him) as her “haven” and was seemingly despondent when she was not with him.

Figurative language was not the only component of epistolary works. Letters, like other compositions, tended to be divided into four types: “persuasive (deliberative), laudatory (demonstrative), judicial, and the familiar, which was nonratorical” (“Tudor Writings” 43). Elizabeth would work within all four types during her forty-five-year reign. Because letters basically functioned as the medium that controlled government, a person skilled with rhetorical ability who excelled in the epistolary genre had the potential to possess power.

Of all the classical rhetoricians, Cicero and Aristotle seem to have had the strongest impact on Elizabeth’s rhetoric, evidence of which can clearly be found in Elizabeth’s letters. Because her education emphasized Latin and Greek, Elizabeth developed an interest in the “classics” (Green 996). Classics, such as Cicero’s *De Oratore* and Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, set up classifications or styles that helped orators, and epistolary connoisseurs, develop their style:

Classifications common in Greek and Latin rhetoric were: invention, arrangement or organization, style, memory, and delivery, or utterance and gesture. Under invention, the search for arguments and evidence, came the three main kinds of proofs: logical, which appealed to one’s reason; pathetic, which appealed to one’s emotions; and ethical, which appealed to one’s opinion of the speaker. These three proofs correspond, says Wilson (and Cicero), to the three purposes of orations: to teach, to delight, and to move the emotions or persuade. (Green 996)

These classification systems helped rhetoricians arrange their orations in order to maximize persuasion. Elizabeth's letters bear the hallmarks of these classifications.

Elizabeth was known to use a "Ciceronian" style, which was "ambiguous, highly subordinate, with sentences, clauses, and phrases coiling around one another like impenetrable vines" (Green 993). In fact, great importance was placed on Cicero's works during the Renaissance. Elizabeth, as well as other Renaissance monarchs, referred to Cicero in their speeches and writings. In a response to one of Elizabeth's letters, James commented to Elizabeth, "Ye know, madame, well enough how small difference Cicero concludes to be betwixt utile and honestum ["useful" and "virtuous"]" (292). In a letter to her brother, King Edward VI, Elizabeth wrote: "...I grieve because I perceive I cannot reciprocate the force of these at any time, neither in thought, much less in returning thanks. Lest, however, your majesty should judge your so many and so great favors to me ill placed, or better (to use the words of Cicero taken from *Ennius*), ill done[...]" (16). She also recalled Cicero's words in a letter to Monsieur (Alençon): "You will not esteem me so unworthy of reigning that I may not fortify myself, indeed, with the sinews of war while waiting too long for courtesy from those who seek my ruin" (259). According to Marcus' footnote, "sinews of war" ("the sinews of war, unlimited money) comes from Cicero's *Fifth Philippic*. These references substantiate the influence Cicero had on Renaissance rhetoric.

Besides the direct references to Cicero's words, Elizabeth was also influenced by Cicero's ideas. Elizabeth was "naturally endowed" with a good memory, something Cicero found necessary (Green 1000). Some of Cicero's oratorical/rhetorical strategies were emulated by Elizabeth. In his speeches, Cicero was "courteous when reproving an



opponent and carefully negotiates between extreme political positions as he appropriates elements from each to craft his *Concordia ordinum*. These rhetorical moves were the essence of Roman politics” (Cape, Jr. 273). Elizabeth was an expert at “negotiating” between “extreme political positions” (Haigh 4). In a letter to Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, Elizabeth sent her condolences to Mary regarding the murder of Mary’s husband and conveyed to Mary her concern over the situation:

My ears have been so deafened and my understanding so grieved and my heart so affrighted to hear the dreadful news of the abominable murder of your mad husband and my killed cousin that I scarcely yet have the wits to write about it. And inasmuch as my nature compels me to take his death in the extreme, he being so close in blood, so it is that I will boldly tell you what I think of it[...].O madame, I would not do the office of faithful cousin or affectionate friend if I studied rather to please your ears than employed myself in preserving your honor[...]. (116)

Elizabeth cautioned Mary to proceed very carefully and to deal appropriately with the situation. She went on to beg Mary to remember that she was a “noble princess and a loyal wife” and that she wrote out of “affection” for Mary. Elizabeth was fully aware that she had to be careful with Mary as well as be firm with her.

Elizabeth also possessed immense eloquence—generally thought of as “the good delivery of an oration (voice and gesture)” (Green 1000). However, eloquence can also include the arrangement of words to maximize persuasion. Eloquence is extremely important in letter-writing, as Cicero so strongly emphasized. When discussing eloquence, Cicero writes that he looks for an “accomplished speaker who could deliver his thought with the necessary point and clearness before an everyday audience” with a “style more admirable and more splendid, to amplify and adorn any subject he chose”

(302). Elizabeth was certainly an eloquent speaker; it is not surprising that her eloquence translated into her letters.

Cicero himself was known for his epistolary skills. Amanda Wilcox notes in her article, "Sympathetic Rivals: Consolation in Cicero's Letters," that Cicero wrote letters to his contemporaries that were paradoxical in nature. On the one hand, the letters were a form of sympathy for lost loved ones or some other tragic event; on the other hand, the letters "were steeped in adversarial rhetoric" (Wilcox 237). Wilcox explains:

Through various means, these letters promoted a relationship founded on a spirit of competition aimed at maintaining and, if possible, enhancing the reputation of both contestants. When consolatory letters written by and to Cicero in response to political misfortune or bereavement are read in light of their social context, they suggest that the status of a letter's sender, the circumstances of its arrival and reading, and the pressures that its rhetoric brought to bear on its addressee, were at least as potent in contributing to the effect of the letter as were the commonplaces determined by its genre. (240)

Elizabeth herself wrote some consolatory letters to some of her subjects, and like Cicero, utilized the opportunity to assert her authority and preserve their loyalty. In a letter to George Talbot concerning the death of his son, Elizabeth consoled her subject over his loss and reminded him of the Christian doctrine of heaven to help ease his pain:

Right trusty and right well-beloved cousin and councilor, we greet you well. We had thought immediately upon understanding of the death of the Lord Talbot, your son, to have sent you our letters of comfort, but that we were loath that they should have been the first messengers unto you of so unpleasant matter as the loss of a son of so great hope and towardness, that might have served to have been a comfortable staff unto you in your old years and a profitable pillar unto this our estate in time to come. Whereof he gave as great hope as anyone of his calling within this our realm, which we know, in respect of the love you bear us, cannot but greatly increase your grief.

But herein, we as his prince and sovereign and you as a loving and natural father, for that we both be interested in the lost (though for several respects), are to lay aside our particular causes of grief and to remember that God, who hath

been the worker thereof and doth all things for the best, is not to be controlled. Besides, if we do duly look into the matter in true course of Christianity, we shall then see that the loss hath wrought so great a gain to the gentleman whom we now lack, as we have rather cause to rejoyce to lament. [...]. (256-7)

In another consolatory letter to Margery, Lady Norris, Elizabeth wrote:

Although we have deferred long to represent to you our grieved thoughts, because we liked full ill to yield you the first reflection of misfortunes, whom we have always rather sought to cherish and comfort, yet knowing now that necessity must bring it to your ears and nature consequently must move both grief and passions in you, we resolved no longer to smother either our care for your sorrow or the sympathy of our grief for his loss. Wherein, if it be true that society in sorrow worketh diminution, we do assure you by this true messenger of our mind that nature can have stirred no more dolorous affection in you, as a mother for a dear son, than gratefulness and memory of his service past hath wrought in us, his sovereign, apprehension of our miss of so worthy a servant. But now that nature's common work is done, and he that was born to die hath paid his tribute, let that Christian discretion stay the flux of your immoderate grieving, which hath instructed you both by example and knowledge that nothing of this kind that happened but by God's divine providence.

And let these lines from your loving and gracious sovereign serve to assure you that there shall ever appear the lively characters of you, and yours that are left, in valuing all their faithful and honest endeavors. More at this time we will not write of this unpleasant subject, but have dispatched this gentleman to visit both your lord and you to condole with you in the true sense of your love and to pray you that the world may see that what time cureth in weak minds, that discretion and moderation helpeth in you in this accident, where there is so just cause to demonstrate true patience and moderation. Given at our manor of Richmond, September 22, *Anno Domini* 1597, and in the thirty-ninth year of our reign. (389-90)

Elizabeth began both letters in a similar fashion, claiming their delay was to give the family an appropriate time to grieve. And unlike Cicero, Elizabeth did seem to show legitimate concern for her subjects. She knew the specifics of the tragic events; something Wilcox notes is contrary to the "self-promotion" of Cicero's consolatory letters:

But if consolatory letters were a means of self-promotion, of maintaining friendships, and of garnering increased prestige, personal information about the deceased would not advance their real aim. Reluctance on the author's part to deflect admiration or attention from himself and his relationship with his addressee, while not necessarily pursued as a deliberate rhetorical strategy, would help to explain the absence of information here. (241)

In her letters, Elizabeth showed concern while still asserting her authority as a monarch. This showing of concern further endeared her to her people. Cicero's treatises on rhetoric helped Elizabeth formulate the rhetorical strategies which she used to maintain control of her kingdom.

Aristotle also left an indelible mark on Elizabeth. His suppositions on rhetoric and political theory can be found sprinkled throughout Elizabeth's works. Elizabeth referred to Aristotle as "the philosopher" in a letter to her stepmother, Katherine Parr (6). She also referred to Aristotle in her reply to parliament which was urging the execution of Mary Stuart. Elizabeth stated, "After that I did put myself to the school of experience, where I sought to learn what things were most fit for a king to have, and I found them to be four: namely, justice, temper, magnanimity, and judgment" (198). Marcus notes that Elizabeth, taking the four things fit for a king from Plato, replaced Platonic courage with magnanimity, which was defined by Aristotle as "a lofty pride and self-esteem that reach moral nobility through concern for one's honor" (*Collected Works* 198). For Aristotle, rhetoric was critical in politics; he "places rhetoric, the art of identifying and using 'the available means of persuasion', at the heart of political deliberation" (Yack 418). The three elements that enter into the ability to persuade are the speaker's character (*ethos*); the audience's emotions (*pathos*); and the logic of the speech's arguments (*logos*).

Persuasion is critical to political deliberation, and political deliberation played a key role in Elizabethan politics.

Bernard Yack expounds on Aristotle's treatise on political deliberation in his article, "Rhetoric and Public Reason: An Aristotelian Understanding of Political Deliberation." Using Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, Yack defines political deliberation as "a social practice in which citizens communicate with each other about how they should direct the actions of their political communities" (419). Political deliberation "leans so heavily on rhetoric" or more specifically, the "form of rhetoric in which we seek to persuade each other that one action rather than another best serves the common good or advantage" (Yack 420). Yack notes that political deliberations deal with "contingencies rather than necessities, since no one deliberates about things that cannot be done or actions that we cannot avoid performing" (420). Elizabeth utilized the idea of political deliberation in her letters to her political advisors. In a letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, for example, Elizabeth discussed the marriage proposal of the Duke of Alençon as well the Treaty of Blois. In an almost detached voice, Elizabeth lays out the discussion between the French party and the court, and instructed Walsingham to ensure the amity between England and France:

Wherefore, according to our answer made to the said ambassadors, we have determination that you shall in our name say as followeth to Montmorency, or if he shall desire that you yourself (considering the answer is not plausible) shall make it to the king and his mother to interpret the same to the best, as indeed we mean it plainly and friendly. And then you shall say that we have considered the matter of the king's offer unto us of Monsieur Alençon in marriage, and for the same we do mostly heartily thank the king and the queen mother, knowing manifestly that the same proceedeth of very great goodwill to make a very perfect continuance of the amity lately contracted between us by this last treaty. And considering we have as great desire to have the same amity continued and strengthened, we are very sorry to find so great difficulties in this matter, that

should be a principal bond thereof, as we cannot digest the inconveniences of the same (by reason of the differences of our ages) to assent thereunto. [...]. (207)

Maintaining the relationship with France was contingent on Elizabeth's reaction to the marriage proposal; Elizabeth was aware of this and directed her ambassador to very carefully answer the marriage question. She gave him explicit instructions on how to talk with the king and queen.

Along with political deliberation, Aristotle stressed the importance of building a political community. Aristotle's definition of political community "relies heavily on appeals to character and emotion as well as the giving of reasons" (Yack 418). Aristotle wrote, "Political speaking urges us either to do or not to do something: one of these two courses is always taken by private councillors, as well as by men who address public assemblies" (185). The political community is not made up of people who always get along; rather, the community is made up of people committed to working together despite disagreements. The idea of a political community sounds quite similar to Elizabeth's relationship with her Privy Council. Elizabeth's political community included some of her closest political consultants: Sir William Cecil, Sir Francis Walsingham, Sir Robert Dudley, Christopher Hatton and later Robert Cecil. In his book *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1588*, Wallace T. MacCaffrey writes that Elizabeth's political system was like a "solar system" with the Queen as the "prime mover" and the Privy Councilors who "moved in regular and calculable relationships to the sovereign and to one another" (431). Elizabeth was intensely loyal to her councilors. As MacCaffrey notes, "The men who made up the Council in the Queen's middle years, from the 1570's to the 1590's, were of the Queen's own choosing; those Councilors she had inherited from her predecessors had largely passed from the scene. She needed to choose well, for

her own conservatism was such that, once chosen, a minister was hardly ever discarded” (435). Elizabeth used her political community to help decide and dictate the necessary regulations needed to make her reign run efficiently. (A more in-depth look at the relationship between Elizabeth and her privy council may be found in Chapter 3). Aristotle’s idea of public community provided a key field in which to employ her rhetorical prowess and develop her political agenda.

Another Aristotelian idea stresses the importance of character, or *ethos*, which is so vital to effective political deliberation. In the article, “Politics, Speech, and the Art of Persuasion: Toward an Aristotelian Conception of the Public Sphere,” Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos writes, “The truly persuasive speaker’s superior character, delivery, and knowledge of the political world place him or her in the forefront of political deliberations” (748). According to Yack, Aristotle placed the “appeal to character” as the “most effective of the three forms of proof” (429). Aristotle wrote, “Particularly in political oratory...it adds much to an orator’s influence that his own character should look right and that he should be thought to entertain the right feelings towards his hearers; and also that his hearers themselves should be in just the right frame of mind” (213). A person’s character need not necessarily be flawless; however, his or her character should be commanding and reliable. Early in her reign Elizabeth was very involved in her government; she also sought to establish her “good character.” As a princess, Elizabeth wrote several letters to Edward’s Privy Council demanding that rumors of her infidelity with Thomas Seymour be squelched:

But if it might so seem good unto your lordship and the rest of the Council to send forth a proclamation into the countries that they refrain their tongues, declaring how the tales be but lies, it should make both the people think that you and the

Council have great regard that no such rumors should be spread of any of the king's majesty's sisters (as I am, though unworthy). [...]. (32-3).

Even at an earlier age Elizabeth realized the importance of sustaining her public persona. She reminded Edward Seymour of her rightful place as the king's sister, which provided a greater impetus for him to carry out her wishes. Elizabeth was not immune to attacks on her character. Most attacks on her character were blatant attempts to undermine her position.

Other attacks focused on Elizabeth's gender and her ability to rule. Christopher Haigh claims that Elizabeth was basically fickle and indecisive. However, it could be that Elizabeth's "perceived" fickleness was not a gender issue but instead a form of Aristotle's "unconstrained form of public reasoning"(Yack 418). Yack states that for Aristotle, public reasoning was "more like a contest for attention and allegiance" (427). Elizabeth was cognizant of the fact that she had to be careful not to disaffect her subjects; she needed to maintain the allegiance of her people. Essentially, Elizabeth had to work the "middle road" with her court. To do this, she would sometimes delay key decisions or would compromise in areas many felt should not be compromised. For instance, she stalled numerous times the executions of Mary Stuart and Norfolk. She did not fully embrace conservative Protestantism, choosing instead to continue a balance with Catholicism. One poor decision could completely undermine her ability to control her kingdom. Sometimes her decision-making process infuriated those closest to her. Clearly though, she was not indecisive, but careful. Aristotle acknowledged "that rhetoric is a potential ally in our struggle to define the appropriate ends of political life" (Triadafilopoulos 743). Elizabeth used her Aristotelian rhetoric and ideas to define those "appropriate ends."



For all classical rhetoricians, audience consideration was of the utmost importance. It was vital for the rhetorician to be able to manipulate the emotions of the audience. Aristotle claimed that to be persuasive, “public speech must transcend reason, or *logos*, and engage the audience’s emotions” (Triadafilopoulos 749). Emotions can be a powerful tool. Aristotle wrote that the “frame of mind” is especially important when considering persuasion (215). Triadafilopoulos concedes, “It is not enough that one’s argument be demonstrative, the speaker should also put his or her audience in the proper emotional state” (745). Elizabeth understood the importance of ascertaining and manipulating her audience’s emotions and expectations. Mary Crane states that Elizabeth used “her thorough grounding in the humanist system to formulate strategies for asserting her authority in different situations and before different audiences, often turning audience expectation that she would accept advice into a means of refusing it” (5). One sees this most clearly in her speeches to parliament. When parliament demanded that Elizabeth marry and produce an heir, Elizabeth “thanked” them for their concern and went on to rhetorically tie herself—essentially claim marriage—to her country. Elizabeth used assertive rhetoric while at the same time addressing the needs of the audience. For instance, for her troops, Elizabeth employed motivational rhetoric. For her parliament, who seemed bent on forcing Elizabeth to abide by their wishes, Elizabeth tended to be more direct and sardonic. Elizabeth also remembered how to manipulate her audience by taking into consideration their views of her—namely as an unmarried single woman monarch. Crane aptly explains Elizabeth’s rhetorical strategy toward her subjects:

The point here is that even when addressing her subjects, she does not avoid the assertion of her authority to advise, but rather follows the assertion with a softening qualification. In this way, she maintains her conveniently ambiguous

place in the system of counsel, both manifesting her authority and taking pains that the manifestation of a powerful woman can occasion no anxiety. (11)

This “softening qualification” became Elizabeth’s key rhetorical ploy to manipulate the emotions of her audience to further assert her control. Elizabeth also used her consolatory letters (discussed prior with Cicero) and “softening qualities” as means to elicit emotional responses of love. The consolatory letters themselves solidified emotional attachments between Elizabeth and her people.

To maintain her relationships, Elizabeth sometimes used her emotions as one of her political tools, albeit not in the exact frame Aristotle had in mind in his *Rhetoric*. In Elizabeth’s case she manipulated the emotions of those around her to her advantage. Indeed, many of Elizabeth’s letters are emotionally charged. Haigh maintains that Elizabeth “attempted political intimidation by her anger, and political seduction by loving words” (98). Sometimes she would flirt and try and seduce members of her court; other times she would let her anger work for her:

Elizabeth’s angry outbursts and occasional violence reminded her ministers that her favour was conditional. She would rage that her councilors would be ‘shorter by the head’, or that she would ‘set them by the feet’ in stocks. Norfolk and Essex were executed; Davison and Croft went to prison; Arundel and Pembroke suffered house arrest. The Queen threw her slipper at Walsingham, slapped Essex’s face, and ranted at Leicester times without number. She had a richly deserved reputation as an evil-tempered woman, and her wrath towards errant councilors, contrived or not, was dissuasion from disagreement. (Haigh 83)

The Tudor temper was not something new. Henry VIII was renowned for this temper, which he too used as a means of manipulation. “Like her father,” declares Doran, “Elizabeth displayed a mixture of radiating charm and unpredictable rages; like him, too, she demanded to be the centre of attention and enjoyed the flattery of courtiers” (32).

One can see glimpses of the Tudor temper and sarcasm in several letters. In a letter to

James, Elizabeth wrote: “And if you suppose that princes’ causes be veiled so covertly that no intelligence may bewray them, deceive not yourself: we old foxes can find shifts to save ourselves by others’ malice, and come by knowledge of greatest secret, specially if it touch our freehold” (262). In another letter to Henry III of France Elizabeth sternly wrote:

Is it possible that I, meriting so much in your regard by the entire affection and solid friendship which for a long time I have always held out towards you—beyond the honor that I hold in the rank of king—that I should be treated so strangely, indeed rather as a true enemy, having written to you by my ambassador a thing of great importance most suitable for your quarrel? [...] For from one day to the next I get so many complaints and disputes from my afflicted subjects, to whom unless you remedy everything very soon it is not at all possible that I will deny them the justice of avenging it. (298)

By using emotions to her advantage, Elizabeth effectively controlled her subjects and prolonged her sovereignty.

Studying classical rhetoricians like Aristotle and Cicero, along with others in the humanist education, was a crucial piece in Elizabeth’s development as a Tudor monarch. The humanist education sought to “turn a student into a wise advisor” who could assert his authority “through various rhetorical gestures” (Crane 3). Women were generally not allowed a humanist education and kept from the “training in the rhetorical gestures of authority and without a sanctioned role as public advisors, women were effectively denied a place in the system of political counsel” (Crane 3). However, Elizabeth was given the humanist education generally allotted to princes which shows how the humanist education “could empower a woman who was given the chance to exercise that power” (Crane 4). Elizabeth appreciated the value of her education and realized the “importance of displaying her education as a way of legitimizing her claim to power” (Crane 4).

Elizabeth was no mere princess; she learned the ways of a statesman. As Crane points out:

Elizabeth directly asserts her own learned authority to give advice or in other ways affirms her ties to the humanist learning that was supposed to enable to her do so. Most directly, she occasionally makes full and serious claim to the authority of learning, assuming, if only briefly, the role of humanist statesman. (Crane 9)

Elizabeth was astutely aware of the political climate that surrounded her, both at home and abroad. Because Elizabeth was trained in classical rhetoric, she was able to use her considerable facility with the written word to effectively establish a policy for effectual ruling.

## Chapter 2: Common Rhetorical Strategies: Gender and Religion

Two common themes found throughout many of Elizabeth's letters are gender and religion. Because religious rhetoric encompassed a major portion of her life, Elizabeth utilized rhetorical strategies based on gender and religion. Besides exploiting her rhetorical adroitness in her relationships, Elizabeth used rhetoric to move within the gender-specific "roles" ascribed to her by her contemporaries. Many of these "roles" were prescribed on biblical contexts: within the church, women had certain roles and expectations to fulfill. Elizabeth rhetorically embraced these expectations while paradoxically refuting them and adopting more masculine roles.

A common rhetorical ploy Elizabeth utilized to subvert her critics was to refer constantly to herself with masculine terms. This idea is brilliantly illustrated in her famous speech at Tilbury: "I know that 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" (326). In her letters, she frequently used the ambiguous pronoun "we" instead of "I" when addressing her subjects—generally opening with "we greet you well."<sup>2</sup> Although many monarchs employed the "majestic plural," Elizabeth was able to exercise it twofold: this rhetorical ambiguity allowed Elizabeth to remind her reader that she and England (or she and the council) were one and that she was equal to any male ruler. In other words, she was intricately connected to England and embraced some of the gender-specific roles, such as wife, mother, etc, by rhetorically claiming to be married to England, while yet using other

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<sup>2</sup> The "royal we" or "majestic plural" was a common rhetorical ploy of Tudor monarchs. In the article, "The King's Two Thrones," Adrian C. Mayer notes that Kantorowicz's work, *The King's Two Bodies* (1957), "traces the development of the belief that the Tudor King had two bodies, a corporeal and immaterial one" is just as much a "sociological theory" as a debate on the distinction between the two bodies (205). This "theory," according to Mayer "reveals much about the culture" (206). For Elizabeth, the majestic plural afforded more opportunities to align herself with her male ancestors and contemporaries in a male-dominated political world.

masculine references about herself—calling herself “a prince” and “a king”—in many of her letters. It is difficult to examine Elizabeth’s life and not address gender. Undoubtedly, gender played a huge role in her life as well as her rhetoric.

Interestingly, there tend to be two distinct points-of-view concerning gender and Elizabeth. One follows the belief that gender really had little bearing on Elizabeth’s political world; the other side describes Elizabeth’s gender as a critical factor in her reign. Susan Doran downplays the role gender played in Elizabeth’s political life:

All in all, Elizabeth’s gender had less impact on political life than is generally assumed. The key political issues of the day were those that had dominated earlier reigns: religion, the succession and international affairs. While Elizabeth had her own style of leadership, she worked within the same institutional structures and adopted the same royal convention as earlier monarchs. Even Elizabeth’s image was not so very different from that of her male predecessors and contemporary kings; like them she emphasized her regality, religion and role as carer of her people. (Doran 35)

Doran also asserts that “throughout the reign, Elizabeth claimed the same prerogatives as her male predecessors, adopted the same visual imagery and mottos on her coinage, and participated in traditional royal rituals, adapting them where necessary to suit a female monarch” (Doran 31). Doran’s argument was not that gender played little or no role in Elizabeth’s reign; rather, her argument contends that it did not play as critical role as other scholars, such as Christopher Haigh, claim. Haigh contends that essentially Elizabeth had to dispel the traditional image of the ‘weak’ female and align herself with a ‘virile’ male prince. This line of thought is certainly solidified by Elizabeth’s abundant use of masculine rhetoric when referring to herself. Indeed, Elizabeth almost concedes to these traditional views on gender on the one hand, and then completely undermines the perception in the next breath (or action). According to Haigh in his book *Elizabeth I*,

Elizabeth and her “propagandist” team attempted to redefine the traditional views of womanhood by having Elizabeth embrace her gender while also transcending the accepted stereotypes of women. As Haigh notes, Elizabeth “presented herself in female roles which were elevated far above those of other women” (19). She was a wife, but the wife of England. She was a mother, but was her people’s mother. This is specifically seen in letters to her subjects and James IV of Scotland, and is addressed in later chapters. What I propose is more of an adaptation of Haigh’s view: from an examination of her rhetoric it appears that Elizabeth embraced her femininity and used it as a tool of manipulation while trying to shed the perceived limitations of her sex.

These ‘limitations’ included the belief that women were fickle and incapable of making a rational, detached decision. However, Elizabeth frequently used a detached rhetoric when writing her councilors. One sees evidence of Elizabeth’s careful, emotionally detached rhetoric in a letter to William Cecil staying the sentencing of Mary Stuart:

Right trusty and right well-beloved councilor, we greet you well. Whereas by your letters received this evening we find that the Scottish queen doth absolutely refuse to submit herself to trial or make any answer as by you and the rest of the commissioners there she is to be charged with, and that notwithstanding you are determined to proceed to sentence against her according to our commission given you in that behalf, we have thought good hereby to let you understand that albeit upon the examination and trial of the cause you shall by verdict find the same queen guilty of the crimes wherewith she standeth charged, and that you might accordingly proceed to your sentence against her, yet do we find it meet and such is our pleasure that you nevertheless forbear to pronouncing thereof until such time as you shall have made your personal return to our presence and report to us of your proceedings and opinions in that behalf, or otherwise (if you find it may prejudice your principal commission or hinder our service) to advertise us thereof accordingly and abide there our further answer. And thus our letters shall herein be to you and the rest of our said commissioners there our sufficient warrant and discharge given herein. (289)

Elizabeth was quite direct with Cecil: she did not want him to proceed until he personally met with her to discuss the sentencing. She acknowledged Cecil's effort in the matter, but made it clear that she expected him to report to her before he proceeded. Because the sentencing would be given in Elizabeth's name, she wanted everyone to be clear that she would make the final decision. Another limitation was the belief that women were too emotional. However, in Elizabeth's case, emotions became a powerful political tool. Elizabeth's alleged "indecisiveness," something I believe was more in line with Aristotle's political deliberation, infuriated her councilors, her country, and her suitors. On numerous occasions Elizabeth refused to be forced into a specific decision. She did not marry any prospective suitors; she stayed the executions of Mary Stuart and the Duke of Norfolk; she refused to name an heir. As Doran notes, "her [Elizabeth's] frequent refusal to be pro-active or pinned down to a particular line of action may have infuriated them, yet this flexibility and apparent indecisiveness always left open the possibility that she might rethink her position and change her mind" (32). Elizabeth was not indecisive; she was careful.

Religious rhetoric also played a key role in Elizabeth's life and letters. Early in Elizabeth's reign, John Knox wrote a pamphlet professing that it was contrary to God's desire that a woman could rule. However this claim is undercut when juxtaposed with Elizabeth's reign. As for "God's" providential desire, Elizabeth frequently cited the divine right as proof of her legitimate claim as monarch. In fact, this was one of Elizabeth's favorite rhetorical strategies to undermine those who, based on Elizabeth's gender, challenged her authority. In several letters Elizabeth made references to God's protection of her and fellow monarchs. In a letter to Mary Stuart, Elizabeth hoped



Mary's eyes would be providentially opened: "Praying the Creator to give you the grace to recognize this traitor and protect yourself from him as from the ministers of Satan" (117). Elizabeth related to Lord Henry Carey that she was pleased that "God assisted" him in his latest endeavor and that "God appointed" Carey as Elizabeth's "instrument of [her] glory" (125). In a letter Elizabeth to James wrote:

I was in mind to have sent you such accidents as this late month brought forth, but the sufficiency of Master Archibald made me retain him. And do render you many loving thanks for the joy you took of my narrow escape from the chaws of death, to which I might easily have fallen but the hand of the Highest saved me from that snare. And for that design rose up from the wicked suggestion of the Jesuits, which make it an acceptable sacrifice to God and meritorious to themselves that a king not of their profession should be murdered, therefore I could keep my pen no longer from discharging my care of your person, that you suffer not such vipers to inhabit your land. They say you gave leave under your hand that they might safely come and go. For God's love, regard your surety above all persuasions, and account him no subject that entrains them! [...]. I thank God I have taken more dolor for some that are guilty of this murder than bear them malice that they sought my death; I protest it before God, but such iniquity will not be hid, be it never so craftily handled. [...]. But no marvel, for when they are given to a reprobate sense, they often make such a slip. I have been so tedious that I take pity of your pain and so will end this scribbling, praying you believe that you could never have chosen a more sure trust that will never beguile than myself, who daily prays to God for your long prosperity. (286-7).

This letter was written after the Babington Plot, which was yet another assassination attempt against Elizabeth. She cited God as her deliverer (a reference to Psalm 91) and directed James not to allow these criminals to remain in his kingdom as free men. And because God delivered her safely from yet another snare, Elizabeth claimed God's protection as proof of His favor.

Because religion played such a crucial role during the Renaissance, it was only natural that Elizabeth would draw on religious rhetoric. Doran comments, "In England, it seems, the monarchy was excluded from patriarchal assumptions and a female monarch

was given right by God which permitted her to rule over men” (31). Elizabeth “emphasized the role of God in preserving her from danger and placing her on the throne” (Doran 31). In many letters Elizabeth reinforced her providential right as ruler and used references to God and the Bible to remind her audience of her divine right. Alluding to biblical characters was something the Ciceronian style espoused. Elizabeth frequently alluded not only to feminine biblical characters like Deborah, she also referenced and aligned herself with strong masculine characters such as Abraham, David, Noah, Solomon, Simeon, and Samuel. This divine preference gave Elizabeth “the psychological strength to beat the patriarchal system, to be more than a woman and to rule over men” (Haigh 23). This rhetorical strategy afforded Elizabeth the opportunity to remind her contemporaries of her elevated state. They would have been all too aware of the religious implications of denying a chosen monarch of God. Elizabeth understood the importance of appealing to their religious “*logos, ethos, and pathos*” as a means to control them. This is clearly exemplified in a letter to the commoners of London where Elizabeth attributes the delivery of her enemies to the “great goodness of God.” She goes on to call herself a “Christian prince” whose people are infinitely blessed because it pleased God that her subjects’ hearts were inclined from the “beginning of [her] reign to carry as great love towards [her] as ever subjects carried towards a prince” (285). The message is clear: God has blessed them because of their loyalty to Elizabeth. And if they want the blessings to continue, then the loyalty and support must remain with her.

Both gender and religious rhetoric were an essential parts of Elizabeth’s reign and in many ways defined her as a monarch. By juxtaposing masculine rhetoric with feminine rhetorical terms (that of mother, wife, etc), Elizabeth was able to affirm her

authority. She dispelled fears of a mindless, feeble woman being subjected to manipulative men while at the same time using her femininity as a tool of management and exploitation. Also, Elizabeth had the tradition of the “Divine Right of Kings” to further uphold her legitimacy to the throne. Her numerous victories over her enemies made many believe that she was rightfully England’s sovereign. From the beginning of her reign, Elizabeth attributed to God her protection and accession to the throne, referencing “His permission a body politic to govern” (52). She retained that rhetoric as one of her foundational proofs of her right to be the leader of England.

### Chapter 3: Rhetorical Strategies in Letters to Privy Council

In her article, “‘Video et Taceo’: Elizabeth I and the Rhetoric of Counsel,” Mary Crane explores Elizabeth’s use of “political counsel” to show how Elizabeth “asserted and protected her authoritative involvement in the making of public policy” (1-2). This system allowed Elizabeth to be both the “patriarchal advisor” as well as the “silent and obedient woman within the political system” (Crane 2). Elizabeth was directly involved with the political matters in her kingdom. As Crane notes, Elizabeth “met with her council, corresponded with fellow monarchs, addressed parliament, and made decisions as part of her exercise of power” (4). Being directly involved in the political matters meant developing the relationships with her political community and her court, which she partly maintained through her rhetorical strategies in her letters.

Elizabeth’s Privy Council played an intricate role in her reign; interestingly, her relationship with her privy council was quite complex, as her letters illustrate. Her rhetoric tended to be more straightforward; many of the similes and commanding superlatives that dominate other letters to monarchs and subjects are absent from these letters. This rhetorical shift was most likely due to the different expectations from Elizabeth’s relationship with these men. When Elizabeth attained the throne, she gave the following address to William Cecil and her Privy Council:

I give you this charge, that you shall be of my Privy Council and content yourself to take pains for me and my realm. This judgment I have of you: that you will not be corrupted with any manner of gift, and that you will be faithful to the state, and that without respect of my private will, you will give me that counsel that you think best, and if you shall know anything necessary to be declared to me of secrecy, you shall show it to myself only. And assure yourself I will not fail to keep taciturnity therein, and therefore herewith I charge you. (51)

William Cecil, Lord Burghley, was perhaps Elizabeth's closest counselor. Cecil essentially acted as the queen's filter and helped monitor the daily decisions of the kingdom. However, Burghley was not in control of Elizabeth; rather, Elizabeth used and manipulated him as much as he attempted to do to her. In the letter above Elizabeth is clear: Burghley will be "allowed to give" Elizabeth advice in exchange for his "contentment" for his service to her. He will report to only Elizabeth. Crane notes that "Burghley was Elizabeth's tool to reassure her court and subjects that she was seeking advice, although she may not have necessarily taken any of it" (7). Cranes explains further:

It was important for Elizabeth, especially as a young woman, to appear to receive good advice. On the other hand, as a prince, it was not to her advantage to appear to accept too much of it, especially from powerful male advisors. Through the delicate balancing act of her relationship with Burghley, she was able to assume absolute authority while seeming open to wise counsel. (7)

We can see evidence of this "balancing act" in two letters to Cecil. In one letter to Cecil, Elizabeth directly asks him his opinion concerning the marriage of Mary, Queen of Scotland:

In such a manner of labyrinth am I placed by the answer that I am to give to the queen of Scotland that I do not know in what way I will be able to satisfy her, since I will not have given her any answer for all this time, nor do I know what I now should say. Therefore let there be found something good that I will be able to put into Randol's written instruction and show me your opinion in this matter. (115)

The situation with Mary of Scotland was quite precarious: Elizabeth had to be very careful. By asking Cecil his opinion, Elizabeth allowed Cecil to be a part of a significant moment in her reign. It also afforded her the opportunity to allow Cecil to become the scapegoat should anything go awry (which would happen with Stuart's execution). In

another letter, she goes against the wishes of many on her council and stays the execution of the Duke of Norfolk. She does not bother to explain her wishes in this letter to Burghley, stating: "The causes that move me to this are not now to be expressed, lest an irrevocable deed be in meanwhile committed. If they will needs a warrant, let this suffice, all written with mine own hand" (131). By acknowledging Cecil's clout and seeking his opinion, Elizabeth did not merely confer power to Cecil; rather she gained power by working with Cecil in the confines of her political community. She used him not only for his sound political advice, but also as a means to settle those worried that she as a woman would be unable to make sound political decisions.

Sir Francis Walsingham was another trusted member of Elizabeth's political community. Because Walsingham spent some time in France as Elizabeth's ambassador, many of the letters focus on Elizabeth's protracted marriage talks with the Duke of Alençon. Several letters are quite extensive; essentially, Elizabeth maintained her relationship with Walsingham directly through these letters. In the letters she gave Walsingham explicit instructions on how to approach the French regarding the proposal as well as other political topics. Other letters to Walsingham seemed to be a cathartic forum for Elizabeth. In one letter regarding the slaughter of Protestants in the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre Elizabeth wrote:

We are sorry to hear, first, the great slaughter made in France of noblemen and gentlemen, unconvicted and untried, so suddenly (as it is said at his commandment), did seem with us so much to touch the honor of our good brother as we could not but with lamentation and with tears of our heart hear it of a prince so well allied unto us, and in a chain of undissoluble love knit unto us by league and oath. That being after excused by a conspiracy and treason wrought against our good brother's own person, which whether it was true or false, in another prince's kingdom and jurisdiction where we have nothing to do, we minded not to be curious. Yet that we were not brought to answer by law and to judgment

before they were executed (those who were found guilty) we do hear it marvelously evil taken and as a thing of a terrible and dangerous example; and are sorry that our good brother was so ready to condescend to any such counsel, whose nature we took to be more humane and noble.

But when more was added unto it—that women, children, maids, young infants, and sucking babes were at the same time murdered and cast into the river, and that liberty of execution was given to the vilest and basest sort of the popular, without punishment or revenge of such cruelties done afterwards by law upon those cruel murderers of such innocents—this increased our grief and sorrow in our good brother’s behalf, that he should suffer himself to be led by such inhumane counselors. (215-16)

In this portion of the letter Elizabeth laments the circumstances of the slaughter as well as conveys her worries about the consequences of such brash actions. She directly tied the incident with England: she found it “dangerous” that they “were not brought to law and answer” before the people were executed. Even more appalling was the fact the women and children were also slaughtered, something Elizabeth drew to elicit a sympathetic response. Elizabeth finished the letter by returning to a detached tone and directed Walsingham yet again how he was to approach the king. Elizabeth’s candid openness with Walsingham, as well as other councilors, attests to her unique relationship with her Privy Council. In the letter she takes the opportunity to appeal to Walsingham’s *ethos* and *pathos*, specifically in the last section where she creates powerful imagery. She also uses the letter as a platform to convey her feelings regarding the French monarchy’s decisions. While she seems to displace the blame of the execution on poor counsel—a subtle reminder to her councilor to be careful of the advice he wishes to give—Elizabeth fully understands the religious implications of aligning herself with the French monarchy. And because Elizabeth was in negotiations to marry the Duke of Aleçon, something Walsingham fully supported, she was able to use this event to stay the marriage negotiations.

Elizabeth realized that sometimes conflict could be beneficial and surrounded herself with people who sometimes opposed her views. Obviously, surrounding oneself with “yes-men” could invariably lead to one’s downfall. However, Elizabeth needed to be able to “distance herself from her leading councilors, to identify and resist their manipulation, to secure other sources of advice and information, and to force them to do her will” (Haigh 79). The Privy Council rarely agreed with Elizabeth on every course of action. The council’s primary concern “was more about what they saw as the Queen’s mistaken policies and refusal to listen to good sense than about the inappropriateness of a woman taking decisions” (31). This frustration was “a measure of Elizabeth’s independence and their failure to persuade or browbeat her into following their own particular line of policy” (Doran 31). Elizabeth had to avoid the council’s manipulation while she manipulated them. Haigh notes that “Elizabeth must surely have learned from her mother’s fate—learned that a woman in politics was at risk from emotional entanglements, and that a ruler of England could be made a tool of Court intrigues” (4). Elizabeth refused to be cornered into a decision she would later regret and was angry when her council challenged her. When Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, accepted control of the Netherlands contrary to Elizabeth’s will, Elizabeth’s anger was quite clear:

How contemptuously we conceive ourselves to have been used by you, you shall by this bearer understand: whom we have expressly sent unto you to charge you withal. We could never have imagined (had we not seen it fall out in experience) that a man raised up by ourself and extraordinarily favored by us, above any other subject of this land, would have in so contemptible a sort broken our commandment in a cause that so greatly toucheth us in honor. Whereof although you have showed yourself to make but little account in so most undutiful a sort, you may not therefore think that we have so little care of the reparation thereof as we mind to pass so great a wrong in silence unredressed. And therefore our express pleasure and commandment is that, all delays and excuses laid apart, you do presently upon the duty of our allegiance obey and fulfill whatsoever the



bearer hereof shall direct you to do in our name. Whereof fail you not, as you will answer the contrary at your uttermost peril. (273-4)

Later Elizabeth wrote a more temperate letter to Dudley, rhetorically attempting to solidify the relationship:

Right trusty and right well-beloved cousin and councilor, we greet you well. It is always thought in the opinion of the world a hard bargain when both parties are leasoned [belied, slandered], and so doth fall out in the case between us two. You, as we hear, are greatly grieved in respect of the great displeasure you find we have conceived against you; and we, no less grieved that a subject of ours of what quality that you are, a creature of our own and one that hath always received an extraordinary portion of our favor above all our subjects even from the beginning of our reign, should deal so carelessly—we will not say contemptuously—as to give the world just cause to think that we are had in contempt by him that ought most to respect and reverence us, from whom we would never have looked to receive any such measure. Which, we do assure you, hath wrought as great grief in us as any one thing that ever happened unto us. (277)

This second letter illustrates the unique relationship Elizabeth fostered with her Privy Council. Elizabeth had every right to be angry with Dudley for his actions; however, she felt compelled to pen the second letter in an attempt to reconcile the relationship. She draws heavily on *pathos*, claiming that the event caused her the “greatest grief.” She then practices the Ciceronian idea of being “courteous” when reproaching her subject. Elizabeth also plays with the Dudley’s perceived “truth” of the situation—her unfair anger and that fact that the council has plotted against him—and her “truth”. She acknowledges Dudley’s anger and hurt, while further explaining her side of the story in the letter. This, again, allows a member of her council to feel as though he was valued while still asserting her authority. She is essentially strengthening the bond between herself and her political community. Undoubtedly, she would have been less patient with someone outside of her Privy Council.

Because the Privy Council composed Elizabeth's political community, expectations for the group differed as compared to other relationships that Elizabeth fostered. The task of the political community was to "help make the difficult judgments about how to balance and prioritize these different components of the common good, rather than to urge [...] [behavior] in the noblest and most honorable way" (Yack 426). What brings the political community together is "shared advantage, the shared benefits of pooling their resources and cooperating, rather than shared virtues or mutual concern about their well-being" (Yack 431). Elizabeth's rhetoric differs because of the unique relationship she maintained with the Privy Council. She communicated very directly with her council and certainly sought to persuade them that one action (generally hers) was better than other ones. She clearly dictated to them the major decisions of the kingdom. Essentially, she was positioning herself in the best possible way to maintain control of her kingdom, something she would have been made aware of in her humanist education:

Clearly, then, Elizabeth was extremely aware of humanist ideas about political counsel, and sought quite subtly to position herself with exceptionally flexible tools for the maintenance of power because, unlike courtly paradigms which froze her in a static pose, she could assume a wide array of stances within it. (Crane 11)

Elizabeth deeply cared for her councilors and would often visit their sick beds to show her affection (Haigh 83). The relationship Elizabeth fostered with her council bears the hallmarks of Aristotle's political community; because Elizabeth would often show affection (admittedly, sometimes to further her own agenda), she was establishing a "reputation for public-spiritedness, rather than a reputation for impartiality and disinterestedness" (Yack 423). As Yack professes, a political community is "bound by

ties of friendship,” but it is a friendship with “shared advantage” rather than “the more perfect friendship of shared virtue” (424). Members of the Privy Council certainly benefited from being in Elizabeth’s close “circle” of advisors; often she handsomely rewarded those closest to her. However, Elizabeth herself particularly reaped the advantages of power and stability from this being a member of this group as well.

#### Chapter 4: Rhetorical Strategies in Letters to other Subjects

Elizabeth cultivated useful relationships with her other subjects, including members of her court and the nobility of her country. In the letters to her subjects, Elizabeth's rhetoric fluctuated between over-the-top flattery and more direct forms of interpersonal communication. Often, she seemed like a concerned mother providing "advice" to her people. In a letter to Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby, Elizabeth offers some marriage counsel:

We greet you well. Hearing sundry wise of some unkindness or strangeness of late of your part towards your wife, whereof for both your parts we were sorry, and being informed that no matter can be understood by her friends and kinfolks of her desert, but that upon some misliking conceived against her by your children, you should by them be occasioned to deal strangely with her and in other sort than you were accustomed or than is convenient, we, being very sorry to hear of this alteration (considering we know how well you esteemed her and we ourselves having always had very good estimation of her, both for her good parentage and for her own discreet behavior), cannot, for the favor and goodwill we have to you both, but require you either to receive her to such favor as heretofore you did bear her, without inclining to credit such as of evil will and without just cause shall be disposed to maintain variation betwixt you; [...]. (111-12)

In this letter, Elizabeth directed Stanley to have a higher regard for his wife. She began the letter with a Ciceronian "softening quality," but quickly reminded Stanley of his earlier "esteem" for his wife, as well as her "very good estimation of her." She not only appealed to Stanley's *ethos* and *pathos* by reminding him of his moral obligation as a husband, but also his *logos*: if he loses his wife, he will lose his favor with her. This role of guiding mother and queen served as a perfect platform for Elizabeth to take advantage of her rhetorical skills. Further, Elizabeth's "dual" image of fully queen and fully woman allowed her to use her "personal friendships...as political strings to manipulate her servants" (Haigh 92). This fueled the devotion from her servants and "formed a

framework for political relations and a constant reinforcement of loyal attitudes” (Haigh 95). Elizabeth was successful, with her rhetoric playing a vital role. In other letters, she was quite droll. Elizabeth’s “sense of humor was not very subtle, but her irony was keen” (Harrison xv). Showing her keen wit, Elizabeth continues a metaphor in a letter to Charles Blount, Lord Montjoy, of a kitchen wench addressing the letter, “Mistress kitchenmaid,” (399). She continues with the figurative language throughout the letter referencing his “frying pan and other kitchen stuff”:

I had not thought that precedency had been ever in question but among the higher and greater sort; but now I find by good proof that some of more dignity and greater calling may by good desert and faithful care give the upper hand to one of your faculty, that with your frying pan and other kitchen stuff have brought to their last home more rebels, and passed greater breakneck places than those than promised more and did less. Comfort yourself, therefore, in this: that neither your careful endeavors, nor dangerous travails, nor heedful regards to our service, without your own by-respects, could ever have been bestowed upon a prince that more esteems them, considers and regards them, than she for whom chiefly, I know, all this hath been done, and who keeps this verdict ever in store for you—that no vainglory nor popular fawning can ever advance you forward, but true vow of duty and reverence of prince, which two afore your life I see you do prefer. (399-400)

Elizabeth wanted to be loved and respected by her people. She wanted her people not only to hear the words she spoke, but also love her more because of them. She wrote several consolatory letters to subjects who had lost loved ones. Often, however, the show of affection was another means of retaining loyalty and control, and Elizabeth’s letters were a means of power over those around her. Elizabeth’s relationship with her people was codependent. They needed each other: her subjects wanted the social advancement and she wanted their flattery and loyalty. It is clear that Elizabeth’s subjects took “pride” in her rhetorical ability (Green 987). Janet Green’s article, “Queen Elizabeth’s Latin

Reply to the Latin Ambassador,” examines one of Elizabeth’s later rhetorical feats. Elizabeth completely impressed her court when she gave an impromptu rebuttal in Latin, the common language of diplomacy, to a discourteous ambassador. Cicero stressed the importance of Latin, and as a humanist student, Elizabeth was taught to be well-versed in it. Green notes, “Elizabeth’s ability to communicate directly with foreign ambassadors, in their own languages, was well known. She could easily defend herself against any displeasing words, and did” (1003). As Crane remarks, Elizabeth’s “skillful use of the humanist rhetoric of authoritative counsel allowed her to break silence and speak the language of authority as a uniquely powerful woman in a man’s world” (12). Her intellectual and rhetorical ability literally endeared Elizabeth to her people. She often manipulated her subjects’ emotions and cultivated the representation of her character that she wanted her them to embrace with her rhetoric, thereby maintaining their endearment. Also, Elizabeth’s rhetorical aptitude proved to her people that Elizabeth was still in control: “that Elizabeth could summon up relevant historical examples and governmental theory so spontaneously is proof indeed that she was in command not only of the situation, but of all her faculties” (Green 988). It was Elizabeth’s ability to “exercise power successfully in a man’s world” that garnered the respect of her contemporaries and the modern world (Doran 29).

The English nobility was important to Elizabeth. She needed them. Haigh notes that Elizabeth “flattered and favored her nobility for two reasons: she was afraid of their power, and she needed their power” (58). Elizabeth understood that “at times of political crisis, Elizabeth needed the power and the prestige of her nobles—and she had to ensure their loyalty by involving them in her actions” (Haigh 59). This idea is nicely illustrated

in a letter to Henry Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon, who was responsible for keeping order in the northern realm of the kingdom:

Right trusty and well-beloved cousin, we greet you well. Although we doubt not but you have understood from divers of our Council in what good part we have taken your exceeding care and pain in divers things greatly importing our service (even according to your old custom, whereof we have had good trial); yet can we forbear at this time to let you know it by our own hand—the rather for that these new occasions of disorders in Scotland and on our borders have crossed our purpose to have had you come up in regard of your health, whereof we have great care and consideration.[...]. But now that things are as they be (whereof the issues are yet uncertain) and that the looseness of those northern parts is fit to be guided by wise and sound directions, though we know your own vigilance and watchful care is such as you would be loath to be absent in this fickle time, yet do we require you there (even seriously from ourself) to have care of your health and state of body, in such sort as you may neither prove wearisome to yourself (which is the fruit of sickness) or be less able to continue so serviceable unto us as we have ever found you, and for such a one both do and will esteem you.[...]. (372)

Elizabeth began the letter discussing the political problem she was facing. Then she turned to Hastings's duty while at the same time using flattery to manipulate him into helping her. She showed consideration for his well-being and health—further developing an emotional attachment with him—and stressed his importance to her and her well-being. She could not directly control the borders; however, she did directly control Hastings. She merely used Hastings to keep control of the northern realms, but made Hastings feel significant. By involving Hastings in her political agenda, Elizabeth hoped that Hastings would help her control the north.

Elizabeth's courtiers were also an important part of Elizabeth's reign. She encouraged her nobility and politicians to practice the courtier lifestyle and according to Haigh "deliberately politicized her Court" (87). Elizabeth's court was a place of "political seduction" and afforded her a place to "control her councilors and her magnates by

drawing them into a web of personal, even emotional, relationships with her, in which she was by turns queen and coquette” (Haigh 87). Elizabeth often rhetorically aligned herself with whichever role needed to best suit the situation to sustain control.

Sometimes she sounded like a mother; other times she sounded like a Tudor general:

Right trusty and well beloved, we greet you well. Albeit your abode and of our troops in that realm hath been longer than was first required and by us meant; whereof, as it seemeth, your yielding to divers services there hath been partly a cause, contrary to our expectation, to the king’s purpose at the first declared, and to your own writing also hither, whose advertisements moved us to give order for certain ships of ours to be sent for the safe conduction of you and our subjects with you; yet now perceiving the great contentment and satisfaction the king, our good brother, hath received by your good service, and of our companies under your charge, whereby also such as heretofore might have conceived an opinion either of our weakness or of the decay and want of courage or other defects of our English nation may see themselves much deceived, in that the contrary hath now well appeared in that county by so small a troop as is with you, to the great honor and reputation of us and of our nation, and to the disappointing and (as we hope) the daunting of our enemies. [...]. You shall say unto the king that although we have cause, in respect of the wants which we heard our men endured sundry ways there, to be unwilling that they should remain there any longer time, yet when we understood that he hoped to do himself the more good by the use of them than otherwise he might look for, wanting them, we were—we know not how—overcome and enchanted by the king to yield thereunto [...]. (360-1)

This letter to Peregrine Bertie, Lord Wiloughby, was in response to Wiloughby’s army’s decisive victory in France for Henry IV. She applauded his effort for Henry and sent her regrets for the extra time he spent in France. She discussed in detail strategies and explanations regarding the battle with Wiloughby while also praising Wiloughby’s feats on the battlefield. As any politician would, Elizabeth had to make Wiloughby feel important while pushing her political agenda (helping Henry gain control of France). Elizabeth’s ability to “sound” like a politician or military figure strengthened the hold she



had on her subjects. This worked well for her nobility; for the peasantry, however, Elizabeth had to take a different approach.

Elizabeth often had to argue against ‘popular’ views or positions while maintaining the loyalty of her people. To do this, Elizabeth “pursued a propaganda policy designed to maximize popular loyalty to herself—not just because she liked to be cheered, but because it was politically sensible” (Haigh 146). She had to show her princely education to her nobility and present an unpretentious message to her commoners: “So Elizabeth did not only have to present sophisticated and allusive images of female rule to her educated courtiers; she had to present a simpler, more basic message to ordinary people. Somehow, the townspeople and peasants of England had to be made to love her” (Haigh 146). To do this, Elizabeth would send communications to the common people, employing some of the same rhetorical strategies she would use in other letters. In a letter addressed to the “Commoners of London” Elizabeth wrote:

Right trusty and well beloved, we greet you well. Being given to understand how greatly our good and most loving subjects of that City did rejoice at the apprehension of certain devilish and wicked-minded subjects of ours that through the great goodness of God have been of late detected to have most wickedly and unnaturally conspired not only the taking away of our life, but also to have stirred up, as much as in them lay, a general rebellion through our whole realm, we could not but by our letters witness unto you the great and singular contentment we received upon the knowledge thereof, assuring you that we did not so much rejoice at the escape of the intended attempt against our person, as to see the great joy our most loving subject took at the apprehension of the contrivers thereof, which to make their love more apparent they have (as we are to our great comfort informed) omitted no outward show that by any external means might witness to the world the inward love and dutiful affection they bear towards us. And as we have as great cause with all thankfulnesss to acknowledge God’s great goodness towards us by the infinite blessings He layeth upon us—as many as ever prince, yea, rather as ever creature had—yet do we not for any worldly blessing received from His divine Majesty so greatly acknowledge the same, as in that it hath pleased Him to incline the hearts of our subjects from the first beginning of

our reign to carry as great love towards us as ever subjects carried towards prince, which ought to move us, as it doth in very deed, to seek with all care and by all good means that appertaineth to a Christian prince the conservation of so loving and dutiful-affected subjects. Assuring you that we desire no longer to live than while we may in the whole course of our government carry ourself in such sort as may not only nourish and continue their love and good will towards us, but also increase the same, we think meet that these our letters should be communicated in some general assembly to our most loving subjects the commoners of that City. Given under our signet at our castle of Windsor the 18 of August, 1586, *annoque regni nostril 28<sup>o</sup>*. (285-6).

Once again Elizabeth utilized the religious and gender based rhetoric that often denoted her style. She was a “Christian prince” delivered once more by God. She also exercised flattery, extolling her people for their rejoicing for her safety.

Elizabeth’s letters to her subjects are especially fascinating because they show her to be a monarch very much concerned with her people’s perception. She was directly involved with her subjects’ lives, both for their benefit as well as hers. And while she was certainly not the epitome of altruism, Elizabeth did make sacrifices for her people. All she wanted in return was their support and love.

## Chapter 5: Rhetorical Strategies in Letters to other Monarchs

In most of Elizabeth's letters to other monarchs, Elizabeth employs similar rhetorical techniques to those she uses in other letters. She used masculine rhetoric, referring to herself as a "king" and or a "prince." She reminded Henry III of France that she held the "rank of king" (298). Elizabeth even referenced Mary as a prince in a letter reproaching Mary's behavior after the murder of her husband. Elizabeth asked James to "judge of me therefore as of a king that carries no abject nature..." (267). Elizabeth always addressed male monarchs directly; she did not allow her sex to make her the object of condescension to her male contemporaries. She also drew on religious rhetoric in these letters. In a letter to Henry IV of France she made a biblical allusion to Jacob and Esau to remind Henry of his true "Father" (a reference to Henry's recent conversion to Catholicism). Elizabeth identified herself as: "Elizabeth of England, France, and Ireland queen, and of the true Christian faith against idolators falsely professing the name of Christ the constant, perpetual, and victorious Defender" in a letter to the Sultan Mahumet Cham (400). What was exclusive about these letters is the fact that Elizabeth was writing to other monarchs in such an assertive manner. In these letters to other monarchs, Elizabeth often stressed her authority "openly and without qualification" (Crane 7). She did not refrain from offering advice to James of Scotland, Mary Stuart, or Henry IV of France. She dissuaded Henry IV of France from going into battle, conjuring him to "esteem himself not as a private soldier but as a great prince" (363). She "exhorted, counseled, and beseeched" Mary to swiftly deal with the murderers of her husband (116). Elizabeth also directed Mary to "be careful how your son the prince may be preserved" (118). In a letter to James Elizabeth advised him to return "vagabond

traitors and seditious inventors” to her or to “banish them from [his] land” (365). This advice allowed Elizabeth to command respect from her peers:

By using a commonplace to express her thoughts, she asserts the learned authority of a trained advisor and claims the support of convention for her unconventional claim to male power. By casing a command in the form of sententious advice, she softens, and makes more acceptable, her claim to that power. (Crane 9)

Harrison notes that “few kings can have received such straight letters as Henry IV of France or King James whom she berated abusively when they angered her, especially by failing to show the same independent spirit as her own” (xv). In correspondence with Henry IV of France, Elizabeth solidified her fundamental beliefs by expressing her displeasure over his conversion to Catholicism, writing: “My God, is it possible that any world respect should efface the terror with which the fear of God threatens us? Can we with any reason expect a good sequel from an act so iniquitous?” (371). She ended the letter: “Otherwise I will be only a bastard sister, at lest not your sister by the Father” (371). She reproached and warned James for not dealing with Spanish Catholics who plotted to kill her:

I vow if you do not rake it to the bottom you will verify what many a wise man hath (viewing your proceedings) judged of your guiltiness of your own wrack, with a whining that they will you no harm in enabling you with so rich a protector that will prove in the end a destroyer. I have beheld of late a strange, dishonorable, and dangerous pardon, which, if it be true, you have not only neglected yourself but wronged me, that have too much procured your good to be so evil guerdoned with such a wrong as to have a free forgiveness of aught conspired against my person and estate. Suppose you, my dear brother, that these be not rather ensigns of an enemy than the tack of a friend? (367)

Elizabeth had an especially interesting relationship with James IV of Scotland. She wrote to James: “You know, my dear brother, that since you first breathed I regarded always to conserve it as mine own it had been you bare” (366). Elizabeth employed a

familial role with James in many of her letters. She often addressed her letters, “Right dear brother,” and signed them “Your very assured, loving sister and cousin,” (262). Her tone was very direct and motherly, generally chiding him for not responding quickly enough and conferring with him over political matters. Sometimes she showed concern for him; at one point she composed a letter warning James of impending trouble from Scottish refugees who left England to stir rebellion in Scotland. G. B. Harrison relates that James also “irritated [Elizabeth] beyond measure” (xvi). This could be because Elizabeth felt some responsibility for James (she was his godmother) and wanted to coach him into her way of thinking.

James and Elizabeth’s relationship also had to bear the Mary Stuart situation. In a letter regarding James’ mother, Elizabeth writes, “Dear brother and cousin, weigh in true and equal balance whether the lack not much good ground when such stuff serves for their building! Suppose you I am so mad to trust my life in another’s hand and send it out of my own?” (296). In other words, Elizabeth was not going to release Mary; it was much easier to keep an eye on her in England. Mary’s numerous attempts to assassinate Elizabeth, which led to Mary’s eventual execution, naturally strained their relationship. In a letter to James, Elizabeth professed her innocence concerning the death of Mary:

I would you knew though not felt the extreme dolor that overwhelms my mind for that miserable accident which far contrary to my meaning hath befallen. I have now send this kinsman of mine, whom ere now it hath pleased you to favor, to instruct you truly of that which is too irksome for my pen to tell you. I beseech you that—as God and many more know—how innocent I am in this case, so you will believe me that if I had bid aught I would have bid by it. [...]. (296).

This almost seems like a rhetorical ploy by Elizabeth to displace blame for Mary's execution. And so it may be. However, Elizabeth goes on in the letter to express to

James that had she commanded the execution, she would have abided by it and that no other monarch would make her “afraid to that were just or, done, to deny the same” (296). Elizabeth was quite unhappy with her councilors for forcing her into an uneasy political situation. Indeed, Mary’s execution was the catalyst for Spain to attack England.

James and Elizabeth’s relationship was almost entirely maintained through letters. These letters allowed Elizabeth to offer James political counsel and advice; it also allowed Elizabeth the opportunity to manipulate him with her rhetoric. Their correspondence began with Elizabeth writing:

Your gladsome acceptance of my offered amity, together with the desire you seem to have engraven in your mind to make merits correspondent, makes me in full opinion that some enemies to our goodwill shall lose much travail with making frustrate their baiting strategems, which I know to be many and by sundry means to be explored. I cannot halt with you so much as to deny that I have seen such evident shows of your contrarious dealings that if I made not my reckoning the better of the months, I might condemn you as unworthy of such as I mind to show myself toward you; and therefore I am well pleased to take any color to defend your honor, and hope that you will remember that who seeketh two strings to one bow, they may shoot strong but never straight. (262)

Elizabeth’s correspondence continued to shape James’s ideas by offering political advice:

Judge of me therefore as of a king that carries no abject nature and think this of me, that rather than your danger I will venture mine. And albeit I must confess that it is dangerous for a prince to irritate too much through evil advice the generality of great subjects, so might you or now have followed my advice, that would never betray you with unsound counsel. (267)

Elizabeth’s last letter to James in 1602 contained figurative language and political counsel:

Who longest draws the thread of life and views the strange accidents that time makes doth not find out a rarer gift than thankfulness is, that is most precious and seldomest found. [...]. Whereas it hath pleased you to impart the offer that the French king hath made you, with a desire of secrecy, believe that request includes

a trust that never shall deceive, for though many exceeds me in many things, yet I dare profess that I can ever keep taciturnity for myself and my friends. [...]. (402)

These letters illustrate Elizabeth's use of previous rhetorical strategies. She employed figurative language in typical Ciceronian style: she used elaborate metaphors, masculine rhetoric, and softening reproaches with James. When he made her angry (and he did) Elizabeth was quick to scold James. When he did something that pleased her, she would thank him. James was important to Elizabeth. He would be her successor and she wanted to groom him for the job. Her letters were the molding tool; with her rhetoric she was able to fashion him into the monarch she wanted him to be for England.

On the surface the letters to other monarchs appear quite similar to other letters that Elizabeth authored. She utilized the same rhetorical strategies that she used in letters to her Privy Council and other subjects. Her humanist education prepared her to engage in effectual discourse with her fellow sovereigns. Essentially, she conducted herself as a Tudor monarch was trained to do. She drew on Aristotelian ideas of *pathos*, *logos*, and particularly *ethos* to capitalize persuasion. In some instances she could be detached; in other letters her fiery temper was quite clear. She employed figurative language and religious rhetoric. What differed, however, was the audience. For classical rhetoricians, audience expectation was crucial to maximize manipulation. Elizabeth did not have to establish a political community with these monarchs. The fact the Elizabeth used the same rhetorical strategies on monarchs that she used for her other subjects demonstrates that Elizabeth believed herself as "the absolute monarch" (Harrison xvi). She rhetorically manipulated fellow monarchs using Aristotelian and Ciceronian techniques just as she did her English subjects.

## Conclusion

Elizabeth realized that her letters were an integral part of her reign. She used them as the medium to develop a representation of herself that would allow her to preserve her power. In her letters, Elizabeth's "personal character, her kingly qualities, and her fundamental beliefs are frequently shown" (Harrison xvi). Elizabeth presented herself in a variety of roles in her letters. On the one hand, she asserted her authority as the providentially chosen monarch who would not tolerate any question of her authority. Sometimes her voice was detached as she went through dictating important orders and information to her subjects. This detachment allowed Elizabeth to remove herself from the emotional stigmatism often placed upon her as a female monarch. On the other hand, Elizabeth used emotions to endear her to her people. We see a softer side of Elizabeth: at times she appears almost like a motherly figurehead concerned with the well-being of her country and her subjects. Fulfilling these and other paradoxical roles (something Christopher Haigh points to in his book) by her rhetorical ability allowed Elizabeth the opportunity to rule her kingdom effectively. Elizabeth had several roles to fulfill: she had to be a woman, a queen and a king. Haigh claims that Elizabeth had to be the Virgin Queen on the throne, mother of the Church, aunt to her nobles, nagging wife to her councilors, nanny to her parliament, and seductress to her courtiers (106). However, Elizabeth not only utilized the feminine roles that Haigh is so quick to place upon her, but she also fulfilled the duties placed upon her as a Tudor monarch. She responded to the historical events as no other Tudor monarch did: uniquely encompassing the passion of her father with her own compassion and loyalty. She embraced her femininity while attempting to exploit the stereotypes forced upon her by her contemporaries. She showed



patience while making major decisions, not the indecisiveness others have claimed. She used her Henrecian temper as a tool of manipulation. The inability of Elizabeth's contemporaries to confine Elizabeth to one particular classification (queen, king, woman, prince, Protestant, Catholic, mother, wife, etc.) afforded Elizabeth the opportunity to evade being placed into one of those aforementioned 'classifications'. Rhetoric was the key way for Elizabeth to avoid the confinement to one classification. As Robert Cape Jr. notes, "Rhetoric, then, and style become extremely important assets for the politician. Rhetoric is not to be looked through, as if to find some other 'reality' underneath, but looked at, for it is the stuff of [...] political transactions" ( 256).

If anything, her letters show that Elizabeth was directly involved with all aspects of her kingdom. She was able to present herself rhetorically as a king—and a "King of England," too. There is no denying Elizabeth's rhetorical prowess. Although Christopher Haigh claims that Elizabeth's power was an illusion, it is clear from the historical record that Elizabeth retained real power over her subjects (172). Yes, Elizabeth's reign was fraught with incidents that could have been political disasters. Toward the end of Elizabeth's reign, her country was on the brink of disaster. England was in a costly war. There was not enough food for everyone in her country. One of Elizabeth's favorites was executed for trying to spur a rebellion against her. And yet, two of Elizabeth's most famous rhetorical displays—her impromptu Latin reply to the Polish ambassador and her Golden Speech—occurred during this time. These displays dazzled her subjects and awed those in her presence. And it is exactly these rhetorical displays, as well as many others that marked Elizabeth's reign, for which Elizabeth is fondly remembered. As Green commented, "Elizabeth was rightly valued" for "the force and

vitality of her intellect, the strength of her memory, the accuracy of her political knowledge, the quickness of her linguistic reflexes, and the power of her royal will” (1003). The very fact that Elizabeth reigned for forty-five years stands as a testament to her ability to maintain control. And while her reign was sometimes fraught with economic and political instability (whose reign was not?), it was also characterized by rhetorical, intellectual, and political high points that still resonate today. This is indeed a substantial legacy for one of the most powerful monarchs in England’s history.

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