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The Social, Political and Theological Implications of the Prayers of Elizabeth I - Access, Display and Association

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**The Social, Political and Theological
Implications of the Prayers of Elizabeth I -**

Access, Display and Association

**(Spine Title: The Prayers of Elizabeth I - Access, Display and Association)
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Graduate Program in Theology

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**The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
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Abstract

Tudor monarchs formed and expressed a metaphor of sovereignty meant to signify their legitimacy as rulers. Elizabeth I expressed that metaphor through her composition and publication of prayers. Transforming medieval symbols, rituals, church and calendar, Elizabeth used her prayers as a mechanism of government and claim to legitimacy.

Keywords: Elizabeth I, Ritual, Prayer, Chapel Royal, English Reformation,

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Introduction

Tudor monarchs faced a problem of legitimacy. Henry VII had a weak dynastic claim to the throne even though his rule was solidified by his victory at Bosworth Field and confirmed by marriage to Elizabeth of York. Legitimacy of rule was deeply connected with the ritual, calendar and prayers of the church, in displaying glory, showing access to God and associating the monarch with God's will. Each Tudor monarch formed and expressed a metaphor¹ of sovereignty which was meant to deepen and signify his or her legitimacy as rulers. The church was an integral part of this process, and in the English reformation the question of legitimacy reflected back from the throne to the church itself. This can be tracked through various Tudor reigns, using the Chapel Royal as illustrative of religious policy. Music, architecture and dynastic alliance were also means by which to create this metaphor of sovereignty. Elizabeth I expressed that metaphor through her composition and publication of prayers. While the sovereign praying was understood as a part of the mechanism of government, Elizabeth, by composing prayers, transformed medieval symbols, rituals, church and calendar, in order to exercise her own sovereignty and to form the church that would adhere to her own understanding of the Word of God. Elizabeth composed and later permitted or caused to be published, prayers that marked her various states vis-à-vis the succession and her final

¹Metaphor is the application of an alien name by transference either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion. (Aristotle, *The Poetics of Aristotle*, trans. S. H. Butcher (London : Macmillan, 1895), 73. For the purposes of this paper, metaphor refers to the sum of discourses, image, politics, prayer, policy and propaganda composed, experienced or enacted in a particular reign in order to produce an icon of the nature of an individual sovereign's rule.

position as queen. In examining prayers from before and immediately after her succession, the middle as well as late in her reign we can discern the hand of Elizabeth on the levers of government. As Elizabeth is well known for carefully correcting the record of her public utterances, an inspection of these printed and holograph sources shows an effort over a period of time to fix an idea of godly queenship in the minds of subjects and popular politics. It also shows a firm hand in the development of the expression of the church as it had been negotiated in the parliament of 1559 and its subsequent ritual life. In so doing, Elizabeth used her prayers as a mechanism of government and forged through them a claim to legitimacy as godly queen - miraculously preserved from those who would destroy her throughout her life and placed providentially on the throne - which would eventually take the form of the 'divine right of kings.' This legacy would influence the downfall of her successor only forty-five years later.

The person of Elizabeth I has come under intense scrutiny both academically and in popular culture in the past few decades. Both academic and popular histories have explored the person and work of Elizabeth from all sides as a means to understand the Elizabethan settlement.² This may be for many reasons, not least of which is the attempt

²J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth I* (a reprint of the 1952 Johnathan Cape edition) (London: Folio Society, 2005); Maria Perry, *Elizabeth I The Word of a Prince: A Life from Contemporary Documents* (London, Folio Society, 1990); Alison Weir, *Elizabeth the Queen* (London: Pimlico Press, 1999); Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose, eds., *Elizabeth I Collected Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000); David Starkey, *Elizabeth: the Struggle for the Throne* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001); Leah S. Marcus, and Janel Mueller eds. *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003); Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

to grapple with her writings and governance in the light of feminist consciousness.³ Elizabeth inherited a ritual life, calendar and metaphor of queenship that had been rooted in the rule of her family since Henry VII. From the beginning of her reign, when Elizabeth was 25 years old, she consistently formed a new metaphor of queenship using the old symbols, the old calendar, rituals and court life. In her reign she fashioned a new discourse of sovereignty in which the old medieval model of the sovereign at prayer as mechanism of government was transformed to one of a godly sovereign whose learning and spirituality was meant to form the church over which she was governor.

For the religious in general, and the theological in particular, Elizabeth is an enigma standing in the midst of the religious controversies of her day. In the light of our own theological debates, Elizabeth I strikes us as a chameleon - one who kept her counsel on the matters of religion and steered a middle course between those who would tear down the whole apparatus of medieval religiosity and those who tried, and failed, to rebuild it.

³Allison Heisch, 'Queen Elizabeth I: parliamentary rhetoric and the exercise of power', *Signs* 1, no. 1 (1975): 31-56; Joan Kelly, 'Did Women have a Renaissance?', Renata Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz eds., *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 137-164; Paula Louise Scalingi, 'The sceptre and the distaff: the question about female sovereignty, 1516-1607', *The Historian* 41 (1978): 59-73; Carole Levin, 'Power, politics and sexuality: images of Elizabeth I', in Jean Brink, Allison P. Coudert and Maryanne Horowitz eds., *The Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Kirksville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989); Carole Levin "'Would I give you help and succour": Elizabeth I and the politics of touch', *Albion* 21 (1989); Lisa Hopkins, *Women who would be kings: Female Rulers of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Vision Press, 1991); B. Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Charlotte Merton, *Women and the Court: Tudor England, 1553-1610* Cambridge University Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1994; D. Howarth, *Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance 1485-1649* (London: Houndmills, 1994).

That Elizabeth believed the Christian faith is not at issue here. The faith of a prince was assumed. Princes, beyond their function to govern, were a means of communication with the Divine for the purposes of the state, and the whole ritual apparatus of the church served to support and reinforce the position of the sovereign as intermediary, political, spiritual and temporal, between God and humanity. The rule of women in general was thought to be an impossibility; on the continent the Salic law forbade women from inheriting the crown. In England, however, the English law of primogeniture permitted it, though England's recent experience of rule by a woman was not considered successful. Elizabeth's sister Mary had shown that though she was her father's daughter, she was too ready to surrender her will to the men around her in order to secure her throne and her posterity. It was her undoing. To be sovereign, Elizabeth learned early on that to rule meant she must be more than a woman, and even more than a man. That this position of spiritual and political power was held by a woman for forty-four years, and that those years were relatively prosperous and peaceful in some ways reinforced her identity as a figure of Old Testament proportions. For the first twenty years of her reign, she ruled while being pestered to marry, to make alliances and to produce an heir. Though she was willing to marry in the right circumstance, in the end, Elizabeth realized there were few in the world who could match her in government and that her throne was most secure when others thought it most at risk. Her surest course, it turned out, was to vacillate, obfuscate and delay when it came to marriage.

In religion, she steered a middle course that infuriated Catholics and puritans alike. Her own spirituality had been tempered by spending time under arrest, under

suspicion and in danger of the headsman's sword, just like her mother. Elizabeth did not falter. For all her life she meditated daily, translated spiritual texts and scriptural verses, debated with Divines, and argued with those who would, as she called it 'make windows into men's souls'. More than this, Elizabeth understood that her position gave her a unique ability to signal theological policy by action. Using ritual, prayer and theatre, Elizabeth was not afraid to make clear her intentions to those who could read between the lines she would write with her actions. If one wanted a direct answer, however, she would immediately retreat into coy diversion or intellectual disputation. Her surest course was to be unclear except in the minds and hearts of the common man and woman of England. They saw how she prayed. They could go and see her do so, and they could read the prayers she herself composed. They could hear the same sermons as she did and they could join the crowds as she travelled to and from the Chapel Royal. Anyone could see what Elizabeth believed and practised. They could not, however, debate it with her. To know Elizabeth's mind, one could watch, one could listen and one could analyse, but one could not define. It changed, and it remained the same. It developed, and then retreated to familiar territories. In an era when confessions and catechisms flew off printing presses at lightning speed, Elizabeth would not be held to anything more or less than the negotiated legal settlement approved by the parliament of 1559. There she stood - she would do no other. Believing this settlement represented the best of the 'old church' and the 'new religion', Elizabeth held tightly so that the common man and woman of England would not find their church unrecognizable, their consciences violated or their intellects subsumed by superstition.

Elizabeth's education was deeply influenced by Roger Ascham and by extension John Cheke, who was Edward VI's tutor. Cheke was also William Cecil's teacher, and his father-in-law, for Cecil had married Cheke's daughter in 1541. Mary did not survive two years, but did produce one son, Thomas. Cecil maintained his relationship to Cheke for the rest of Cheke's life, and if this were not enough of a connection to the galaxy of servants and functionaries of court, Cecil's marriage to Mildred Cooke in 1545 solidified his position as a man of learning and as a man with a future.⁴ Sir Anthony Cooke, Mildred's father, had served as Sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire and was well known at court. More than this he was well known to Queen Katherine Parr, who was stepmother to Prince Edward, Princess Mary and Princess Elizabeth, and as scholar-courtier Cooke had taken his turn in tutoring the royal household.⁵ Queen Katherine Parr was also noted for having brought some peace to the royal household of Henry VIII, and brought Elizabeth, Mary and Edward together as a family and constantly inquired after their studies.⁶ But Cooke and Cecil and Cheke and Parr all represented an educated and thoughtful change in the nature of court. These were scholar-courtiers serving a scholar-queen whose reading and education were carefully passed on and whose careers all circled back through St. John's College in Cambridge. Elizabeth's understanding of queenship under Katherine Parr was as patron of learning and as scholar herself. Elizabeth's education was spectacular for a woman of her station, but it was a symbol of

⁴Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 30.

⁵*Ibid.*, 30-31.

⁶Maria Perry, *Elizabeth I The Word of a Prince: A Life from Contemporary Documents* (London, Folio Society, 1990), 27-29.

the world that was to unfold. Elizabeth the humanist scholar was born in this time, of an education that survived the changes between her father's, brother's and sister's reigns.

How did this woman, a princess educated better than almost any other of her sex, rank and birth, manage to steer herself through the dangerous period of her sister's reign and then continue to navigate the fractious and demoralized church she inherited through her own? Notorious for her temper and her dislike of the clergy, Elizabeth went head to head with prelates and puritans alike. She met them on their own terms and still prevailed. Elizabeth's learning and stature with regard to language and theology made for a sure footing when she took her part in disputes over religion and government. Those who came up against that formidable intellect learned they contradicted it at their peril. More than this, Elizabeth understood that the religious settlement of the kingdom was in part due to how she would set the tone; her own chapel, music, prayers, piety and choices would set the standard for the final form the church would take. Elizabeth would take her own part in manufacturing her metaphor of sovereignty in the church. We can confidently ask, then, what parts of Elizabeth make up the 'Elizabethan Settlement'? Could it be that the frustratingly enigmatic woman gave a shape to a church that would become renowned for its learning, its holiness and for its ability to play both sides of any issue? Can it be that we can find some of Elizabeth in the settlement that made such a big tent for so many?

In particular, the prayers of Elizabeth I serve as a means to understand her own religious feelings and may serve as a means to understand the woman in her heart. Much has been made in the history books of her remarkable piety and learning. Her facility with

languages and her studies under Ascham made her a formidable scholar. But the prayers themselves hold something for us. The choice of words, the biblical allusions and the illustrations Elizabeth used as she composed her prayers can be both a means to listen in on her conversations with God and see her hands on the levers of government. Not all of these prayers were meant for public consumption. Others were published only after her death. But in the examination of the prayers themselves we may find answers to some of the questions we ask.

Chapter I - Queenship

Ritual and the Life of the Court

Ritual was a daily reality for the renaissance prince. In fact ritual seemed the very thing that held heaven and earth together, at least as far as the social understandings of the classes of people that made up the Tudor world. The ritual of the sovereign at prayer is a mechanism of governance. Ritual “serves to give access to articulate emotional states which resist expression in language.”⁷ Rituals are evocative of realities that we have been unable to name fully, or define completely - and in this, we have found the very centre of the Tudor court. Ritual was a means of display of the royal state. Ritual displayed the piety of the monarch and ritual displayed to the whole world the status and nature of kingship itself. Ritual and religiosity are so entwined in the reality of the world of the court, in its intrigues and its silent meaning, that in order to understand the Elizabethan court, we must examine ritual and its place in the lives of those who enacted it. To examine ritual is to examine display. This is a world strange and foreign to us, which

⁷Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 2.

involves trust and understanding of the ceremonies of court life, both those that are insignificant and those that are a primary means of communication of the sovereign's will. It is necessary to parse the actions and the minds of those who lived the rituals in order to understand them. To enact the rituals of court was to belong. To reform, deny or abolish them was to assert authority over heaven and earth, over the lives of all those at court, and over time itself, because time too was subject to the sanctification of the ritual calendar. Change in ritual life was a display of power. Continuity of ritual life was a display of continuity with the past and the past's wisdom.

The ritual life of the court was in fact a marriage of the church calendar to the court calendar. The church's ritual *was* the court ritual, and the church calendar *was* the court calendar. The whole apparatus of religion and ceremony was so completely intertwined with the nature of sovereignty and its display that there was no separation. Even the reformation and the Marian religious counter-revolution could not disturb the simple truth that the monarch could not be sacralised without the rituals of the church.⁸ To show the monarch was to show the monarch at prayer, on the way to prayer, or having recently completed prayer. The rituals of the church displayed the church's power and the monarch's as well.

It is usually noted by popular historians that the reformation was such a drastic departure from the medieval past's rituals and self understanding as to be a revolution of thought and religiosity. This is only partly true. A fulsome examination of the ritual life of

⁸Fiona Kisby, "When the King Goeth a Procession": Chapel Ceremonies and Services, the Ritual Year, and Religious Reforms at the Early Tudor Court, 1485-1547' *The Journal of British Studies* 40 no. 1 (Jan. 2001): 74-75.

the Tudor court shows that though there was significant upheaval and change in the life of the monarch between Henry VII and Elizabeth I, all the primary rituals of the sanctification of time through the cycle of a sacred calendar and the position of the monarch as intermediary between God and humanity on behalf of the state remained. The monarch had to be seen - displayed as pious and thoughtful of God's will. Even the most protestant reformers in the time of Edward VI acknowledged that in the good government of the king was found the express will of God, and that rebellion against that king was in fact rebellion against the Divine Judge who had set up thrones on this earth.

Tudor Religiosity

If we begin with the ritual life of the court of Elizabeth I's grandfather, Henry VII, the ritual piety of the monarch and the practice of religion at court become both a guide to understanding 'official' religious policy and the celebration of the monarch's religious self understanding. This will remain especially true in the period of the Tudor reformation where all factors - music, public prayer, procession, preaching, architecture of the churches and the piety of the monarch form - a picture of the outward incarnation of belief and metaphor of kingship. In order to understand what will occur in the time of Elizabeth I, we must look at the piety and religious and state display of the earlier Tudor courts to see both the continuity and change the monarch signalled.

Knowing the heart of a Tudor monarch is no easy feat, even when that monarch is alive, so knowing the heart at so great an historical distance leaves us asking many questions. We cannot know how it is that a heart is genuinely turned or 'converted', but we can observe the outward signs and observances that surround the practice of faith for

clues as to how that faith is understood and instantiated by the one practising it. More to the point, the upheaval in religion between the late medieval world of Henry VII and the religious settlement of Elizabeth I is so drastic on the one hand, and surprisingly conservative on the other, as to demand some examination. Why did the church look so different, and why did the church look so much the same?⁹

By beginning to look closely at royal religious life and how it was organized and experienced by those who were part of court, we can make a window into the world of those who took their place in the Chapel Royal in the observance of the Christian Year. In ferreting out some understanding of the ritual life of the early court, and the display of sovereignty over time, it is hoped that we may gain some insight into the religious opinion and heart of Elizabeth I.

It was the responsibility of any noble to set an example in religion and piety for those who surrounded him. Later conceptions of 'personal' piety and 'private' observance were unknown at this time. Certainly there were 'private masses' and Privy Chambers, but it was understood that both the monarch and those connected to the Monarch would be outwardly pious in the practice of faith because it was what was expected of all great families. It was in fact part of what cemented medieval society together. In the case of Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII and grandmother of Henry VIII, that duty was maintained splendidly. Beaufort was the great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt by illegitimate union with Katherine Swyndford. The line was legitimized by act of parliament in 1397, but though that act in 1397 granted rights and property and their

⁹Ethan H. Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5-7.

posterity was guaranteed, no claim to the throne was ever laid out.¹⁰

Married twice before she was ten, first to William de la Pole in 1450 and then to Edmund Tudor, half brother of Henry VI, Margaret had only one child, born when she was thirteen. This was Henry Tudor, later King Henry VII. Following the death of Henry's father, Edmund Tudor in 1456, Margaret married again, to Sir Henry Stafford, and after his death some years later, she was married a fourth and final time to Thomas Lord Stanley. Margaret, by virtue of her marriages and her inheritances, was enormously rich. She was also tremendously powerful, negotiating back and forth in the Wars of the Roses to see that her son's claim to the throne was always maintained.

Upon Henry's victory at Bosworth Field in 1485, Margaret was given the legal status of a queen dowager and maintained a household, chapel and the charitable foundations that were fitting for a late medieval queen's station¹¹ even though she was never queen consort. In another settlement of her independent status in 1485, she was declared a 'femme sole', which gave her the rights of a landowner, independent of any husband, so she could act on her own financially.¹²

Margaret Beaufort - Medieval Queen as Example

Margaret was renowned for her piety and holiness and that piety and holiness was a matter for public consumption. Richard Rex, an historian who has done extensive work on the life and theology of John Fisher, notes in particular Fisher's funeral oration for

¹⁰Fiona Kisby, 'A Mirror of Monarchy: Music and Musicians in the Household Chapel of the Lady Margaret Beaufort, Mother of Henry VII', *Early Music History* 16 (1997): 206.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 208.

¹²*Ibid.*, 209.

Margaret Beaufort as an example of the public consumption of the image of Christian queenship in Lady Margaret. Fisher himself was a client of Lady Margaret, having served in her household and having been Lady Margaret's confessor for some years. It was her patronage that made for Fisher's stellar rise in ecclesiastical politics, and Fisher, in the end, preached Margaret's virtues of generosity and toward and compassion for the poor as the example to all Christians.¹³ Fisher, in his funeral oration, makes the comparison of Lady Margaret to the biblical figure of Martha, who chose the active part of work in the Kingdom in the presence of Jesus. It was his comparison of Martha and Lady Margaret in terms of nobility, self-discipline and devotion, which was conventional, but more importantly, Fisher also marks out her love of the poor as the love of Christ, for the poor are the image of Christ.¹⁴

Lady Margaret's devotional life had been encouraged by Fisher, her confessor and spiritual director, and therefore the round of services and discipline Lady Margaret kept as a medieval queen was set up according to the direction of Fisher.¹⁵

Lady Margaret managed to keep a chapel that had both private and public functions. Her religious apparatus was that of a medieval queen: she rose at 6 am, and stayed for private prayer in her chapel for an hour, before hearing matins and then a series of masses from 7 to 11 am. Her devotion was remarkable in that even in the late medieval period, when the ordinary person took communion but once or twice a year, Margaret

¹³Richard Rex, *The Theology of John Fisher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 42-43.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 43.

received communion, on average, twelve times a year.¹⁶ This attitude to religion was not uncommon for women of her rank and financial resources, as she also maintained priests and singers (nine chaplains, eight clerks and nine choristers)¹⁷ to make the services more beautiful and enjoyable - an influence she no doubt also exercised on her son's court. It is fair to assume as well, that personnel and other resources would have made their way from Lady Margaret's home to the king's house as well.¹⁸ Her influence on both her son and her grandson were significant and long lasting.

Ritual Stability and Legitimacy

The search for political legitimacy and dynastic stability might also lead us to look at Henry VII's decision to display his dynastic legitimacy in building the Henry VII Chapel on the back of Westminster Abbey. At the time, St. Peter's Westminster (the Abbey) was a royal monastic foundation. For a short time under Queen Mary it became a cathedral, but later was settled as a Royal Peculiar, with a Dean and Chapter caring for its services and working as part of the Chapels Royal for the king. Henry VII's desire to build was a matter of adding a quest for legitimacy to the authentic pious intent to build a family dynastic mausoleum. This dynastic display would place Henry VII and his family and their remains at the symbolic heart of English kingship, only steps away from the tomb of Edward the Confessor. Henry VIII's choice to bury his grandmother, Lady Margaret at Westminster in the vault underneath Henry VII's new Lady Chapel was a

¹⁶Kisby, 213.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 215.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 228.

signal that this was going to become some form of dynastic burying place.¹⁹ Lady Margaret had died a sparse two months after her son Henry VII and her grandson saw to it that her funeral was fitting of one who carried the rank of a queen dowager. This served as yet another religious display that bestowed legitimacy and in pious belief granted Margaret and all who were buried there a close proximity to a royal saint. When the resurrection of the dead came to pass at the end of time, Margaret and later Tudors would meet with one another side by side with St. Edward. Proximity to the saints in death is a principle well known back to the earliest Christian communities in Rome. It was no less a force for medieval monarchs who chose their place of rest carefully to reflect pious and dynastic ends. To be buried close to a saint was to assure sanctity and to identify oneself with that particular saint's heroic virtue.

The Henry VII chapel is the only true pre-reformation structure that remained largely untouched by the reformation and the commonwealth.²⁰ Even the spoilage of Henry VIII at the dissolution of the monasteries was not complete, as its royal connections preserved its status. The confessor's tomb had been stripped, but the stripping of those riches from Edward's tomb was a function of tearing away riches from the church. The Confessor's bones remained undisturbed because to Henry VIII, Edward was a king long before he was a saint, and as a king, it was better to let him rest. The practice of disturbing enemies once they were dead, no matter what one's theological belief, sets a bad example. It makes one think that one's own resting in peace could be a

¹⁹Thomas Cocke, "The Repository of Our English Kings": The Henry VII Chapel as Royal Mausoleum', *Architectural History* 44 (2001): 213.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 212.

temporary state if the precedent were set.

Ironically, even the regicides of commonwealth of the 1650s chose to be buried at Westminster. Henry VII appropriated, and the rest of English society adopted, the building that afforded a national legitimacy: an 'English Valhalla.'²¹ This sense was no doubt alive generations before in the choice of Henry VII to build his chapel at Westminster and then to be buried there. The continued coronation of the kings and queens of England afforded that idea. Henry was looking to display to the world that he and his line were kings in the line of Edward the Confessor, and his tomb and those of his descendants would instantiate the fact. This religious aspect of kingship so deeply ingrained in the medieval mind was also at work within the life of the Chapel Royal. Proximity to a royal saint simply added another layer to that legitimacy and metaphor of kingship.

Access, Display and Association

The religious life of the court has been recently re-examined in scholarship that has noted the continuity of the public face of religion through the early Tudor courts, both of Henry VII and Henry VIII. The Chapel, it has been shown, was a central pillar of court life, and yet one more place in which the display of kingship, the access to the King and the association of persons with the royal household were all in play - these being the central tenets of Tudor kingship.²² Having access to the king, being associated with the king's presence and then having that access and association displayed for all the court and

²¹*Ibid.*, 214.

²²Fiona, Kisby. "When the King Goeth a Procession": Chapel Ceremonies and Services, the Ritual Year, and Religious Reforms at the Early Tudor Court 1485-1547'. *The Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 1 (Jan 2001): 46.

other notable persons was an inherent need if courtiers were to advance in their ambitions. Life in the Chapel Royal was one place wherein all these factors came together in an alchemy that included God as well.

Fiona Kisby's work on the Chapels Royal refers to the premiere manuscript on this era's ceremonial life, the Anstis Manuscript.²³ It reveals a highly structured and organized medieval world with different directions for liturgy in the Chapel Royal depending on which personages might be present. One example is the direction made when Prince, King and Cardinal are present. This situation, "Prince, King and Cardinal" can only refer to a time under Henry VII, for that is the only time in the Tudor period when all three persons were alive simultaneously.²⁴ The ceremonial changed with each feast, season and even the persons present. Henry VII's second son, later Henry VIII, noted for his Catholic piety early in his reign, normally heard between five and seven masses a day,²⁵ and while the liturgy was recited, he would work on his papers. But these were ordinary days with ordinary celebrations either in the Chapel (public worship) or in the Privy Closet (private devotions). The fullness of 'the royal person at prayer' was displayed on the high holy days, in which the king would process into the Chapel with the whole court in attendance. It was during these processions to the Chapel that many from the household as well as those who had gained access to the palace from outside made the

²³*Ibid.*, 50.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵Much like leaving the radio on while working in the modern day, Henry was present but probably not fully attentive to these masses, which would probably include a round of masses for specific intentions: a votive of the Holy Spirit, a votive of the Virgin Mary, a votive of Henry's favourite saints followed by masses for his parents and then masses proper to the day.

effort to present their petitions to the king.

While being attended by great members of the nobility and officers of state, the king would make his way to chapel, and this was the moment access could be gained to the royal person in order to present a case. These processions were noted in the reign of Elizabeth I as late as 1598, a function of the pageantry of state and the theatre of power.²⁶ The metaphor of the state at work seems to be the image of one interceding with the king, while the king was on his way to intercede with God. This was an important moment, as the court was a limited group of persons. Recognition by the sovereign and access into the Presence Chamber of Tudor monarchs was limited to about a hundred persons at any one time.²⁷ The ability to get near the sovereign was the means by which to have a case heard or a petition received. To gain access to the Presence Chamber was a privilege of nobility and officers of state, but access to the Privy Chambers, the most intimate living quarters of the king, was an even more rare privilege. Those present were the sovereign's closest advisors and most faithful servants. The two most intimate were the groom of the stool - who attended the sovereign on the close stool - and the Master of the Horse, who arranged royal travel and royal hunting parties, a position so important that its register of holders is a long list of royal favourites for years.²⁸

It was essential for the king to be part of the praying life of the church, for the sovereign was the embodiment of Christian graces and meant to model the sanctification of all souls. More than this, the apparatus of kingship was so entwined with the

²⁶Kisby, 53.

²⁷John Adamson, 'The Tudor and Stuart Courts 1509-1712', in John Adamson, ed., *The Princely Courts of Europe* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 99.

²⁸*Ibid.*

assumptions and paradigm of divine kingship that the concept of kingship and political power were themselves divine commodities.²⁹ While the king was solely the physical reality of a man, 'a natural body' by medieval thought he also represented a 'body politic' who acted for the nation and whose position was separate from the ordinary cares and concerns of the mortal who held the office of king.³⁰ The king was at the same time a mortal man and king and made this way by God's creation, through the sacred rites of anointing at the coronation. This character was God given and sacred.³¹ Elizabeth I referred to this concept of the body politic to govern when she spoke to the Lords at Hatfield on 20th November, 1558, only three days after her accession. In speaking to them and asking for good counsel, she said:

My lords, the law of nature moveth me to sorrow for my sister; the burden that is fallen upon me maketh me amazed; and yet, considering I am God's creature, ordained to obey His appointment, I will thereto yield, desiring from the bottom of my heart that I may have assistance of His grace to be the minister of His heavenly will in this office now committed to me. And as I am but one body naturally considered, though by his permission a body politic to govern, so I shall desire you all, my lords (chiefly you of the nobility, everyone in his degree and power), to be assistant to me, that I with my ruling and you with your service may make good account to almighty God and leave some comfort to our posterity on earth.³²

It is this 'body politic' who went to prayer along with the 'natural body'. This 'body politic' at prayer is part of the metaphor of kingship that is developing. It is this extra reality that makes the religious display and life of ritual so important. It also goes a great way in explaining the medieval and Tudor attitudes to moral lapses in monarchs. In

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 101.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

³¹ Starkey, 250.

³² Marcus *et al.*, eds., *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 51-52.

this regard they were ordinary 'natural bodies', although privileged mortals. In matters of state and religion, they acted as sovereign, above the petty moral lapses of their mortal bodies and so their religious devotion, pious display and ritual action continued to serve a state purpose.³³

Included in that purpose is the sanctification of time, a prime feature of Christian faith. Prayer made formal over time and in cycles in the observance of the church year and its rotation through the months is a central point of the sacramental economy of God in the medieval world. The round of fasts and feasts and saints' days and holy days all wound together to make a calendar for the court and for wider society. It was this calendar that made clear which days were feasts for the king to process to the Chapel, (and therefore give an occasion for access) and which days were simple feasts and ferial in their status, that is, days on which the king's devotions would be private. Even within the religious calendar, there were days special to the king³⁴ and noted as 'royal days' on which the king wore the crown and the royal purple to church and 'days of estate' in which there was a little less ceremony, but still, purple was worn, and caps of estate were present rather than crowns.³⁵ Here we see the political trappings of kingship intimately connected with attendance at mass and the requisite sanctification of time. The marriage of the imagery of statehood with that of the priesthood in church was well understood in the medieval mind.

³³Adamson, 101-102.

³⁴One of the most notable examples of this development of a feast for the calendar was the inclusion of a feast day in the church calendar for the Accession of Elizabeth held on November 17 each year.

³⁵Kisby, 59-60.

The king's 'priestly' role met its apotheosis at the celebrations of the court through Holy Week and Easter. Here the medieval concept of kingship being married to a mystical understanding of interceding with God for the realm takes on its most powerful form. At the beginning of Lent, on Ash Wednesday, the king had taken ashes as a public penitent. Now, on Palm Sunday, the king would lead the palm procession and kneel at the Blessed Sacrament and at the unveiling of the rood. On Tuesday of Holy Week, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, the king would be flagellated as a regular penitent (although this was surely a symbolic flagellation). Shortly thereafter the king would wash the feet of poor men, and distribute alms, and finally, on Good Friday, the king would 'creep to the cross' and administer 'the King's touch' to cure scrofula and pray over and consecrate cramp rings for distribution to the sick.³⁶ These all served to mark out the sacred nature of kingship, and the responsibility of the king to intercede for his subjects before the throne of God. In an England only recently brought to peace after decades of war between rival royal factions, the claim of the Tudors to the throne was not as strong as some, but the pageantry and theatre of kingship, married to the sacred movement of the calendar must have been a powerful symbol of a unified monarchy. The development of a metaphor within the monarchy served to establish legitimacy as well as promote it.

Chapel Royal as Display

The monarch was 'on progress' a great deal. There were many principal residences up and down the Thames as well as palaces and castles about the realm which the king would use at his pleasure. The Chapel Royal was not a single room in a building,

³⁶*Ibid.*, 61-64.

but the staff of persons led by the Dean of the Chapel, who saw to it that the king's religious life was ongoing as he progressed from house to house, palace to palace. The round of services has already been noted as a force for influence of the religious life of the court. This calendar served as a forum for a display of a 'kingly charisma', the religious platform for the display of majesty.³⁷ What is to be said, then, of the interior religious life of the monarch? In what way did this portable religious display affect the life of the king? The display of religious piety and the keeping of the holy round must have had an immense impact on the life of the king, and more importantly for this discussion, it would have supplied religious formation and state display to its principal practitioner. Did the metaphor affect its practitioner?

It has already been noted that we cannot truly know whether or not 'conversion' is real. We can only look to the external evidence of a subject's life to determine whether the actions match the teaching they espouse. Beginning with the changes in the life of the church under Henry VIII and the work of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, royal religious life changed, but the change was subtle and in many cases, the trappings of medieval kingship were reinterpreted and metamorphosed into new sacral understandings to match a piety that would have been distant but still recognizable to the ancestors of the old religion, although vastly different in focus and practice. A new metaphor was being manufactured using old symbols. In spite of the many royal injunctions and declarations, the proclamations and acts of parliament throughout the period, the round of services and

³⁷*Ibid.*, 65.

observances in the Chapel Royal of Henry VIII remained largely unchanged.³⁸ The hallowing of time as a state reality continued in ways to which the theologians themselves objected. Cranmer himself complained that the old feasts and celebrations were being held in the Chapel Royal even after they had been abrogated. He worried that if the royal household was a half example to all the realm, how could they expect others to change if the king himself did not?³⁹

Reformation Clothing for Medieval Rituals

Even with the accession of the boy king Edward VI, and the adoption of Protestant sensibilities that his reign espoused, many of the processions and high feasts were kept in a modified form as they were also those occasions for display, association and access.⁴⁰ The 'kingly charisma', or the metaphor of being godly and righteous and to approach God on behalf of the people was as alive and well in the Protestant mind as it was in those of the old religion.

There are a number of lenses through which we might examine the changes in the Chapel Royal. In looking at legitimacy and the Tudor dynasty, the Henry VII chapel was used as an example of both piety and political edifice. In the case of the short reign of Edward VI, we can turn to no specific building as a legacy, for his reign was too short, but rather to the music of the Chapel Royal. This displayed the king's love of art and patronage of beauty while at the same time, signalled something of the religious mind of the young Edward VI. In turning our minds to the music of the Chapel Royal, we can also

³⁸*Ibid.*, 71.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 71.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 75.

look at the prayers of the monarch as displays that might point to the interior lives of those who attended services. It is popularly believed that Edward VI's Protestantism (or at least the Protestantism of those who governed the boy king) was hostile to the use of all Latin in the liturgy. This is not true. The Edwardine principle was that the language of the liturgy should be plainly understood by the people who heard the service. It was a Cranmerian principle, and Latin had been the language of discourse in the universities and in diplomacy for centuries. It was acceptable to hear a Latin service as long as those who heard it understood it plainly. The Edwardine Act of Uniformity permitted the prayers and liturgy of the English Church to be said in Latin in private or even in public (the Mass excepted) if the person or institution observing them understood the language:

Provided always, that it shall be lawful to any man that understands the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew tongue, or other strange tongue, to say and have the said prayers, heretofore specified, of Matins and Evensong in Latin, or any such other tongue, saying the same privately, as they do understand.

And for the further encouraging of learning in the tongues in the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, to use and exercise in their common and open prayer in their chapels (being no parish churches) or other places of prayer, the Matins, Evensong, Litany, and all other prayers (the Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass, excepted) prescribed in the said book, prescribed in Greek, Latin, or Hebrew; anything in this present Act to the contrary notwithstanding.⁴¹

This should not be as shocking a revelation as we might believe. There were two years between the accession of Edward VI in 1547 and the proclamation of the Act of Uniformity and publication of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549. Edward inherited a Henrician Catholic settlement and it was from there his changes to the religious rule and

⁴¹Act of Uniformity 1549 (citation 2 & 3 Edward VI, c. 1).

life of Edward VI were made.

Latin motets were not totally banned, as there is some evidence that collegiate churches and cathedrals still maintained many of the motets that had been in use under Henry VIII. There are two composers of note who composed in Latin for the Edwardine court: one, known for only one piece, another with a small catalogue of Latin works, though dwarfed by his English language output. The *Deus Miseratur* by Robert Johnson dates from the very late Henrician or very early Edwardian reign.⁴² This motet is a simple imitative setting of Psalm 67, a Psalm connected with harvest and rogationtide celebrations at court. This Latin motet stands with English treatments of the same texts in Edwardine partbooks.⁴³ Christopher Tye (1505?-1572) is represented in Latin composition from the Edwardine period with several works: *Domine Deus Coelestis*, *In Quo Corriget* and *Quaesumus omnipotens*.⁴⁴

Tye was a popular composer for the royal chapel, and was reputed to have had a close personal relationship with Edward. He was also noted to have been admired by Henry VIII:⁴⁵

‘In the dedication to Tye's *Actes of the Apostles* (London, 1553), a close personal relationship with the young king is implied, and the title page itself describes the composer as “one of the Gentlemen of his grace's most honourable chapel”. Lines in a play written in 1605 go further to

⁴²Hugh Benham, ‘Latin Church Music under Edward VI’, *The Musical Times* 116, no. 1587 (May 1975): 477.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵Tye also served Elizabeth I, as Anthony à Wood notes: Dr Tye was a peevish and humoursome man, especially in his latter days, and sometimes playing on the organ in the chapel of Queen Elizabeth, which contained much music but little delight to the ear. She would send the verger to tell him that he played out of tune, whereupon he sent word that her ears were out of tune. From <http://www.hoasm.org/IVM/Tye.html>

suggest that Tye actually taught music to Edward, who is reported as quoting his father, Henry VIII, as saying, "England one God, one truth, one doctor hath for music's art, and that is Doctor Tye, admired for skill in music's harmony."⁴⁶

The texts chosen to be set by Tye in Latin are also particularly of note. *Domine Deus Coelestis* is a prayer for a young king.

The writer asks that the king may be 'sharpsighted in executing the affairs of the realm, circumspect and scrupulous in giving justice': 'Da ut ... perspicax in obeundis regni negotiis, consideratus et diligens injudicia afferenda, constans et sedulus in tua, Domine, Catholica fide et religione restauranda et tuenda vehemens et invictus.'⁴⁷

In Quo Corriget is a setting of the text "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?"⁴⁸ These are obvious texts to accompany the early devotions and chapel life of the newly ascended Edward. Latin did not disappear, though it certainly was severely restrained in most places. The Chapel Royal seems to have continued to step to a slightly different drummer than the rest of the realm when it came to religious observance. The fact that Latin was used, but began to be used less over time is also noted in that some of Tye's grandest works for the Latin liturgy, *Ave Caput Christi*, *Christus Resurgens*, the aforementioned *Domine Deus Coelestis*, as well as a *Magnificat* and *Te Deum*, all exist now only in parts. The whole has been lost.⁴⁹ The size, subject matter and scope of the works indicates that, language aside, these were serious works for use at court; the petitions and sentiments are consistent with a desire to grant the king wisdom and

⁴⁶<http://www.hoasm.org/IVM/Tye.html> accessed 1 July, 2006 at 19:45.

⁴⁷<http://www.hoasm.org/IVM/Tye.html> accessed 1 July, 2006 at 19:52.

⁴⁸<http://www.hoasm.org/IVM/Tye.html> accessed 1 July, 2006 at 19:34.

⁴⁹<http://www.hoasm.org/IVM/Tye.html> accessed 1 July, 2006 at 19:58.

spiritual purity in the exercise of his office as he intercedes with God for his people. The metaphor of kingship is still at work.

To sum up religious display through court music at this time, one can argue that the liturgy and music of the Henrician church as a whole was not jettisoned in the Chapel Royal. Royal peculiars, learned persons, colleges and universities and other non parish situations on the accession of Edward VI could continue it. Rather, the continuity with the display of religious life before the Act of Uniformity of 1549 indicates the shift in attitudes, while dramatic, was not the immediate demand of the unashamedly Protestant prince. The texts were mostly biblical, though not exclusively, and the principles of having music and words that were plainly understood by those who heard them were not violated at an educated court where Latin was well known by the royal household. Those who have sought to make the Edwardine reformation absolute in all its forms are at a disadvantage when these particular details are considered. At least in the cathedral, colleges and in a few cases the Chapel Royal, Latin in liturgy survived, so long as it did not violate the principle that the liturgy must be understood by the people. One could argue that Latin in church music and even liturgy was acceptable as long as it was learned, and not foreign.

The Marian Counter-Reformation

Upon the death of the young Edward VI in 1553, the hopes of the reformers were dashed as the stridently Catholic Mary ascended the throne. But even Mary found her desire to resurrect the old religious order was a lost cause, for so much that had been invested in the old religion in former days - lands, houses, religious, hospitals,

foundations and the like - were irretrievably gone.⁵⁰ The one thing Mary could restore was the worship in her own Chapel and thereby she would restore the display of religious attitude that had been changed by her brother. In this she also hoped to force some manner of Catholic practice on the formerly Edwardine church. To do this, ironically, she was confronted with using the self same Royal Supremacy she refused. The Supremacy gave her the authority to repeal many of the statutes, provisions, injunctions and omissions that had set up the Edwardian settlements of the matters of religion.⁵¹ Still she refused. Mary desperately wanted to restore England to the Catholic fold, but she had to wait for parliament to do her bidding, rather than exercise the hated Royal Supremacy. This is yet another display of royal religious scruple that was an indication of how she intended to proceed.

‘Her first official announcement on August 12 made it plain that she meant to leave her subjects free to worship as they chose until Parliament could co-operate in bringing about an orderly change.’⁵²

In her Chapel, and through the realm, all that had disappeared in the last twenty years was returned, but by parliament’s order and repeal of statute. Her *Act of Repeal* (1 Mary I, cap. 2) of 1553 and *Royal Injunction* of 1554 made it clear that as much of the old order of religion, music and practice was to return as was possible - though this was the order of religion under her father.

11. Item, that all and all manner of processions of the Church be used, frequented, and continued after the old order of the Church, in the Latin tongue.

⁵⁰G. R. Elton, *England Under the Tudors* (London: Folio Society, 1997), 216.

⁵¹Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (London: Yale University Press, 1996), 542.

⁵²Carroly Erickson, *Bloody Mary* (New York: Double Day Publishing, 1978), 310.

12. Item, that all such holy days and fasting days be observed and kept, as was observed and kept in the latter time of King Henry VIII.

13. Item, that the laudable and honest ceremonies which were wont to be used, frequented, and observed in the Church, be also hereafter frequented, used and observed.⁵³

There is not a great deal of evidence of new music composed or new material written for Queen Mary. It would seem a reflection of her desire to turn back the clock that much of what she enjoyed in her own Chapel looked backward or to the continent. Her marriage to Philip of Spain (her cousin on her mother's side) also influenced the use of continental music. The reign itself was short enough that her influence was not significant, but the themes of her piety were decidedly 'old order': The Sarum rite with many adornments, Spanish in flavour focused on her hopes for a Catholic heir.

'As for Mary, all she had achieved was to destroy the old religion and the Spanish alliance by making them the heart of her policy. Even before the Council of Trent put it beyond all doubt, the Marian reaction demonstrated that an anti-papal church preserving the doctrine and ritual of pre-reformation was an impossibility...'⁵⁴

Ritual, Ceremony and Access to the Sovereign

The court was a rarefied atmosphere, and the life of the court was a cycle that operated on a calendar, which we have noted, through the work of Fiona Kisby, was the sacred calendar. The concept of a divine king exercising the temporal manifestation of God's intended rule made the time spent at court and the ritual celebrations functions of both the display of royal and divine glory, but more than this, served as means of access

⁵³*The Royal Injunctions 1554*

<http://members.shaw.ca/reformation/1554injunctions.htm> accessed July 1, 2006 20:15.

⁵⁴Elton, 220.

for the court to the sovereign, and in cases of high holy days in the church's calendar, as means for the regular public to see Elizabeth in state as she processed to and from church. In this, the sovereign praying was a part of the mechanism of governance. The rituals of the court, which were tied to the calendar, were all religious feasts in their focus, and even with reformation changes, the calendar and its observances as well as ordinances had not significantly shifted from the early days of Henry VIII. It is clear that life at court revolved around the church calendar.⁵⁵ The highest feasts in the year were marked with state ceremony and processions. These were 'collar days' - that is to say days on which the collars of the Order of the Garter were to be worn along with state regalia. They were: Michaelmas, All Saints, Christmas, New Year's (circumcision of Christ), Epiphany, Candlemas, Lady Day (Annunciation), Easter, Ascension, Whitsunday, Trinity and St. John the Baptist and a series of minor saints' days that survived reformation purges.⁵⁶ On these days, processions of up to one hundred persons in full state regalia preceded the sovereign, who, following the ritual/liturgical principle of *juniores priores*, was last in line. The sovereign walked beneath a canopy of estate, held by four bearers as a symbol of rank. Adamson notes that the pre-reformation ceremonies of the Eucharist, which included a canopy over the host, a baldachin over the altar and other symbolic representations of Christ's presence in the sacrament, may have disappeared from court life in 1558 as popish and superstitious, but the same structures that had hallowed the Eucharist - a canopy in procession and a baldachin over a throne, were in use over the sovereign for many years following. This is a clear appropriation of the pre-reformation

⁵⁵ Adamson, 99.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 102.

apparatus of the sacred for the person of the sovereign.⁵⁷ Once again the metaphor is being changed, using old symbols.

All of this apparatus of the sacredness of kingship was used on the days when the court was visible, both to itself and to the rest of the world. Ambassadors would be present, as well as common folk, as we have seen in *The Diary of Henry Machyn* from April 1559:

[The xxij day of April, being saint George's day, the Queen went about the hall, and all the knights of the] Garter that [went singing in proces]syon, and a-bowt the cowrt; the sam day at after [noon were] knyghtes electyd of the Garter the duke of Norfok, the marques of Northamtun, the erle of Rutland, and my lord Robard Dudley, the master of the quen[']s horse.⁵⁸

So, on the very first celebration of St. George's Day over which Elizabeth presided, the elevation of her favourite Robert Dudley to the Order of the Garter was accomplished, but more importantly, a display of royal power and favour was executed directly in view of ordinary persons. Machyn was no noble, but a merchant who had an interest in the court as a maker of heraldic paintings and hatchments. In some sense he represents the solid core of England, and he has provided us an irreplaceable record of the nature of court life in the diary that has been left to us.

It has been noted that the size of the palace and the nature of the court limited the number of persons who had direct access to the sovereign at any given time. The fact is that the aristocracy may have been flung far around the realm for their lands, but real power was exercised and available to them when they were assembled and waiting on the

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 104.

⁵⁸John Gough Nichols, ed., *The Diary of Henry Machyn: Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London (1550-1563)* (London: Camden Society, 1848), 232.

queen. This was a world in which everyone related upwards on the social hierarchy. Peasant classes might work and strive to one day be prosperous and stable as the merchant class. The merchant classes, exemplified and represented by Machyn, related upward to the aristocracy as the next nearest manifestation of the power of the sovereign, and the aristocracy related upwards to the queen as fount of honour and the means of graces and preferment. The queen herself, imbued with divine grace and the godly exercise of the power of life and death over her subjects, naturally related upward to only one other reality, and that was God. It was the duty of the sovereign to exercise power for the good of the realm and to God's glory in her rule, and it is this 'body politic' that the sacred rites of coronation and anointing had created. It was the carefully controlled access to this power and the display of that power that courtiers used as power of their own, and as in a court with a female sovereign, women themselves would control much of the access imperative to advancement.

The palace at Whitehall (Figure 1), which Elizabeth regularly inhabited when she was in the capital, was an accretion of buildings that comprised a rabbit-warren of rooms, haphazardly arranged into progressively more intimate chambers. These began and ended with sacred space. Beginning with the Chapel Royal, the public place of worship for the court, the building progressed on through to the monarch's Presence Chamber, which was the most commonly used room for public occasions, and set up as a place where the majesty of the monarch could sit in full estate. Behind this was the 'watching room' or Guard Chamber where Yeomen of the Guard kept watch and guarded the safety of the sovereign, and then behind the Presence Chamber, the entrance to the Privy Chambers of

the monarch. Any noble of the realm had the right to enter Whitehall and the Presence Chamber or the Chapel Royal. Other 'persons of fashion' were also admitted at the discretion of the gentlemen ushers.⁵⁹

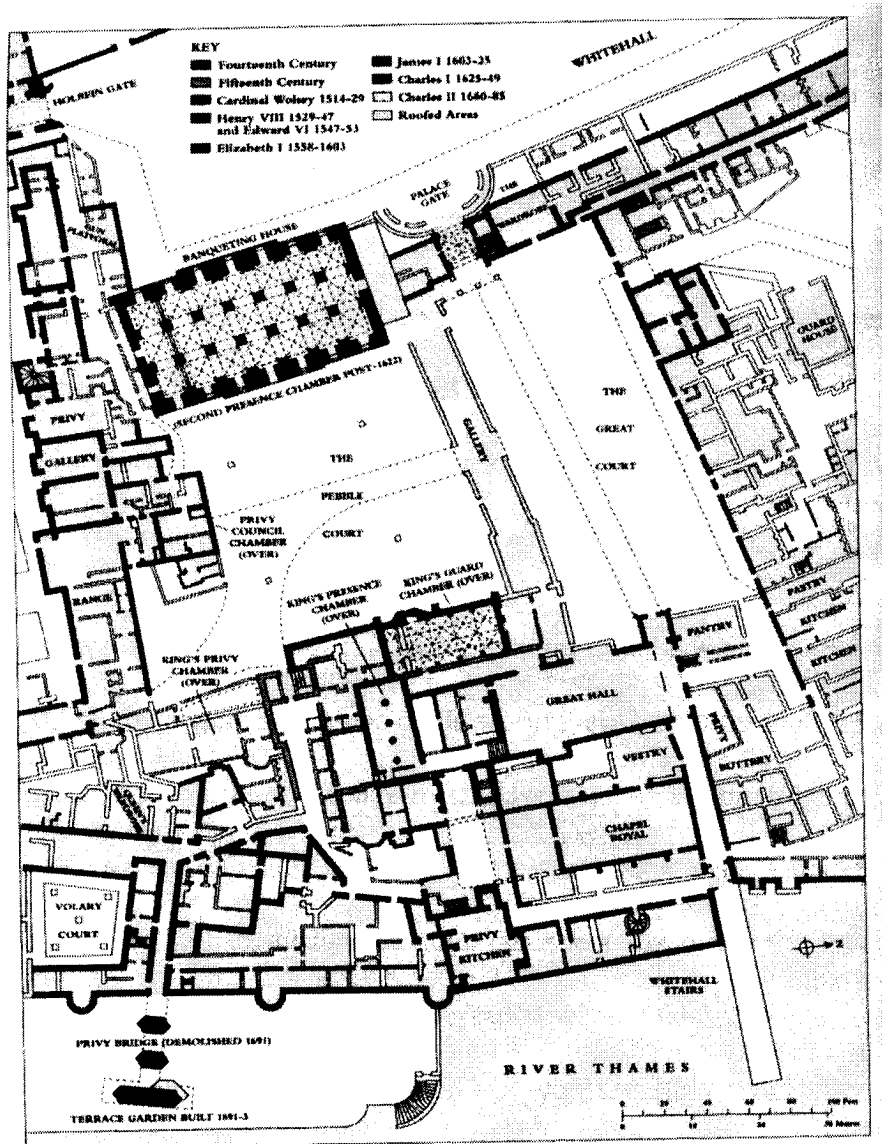


Figure 1 Diagram of Whitehall from John Adamson, 'The Tudor and Stuart Courts 1509-1712' from *The Princely Courts of Europe* John Adamson ed. (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson) 1999, 98

⁵⁹Adamson, 99.

This is the secret to understanding the display of piety in the Tudor court and in Elizabeth's court in particular. This series of chambers was the stage on which the public display of majesty and piety was enacted and it was accessible to a large portion of 'those who mattered' - the nobility and 'those of fashion' who could cajole, beg or bribe their way into the public spaces. The display of monarchy was for their benefit and solidified in them the conviction of its divine origin and legitimacy.

Behind this façade was the next level of intimacy in government, and that was access to the sovereign's Privy Chambers, which, as noted before, were open to, at most, one hundred people - it was the holy grail of royal access because

'this inner sanctum was out-of-bounds to all but peers, privy counsellors and those to whom the king had specifically granted the entree, a privilege that might be conferred or removed at the monarch's will.'⁶⁰

The people admitted to this rarefied atmosphere were there by birth and appointment, but there were some who could worm their way in through relationship with the sovereign as a favourite or through merit. However, as the privilege of access could be cut off at the sovereign's will as well, it was a commodity to be jealously guarded and tended with care. To be banished to the outer chambers was to see the sovereign only as did others, and not in the intimacy of conversation where real differences could be made. Inasmuch as some were admitted to council and were regularly great officers and nobles of the realm, a reciprocal relationship with the monarch was observed. Though the sovereign was the apex of society, those with this level of closeness to the divine ruler

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

shared in a right to counsel in the government of the realm.⁶¹ Clearly the clash between ancient and noble families and those whom Elizabeth preferred as favourites was an endless source of faction at court. Debates about marriage negotiations, concerns about plots and even appointments were always being discussed in small groups as well as at the council.⁶² Whether it was the early years and Leicester's supporters versus the Dukes of Norfolk who were also arrayed against Burghley on the council, or later in her reign, when Essex and his crowd squabbled with the Cecils, the Lord Howard of Effingham and Sir Walter Raleigh during and after the expedition to Cadiz,⁶³ the shift in power caused by a rival's appointment to an office was enough to undo the political landscape at court. The appointment of Robert Cecil as Secretary to the Council on 5 July 1596 is interpreted as a profound blow to the Essex faction. Paul Hammer notes this in his work as he points out that 'Cecil's promotion and his subsequent actions as secretary were interpreted by followers of Essex as the start of a push by Cecil and his friends - including Raleigh against the Earl and themselves.'⁶⁴

The sovereign could create peers and appoint counsellors of course, and she could distribute offices at court to her favourites, but there were some families whose titles and relationship to the state were so ancient and venerable that birth into them was enough to create a relationship to the state regardless of who the monarch was.⁶⁵ These old families served the queen and guarded her and kept her counsel, and for the most part remained

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 105.

⁶²Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms*, 39-41.

⁶³Paul E. J. Hammer, 'Myth-Making: Politics, Propaganda and the Capture of Cadiz in 1596', *The Historical Journal* 40 no. 3 (Sept 1997): 621-622.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 627.

⁶⁵Adamson, 105.

faithful to her administration and rule. Their ancient titles were also badges of having survived dynastic paroxysms for centuries and they did, for the large part, survive for much longer yet.

The Manuscripts of Prayer

The manuscripts for the prayers of Elizabeth exist in three principal groups. The first are prayers in Elizabeth's own hand that have been preserved either in state papers, the Cecil Papers or other fragments kept, perhaps, as mementoes of the queen. The second set of sources are prayers that were widely circulated and published, usually connected with significant moments in Elizabeth's life or occasions of state. The third set are prayers attributed to Elizabeth for which very strong evidence suggests they could only have been written by her, and reproduced with her knowledge and permission. In the case of those prayers that will be referred to in this examination, all three groups of sources are represented. The earliest prayers mentioned are the prayer in the tower and during the coronation procession.⁶⁶ The coronation prayer is also detailed (with slight changes) in an earlier printed source by Richard Mulcaster.⁶⁷ In each case, these prayers are considered reliable sources, even though Bentley's *Monument of Matrons* is quite late, because of the close correlation to the earlier sources. The second published source is the *Precationes Privatae* of 1563.⁶⁸ This volume is believed to have been published by

⁶⁶Thomas Bentley, *The Monument of Matrons* (London: H. Denham, 1582).

⁶⁷Richard Mulcaster, *The Passage of our Most Dread Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth through the City of London to Westminster the Day before Her Coronation* (London: Richard Tottel, 1558).

⁶⁸Elizabeth I, *Precationes Privatae. Regiae E.R.* (London: Thomas Purfoot, 1563).

Elizabeth as a thanksgiving for her deliverance from a bout of small pox in 1562.⁶⁹ Its contents are entirely in Latin and, as a source from early in the reign, it is reliable inasmuch as it is claimed and published as Elizabeth's own work. Following this, the texts attributed to Elizabeth and published in foreign languages for public consumption are found in a volume published in 1569.⁷⁰ This volume does not specifically credit Elizabeth with authorship, but is composed in such a way, dedicated and illustrated with Elizabeth's image and the frontispiece has a reproduction of her Royal Arms, it is inconceivable any printer could have produced the volume or gained access to the material without Elizabeth's knowledge and permission. The style of translation and choice of syntax is noted as entirely consistent with Elizabeth's other known translations from her girlhood to old age. These prayers are considered reliable representations of Elizabeth's work.⁷¹

The most remarkable source of Elizabeth's prayers is a small book of prayers in her own hand. It now exists only in facsimile, as the original was lost at the beginning of the last century.⁷² This book was obviously for personal use and not for public

⁶⁹Marcus *et al.*, eds. *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 135.

⁷⁰*Christian Prayers and Meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke, and Latine* (London: J. Daye, 1569).

⁷¹Marcus *et al.*, eds., *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*, 129.

⁷²Known now as BL MS Facsimile 218, sigs. 3r-36r as the original was lost in the very early 20th century. Notation dated June 3, 1893 reads 'this tiny volume, measuring 2 inches wide by 3 inches long, has 38 vellum leaves. It is bound in shagreen with gold enamelled clasps; in the centre of each is a small ruby. Two miniatures on gold backgrounds with fleurs-des-lis are by Nicholas Hilliard: the one represents Queen Elizabeth, the other François Hercule de Valois, successively Duc D'Alençon and Duc d'Anjou. This book was given by James II to the Duke of Berwick, and then through a series of persons ending with a purchase by Queen Charlotte in 1786. From there it

consumption, as its binding and small size made it far more the style of a private prayer book. Dating to circa 1579 it contains gilded lettering, prayers in various languages and all in Elizabeth's own hand. It is believed to have been Elizabeth's own girdle prayer book, which would have been worn or carried to prayer.⁷³

The third and final source of manuscript is the fragments and single sheets of prayers that exist in private collections, state papers and in a secretary's hand. The Armada prayer of the Cecil Papers is one example.⁷⁴ The Cadiz prayer has variants in text, but agrees as it appears in the British Library Manuscript,⁷⁵ the Bodelian,⁷⁶ the Huntington Library Source,⁷⁷ and the Masters of the Bench of the Inner Temple Library.⁷⁸ While the variants are interesting regarding which might be the earliest authentic text, the sense or intention of the prayer is not at issue. The survival of so many sources is also an indication that Elizabeth's prayers were written out and given away and survive in papers families passed down as mementoes.

The Accession of Elizabeth

When Elizabeth acceded the throne on her sister's death, she inherited a metaphor of kingship: tradition of the sacredness of monarchy and the display of that glory born of her own 'body politic'. This makes it a fruitful exercise to examine the religious opinion

passed to an unnamed owner when it was exhibited by the "Fine Art Society" in 1902. It disappeared shortly thereafter'. From Marcus *et al.*, eds. *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 311-312.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 312.

⁷⁴Source: Hatfield House, Cecil Papers 147. Fol 214r; Draft in Elizabeth's Hand.

⁷⁵BL MS Additional 38823, fol 96r.

⁷⁶MS Rawlinson B.259, fols. 53v-54r.

⁷⁷MS EL 1205c.

⁷⁸MS Petyt 538, vol. 10, fol. 6.

and focus Elizabeth steered in order to understand the place of prayer in the sovereign's life. *That* the queen prayed is not remarkable, except in understanding that those prayers were, in effect, the nation at prayer. As previously mentioned, this is part of the mechanism of government. That the queen *wrote* prayers adds another level of meaning and depth to those prayers in the light of Tudor display, access and association. From Elizabeth we have full prayers in numerous languages, translations of texts in her own hand and reflections on kingship that are made the more honest in that they were not necessarily for public consumption, but kept in a personal prayer book Elizabeth or her ladies might see or read from. Historians themselves have examined Elizabeth's life for clues as to her own religious opinions and convictions and different historians have come to opposite opinions about her thought.⁷⁹ It is in the display of religion that Elizabeth is fascinating. When she came to the throne, Mary's laws stood and had to be reformed by parliament. Elizabeth made a show of her piety but also had to wait to change the ordinary worship of the parishes of England until after the parliament of 1559 had acted. It was in her private chapel that she signalled both a willingness to wait for parliament and an impatience with that which she considered superstitious and repugnant to the word of God.

There has been recent research suggesting the Prayer Book of 1559, the real liturgical Elizabethan settlement, represented not Elizabeth's preference for worship, but rather a compromise position that would permit as many Marian Catholics, Edwardine

⁷⁹William P. Haugaard, 'Elizabeth Tudor's Book of Devotions: A Neglected Clue to the Queen's Life and Character', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1981): 80.

Protestants, godly puritans and conservative religious voices to blend together as possible.⁸⁰ As will be shown, the queen would seem to be much attached to the ceremony and mystery she remembered from her childhood in the latter happy years of King Henry VIII's reign. Her preference was not for the austere Calvinist liturgies of her brother, but rather for the candlesticks and crucifix of her father's church, combined with the Royal Supremacy.⁸¹ During her upbringing she had been tutored up to the age of thirteen or fourteen in the high Henrician-Catholic view of both the Supremacy and the church. Her tutor, the Chaplain Edmund Allen's teaching on the Eucharist and his catechisms were entirely consistent with the first Prayer Book of 1549, but not of the reformed theology of the Prayer Book of 1552.⁸² In her own decision for the changes put forward in 1559, Elizabeth had to settle:

Grudgingly and reluctantly, Elizabeth had to accept that restoration of the 1549 liturgy would neither appease the Marian Catholics nor satisfy the Protestants; a reformed settlement could be founded only on the basis of the 1552 Prayer Book, which was the least that would prove acceptable to the men on whom she was going to have to rely to serve as Bishops in her Church.⁸³

As we have postulated, the personal religious intention of the sovereign is best seen in the manner in which he or she orders the worship of the Chapel Royal. Elizabeth had inherited a Catholic entity from her sister Mary and she broke her usual pattern of leaving Marian appointed prelates and clergy alone by immediately replacing the

⁸⁰Roger Bowers, 'The Chapel Royal, the First Edwardian Prayer Book, and Elizabeth's Settlement of Religion 1559', *The Historical Journal*, 43, no. 2. (Jun., 2000): 319.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 319-320.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 320.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 321.

Catholic Thomas Thirlby as royal chaplain with the more congenial George Carew. This is noted not so much as the appointment of a strict Elizabethan Protestant as it is the appointment of a priest who was amenable and would do as he was told.⁸⁴ The next hot button issue that would have clearly signalled the queen's pleasure with regard to religious settlement was her instruction at Christmas Day and St. Stephen's Day 1558 to omit the elevation of the host from the service that was celebrated for her. This was a violation of the Injunctions of Mary, and Elizabeth did not mandate this for the realm, but for her own Chapel. This is doubly significant, for as we have noted, in the state ritual, these were not celebrations in the Privy Chamber, but, as high holy days, were days on which the whole court would be present with the queen as she attended service in full state regalia.⁸⁵ Elizabeth worked hard to make all of her changes to liturgy consistent with the laws of parliament and did not knowingly or willingly break statutes that still stood in the time before her settlement of 1559, except with regard to two instances. First the elevation of the host in her own Chapel was forbidden, though no instruction was given to any other clergy. Only those of her own household were given these instructions.⁸⁶ Secondly the details surrounding the celebration and reception of communion at her own coronation were a most public display of both religiosity and an indication of a future policy in religion.

The Marian bishops unanimously refused her instructions to omit the elevation of the host and to serve communion in both kinds at the high mass at her coronation.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 322.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 322-323.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 322.

Therefore her chaplain Carew was pressed into service and celebrated the Eucharist, with the elevations omitted, and the queen received communion in both kinds, in violation of the Marian discipline, though in a compromise to the law, this was accomplished in secret, as the communion of the sovereign was concluded in a freestanding 'closet' or traverse surrounded by curtains.⁸⁷ It was a display that allowed for deniability - no one saw her receive in both kinds in a very public service, but everyone would have seen the Chalice go into the traverse.

A proclamation of 27 December, 1558 made clear the provisions for English in the liturgy were optional - the Litany as lately used in the Chapel Royal being one example and licence for the Epistle and Gospel to be read in English being another. Also optional licence was given for an English rendition of the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed and the Decalogue. Parishes could use these English portions of the liturgy but were not compelled to do so.⁸⁸ Much time and effort was spent looking at texts and litanies that would have been legal in spite of the *Act of Repeal* 1553 and the *Injunctions* of 1554. Litanies were found in English that had not been banned that dated from the King's Primer of 1547. These did not offend the letter of the law of the *Injunctions* of 1554, as they were not strictly for worship but were listed as texts used extra-liturgically for edification and teaching.⁸⁹ Citations for a lawful recitation of the Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer in English had been found in a similar vein and Elizabeth managed to obey

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 327.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 325. Citation reads: Proclamations of 17 Nov and 27 Dec, 1558: The Royal Proclamations (TRP), II Pages 99-100, 102-103.

⁸⁹As cited in Bowers, 325-326. Citation reads: Visitation Articles (VAI), II, pages 6-7 (1536), 36-7 (1538), 116 (1547); also articles 3 and 12 and Injunction 5 of 1559: *Ibid.*, III, pages 2, 3, 10.

her dead sister's injunctions until they were repealed.⁹⁰ This marks a feat of liturgical and legislative prestidigitation that should have earned some bookish clerk somewhere a bishopric!

Half Measures and Royal Supremacy - Easter 1559 and Easter 1560

The Settlement of Religion, the great compromise of the 1559 parliament, staked out the nature of the church and much was done to accommodate the queen's own sense of the importance of a visual continuity with the past. The reformers in the church were uncomfortable with the half measures being put forward as regards the liturgy and look of the church and the changes to the rubrics of the Prayer Book, and the assumption of many was that Elizabeth would go further to restore what her brother had legislated in 1552. This was not to be. Elizabeth herself was remembered to have said to Archbishop Parker that she would never have consented to the Act of Uniformity if she did not have the Ornaments rubric, that is to say unless she had some control over what the church 'looked like'.⁹¹ Her plan was to be sure that the church had a continuity with what her father had implemented, and at first it appeared she was in support of her brother's religious settlement. This was disproved over time, as the cases of St. Bartholomew's 1559 and Easter 1560 were to show.

St. Bartholomew's 1559 and Lent and Easter 1560

The parliament of 1559 had settled religious questions and declared that the newly restored and revised Book of Common Prayer would come into effect as of the 24th of

⁹⁰Bowers, 325.

⁹¹Norman L. Jones, *Faith by Statute - Parliament and the Settlement of Religion 1559* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1982), 136.

June 1559. Elizabeth signalled her own belief and sympathy by enacting the new liturgy in her own Chapel on the 12th of May, only four days after the parliament had dissolved and previous to this, Elizabeth had systematically altered the worship in her own Chapel until it more closely resembled a close relative of the Prayer Book of 1552.⁹² Whether her own tastes were more reformed or Henrician, Elizabeth was faced with a settlement in the area of religion that restored the Royal Supremacy and imposed Uniformity without unduly punishing Catholics who could not or would not submit to the new religion. If Elizabeth's sympathies lay with the extreme reformers, there is precious little evidence to show it, for she was constantly criticized for ecclesiastical half measures, and yet she was unable or unwilling to take the church all the way back to the church of her father, as restoration of the theology and worship of the 1549 book by now was 'untenable'.⁹³ We can however glance into the world Elizabeth inhabited in the Chapel Royal and see what manner of signals she sent through worship in her own world.

While Elizabeth had adopted the use of the new Prayer Book on the 12th of May, a notable signal of religious allegiance, many other churches in London adopted it very shortly thereafter on Whitsun, the 14th of May that year. Full compliance to the Act of Uniformity was not required until 24th June 1559, but the city of London signalled its loyalties by adopting it in large part much earlier. By August, the sentiments of the people and the commissioners who had been sent to ensure compliance to the Act of Uniformity were demonstrated in a great bonfire of religious images and other parts of church ritual paraphernalia at the St. Bartholomew's Day fair held at Smithfield. This was witnessed

⁹²*Ibid.*, 187.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 188.

and described by Henry Machyn, a merchant of London, in his diary and he noted that there was a destruction of 'Roods (crosses with the body of Christ attached), Marys and John and other images.'

[The xxiiij day of August, the lord] mare and the althermen and the [sheriffs? w]her at the wrastelyng at Clarke-in-w[ell, and it was the] fayre day of thynges kept in Smyth-feld, [being] sant Bathellmuw (day), and the same day my lord [mayor] came home thugh Chepe, and a-gaynst Yrmonger [lane] and a-gaynst sant Thomas of Acurs ij gret [bonfires] of rodes (fn. 56) and of Mares and Johns and odur emages, ther thay wher bornyd with gret wondur.⁹⁴

Machyn also notes that is was more than furniture being burned.

The tyme afor Bathellmuwtyd and after was all the rodes and Mares (and) John, and mony odur of the chyrche gudes, bowth copes, crosses, sensors, alter-clothes, rod clothes, bokes, baners, bokes, and baner-stays, waynskott, with myche odur gayre, abowt London.⁹⁵

This was a form of religious and political theatre whose purpose was to signal the new religious settlement and to solidify the population in its religious opinions and set about the new religious order as the commissioners had hoped. Ordinary people like Machyn may not have been as enthusiastic about these demonstrations as the commissioners, Mayor and others may have hoped. The fact that the destruction of the images and accompanying vestments and books and banners had been carefully noted, not least by Machyn, but also by the Windsor herald Charles Wriothesley - who put the value of what had been destroyed at £2000⁹⁶ recently spent by Queen Mary - was a sign

⁹⁴Nichols, ed., *The Diary of Henry Machyn*, 207.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 208.

⁹⁶Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors from AD1485 to 1559*, Vol. II, ed. William Douglas Hamilton (London: Camden Society, 1877), 146.

that perhaps not all those who witnessed religious and political theatre were convinced of its message.

Elizabeth knew that the outward manifestations, the 'display' of religion was a powerful force to calm or incite those of radical opinions on either side of any religious question. The way church looked was as important as what was said at church. This was the way in which Elizabeth could make her own opinions known about any excesses, on either side of the religious divide. After the destruction of so much of the old order in the fires of St. Bartholomew's Day as well as the work of the commissioners who crisscrossed the country to assure compliance, Elizabeth was ready to signal a change and she could do so through the next great religious season that was to come about after the commissioners' work. That was Lent and Easter in 1560.

Beginning with a proclamation in Lent, Elizabeth enforced the traditional fast from meat during Lent 1560.

The furst day of Marche was a proclamasyon by the quen('s) grace and the consell that no man nor woman, nor they that kepys tabulles, shuld ett no flese in lenth nor odor tyme in the yere that ys commondyd (forbidden) by the chyrche, nor no bucher kyll no flese, but that they should pay a grett fyne, or elles vj ours (hours) on the pelere (pillory), and in-presoment x (10) days.⁹⁷

This was a signal that not all had changed from the old order. Fasting was one of the disciplines of the old church, and to re-introduce and enforce it now was a signal that not all was going to change as some had thought. Practices like public penances and fasting, not to mention many of the lenten and Easter ceremonies were usually decried with the

⁹⁷Nichols, ed., *The Diary of Henry Machyn*, 226.

loaded term of 'superstition'.⁹⁸ To call something superstitious was to label it as nearly demonic and connected with the old religion and shot through with ignorance. The royal proclamation was yet another display that Elizabeth meant to rule the church as she ruled the nation. Her reach did not stop there.

Vesture was another form of display Elizabeth could control. As has been previously noted, the queen would not have consented to the Prayer Book of 1559 without the ornaments rubric it contained. Her assumption may have been that as long as she could control the display of those who would come to swear allegiance to her as sovereign, the bishops could not be too independent of her religious policy. They might rail against popery and superstitiousness in the pulpits, but Elizabeth herself could modify their display of office in such a way that more moderate souls might be comforted and more radical voices brought to heel.

The best example of this is the use of the Rochet and Chimere. The Rochet, a fine linen garment, gathered at the wrist and flowing the length of the body down to the ankle, and the Chimere, a sleeveless silk garment fitted over the Rochet, were the ordinary court dress of the bishops who had presided over the old order. Henry Machyn notes the dress of the many bishops he heard preach that Lent of 1560 and he comments that from top to bottom, every bishop appeared consistently dressed in the same attire as a bishop of the old order. This was a visible display of the queen's will for consistency, for many of these men who preached through Lent of 1560 were the self-same men who had declared these garments popish rags and antichrist. These men were, now that they had been preferred

⁹⁸Norman L. Jones, *Faith by Statute - Parliament and the Settlement of Religion 1559* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1982), 184.

by a reforming queen, forced to wear them and wear them publicly. Even Grindal, the arch Protestant and reformer, was noted as preaching on 3 March 1560 :

He sam day dyd pryche at Powlles crosse the nuwe byshope of London master Gryndall, in ys Rchet and chyminer; and after sermon done the pepull dyd syng; and ther was my lord mayre and the althermen, and ther was grett audyence.

The sam day at after-non dyd pryche at the curte (court) the byshope Skore, (Scory) in ys rochett and chyminer, and ther was grett audyens, and after (unfinished)...

The vj of Marche dyd pryche at the court doctur Byll dene of Westmynster that day in the quen('s) chapell, the crosse and ij candylles bornyng and the tabulles standyng auter-wyse.⁹⁹

This is a clear indication of the queen's will in these matters. The bishops who appeared at court and preached, as well as those who preached at St. Paul's Cross did so in the vestments of the old order and when the Dean of Westminster preached in the queen's Chapel, he did so in front of a table standing altar-wise and with candles and cross set upon it. Henry Machyn could see with his own eyes what the religious settlement of England was going to look like, because he was at court and managed to understand in the midst of the religious turmoils of his day the implications of the sermons he heard as well as the vesture of those preaching.

It was also a sign to those of the more radical sentiments in religion that they were to be brought under a discipline to which they had not yet submitted and that their own scruples mattered little to the queen when it came to how she intended to rule the church. Even the reformed minded Bishop Barlowe of St. David's, formerly chaplain to the Duchess of Suffolk, was seen wearing the very popish rags his former mistress detested,

⁹⁹Nichols, ed., *The Diary of Henry Machyn*, 226.

and in mid-lent 1560 Machyn noted that not only had Bishop Barlowe preached but was present at court for evensong when the queen herself was absent. Yet he obeyed the royal will as regarded dress and the Chapel was decorated in a way to which Barlowe should have objected.

The xxiiij day of Marche, was mydlent sonday, master Barlow byshope of sant Davys dyd pryche at the cowrtt, but the quen was not at yt; butt ther was mony pepull; and he was in ys rochett and ys chymmer, and at v of the cloke yt ended; and contenenntt (incontinently) her chapell whent to evy[ning song,] and ther the crosse stood on the auter, and ij candylstykes and ij tapurs bornyng, and after done a goodly anteme song.¹⁰⁰

All of this display of the queen's will culminated in the Holy Week and Easter Season that was about to be celebrated. The royal Maundy celebrations were an expression of that same ancient hallowing of time the court had kept for the better part of the last six hundred years. To be at court at these times was to see the sovereign preside over the religious ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter as a state occasion. It is this same implication of the sacerdotal kingship exercised by her ancestors that Elizabeth perpetuated in the celebrations of 1560, thereby signalling and displaying her will for the future and a continuity with the past.

On Maundy Thursday, the sovereign, taking Christ's example, washed the feet of the poor and then distributed alms to as many as were gathered together. Elizabeth kept to the old script almost exactly. Machyn made sure he was there, and he notes:

The xj day of Aprell the Quen('s) grace kept her monde (Maundy) in her halle at the cowrt at afternon, and her grace gayff unto xx (20) women so many gownes, and on woman had her best gowne, and ther her grace dyd wosse ther fett, (wash their feet) and with a nuw whyt cupe her grace dronke unto evere woman, and they had the cupe, and so her grace dyd

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 229.

leyke-wyse unto all, and evere woman had in money (blank). [The same afternoon she gave unto pore men, wo]men, and chylderyn, both holle (whole) and lame, in sant James('s) parke ij d. a-pese, a [thousand people and upwards.]¹⁰¹

The only departure from tradition that was noted was that Elizabeth should have washed the feet of a number of women equal to her age, which at that time was twenty-five. Instead she washed the feet of only twenty. Perhaps this is an expression of the queen's vanity around her age rather than a display of a break with tradition, as every other ceremony was kept.

Finally, on the 23rd of April, St. George's Day, the queen presided at the ceremony of the Knights of the Garter and Machyn notes the presence of the Knights and Heralds, all instruments of the state, but also of the clergy vested in copes made of cloth of gold.

The xxij day of Aprell, was sant Gorge day, the Quen('s) grace and the knyghtes of the Garter whent a prossessyon with all her chapell in copes of cloth of gold, a xxvij copes, and the Quen and all the knyghtes wore ther robes, rownd a-bowt the hall to the cowrt-y[ard,] and all the haroldes of armes in ther cottes of armes.¹⁰²

This was a signal that could not be missed. Radical Protestants objected to the Cult of Saints, and yet here was a national celebration on a saint's day - and while this might be excused as a national holiday, it could not escape notice that the very same form of vestments that had been burned ten months earlier at the St. Bartholomew's Fair in Smithfield were now being worn on a state occasion in the queen's presence, at the queen's direction with all the other solemn pomp the state could muster. There could be no mistaking Elizabeth's supremacy in this particular display. This was a sign of

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 230.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 232.

continuity, and as Machyn himself notes, there were not two or three copes on senior clerics, but rather a full twenty-eight copes of cloth of gold.

Prayers as Private Devotions and Display

Once the religious issues were settled by Elizabeth, we can glimpse a little of the mind of the remarkable woman upon whose prayers we can now eavesdrop. Elizabeth's *Book of Devotions* was a small volume, easily fit into the hands and set throughout in Elizabeth's own script. It might be thought that she took great care in her prayers, casting an 'eye on posterity'. This is consistent with a woman who also made such a clear intention of correcting the versions of her *ex tempore* parliamentary discourses as well.¹⁰³ We can assume that Elizabeth was at her most honest with God and herself in these prayers, for they were her own, and for her own use. At some points she would give them away on paper, as she did with her prayer for the expedition to Cadiz in May 1596, which was to be distributed to the whole fleet as it sailed.¹⁰⁴ In other cases they were composed and kept as a precious mementos of her presence and piety, as was one copy of her prayer on the defeat of the Spanish Armada, which is now in the Cecil Papers.¹⁰⁵ They were a display of her religious duty as a sovereign and her faithful desires in her natural self, but they were not meant to be read for doctrine. No one else would be able to point to them to read a theological opinion from her. While they might be published or spread abroad as a sign of the queen's favour and of her own access to God's mercy and grace, they were not for regular public use, and so they are an unvarnished example of where her mind and

¹⁰³Haugaard, 81.

¹⁰⁴Marcus *et al.*, eds., *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 425.

¹⁰⁵Currently held at Hatfield House, Cecil Papers, 147, fol. 214r.

heart dwelt as she pondered her duty to the realm and to God, the very place of the sovereign in the world and her responsibility to the people of England when they were under threat or marching or sailing into harm's way as an expression of her own will in government.

As has been previously noted, the social display of court as well as the religious ritual instantiated the reality that all members of Tudor society related upward. So it is that Elizabeth addresses her prayers upward to her heavenly Father but also her Sovereign. Most of Elizabeth's prayers address God as Father and Sovereign, engaging in precisely that reciprocal relationship with God that her nobles enjoy with her. They are important because she is important. In this case, the queen is sovereign because the Lord is Sovereign over all and has placed her in this exalted position. The queen acts as sovereign for the sake of good government and in the matters of the church; she is not bound by or forced to take counsel with which she would disagree. As in all her government, Elizabeth would listen, but need not act on counsel¹⁰⁶ - much like God, who always listened, but need not act on our prayers. Elizabeth, like a 'god on earth',¹⁰⁷ acted in council the way the Father above acted with Elizabeth's prayers. The fact that her prayers met generally with acceptable outcomes may be an indication that Elizabeth would be interpreted as a wise counsel of God.

Therefore, in order to demonstrate suitable humility in the access to divine mercy and power, Elizabeth's prayers focus particularly on thanksgiving for all the benefits she had received and her preservation through difficult times and threats on her life. More

¹⁰⁶Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse*, 80-81.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, 82.

than this, Elizabeth's prayers speak of her interceding for the people under her charge, and interceding with God in a crypto-sacerdotal manner - a priestly function¹⁰⁸ reminiscent of a long past day in the high medieval era, which was still functioning within the manufactured metaphor of sovereignty. This metaphor was changed though, and changed so that Elizabeth could answer her many critics both within and without the realm who objected to such sacred power being wielded by a woman. The preachers throughout the reign reminded Elizabeth of her mortality, her weakness and her inferior station vis-à-vis her sex on numerous occasions through court sermons that advised her that, as a woman, she was subject to the preacher's correction.¹⁰⁹ In response to John Knox's *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558)¹¹⁰ the exiled preacher John Aylmer made the case against Knox's tract by replying in a fulsome volume:

Murmer ye at myne anynted, because she is a woman? Who made man and woman, you, or I? Yf I made hir to lyve: May I not make her to reigne? If I apoynt hir to the office? Can I not adorne hi, and make hir able to discharge it? Why then (you of litle faithe) eyther fear you my goode wil: or mistrust you my power?¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸Haugaard, 103.

¹⁰⁹Margaret Christian, 'Elizabeth's Preachers and the Government of Women: Defining and Correcting a Queen', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 24, no. 3 (Autumn, 1993): 562-563.

¹¹⁰In yet another example of exquisite bad timing in history, Knox published the tract intending to indict the rule of Mary of Guise, regent of Scotland and Mary I of England. Shortly after publication, Mary Tudor died and was succeeded by Elizabeth, who had no sympathy with Knox as his arguments condemned her as well as her sister. Elizabeth may have been happy to see Knox lead a reformation in Scotland, but she forbade him passage through England nonetheless.

¹¹¹John Aylmer, *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subjectes, against the Late Blowne Blaste, Concerning the Government of Women* (Strasburg: 1559), sig I1v-2 Reel Position STC:194:17.

Aylmer was supplying the arguments Elizabeth would employ in her own justification of legitimacy for her rule. God had placed her there and she needed no counsel of preachers to teach or guide her in her rule. Preachers might think they hold an office that acts as prophet to the sovereign, but the queen would act of her own accord and according to her own counsel, for God had placed her on her throne, and she intended to rule.

Elizabeth prayed in a way that made it clear to anyone who reads these prayers now, that she had a sense of herself as a Christian prince, whom providence had brought to her throne and one on whom much had been laid in the care and charge of so many subjects. Elizabeth was a 'divinely appointed absolute monarch'¹¹² but she was keenly aware of her shortcomings. There are numerous references to penitence and a desire for a change of life, but similarly, Elizabeth regularly asks for wisdom, for good counsel, for protection from enemies and the establishment of right religion and true faith everywhere. In this she was truly a humanist in the finest Erasmian tradition.¹¹³ One prayer, in poetic form and ascribed to Elizabeth, though it appears in a finer French than Elizabeth usually used, states:

O Governor of all the spheres in motion
 O Thou who has set down the world's foundation
 And parcelled it out, by Thy good intent
 Amongst all men, without asking consent,
 Thou raisest one, another castest low;
 To one in pain Thou dost Thy comfort show
 And makest him king, if so Thou willst him be;
 Thus, God and Master, hast thou dealt with me
 By pulling me out from a prison cruel,

¹¹²Mears, 82.

¹¹³Haugaard, 83.

The prison of flesh, and suffering eternal.
 I dwelt in one for sins that I committed
 From youthful years, and these Thou has remitted;
 The other was mine because the truth I took
 Unto myself in love, and lies forsook
 To follow Christ; therefore Thou pulledst me
 By Thy strong hand from being withdrawn from Thee
 In giving this great royalty to me.
 Align me then with what Thou dost decree:
 Strength, counsel, doctrine sound to me provide
 That well I may Thy people rule and guide;
 And in Thy goodness, vouchsafe not to see
 Or heed at all, my own iniquity.¹¹⁴

As an expression of her personal devotion, this poetic prayer matches closely the life of Elizabeth through her trials and tribulations both as a child in her father's house and as a prisoner of her sister Mary. Elizabeth had been rejected many times and then later restored to her father's favour. She had been courted by ambitious men and had had her virtue and honour questioned in the days of her young brother's reign. Elizabeth always maintained her conscience and her faith against threat of death in her sister's reign, and finally, in coming to the throne herself, she experienced vindication. Now that she sits on the throne as a representative whom God has appointed to wear a crown, Elizabeth seeks God's forgiveness for her sins, gives thanks for all the benefits she has received at the hand of God and asks for herself only that she be given 'strength, counsel and doctrine sound' to guide the peoples left under her charge. This prayer is not only a personal devotion, but serves a purpose in statecraft, and as in all her statecraft, this prayer is stamped with the particular character of Elizabeth as a ruler who has come

¹¹⁴Marcus *et al.*, eds., *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 151- 152. Original Source: *Precationes privitae Regiae E. R.* (London: T. Purfoot, 1563).

through much, not least of which is the doubt of others as to her ability to rule. Elizabeth address God as she would have addressed her father, the gargantuan figure in her mind and in the memories of all those at court.

A psychological profile of Elizabeth notes that her separation from her father and her father's ambivalent attitude toward her in her early years would have had a significant effect on her life.¹¹⁵ This may also account for the constant references to God as King and Father throughout her many prayers. Most times, Elizabeth appends an adjective to the title Father that stresses the merciful and kind aspects of God the Father. This marks a desire for an intimate and personal relationship.

“Clementissimo mio Padre...Mon Dieu et mon Père...car tu es mon Père”, “clementissimo mio Padre...mio benignissimo Padre...mio soavissimo e potentissimo Padre”, “Patere clementissime,” “ô mercifull Father”¹¹⁶

This relationship is born out in the exercise of her office and state in life. Elizabeth is a ritualized form of kingly high priest, whose purpose it is to rehearse before God, to the benefit of her people, the needs and concerns of the nation, and of her heart, so that all the realm might be remembered by God for Elizabeth's sake. There is a deep vein of providential belief in the events that led to the coronation of Elizabeth, in that it was incomprehensible to her that God would have brought her to this place and this station in life for no reason. Elizabeth was queen by God's hand and for God's purpose and, as queen, it was her duty to give peace and godly government to her people. The sovereign's prayers therefore rehearse the petitions for peace and that true religion might

¹¹⁵Larissa Taylor-Smith, ‘Elizabeth I : A Psychological Profile’, *Sixteenth Century Journal* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 52-53.

¹¹⁶Haugaard, 84.

flourish, but they also remind those who might read these prayers that while other realms have suffered want, war and injustice, God had preserved her, and through her godly worship and truth. Religious refugees also have found a home because God, through Elizabeth, has made a home where the persecuted members of the church (continental Protestants) have a protector. Here we see most clearly Elizabeth's heart at prayer:

...And thus I shall feel with my subjects, Thy most holy Benediction, from the which I know peace to have come, accompanied with many good things, which until now, to Thy honour and the comforting of Thy Church, I have enjoyed while my nearest neighbours have felt the evils of bloody war and the poor, persecuted children have found an assured dwelling with rest...¹¹⁷

For Elizabeth, the proof of divine favour was in the exercise of good government. Her prayers reassured that God would know her people's need, and while she was preserved, her people would know prosperity and peace, the church would be rightly governed and those persecuted for their faith on the continent would find a safe place in which they could exercise their belief without fear. All this was an act of God's providence, who had placed her on her throne and would, through his own mercy and forgiveness of her human frailty, one day gather her up for a reunion with those royal ancestors of hers:

Deign, therefore, to open the ample treasure of Thy mercy so that I may be freed from so much misery; and therewith disclose to me the living fountains where I may be purified and made clean of all my sin, through the virtue of the pure and cleansing waters that are in Thy sacred fountains. And thus made clean I shall be received into Thy everlasting courts, wherein dwelling with Thee, O my sweet Lord, I with the holy kings will perpetually contemplate thy serene face, most happy and

¹¹⁷ Marcus *et al.*, eds., *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 314. Original Facsimile: British Library MS Facsimile 218, sigs. 3r-36r in Elizabeth's own hand.

content to be enjoying everlasting life.¹¹⁸

Elizabeth is summoning an image, and it cannot be mistaken. It is an image of the bodies of her many ancestors lying together at the abbey, while Elizabeth, joined with all those other anointed princes who have ruled England, looks toward God in rest. As an image it is arresting. As political theatre, it is a remarkable assertion of continuity outside the usual pious invocations of the past. This is a mystical connection that borders on an invocation of the communion of royal saints, the former holy kings who had at one time sought to intercede for their subjects meeting one another in the heavenly realms, in much the same way that they would be gathered together in their tombs. Although Elizabeth was a firm humanist, she has invoked an echo of a piety from long before, but which with her employment of the image has reinterpreted it to tell a new political understanding. There has been no break with the past, but rather a reclamation of the ancient and godly faith of her ancestors in testimony to the truth of God.

Life in the Chapel Royal and its attendant piety in the Tudor court, whether it is that of Henry VII and his mother maintaining a high medieval ceremonial, or the Elizabethan Chapel Royal with its standard of learning and prayer unrivalled by Christian kings of past ages, set the standard of faith for the kingdom and in doing so displayed a political standard. In all cases, Chapel life and its accompanying piety was a means of demonstrating the 'kingly charisma' - and in the Tudor era, it was one more important facet in demonstrating the key elements to court life: access to the royal person, association with the royal household, and the display of the theatre of royalty as a means

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 316. Original Facsimile: British Library MS Facsimile 218, sigs. 3r-36r in Elizabeth's own hand

of legitimizing rule. That legitimacy so dear to Henry VII, won on the battlefield and by marriage, ironically became an obsession for all those who followed him: Henry VIII in finding an heir and determining the Royal Supremacy, Edward in reforming the church, Mary in trying to put back what twenty years of reformation had taken from her, and Elizabeth in attempting to steer a middle course that would bring peace and good government to her people.

The alchemy of royal piety then is a combination of all these factors. The tools of kingship, patronage of the arts, music and architecture, history, learning and disputation come together in the ordinary prayer lives of extraordinary persons. As a metaphor for sovereignty, those prayer lives are not private domains. As public displays, they are a means of articulating a religious vision without arguing dogmas.

This blend when it bends before God, at least in the Tudor court, always managed a continuity with the ritual life that had been set down as far back Henry VII. It also took on a sacerdotal bent, interceding with gratitude and effusive in thanksgiving, fearless in seeking forgiveness for the great sins great persons were wont to have committed and then in seeking counsel for good government and sound faith. No matter what private religious opinion one might hold, this is a manner of establishing and maintaining legitimacy at a time when the legitimacy of dynastic power was a primary question of the day. The medieval world, which would accept kingship by conquest, had given way to a theory of government that acknowledged legitimate authority as having come from the hand of God and no other, and so the religious establishment of legitimacy for a dynasty and the acceptability of the rule of the sovereign was deeply connected to that same sense

in which the sovereign was connected to God. To display glory, to show access to God's mercy and providential grace and to be associated with the power of God was the recipe for continued kingship in the Tudor model. Of all the Tudors, Elizabeth was the greatest master of the craft and it is because of her exercise of it, that we have so much to examine when we look at the place of her prayers.

The Curious Place of Psalm 118

It is a famous story (perhaps true, perhaps legend) that when the Princess Elizabeth was living at Hatfield, quietly avoiding notice after her release from arrest and prison, she was notified that her sister had died while resting under a large millennial oak tree, and that she immediately quoted Psalm 118 (perhaps in Latin, perhaps in English) 'a Domino factum est; Et mirabile in oculis nostris' or 'this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'. This is a remarkable story, and even if it lacks historical veracity,¹¹⁹ it has the benefit of being a pious construction, with the dual purpose of announcing God's hand in the miraculous preservation and exaltation of Elizabeth from prison to the throne, and the perpetuation of the metaphor Elizabeth had established. More than this, it might be inferred that the psalm is precisely that kind of text upon which Elizabeth meditated throughout her life. Meditating on scriptural texts was an expected religious duty for the well educated renaissance princess, and one that had Protestant sympathies would do so regardless of the language of the translation. Having

¹¹⁹Its first report was in Sir Robert Naunton's *Fragmenta Regalia, or, Observations on the late Queen Elizabeth, her times and favorits* printed at London in 1641 written 70 years after the actual events of the Accession. Its persistence as a story would seem to owe more to its drama than its possible truth, but Elizabeth did use this verse of Psalm 118 regularly, as Naunton notes, '[this verse] which we find to this day on the stamp of her gold', p. 5.

learned early in her life that the texts of scripture were for edification, correction and conversion, Elizabeth would have readily studied, translated and meditated on words from scripture from her childhood days. For the purposes of this analysis, the lines have been numbered in the psalm as it appears in Appendix 1, and rather than referring directly to verses, line numbers will take their place. Partially, this is a function of the text itself, which was not printed in psalm form originally, but published in a prose form.

In the succession story, Elizabeth quotes the second half of line 34 and the first half of line 35: 'this is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes'. Interestingly however, the line immediately before the above is significant for our purposes as well. Line 33 and the and the first half of line 34 read: 'The same stone which the builders refused is become the headstone in the corner'. This unspoken line, perhaps present in the mind of Elizabeth as she heard the news of her half-sister's death, has a resonance with the life of Elizabeth in many ways beyond the text and into Tudor history itself.

Elizabeth had been born of a controversial marriage (1533), was accorded the rank of a princess, and on her mother's fall, fell from grace, entered a form of court limbo in which she was accorded royal rank and status, but was quietly raised away from court. An act of parliament excluded her from the succession on the assumption that she was illegitimate (1536), then she was made legitimate and restored to the succession in her father's will (1544). Elizabeth was then rejected by her own brother King Edward VI in his 'Device for the succession' in favour of Lady Jane Grey (1553), she supported her Catholic half-sister against Lady Jane Grey and her Protestant supporters and finally waited to see that the terms of her father's will would be followed when her sister Mary

died (1558). If the king, the bishops, the council, the parliament and even the Protestant aristocracy had rejected her at one time or another in her short life, it was no great wonder that Elizabeth might meditate on this psalm and that its words might be quoted as the first of her reign.

More than this, the conceptual structure of the Coverdale translation of Psalm 118 may lead us to some ideas of the structure of the meditations and thoughts of Elizabeth, and more importantly, may open a small window into the intentions behind the prayers she penned throughout her life. The Coverdale psalms as Elizabeth would have known them were the product of the Great Bible of her father, placed into all the parishes of England in 1536.

Psalm 118 seems to have been composed in ancient Israel as a recitation for a form of thanksgiving liturgy.¹²⁰ The author is giving thanks to God for deliverance from a serious and life threatening situation, and calls upon the whole nation to rejoice with him in his praise to God for mercy and the celebration of the nature of the miraculous deliverance. The liturgical use of the psalm is assumed with regard to the nature of the three overarching sections, where the 'celebrant' stands at the gates of the temple, with congregation, and calls upon them and God to witness to the goodness of the Lord (lines 1 to 13 in Coverdale's version attached in Appendix 1). What follows is a recitation of dangers overcome by God's goodness (lines 14-28) and an 'admission rite' (lines 29-31) followed by an address (lines 32-37) and some form of answer by the congregation to the Lord and the 'celebrant' that offers a benediction and renewal of the sacrificial covenant

¹²⁰James L. Mays, *Psalms - Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994), 374ff.

in which Israel finds its identity (lines 38-44).¹²¹ Understood then, even in the prose form of Coverdale, the psalm lends itself to an interpretation in which Elizabeth might place herself in the shoes of the 'celebrant' or even 'celebrant-king': David.

Here the royal poet and musician leads the nation in thanksgiving for deliverance and places the source of all that has been done within the direct command of the Lord alone. All that has been achieved has been done 'in the Name of the Lord' (lines 14-28) and the great actor of the psalm is in fact God who has done all things and done them miraculously and marvellously. This cannot have been lost on either the young Elizabeth, who was beset around with so many schemes, enemies and conspiracies, or as the older Virgin Queen, whose belief in her own miraculous preservation was the source of much of her own confidence.

"The LORD is for me' The cry of the celebrant was an expression of that knowledge opened up the marvellous possibility of living by faith instead of fear. Human strength is vulnerable to the power and threat of adversaries. It is better not to rely on it, even if it belongs to princes. The Lord's help is a power in which one can take refuge from both human weakness and human threats."¹²²

Frankly, Elizabeth could place herself well within this psalm, and see in it a type of her own sovereign relationship to the church and the nation. It was the relationship of the sovereign to God as intercessor for her people that lent this royal psalm its place in Elizabeth's history. The action of providence itself had brought Elizabeth through the many schemes and plots that sought to deprive her of the place to which God alone had brought her. This was a religious truth as well as a political truth. Elizabeth's concept of

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 375.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 376.

self must have suffered as part of the incessant criticism and changes she suffered as she grew up. Even after her accession, Elizabeth was set about by fortune seekers and petitioners who would have surrounded her with advice and requests she might not have been able to meet, and after a short time, one might see how it felt being surrounded by bees (line 17) with nations looking toward her destruction (lines 14 through 17).

But this miraculous preservation at the hands of the Lord was not for her own private benefit, and this is where the royal reading of this psalm can become so poignant. All that had occurred thus far in Elizabeth's life had been part of a divine plan to place her on the throne for the preservation of her nation and for its prosperity. It is this petition at the end of the psalm that makes sense of the previous recitations of God's faithfulness. Preservation that is miraculous is one thing, and it is good, but this psalm, when read royally, marks out the purposes of God's providence - that is the preservation of Elizabeth for the good of the nation, the furtherance of the gospel and the peaceful extension of the rule of law and enlightened governance of true religion and the destruction of superstition. This is what is meant by prosperity in Elizabeth's realm, not solely financial prospering, but religious and social prosperity as well. This can be seen clearly in several examples of prayers marked as private prayers composed around 1563:

'Lord God of mercy, my and my people's King, I acknowledge Thy great name, for Thou hast made Thyself a helper and a protector to me. I will extol Thee highly, God of my salvation, who hast freed my body from perdition and rescued me from the hands of those who sought my soul. Thy hand O God hath preserved me in an evil time; Thy grace hath looked with favour upon me since my youth and from that time has miraculously set me up in this Thy kingdom.'¹²³

¹²³ Marcus *et al.*, eds., *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 137-138. Original Source: *Precationes privitae Regiae E. R.* (London: T. Purfoot, 1563).

And from Prayer 6, a particularly lengthy collect which contains a litany of requests for virtues and situations advantageous to the kingdom:

Almighty, eternal God, Lord of lords, King of kings, to whom is all power, who has constituted me a prince of Thy people and by Thy mercy alone hast made me sit on the throne of my father, I Thy handmaid am slight of age and inferior in understanding of Thy law. Give me, I pray, a teachable heart, that I may know what is acceptable before Thee at all times, that I may be able to judge Thy people justly, and discern between good and evil. Send from heaven the Spirit of Thy wisdom, that He may lead me in all my doings. Fill my heart with a sense of this; May Thy true wisdom give knowledge and counsel and understanding from my mouth.¹²⁴

These personal petitions are followed immediately with petitions to supply good councillors and ministers as well as other ranks within the kingdom, including even faithful bishops, all of whom, according to this prayer are properly holding their place in the creation by being subject to her, the queen who has been placed by God in order to ensure good order, peace and concord:

May Thy grace (by which I may set in order these Thy many people in equity and justice) attend on those appointed as Thy ministers to be pious, upright and prudent. Impart Thy spirit to them that I may administer justice in Thy fear...Grant me faithful Councillors...Grant good shepherds, who may feed diligently from Thy word Thy sheep committed to them...Govern Thy people by Thy most holy Spirit, so that they may religiously worship thee, excellent Prince and only Power, with true service; and may quietly be subject unto me, their queen on earth by Thy ordinance; and may in obedience to Thee live together in mutual peace and concord.¹²⁵

What becomes clear through each of these prayers is that Elizabeth's view of the

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 138. Original Source: *Precationes privitae Regiae E. R.* (London: T.Purfoot, 1563).

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 138. Original Source: *Precationes privitae Regiae E. R.* (London: T. Purfoot, 1563).

kingdom, and of the relationship she shares with God is one of divine providence and mercy for a purpose. From deep within Elizabeth's prayer life she asks God for wisdom and right counsel in order to govern justly and rule with equity. Included in these prayers are petitions for God to help her to order the church rightly, in order to see that it accomplishes its mission in bringing the Word of God to people and salvation to their souls.

Elizabeth is acting as a royal intercessor for her realm and her prayers reflect her mind both as a 'natural body considered' and as a 'body politic'. The queen is praying, and when she prays she is interceding for her nation as a monarch should, but more than this when the queen *writes* prayers, be they privately used or published for public consumption, something else is happening. The objects, virtues and occasions for which the queen prays become display not only of piety but of policy. They act as a demonstration of the sovereign's access to God and of real association with God's power in the light of the miraculous circumstances of Elizabeth's continued survival through the political and dynastic morass of her sister's rule. The queen at prayer is the state at prayer and the content of those prayers becomes policy, both religious and political, for the whole of the realm. More than this, the display of prayer, association with the power of God and the access of the sovereign to the divine graces are another example of the more ancient form of kingship being demonstrated *in a new way*. This is a new layer to Elizabeth's metaphor of sovereignty. This is not the former participation in ritual life the sovereign undertook in the light of the sacred responsibilities granted in the coronation rites. This is a far deeper reality in that rather than a function in the sacred political

economy, the sovereign, under Elizabeth I, was displaying herself as the temporal representation of the divine source of that very political and sacred economy. Elizabeth gave the nation's prayers a voice, and what she prayed, the nation could see and believe as the policy and future of the kingdom.

In some ways, by reverting to prayers Elizabeth wrote before her accession, we can glimpse a little of how her purely personal petitions were not shot through with national significance. They were rooted more deeply in her own fears and desperate need for deliverance and stability. In his book *'The Monument of Matrons'* Thomas Denham sets out two prayers by Elizabeth as examples. Denham's book was published in 1582, and so was an example of this use of prayer as policy in the Elizabethan time. The first prayer, which is short, is introduced with a sentence and then follows directly:

Another praier made by hir Maiestie, when she was in great feare and doubt of death, by murther.
 Grant, O God, that the wicked may haue no power to hurt or beetraie me; neither suffer anie such treason and wickednesse to proceed against me. For thou, O God, canst mollifie all such tyrannous harts, and disappoint all such cruell purposes. And I beseech thee to heare me thy creature which am thy seruant, and at thy commandement, trusting by thy grace euer so to remaine, Amen.¹²⁶

This is a purely personal prayer of preservation, which is advertised as the prayer of a godly maiden in distress, threatened with murder by those who would keep her from the throne. This would have immediately registered in the Elizabethan mind as the time when Elizabeth was sent to the Tower by her sister. In this prayer, Elizabeth asks God to change tyrannous hearts, that is to say she is seeking the change in heart of those who

¹²⁶Thomas Bently, *The Third Lampe of Virginitie, The Monument of Matrons* (London: H. Denham, 1582), 36.

would harm her. It is interesting to think that harm to herself is something she understands to be a treasonous act - probably because it would usurp the will of her father Henry VIII as to the succession - and more than this it sets Elizabeth in her desperation before God as a pious and innocent child. This prayer, published in 1582, is a demonstration of the peril in which Elizabeth lived in before accession and the affirmation of her access to God in her continued preservation from those who would harm her. The prayer affirms a metaphor that would be more carefully built from 1558.

The prayer, which follows immediately on the page, reads as follows:

Another praier and thankesgiuing made by hir grace, as she rode in hir Chariot from the Tower, to be crowned Queene at Westminster.

O Lord almightie, and euerlasting God, I giue thee most hartie thanks, that thou hast beene so mercifull vnto me, as to spare mee, to behold this ioifull daie. And I acknowledge, that thou hast dealt as woonderfully with me, as thou didst with thy true and faithfull seruant Daniel the Prophet, whom thou deliueredst out of the den from the crueltie of the greedie raging lions: euen so was I ouerwhelmed, and onelie by thee deliuered. To thee therefore be onlie thanks, honour and praise for euer and euer, Amen.¹²⁷

In contrast to the prayer of the maiden in grave danger, we are presented with a prayer of the triumphant and grateful queen on way to Westminster to be crowned. Elizabeth conjures the image of the ancient Hebrew prophet Daniel, preserved from the lions in the Lion's Den. The story has a resonance deep within the English psyche, for Daniel had been thrown into the Lion's Den for refusing an unjust and blasphemous edict from the King of Babylon that would have compromised Daniel into committing

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

idolatry.¹²⁸ On the day of her coronation, Elizabeth took on the mantle of Daniel by praying publicly to thank God for her miraculous preservation. It was left to the crowd's imagination to consider which sovereign ordered edicts about blasphemous idolatries. Elizabeth's prayer was a display of her access to God's mercy and her association with his power. If God had so miraculously preserved Elizabeth in her time of trouble, it must be that her sovereignty is indeed of God and that to contradict it would be a transgression against God's ordering of the universe. The second portion of these prayers also make clear that it was only through God's help that any of this was achieved. No one could claim to have come to Elizabeth's rescue, but rather it was God alone acting in God's time and according to His sovereignty that had brought Elizabeth so high. Elizabeth must have had a purpose in these prayers surviving and being passed about. They were, for instance, later included in a book whose aim was to school and counsel women young and old as to the requisite virtues and lifestyle required of women. Elizabeth's prayer is used as a demonstration of virtuous womanhood. The publication of the prayers, however, also serves the purpose of display of divine access and association with divine power, for it is yet another example of the rehearsal of the story of how Elizabeth came to the throne and how she is portrayed as living metaphor, the godly queen seeking the good of the realm and the extension of the gospel. Elizabeth is likened to an Old Testament figure, and this is just the beginning of this comparison being made.

Elizabeth was commonly compared to Deborah the Old Testament judge (and only female example) who was just and wise in the exercise of governance and the

¹²⁸See Daniel 6.

fearless leadership of the army to defeat the enemies of God.¹²⁹ The Deborah figure was important because she functioned as a political leader while at the same time was a reforming and purifying power to return Israel from apostasy and idolatry - the worship of Canaanite gods - and back to the true faith and covenant of the God of Israel. This is another level in the metaphor, for this too had political ramifications in the Elizabethan psyche, as the queen stood in opposition to the powers of perceived idolatry and superstition that had ruled under her sister Mary. The queen herself conjures this image of herself as a Deborah figure in the third Spanish prayer:

O my God, O my Father, whose goodness is infinite and whose power is immense, who art accustomed to choose the weak things of this world in order to confound and destroy the strong, persist - persist for the glory of Thy name, for the honour of Thy Son, for the repose and quietude of Thine afflicted Church - in giving me strength so that I, like another Deborah, like another Judith like another Esther, may free the people of Israel from the hands of Thy enemies.¹³⁰

Elizabeth notes this in one of her prayers when she reminds God (and

presumably anyone who might read this prayer):

My God and my Father, since it has pleased Thee to extend the treasures of Thy great mercy towards me, Thy most humble servant, having early in the day drawn me back from the deep abysses of natural ignorance and damnable superstitions to make me enjoy this great sun of righteousness which begins in its rays life and salvation, even while Thou leavest still many kings, princes and princesses in ignorance under the power of Satan; for which I will praise Thee, magnifying Thy name, O my Father and will sing psalms with those who fear Thy majesty, and recount to posterity with rejoicing the effects of Thy singular goodness.¹³¹

¹²⁹Judges, Chapters 4 and 5.

¹³⁰Marcus *et al.*, eds. *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 157. Original Source: *Precationes privitae Regiae E. R.* (London: T.Purfoot, 1563).

¹³¹*Ibid.*, 314. Original Facsimile: British Library MS Facsimile 218, sigs. 3r-36r in Elizabeth's own hand.

These prayers are likely dated between 1579 and 1582¹³² and make clear that the rule of Elizabeth has a religious dimension that has become part of the ritual apparatus of display in the monarchy of her day. Elizabeth ruled as a Tudor and as a woman, and she demonstrated her metaphor of rule that displayed her connection to the God who had preserved her from harm and raised her up to be queen by regularly praying both in thanksgiving for her preservation, but also in rehearsing the virtues she would need to govern the nation in a godly way. Simultaneously, Elizabeth asked God for forgiveness for the many sins and errors that she would naturally commit while she attempted to rule. Elizabeth was relating upward through her prayers to the source of her authority, and demonstrated the access to God required in order to prove the legitimacy of her rule. Elizabeth's faithfulness over time, her strong governance of the church and state were all part of the larger apparatus that sought to display the monarch as the divinely placed machine of governance. The stability and prosperity her realm enjoyed was in every way meant to be seen as the fruits of her faithful execution of that office for which God had miraculously preserved her, and in the longer term, God demonstrated his love for Elizabeth and her rule by miraculously preserving her nation as well. This was all part of Elizabeth's manufactured metaphor for governance.

Elizabeth and the Spanish

Between 1585 and 1603, Elizabeth and England were at war with Spain in one form or another, spending £4 million fighting in the Low Countries and in Ireland. These wars involved both overt and massive actions such as the Armada in 1588 to numerous

¹³²*Ibid.*, 312.

skirmishes and expeditions whose purpose it was to harass the Spanish and drain their resources. Such was the expedition to Cadiz. As late as 1587, the popular press would still conjure the figure of Elizabeth as Deborah is repeated in a heading over the prayer composed by Elizabeth on the defeat of the Spanish Armada. It reads:

A godly prayer and Thanksgiving, worthy the Christian Deborah and Theodosia of our days.¹³³

The prayer itself is another example of the same recitation of God's goodness in the light of impossible odds and to the benefit of the nation, the preservation of the queen.

The prayer begins:

Most powerful and largest giving God, whose ears it hath pleased so benignly to grace the petitions of us Thy devoted servant, not with even measure to our desires but with far ampler favour hath not only protected our army from foe's prey and from sea's danger, but has detained malicious dishonours (even having force to resist us) from having power to attempt us or assail them.¹³⁴

Here Elizabeth thanks God that her prayers have been answered in such a way and with such generosity that her sailors have been preserved and her army was not even required to fight against the invading forces of Spain then arrayed in the Channel. This prayer is noted as being undated, and could in fact have been composed later than the most famous change in fortunes for the Armada, as there were several further threats to England from Spain through the 1590s including a second Armada defeated by the

¹³³*Ibid.*, 424. See note for Huntington Library MS EL 2072, fol 2a; copy in a late sixteenth-century hand among the papers of Sir Thomas Egerton, who was likely the author of the heading.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, 422 shows Original facsimile: Cecil Papers 147, fol 214r; draft in Elizabeth's hand.

elements,¹³⁵ but the nature of the prayer's display and thanksgiving for having heard the petitions of the queen in the time of most dire need of the nation is a further example of the display of religious policy that affirmed the sovereign's access to God's mercy and association with God's power.

The Spanish Policy of England for the better part of the previous century had been to maintain an alliance over and against France. This alliance, which was originally cemented by the marriage of Prince Arthur to Catherine of Aragon in 1501, was the beginning of the Tudor policy under Henry VII and was maintained through the sixteenth century, and included Mary's marriage to King Philip.¹³⁶

Elizabeth also worked to maintain the friendship of Spain, but through the ambassadorship of De Quadra (1559-1566) and Guerau de Spes (1568-73) the Spanish embassy became at first the centre of plots against the English government and then the victim of an active campaign for the destruction of good will toward Spain.¹³⁷

The Spanish policy of obstructionism as well as Elizabeth's policy of supporting those who opposed Spain, especially in the Netherlands, led to a longstanding and low grade hostility with the Spanish. The plots and intrigues that surrounded the politics of the court were simply a smaller version of the larger intrigues at work in the attempts by Spain to alienate Elizabeth from the crown and to place her rival, the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, on the throne. Through the late 1560s and through the 1570s Mary was the centre and subject of plots and plans that would usurp Elizabeth and place a Catholic

¹³⁵ Hammer, 621.

¹³⁶ Elton, 292.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 292-293.

favourable to Spain on the throne, and the Spanish Ambassador was rarely far from these intrigues. Complicating this was Elizabeth's continued contrivance that she would perhaps marry Anjou, and then cement a French alliance that would threaten Spain.¹³⁸

It was at this time that Pope Paul V, in an act of exquisite bad timing, promulgated his Bull, *Regnans in Excelsis*. Published in February 1570, this document names Elizabeth as a usurper, a bastard and a heretic and makes it a positive duty for Catholics to overthrow her. In abrogating any oath of loyalty to her, the Pope, in one fell swoop, makes being a Catholic a treasonable existence. In this, the Pope made many old Catholic families in England whose loyalties were at the least not questioned or, at worst, suspect into enemies and traitors, simply for their religious opinions. This too adds to the Protestant metaphor Elizabeth formed in her own mind as she considered her own position and her prayers. Being named a heretic and a usurper by one's enemies focuses one's prayer life and cements loyalties in other ways. Now, when Elizabeth prays, she prays in defiance of the Tridentine characterization of her and her realm as heretical. That same opinion would argue that God would not hear her prayers. She is cut off from the fellowship of the church and the Pope himself has declared that she is to be overthrown and that God has withdrawn his grace from her. And still she reigns and England is on the whole successful in its endeavours. It can only be considered that when Catholic powers were arrayed against Elizabeth and plots hatched that sought to take her throne as a usurper and an illegitimate ruler, her prayers served a political as well as a religious purpose. Those also who claimed that the rule of women was evil, or against the natural

¹³⁸*Ibid.*, 297

order as constituted by God met a formidable contradiction in Elizabeth's survival and seeming ability to conjure the blessings of God on her reign.

The Prayer for the Expedition to Cadiz

Elizabeth had been expressing her metaphor of sovereignty for years by the time the Cadiz prayer was published, and in fact it would seem it was written with the express purpose of being published, as it was sent to the Earl of Essex on the eve of his departure for Cadiz, and was ordered to be distributed among the ships of the expeditionary fleet. It was also issued in printed form to parish churches in England, although without the queen's permission, because it was also ordered removed from a printed collection of prayers prepared by Archbishop Whitgift.¹³⁹ Cadiz as an expedition was both a great success and an unmitigated disaster financially. The behaviour of the soldiery, the accusations of the exclusion of the navy from the spoils, the loss of the Spanish merchant fleet, whose capture was meant to be the financial return on the raid, and the conflicting reports as the generals vied for status as most heroic in battle all combined to make Cadiz a battle won, but a strategy lost.¹⁴⁰ The nobility of the prayer at its inception was more than overshadowed by the scrambling and posturing of court factions. The desire to lay blame for the financial failure of the expedition may be why, in the end, Elizabeth ordered the prayer removed from Whitgift's collection of prayers. It may be that she would have preferred to have forgotten the whole episode. Essex and his group were trying desperately to portray Essex as the great hero and military genius behind the victory. Raleigh and Cecil tended to think otherwise, and Lord Howard of Effingham the

¹³⁹Marcus *et al.*, eds. *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 425.

¹⁴⁰Hammer, 625-626.

admiral of the effort was no friend to Essex.¹⁴¹ Elizabeth finally forbade any publication about the battle at Cadiz save one official account, put together by Sir Anthony Ashley under the direction of Cecil and Burghley.¹⁴²

The Cadiz prayer, composed in Elizabeth's own hand, reads:

Most omnipotent Maker and Guider of all our world's mass, that only searchest and fathomest the bottom of all our heart's conceits and in them seest the true original of all our actions intended, Thou that by thy foresight dost truly discern how no malice of revenge or quittance of injury nor desire of bloodshed, nor greediness of lucre hath bred the resolution of our now set out army, but a heedful care and wary watch that no neglect of foes nor our surety of harm might breed harm to us or glory to them. These being grounds, Thou that didst inspire the mind, we humbly beseech (with bended knees), prosper the work and with best forewinds guide the journey, speed the victory, and make the return the advancement of Thy glory, the triumph of their fame, and surety to the realm, with the least loss of English blood. To these devout petitions, Lord, give Thy blessed grant. Amen.

¹⁴³

This prayer is different from other of the prayers we have examined as we have already noted that it would seem to have been intended from the beginning as a public statement of piety and, as such, it could be examined in the light of the metaphor of sovereignty Elizabeth was continuing at this point in her reign. We have already noted that Elizabeth readily pleaded her case before God as her Sovereign and Guardian, as she addresses God as her Lord. In this prayer we have an example of Elizabeth immediately calling upon God to witness the good conscience and right intent of her action. God is addressed as 'Most Omnipotent Maker and Guide of all our world's mass', which is to

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, 622.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, 628.

¹⁴³BL MS Additional 38823 fol. 96r from Marcus *et al.*, eds. *Elizabeth I Collected Works*, 425

denote the absolute sovereignty of God over the natural order. This is an appropriate naming of a divine attribute in the case of an expedition that must travel by sea.

This prayer continues however to immediately note that Elizabeth is pleading her own good conscience and rightness of cause before God by invoking the fact that God searches the darkest recesses of our intent and fathoms 'the bottom of our heart's conceits'. Elizabeth is declaring before God, and in the case of a public prayer, before the world, a long list that declares there is no malice in her heart or revenge on her mind or desire for bloodshed or lust for money (lucre) that was the purpose in her forming the plan of attack on Cadiz. Much like the psalmist, Elizabeth is calling God to witness that her action is just, and that there be no act of her army or misadventure that would bring either glory to the enemy or defeat to her own troops. Elizabeth does not enumerate the reasons for the attack - there is no list of grievances or litany of wrongs or even desire of virtues to be bestowed, simply a humble desire for a safe passage for her troops, a good wind for the journey, a speedy victory and an advancement of the glory of God. Herein lies the root of the metaphor of sovereignty as imagined by Elizabeth. Having been condemned by the Pope, and being pushed and pulled by continental powers, Elizabeth sees a victory in Cadiz as an advancement of God's glory, as it advances England's glory and also her own.

The glory of God being only one of the effects of the victory, the fame of the victors and the surety of the realm also being considered the best outcomes of the raid, Elizabeth is marking clearly that God had put the idea for the attack in her conscious mind 'Thou that didst inspire the mind...prosper the work' and now Elizabeth is praying

for a good outcome as a ratification of God's will, and the safety of her own nation, which includes of course, the safety of her own throne. All this takes on a deeper meaning when juxtaposed against the long and expensive wars Elizabeth was fighting throughout the 1590s - Ireland in rebellion, maintaining troops in the Netherlands and fighting a constant sea war with Spain in order to hold in check the imperial designs of England's foremost continental enemy.

Elizabeth prays that in spite of all that has been arrayed against her and her rule, God would prosper her and the expedition she conceives at God's instance. This has more to it than a prayer for the safe return of a favourite, or for the men who would undertake a dangerous sea journey as they leave to exercise Elizabeth's policy abroad. This is a public and sacred declaration of intent and petition for vindication from God. Vindication would come from a successful expedition and the defeat of her enemies, and Elizabeth's prayer would be maintained as another example of the great queen who, while condemned by Catholics, ruled with God's blessing, a blessing witnessed by yet another deliverance from the schemes and threats of her many enemies. The vindication of Elizabeth is the vindication of England. They are one and the same and so the metaphor of sovereignty becomes almost complete. Elizabeth can intercede to assure safe passage and victory because the Sovereign of the natural order has placed her on the throne as part of that very same natural order.¹⁴⁴ While the Protestant faith of Elizabeth had been condemned, God, the author of sovereignty, has given the victory to Elizabeth.

¹⁴⁴Mears, 258.

Conclusion

From the earliest incarnation of the Tudor dynasty, legitimacy was at issue for the family that held the throne. Henry VII's claim was tenuous at best and solidified through conquest. His children would serve to perpetuate the dynasty but also to solidify power for the purposes of preserving the family's fortunes. In order to be taken as legitimate, Henry VII worked tirelessly to cement an alliance with a continental power that would loan ancient and royal blood to the royal blood of England's ruling house. The marriage first of Prince Arthur, and then, after his untimely demise, of Prince Henry to Catherine of Aragon was an example of this policy and an expression of this quest for legitimacy. It also served in part as one way in which the legitimacy of kingship was being established in the earliest part of Henry VII's rule. This is a dynastic necessity.

Henry VIII in his turn also manufactured a image of governance in his reign, applying the Royal Supremacy while at the same time keeping the old calendar and celebrations that were a function of the ancient order of the world, but also of continuity with the throne of his father. Edward VI inherited this same settlement and further established the metaphor of the godly king in association with the power of God and the word of God. His death after only six years cut short the changes he would have inevitably made as he established his own image of kingship.

His sister Mary inherited titles she did not want and a church to which she was not reconciled and, in her quest to set back the clock, used the court calendar and ritual of her father and her husband to set her seal on the religious life of court. This seemingly backfired, for her rule and religion both seemed foreign and tyrannical, and her

oppression of those who believed the Supremacy or any part of the reformed faith doomed her own efforts to restore the Catholic church in England. Parliament may have been reconciled to Rome through Cardinal Pole's good offices, but the death of Mary served to interrupt the development of Mary's metaphor of sovereignty and left a young Elizabeth in place to take the reigns of power and articulate a biblical metaphor of sovereignty that used all the trappings of her grandfather's (Henry VII), her father's (Henry VIII), her brother's (Edward VI) and her sister's (Mary I) reigns - all the while transforming meaning and understanding in the minds of the people.

Elizabeth used the ceremony of court and the life of the Chapel Royal as methods of signalling religious policy, demonstrating access to God's power, association to God's majesty as the source of her own position and display of God's confidence in her rule as a prince. Elizabeth, from the very start of her reign, used biblical imagery from Old Testament stories to set herself as judge and prophet over the faithful people with access to the Word of God. Elizabeth also made it clear that she was the one to rule the church, with no doubts of the Royal Supremacy, even though she was willing to settle for the title 'Supreme Governor of the Church of England'.

Believing herself to have been divinely appointed, Elizabeth prayed for good counsel and trusted that God, who had brought her to so great an office from so lowly a state, must therefore have a plan for her successful reign in spite of all that might be arrayed against England. She survived plot and intrigue by foreign governments and treason by those close to her, yet she remained famous for her clemency and willingness to forgive. This was added to her virtues as a gentle sovereign while others opposed her

perceived weakness when it came to crushing those who might otherwise oppose her rule or the continued preaching of the Word of God in her churches.

Elizabeth adopted the medieval metaphor of the sovereign at prayer as a mechanism of government and then began to transform it as she showed not only she would attend prayer, but would also publish prayers she had written. In this she was well known to be learned and godly, but more than this she permitted the prayers to act as a form of rule of the church and declaration of religious policy. The prayers, shaped in the same manner of thanksgiving, repentance and petition, mimic the form of the royal psalms, and in particular the most famous of psalms connected to her own metaphor of governance, that of Psalm 118 and Elizabeth as the stone the builders rejected.

In developing, or causing or permitting to develop this image of the praying Virgin Queen, Elizabeth was exercising her prerogative of governance in a way medieval and earlier Tudor monarchs had not done. Elizabeth knew that piety, religious duty, mercy and compassion were required of a queen, as was demonstrated by her great-grandmother, Margaret Beaufort. But Elizabeth transformed the expectations of queenship and then transcended them in such a way that her rule itself became the example to later rulers. Her self understanding as God-appointed would, in time, cause her Stuart successors to fall, and yet the same ceremonies, architecture, calendar, buildings and court life would survive the commonwealth and see a resurgence under the restored Charles II in 1660.

In her prayers, Elizabeth would plead her case for legitimacy before God when the rest of the world seemed arrayed against her rule. More than this, Elizabeth stated her

case in prayer before God when Catholic Christians across the continent were assured that God did not hear her prayers. The Pope had declared her a heretic, bastard and usurper and had called on all faithful Catholics to an active opposition to her rule. Still, Elizabeth prayed and her realm continued to know peace and prosperity. Even in the last eighteen years of her reign when war with Spain had finally come, she continued to pray, calling on God for justice and witness that her intent was not to destroy but to preserve. In giving God the glory, she received glory herself. By this time in her reign, the glory of God and the glory of his servant Elizabeth were so entwined that puritan preachers railed against her vanity, her court and her failure to fully reform the church. Elizabeth ignored them, believing that God had placed her in her station and that she would admit such counsel as suited her. Elizabeth answered to God alone and not to the preachers who might attempt to correct her or remind her of her mortality.

This association upward through all of Tudor court life was the bread and butter of identity itself. Everyone related upward toward the rank above and the religious life of court served as a means to show access to the sovereign, display place at court and association with the sovereign's rule to all those gathered to see. This system of access, display and association was also at work when the queen related upward toward God. Her prayers were a method of demonstrating that very upward relation to the One who had placed her on the throne. One can see in the prayers a mechanism of that access, display and association which the aristocratic ranks needed to see in her as sovereign. Ironically in the privacy of her prayers Elizabeth stood alone before God, while at the same time she stood alone before the people. Her private prayers were a demonstration of public policy

and as such were as much as anyone was able to know the religious mind of Elizabeth.

In religion Elizabeth knew she must control how faith *looked* as well as how it was practised. She enforced her will on the church in ways that made clear to the ordinary Christian of England that she stood in continuity with her father and grandfather, but that new times required a new understanding of the faith, and that understanding often left her at odds with those on opposing sides of religious questions. Elizabeth held the religious middle. This was a function of her rule as well as of her temperament. While Elizabeth appreciated that she stood latest in a long line of kings, she also understood herself as holding together the past and the present against those who might destroy the old ways without reference to the consciences of the ordinary persons who filled the pews of the parishes of England.

Finally, Elizabeth's metaphor of sovereignty was a metaphor rooted in legitimacy through the hand of God. These are the roots of the later Stuart claim to the divine right of kings. This was expressed in the popular imagination through story, biblical allusion, illustration, sermons and Elizabeth's own willingness to be quoted, even in her prayer life. That legitimacy which Henry VII had sought and solidified through alliance and architecture was now a foregone conclusion in spite of Elizabeth's childless state and papal condemnation. Years of careful rule and prosperity, near parsimony in the management of her treasury, avoidance of war, and when it finally came, relative success in battle, seeming vacillation and prevarication in government all served a purpose. Elizabeth was built up to be the image of the wise and godly queen. She was the godly queen who preserved the Word of God, protected the right to a good conscience and the

lawful authority of the crown in a time when religious tyrannies were common, and ruled as a woman when the rule of women was actively rejected. The mechanisms she put in place in church governance and in the marking of the court calendar survived her and the paroxysms of the Civil War only forty years later. Other monarchs grasped at the metaphor of godliness, and Charles I eventually inherited the title of godly king, but it took his execution, understood by many as a martyrdom at the hands of parliament, to make it so. The Commonwealth of Cromwell went far in its attempts to wipe out the old calendar, the old celebrations and the marking of time as it had been, but time itself claimed Cromwell, and the regicides were disgraced in their puritan attempts to legislate godliness. The court Charles II restored revived much of what Elizabeth had set up in her reign. Charles II, on restoration could rest on a ritual life of court that kept continuity with the past nature of kingship, all the while needing to manufacture his own metaphor, which confessed quietly that even as monarch he could no longer rule without parliament.

*Appendix I - Psalm 118 translated by Miles Coverdale*¹⁴⁵

Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious, because his mercy endureth for ever. Let Israel now confess that he is gracious, and that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now confess, that his mercy endureth for ever. Yea, let them now that fear the Lord confess, that his mercy endureth for ever.

I called upon the Lord in trouble; and the Lord heard me at large. The Lord is on my side; I will not fear what man doeth unto me. The Lord taketh my part with them that help me; therefore shall I see my desire upon mine enemies. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in princes.

All nations compassed me round about; but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them. They kept me in on every side, they kept me in, I say, on every side; but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them. They came about me like bees, and are extinct even as the fire among the thorns; for in the Name of the Lord I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall; but the Lord was my help. The Lord is my strength, and my song, and is become my salvation. The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous; the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass. The right hand of the Lord hath the pre-eminence; the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened and corrected me; but he hath not given me over unto death.

Open me the gates of righteousness, that I may go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter into it.

I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The same stone which the builders refused is become the headstone in the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Help me now, O Lord; O Lord, send us now prosperity.

Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord; we have wished you good luck, ye that are of the house of the Lord. God is the Lord, who hath showed us light; bind the sacrifice with cords, yea, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will thank thee; thou art my God, and I will praise thee. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever.

¹⁴⁵ Coverdale, Miles, *The Psalms: the coverdale translation*, W.S. Peterson and Valerie Macys ed. from www.lutheranonline.com/lo/675/FSLO-1059011476-804675.pdf accessed 17 April, 2008 at 8:45 p.m.

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