

Part 3

ELIZABETH  
ENGENDERED

Presentation and Practice



## Virginity, Divinity and Power: The Portraits of Elizabeth I

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Towards the end of Shekhar Kapur's film, *Elizabeth*, the attractive young queen kneels before a statue of the Madonna and, taking inspiration from it, transforms herself into 'the legendary Virgin Queen, formidable, untouchable and unbeatable'.<sup>1</sup> In the next scene, Kat Ashley hacks off the queen's flowing tresses, fits a jewel-encrusted wig on her shorn head, and paints her face unnaturally white. Elizabeth then dons a stiff white farthingale and makes her first public appearance at court as an icon of divinity. In these final shots of this deeply ahistorical drama, Kapur conveys brilliantly the most familiar myth surrounding Elizabeth I, namely that she fashioned her own image and created the cult of the Virgin Queen as a political device to inspire awe in her subjects, consolidate her political power, and signal her intention never to marry.<sup>2</sup>

It was initially the cultural historians from the Warburg Institute, notably Frances Yates and Roy Strong, who outlined this general thesis.<sup>3</sup> Through their influence, commentaries on the iconography in Elizabeth's portraits have concentrated almost exclusively on the theme of virginity. Later on, when scholars began to approach 'the cult of Elizabeth' from an explicitly gendered perspective, they too focused on Elizabeth's virginity.<sup>4</sup> Some of them continued to see the queen as the 'master-builder of her public image', and claimed that she cannily appropriated the symbols of divine virginity in order to overcome cultural attitudes towards women and remove political

problems arising from her gender.<sup>5</sup> Others, however, took a more sophisticated approach and viewed the creation of the royal image as a complex interplay between the queen and her subjects so that in their analysis Elizabeth was an agent rather than the author of her representation.<sup>6</sup> Even so, with the important exception of Helen Hackett, who has focused on literature not portraits, few academics questioned a cult of the Virgin Queen, but rather explained that virginity held different political meanings for the queen and her subjects.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter takes a fresh look at the queen's visual representation in paintings, miniatures, prints, and illustrations within printed books. It examines the multi-layered meanings of pictorial symbols, the significance of contemporary cultural references, and the context within which each portrait was produced. My two central arguments are: first, that there appears to be very little that can be called Marian iconography in these works; and second, that the queen herself was seldom directly responsible for devising her own image and that in works where she was the patron of a portrait, she was more usually depicted as a Protestant ruler rather than a virgin queen.

## I

During the first decade of the reign, the most widely circulated portraits of Elizabeth were produced for printed books: the dedicatory page of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* and the title pages to the *Bishops' Bibles*. In none of them is there any hint of the imagery of the Virgin Queen. Instead, Elizabeth appears in the guise of a Protestant ruler with illustrators employing traditional iconography to emphasise her role as the restorer of true faith and hope of the reformed Church.<sup>8</sup> In the 1563 edition of Foxe, she is likened to the Emperor Constantine, triumphing over the pope and offering her country the benefits of godly rule (Plate 5).<sup>9</sup> In full royal regalia she sits enthroned within a historiated C (which begins the name of Constantine) and above the body of the toppled pope who is naked [of his powers] and whose [claims to the] keys to heaven are broken. The top curve of the C doubles as a cornucopia to illustrate Foxe's words in the dedication that Elizabeth's accession, like that of Constantine, would end religious persecution and herald peace, prosperity and reform. Marian allusions have been detected through the presence of the three bearded men on Elizabeth's right, as they seem to recall the adoration



Plate 5 The initial C from John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563). Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of York

of the Magi in Nativity scenes, but their inclusion can be otherwise explained. The men depict the printer John Day, Foxe himself and William Cecil (Foxe's sponsor) and their appearance in the print follows the convention of illustrations both in letters patent, where the recipient of the grant kneels before the monarch, and in book frontispieces where an author is sometimes shown offering his work to a patron.<sup>10</sup>

The title page of the first edition of the *Bishops' Bible* (1568) also portrays Elizabeth as the upholder of the gospels. Positioned as she is in the centre of the page directly below the royal coat of arms and above a scriptural text flanked by the heraldic lion and dragon, she embodies the unity of true religion with the state. Furthermore, with the figures of Charity on her left and Faith on her right, Elizabeth personifies Hope, the third of St Paul's theological virtues. Similar iconography is followed in the title page of the 1569 quarto edition of the *Bishops' Bible*, though here Elizabeth has on each side the female personifications of the four cardinal virtues. Traditionally associated with imperial power, their attendance on Elizabeth highlights her status as supreme governor of the Church as well as her role as the authority for divine truth, for the queen is being crowned by Mercy and Justice who carry the symbols of divine revelation (the bible and the sword of the Spirit mentioned in Ephesians 6:17).<sup>11</sup>

It is possible, though not certain, that Elizabeth's gender informed her representation in these last two works. Because abstract nouns tend to be feminine in Latin and Greek and were traditionally personified as female, the queen could be visually identified with the virtues of the classical and Christian world and with concepts such as victory and truth.<sup>12</sup> While depictions of male monarchs surrounded by the virtues are far from unknown, a comparison of the title pages in different editions of Thomas Geminius's compendium of anatomy suggests that illustrators may have exploited this gendered visual association. In the first and second editions published in England in 1545 and 1553, the centre of the engraving was dominated by the royal coat of arms, representing the king to whom the work had been dedicated, while small female figures representing Justice and Prudence stood on each side and Victory sat in a cupola just above. For the 1559 edition, however, a bust of the queen replaced the arms, although otherwise the design of the title page remained unaltered.<sup>13</sup>

In contrast to book illustrations, paintings of the queen executed during the 1560s are generally unmemorable and far less elaborate in symbolism; sometimes Elizabeth carries a prayer-book or personal



Plate 6 Hans Eworth, *Elizabeth I and the Three Goddesses* (1569). Reproduced by kind permission of the Royal Collection

bible to illustrate her Protestantism, or occasionally a glove as a sign of her status as a Renaissance princess. There is, however, one exception: *Elizabeth I and the Three Goddesses* (Plate 6). In this unusual version of the mythological beauty contest between Juno, Pallas-Minerva and Venus, Elizabeth replaces the shepherd and Trojan prince Paris as the judge but, whereas he awarded the golden apple to Venus, she retains the prize, transformed here into an orb. At one level, the work is praising Elizabeth as superior to the three goddesses, since she combined all their virtues in her single self; as the Latin inscription on the frame explains, her majesty, wisdom and beauty are putting Juno to flight, silencing Pallas and shaming Venus.<sup>14</sup>

At another level, however, the painting is focusing on Elizabeth's authority as monarch, especially in emphasising her superiority over Juno, the queen of Olympus. Thus, on Elizabeth's head is the closed crown associated with imperial rule, while Juno wears merely the open crown of royalty.<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth's stillness and majesty contrast with the confusion and loss of dignity of Juno, who loses her sandal in flight and has dropped her sceptre presumably for the queen to pick

up and hold with the orb, the other insignia of monarchy. Implicit to the theme of the painting, moreover, is the idea that Elizabeth's retention of royal power benefits her realm. Whereas Paris's judgement in the original myth resulted in the long Trojan Wars 'to the utter ruin of the Trojans', hers will conversely bring peace and order to the state.<sup>16</sup> The scattered red and white roses on the ground, while an attribute of Venus, are also the badges of Lancaster and York and ready for her to gather together in the Tudor rose, the symbol of dynastic unity, which is the dominant emblem on her dress and the arch under which she stands.

Several scholars have detected references to the queen's virginity in the painting. Professor Montrose, for example, saw the rigid, closed Elizabeth as the paired opposite of the sensuous and maternal Venus, who rests her arm protectively around her son Cupid.<sup>17</sup> Cupid's damaged arrow, he claimed, is placed on the ground with its tip turned away from the queen in order to underline the message that Elizabeth's stiff unyielding body will never succumb to erotic love. This reading of the painting, however, is questionable. In Renaissance works on this subject, Cupid is typically painted aiming his arrow at Paris to signify the passion, which corrupted the prince's judgement and led to his abduction of Helen, the immediate cause of the Trojan War. Consequently, the broken arrow and discarded bow and quiver here reinforce the contrast with Paris; unlike him and despite her sex, Elizabeth is not swayed by a lack of judgement in her rule.<sup>18</sup> The allegory, therefore, relates to royal power, possibly even the need for a female monarch to guard her power, but not to Elizabeth's virginity. The central contrast in the painting is not between Elizabeth and Venus, but between the dark, enclosed, formal world of the Tudor court, where the queen and her two gentlewomen are placed, and the bright pastoral world inhabited by the goddesses. Here again she is contrasted with Paris, since as a shepherd he was detached from the responsibilities of government and always situated within a pastoral setting. Who commissioned the *Three Goddesses* is unknown, but Elizabeth certainly liked it sufficiently to keep it on display in her royal collection.<sup>19</sup>

## II

It was not until after 1570 that the paintings of Elizabeth became generally more complex in their iconography and emblems traditionally associated with virginity grew more in evidence. Too often,



however, interpreters of these art works have neglected other meanings of these symbols and forgotten that 'the iconographic meaning of visual images is dependent on no absolutely stable system of signification'.<sup>20</sup> This can best be illustrated by examining the rose, phoenix and pelican, all of which were impresas adopted by Elizabeth and are generally treated as identifying her with the Virgin Mary, though similar points could equally well be made about the pansy, star and pearl.<sup>21</sup>

The rose, which features repeatedly in paintings and prints of Elizabeth, was associated in Christian art with the Madonna, but it also had many other meanings in sixteenth-century emblem books and literature. In Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes*, for example, it was the visual symbol of the motto, *Post amara dulcia* (after bitterness comes the sweet).<sup>22</sup> In courtly verse it was frequently used as a metaphor for a chaste maiden; thus, in his translation of *Orlando Furioso*, John Harington likened the rose to 'the virgin pure', ready to be picked by a gentleman who 'getteth it may love her best'.<sup>23</sup> It was this latter sense that was probably intended in the 1572 miniature attributed to Nicholas Hilliard. The white roses in Elizabeth's hair and pinned to her dress signify the chastity of a marriageable maiden rather than the perpetual virginity of the Madonna, and the same flowers are present in portraits of other young unmarried women.<sup>24</sup> The black and white colour scheme of Elizabeth's attire makes a similar reference. According to contemporary writings about art, white symbolised purity, simplicity, faithfulness and joy, all qualities befitting a woman seeking a marriage partner, while black stood for constancy whenever it did not refer to grief.<sup>25</sup> During the first eight months of 1572, Elizabeth was engaged in negotiations for a marriage with the French duke of Anjou, and it seems likely that the miniature was painted with this in mind.

Elsewhere, the ubiquitous rose in Elizabethan portraiture usually alludes to the Tudor dynasty and conforms to the customary iconography of sixteenth-century royal propaganda.<sup>26</sup> In the *Phoenix Portrait*, for example, Elizabeth holds a red rose, following the example of her grandfather in a portrait by Michael Sittow and her sister in portraits by Hans Eworth and Antonis Mor.<sup>27</sup> In other paintings of Elizabeth, the rose is introduced as a heraldic counterpart to the *fleur de lis* (signifying the dynasty's long-standing claims to the French throne) and sometimes together with the badge of St George (patron saint of England and the chivalric Order of the Garter since 1348).<sup>28</sup> Roses also appear regularly as an ornamental motif in books dedicated to the

queen: sometimes arranged in a bower around her portrait, sometimes free-standing almost as a mark of the royal stamp of approval, and occasionally decorating different parts of the page.<sup>29</sup> Whenever the rose was directly applied to Elizabeth in poetry, it usually referred to her dynasty not her virginity, and there is every reason to think that the same is true in pictures.<sup>30</sup>

Unlike the rose, the phoenix and pelican were devices personal to Elizabeth. Knowing this, courtiers presented her with phoenix and pelican jewels as gifts, and she is shown wearing such jewels in two life-size matching portraits by Hilliard.<sup>31</sup> The birds' association with the Virgin Mary goes back to St Ambrose and early Christian legend. The pelican represented the crucifixion and the Madonna's maternal self-sacrifice, because the mother pelican was said to pierce her breast with her beak and feed her young with the blood. The phoenix symbolised both the resurrection and the fecund virginity of Mary, since the mythical creature was supposed to arise asexually from its own ashes on the funeral pyre to begin life anew. Beyond their Marian overtones, however, both symbols took on a range of other meanings during the sixteenth century. In emblem books the pelican in piety (shown feeding its young) related both to charity and the self-sacrifice of an individual who used his or her talents on behalf of the country. This latter meaning was of particular relevance to rulers, since it expressed the expectation that they would put their subjects' interests before their own, and indeed John Lyly described Elizabeth as 'that good Pelican that to feed her people spareth not to rend her own person'.<sup>32</sup> As for the phoenix, the creature had long been a symbol for hereditary rule because, like the institution of monarchy, the generality of the phoenix lives on when the individual dies; and like a ruler, only one of its kind is ever alive at any time. The phoenix medallion issued at Elizabeth's accession probably drew on this traditional association and was making a deliberate reference to her right to the throne. In the same way, the increasing use of the phoenix in Elizabeth's last years probably owed much to anxieties about the succession.<sup>33</sup>

The symbol of the phoenix, however, had wider applications. In emblem books, the bird took on meanings related to its characteristics: because it lived alone, it was a metaphor for solitude; as only one was alive at any time, it was a common trope for a person viewed as exceptional.<sup>34</sup> It was in this latter sense that the bird was most often used in relation to Elizabeth in the middle years of the reign; in a book dedication of 1569, for example, she was praised as 'a rare Phoenix of

your time [you] are singular and peerless in honour and renown, in princely majesty, wisdom, skill, beauty, favour, mildness, courtesy and gentleness'.<sup>35</sup> It needs to be remembered, moreover, that neither the pelican nor the phoenix was exclusively the device of Elizabeth. The latter symbol had been the impresa of Mary of Guise and Eleanor of Austria; Philip Sidney and Henry IV of France were each addressed as a phoenix, while Queens Anne (Boleyn) and Jane (Seymour) were called phoenixes after their death because of the 'noble Impe[s]' they had left behind.<sup>36</sup> As for the pelican, the printers Richard Jugge, William White and Alexander Arbuthnet adopted it as their own device.<sup>37</sup> Clearly then, much of the Catholic mystery attached to the symbols had been lost by Elizabeth's reign, and its royal usage was not 'audacious ironical blasphemy' as David Howarth has asserted.<sup>38</sup>

None the less, both symbols could easily be absorbed into Protestant iconography. The pelican in piety well suited a ruler described by Protestants as the nursing mother of the Church; the phoenix, likewise, was an apt emblem for one who had restored Protestantism after the burnings of Mary's reign had threatened its extinction. When the two birds appear as matching devices in a picture, thus stressing their common meaning, it seems likely that some reference to Protestantism was intended, particularly when other religious symbols are also present. Crispin van de Passe's print celebrating the successful English naval expedition to Cadiz in 1596 is a case in point (Plate 7). Here the phoenix and pelican in piety sit on top of matching Corinthian columns, from which hang the dynastic emblems of the house of Tudor. At one level, the columns represent the straits of Gibraltar (known as the Pillars of Hercules) situated near Cadiz (the fortified town shown in the background of the print); indeed in a verse celebrating his victory at Cadiz, Essex was described, 'Greater than Hercules he / came right to Hercules Pillars'.<sup>39</sup> At another level, however, the columns stand for the imperial and religious aspirations of the Spanish king over which Elizabeth and English Protestantism had prevailed.<sup>40</sup> The figure of Elizabeth herself dominates the print with her eyes cast towards the orb (the traditional symbol of imperial power) held in her outstretched hand and her sceptre pointing to an open book in which is written one of her mottoes (I have made God my help) taken from Psalm 88.<sup>41</sup> Taken altogether, the engraving portrays the queen as an instrument of divine will, the scourge of Catholic Spain, a monarch who with God's help and English sea-power would build up an empire of her own and oversee the triumph of European Protestantism.



Plate 7 Crispin van de Passe,  
*Queen Elizabeth I.*  
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After 1570 and before the war against Spain, however, portraying Elizabeth as a godly queen could prove somewhat problematic. After all, at that time many Protestants were dismayed at her failure to purify the Church of popish traces, determination to override the consciences of non-conforming Protestant ministers, and refusal to give open military aid to co-religionists in their struggle against the European Catholic powers. It was probably disillusionment with Elizabeth that led to significant changes in her representation in the later editions of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*; in the 1570 dedication, the historiated C begins the name of Christ and not Constantine as it had in 1563. Thus, Elizabeth was no longer directly compared to the Roman emperor, but instead shown as governing the Church and realm 'under' Christ. In addition, the insertion in the same edition of new pictures of Henry VIII trampling on the pope and Edward VI suppressing idolatry downplayed the role of Elizabeth as a Protestant hero. Whereas they were shown actively trouncing the pope and destroying papistry, she was depicted merely presiding over his downfall.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, her picture, unlike theirs, was confined to the dedication and did not appear in the main body of the book as part of the Protestant story.

Meanwhile, Protestant unease with Elizabeth's role as the upholder

of the Gospels together with a growing iconophobia led to the disappearance of Elizabeth's picture from the 1574 *Bishops' Bible*.<sup>43</sup> An aversion to representations of the divine had already become evident in the 1572 folio edition where the Tetragrammaton (the Hebrew letters symbolising the name of God) systematically replaced all figures of God in the Old Testament pictures. Now in the 1574 bible, the original title page was reproduced with the queen voided. With Elizabeth's disappearance went the Latin text from Romans 1:16; instead, a text in English from John 5:39 appeared on the title page to the Old Testament while the Romans text, now translated into English, introduced the New Testament. The effect was to divorce the words of the scriptures entirely from the person of Elizabeth. As the queen's expertise in classical languages was widely celebrated, the Latin text from Romans had appeared as her own personal statement of faith in the 1568 version. By contrast, the text as it appeared in 1574, written in English and placed directly before the Gospels, rang out as the words of the apostle Paul while the text from John was the message of God.

None the less, Elizabeth continued to be visually represented as a pious Protestant ruler in printed books, but ones that were far less widely disseminated. One such work was Thomas Bentley's *The Monument of Matrones* (1582), a compendium of Protestant prayers, meditations and exemplars, supposedly written by and for women, which is divided into seven sections, each numbered as a Lamp of Virginity.<sup>44</sup> The borders of the title pages to five of the Lamps of Virginity associate the queen with other godly women admired by Protestants, most of whom were not virgins. For example, on the title page of the Second Lamp, Elizabeth's small kneeling figure is placed in the upper left border on the other side from Queen Hester (Esther) from the Hebrew Bible, who as the saviour of her people was often treated as a prefiguration for Elizabeth. Below them kneel the less important queens-consort, Katherine Parr and Margaret of Angoulême, both of whom were idealised as early Protestants and whose works of prayer and meditation Elizabeth had translated while still a princess. On the title page of the Third Lamp Elizabeth is located in the same place, but this time above the kneeling figures of Deborah on the left and Judith on the right, both of whom were treated as biblical models for Elizabeth to follow in the fight against idolatry. Here Queen Bethsabe (Bathsheba) appears directly opposite her, included no doubt because her husband composed the Psalms and her son supposedly wrote Canticles (the Song of Songs), extracts from which figure prominently in the text.

At the end of the Third Lamp comes a woodcut, which by contrast appears at first sight to have strong Marian allusions (Plate 8). As it is untitled, historians have not agreed over whether the picture shows the apotheosis of Elizabeth or of Queen Katherine Parr, whose tomb effigy is prominent in the picture.<sup>45</sup> A reading of the text, however, strongly indicates that it is Elizabeth herself who is depicted kneeling on Christ's favoured right-hand side, ready to receive his heavenly crown. Bentley's central conceit throughout his book is to identify Elizabeth with both the wise virgins from Matthew 25, who await their heavenly bridegroom, and the bride in *Canticles* who enters 'the celestial wedding chamber' of eternal life. Following the text, Elizabeth is shown accompanied by the watchful wise virgins while on Christ's left kneels Solomon, the author of *Canticles*, holding out his open book. Behind Elizabeth is David, whose psalms run through the whole of the Third Lamp and who is called Elizabeth's spiritual father in her prayers.

The iconography of the drawing seems to associate Elizabeth with the Virgin Mary in that medieval biblical exegesis identified the Madonna as Christ's bride in *Canticles* and medieval art frequently portrayed her receiving the crown from Christ, her heavenly bridegroom.<sup>46</sup> None the less, although the picture by itself can reasonably be interpreted as a representation of Elizabeth as the Virgin Mary, the text suggests otherwise. In his text, Bentley explicitly treats both the bride in *Canticles* and the wise virgins of Matthew as a metaphor for the godly of both sexes, whether married or celibate, all those in fact who embrace Christ and the true Church. Christ, stated Bentley, was the heavenly bridegroom of 'all the elect' who would enter 'the celestial wedding chamber'. Here, then, we see a Protestant writer reinterpreting the traditional Catholic understanding of *Canticles* by downplaying the importance of the Virgin Mary and emphasising the Calvinist theology of predestination. In the woodcut, Elizabeth is being shown not as the Virgin Mary, but as one of the elect.

Elizabeth is connected with Kings David and Solomon in the frontispieces of two other printed books. In Richard Day's *A Book of Christian Prayers* (1578) the biblical text in the bottom border identifies the kneeling queen with Solomon, since it repeats his words of prayer uttered immediately after the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem (a common Protestant metaphor for the establishment of true religion).<sup>47</sup> The association with David comes in Day's dedication to the Christian reader (adjacent to the frontispiece), where he commends the king as a prophet 'to whom the lord had done many,



Plate 8 Thomas Bentley's *The Monument of Matrones Containing Seuen Seuerall Lamps of Virginitie* (1582). Engraving opposite page 362. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Library

great and singular benefits, [who] thought him self not so much to increase them by use as to requite them by thanks'. In this way, the work both compliments Elizabeth as the heir to Israel's godly rulers (a frequent contemporary topos) and exhorts her to remember that despite God's benefits she should never forget to praise the Lord or pray for his continued support.

Later in the reign, the frontispiece of Thomas Morton's *Salomon* (1596) presents Elizabeth as virtually a mirror image of the biblical king. Both monarchs wear the same royal insignia, hold up the English royal coat of arms, and rest their foot on a lion that doubles up as a symbol for the royal houses of David and Tudor.<sup>48</sup> Here, however, Solomon is not intended as a Protestant model for edification, as in Day's and Bentley's works. Instead, he stands for the lawmaker and divinely ordained monarch of the Hebrew Bible, as is made clear by the biblical verse beneath the illustration. Adapted from Genesis 49.8, it ends with the words: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Iudah nor a lawgiver from between his feet till the Messia's come. And to him shall be the obedience of the people.'<sup>49</sup> Once again a frontispiece illustrates the treatise's contents, for Morton's book argued for conformity in religion and emphasised the authority of the monarch over the Church. Morton put a case for 'the christian magistrate especially in great and absolute Monarchies [having] greater authority both in civil and ecclesiastical causes' than many readers might consider would 'stand with the good of the Church or the truth of God's word'.<sup>50</sup>

In the frontispiece of all these printed books Elizabeth's picture is used in ways to illustrate the work's content or argument. The same is true of the famous frontispiece to John Case's *Sphaera Civitatis* (1588), a political commentary in Latin on Aristotle's *Politics*. Yet some scholars have taken the diagram out of its context and interpreted it as a representation of the queen as the Madonna of Mercy sheltering the cosmos under her protective mantle and acting as an intercessor with God.<sup>51</sup> When the text of Case's work is examined, however, another interpretation seems more valid. As one of the few scholars to have ploughed through the Latin treatise not yet published in translation, Jonathan Woolfson has explained that one of Case's concerns was to defend monarchy in general and female rule in particular. To this end Case argued that monarchical rule parallels God's rule of the universe and that women who are superior in virtue have a right to govern. In places, claims Woolfson, he even appears to be hinting that the '*pambasilica*', the king or ruling family whose virtue is superior to



everyone else's in the state, might be the best form of government and present in the existing English monarchy. The diagram is essentially a visual metaphor for this argument. First, it depicts Elizabeth in a way that is compatible with the '*pambasilica*', a monarch superior in virtue, who stands outside the political community and rules it as a god. Second, the diagram illustrates Case's belief that England is a pure monarchy and not a mixed government, although based on law and justice. Hence, at the centre of the state is immobile justice while the monarch stands above and separate from her councillors and administrators as the state's prime mover; 'prime mover' of course being part of Aristotelian terminology and thought, though here used in a political rather than divine or cosmological sense.<sup>52</sup>

### III

The imagery in paintings after 1570 differs greatly from these drawings in books. There is no surviving painting which directly compares Elizabeth to biblical personages or links her to scriptural texts, and this absence is probably because Protestants considered paintings had more potential to encourage idolatry than the printed page.<sup>53</sup> None the less, according to the foreign visitor Baron Waldstein, on the painted ceiling in the Paradise Chamber at Hampton Court (which is no longer in existence), there was a contemporary picture of the queen 'being received into heaven'.<sup>54</sup> In addition, one allegorical painting has survived with an explicitly Protestant message: *The Family of Henry VIII: An Allegory of the Tudor Succession* (c.1572). In this work Henry's children are positioned according to their importance in the history of Protestantism. On the left side stands Catholic Mary, disregarded by her father, who turns from her towards his Protestant heirs on the right, the kneeling Edward VI in the background and Elizabeth, the dominant figure at the front.<sup>55</sup> Accompanying Mary is her husband Philip while Mars, brandishing his weapons of war, marches in behind them. Elizabeth by contrast leads in Peace with Plenty treading close behind. As the inscription of the painting refers to it as a royal gift to Francis Walsingham as a 'Mark of her people's and her own content', it is reasonable to conclude that this image of the queen is an example of her own 'self-fashioning'.<sup>56</sup> As such, it accords with her other efforts to distance herself from the military failure and Catholic religion of her predecessor. But, its political meaning may be even more pointed. If Roy Strong is correct in his conclusion that the painting commemorated the 1572 Anglo-French

Treaty of Blois, which was agreed while Walsingham was ambassador to France, the artist is making a sharp contrast between this new treaty with a foreign Catholic power and Mary's alliance with Spain. Whereas the latter is shown to have resulted in the return to Rome and disastrous French war, Elizabeth's treaty promises peace and prosperity and the queen herself is presented as unswerving in her commitment to the Protestant Church.<sup>57</sup> The painting is in this sense an apologetic rather than a panegyric, despite the laudatory lines in verse attached to the picture frame. When in 1597 William Rogers produced an updated engraving of this allegory, it was more triumphal in tone and accentuated further the differences between Mary and Elizabeth. This effect was achieved through the introduction of a new verse along the bottom border of the print, which was designed to reinforce the message of the image. First, Mary's suppression of religious truth was contrasted with Elizabeth's Protestantism and merciful religious policies; and second, Mary's foreign marriage was linked to England's loss of glory while Elizabeth's unmarried state was implicitly connected to England's peace and plenty.<sup>58</sup>

The remaining paintings of Elizabeth after 1570 that make reference to her Protestantism do so mainly through the inclusion of individual symbols. As already seen, the pelican and phoenix in tandem could act as Protestant emblems. In addition, the armillary sphere that appears the 'Ditchley' and 'Rainbow' portraits amongst others, was probably intended to imply her championship of the Protestant Church.<sup>59</sup> Following Whitney's explanation, the pyramid or obelisk encircled with ivy or a vine (a motif embroidered on her skirt in the 'Cowdray Portrait') encoded the relationship between Church and ruler.

The Pillar great, our gracious Princess is:  
 The branch, the Church: who speaks unto her this . . .  
 I, that of late with storms was almost spent,  
 And bruised sore with Tyrants bloody blows,  
 Whom fire, and sword, with persecution rent,  
 Am now set free, and overlook my foes . . .<sup>60</sup>

Otherwise, unlike book illustrations, the later paintings are filled with symbols that celebrate Elizabeth's chastity as much as her religion. The trend probably started with the series of some eight Sieve Portraits executed between 1579 and 1583. At first glance, it might seem that the sieve clasped by Elizabeth in these works was simply a

device employed to praise her good judgement. After all, emblem books treat the sieve as a symbol for discernment and the Italian motto, visible on the utensil's rim in some of the paintings, makes reference to its action in separating good from bad.<sup>61</sup> A second Italian legend common to the paintings, however, offers another layer of meaning. The words '*Stanco riposo e riposato affano*' ('Wearied rest and rested weariness') come from the first of Petrarch's poems in his Triumphs series, the *Triumph of Love*. They serve to remind the learned observer that in the poet's later *Triumph of Chastity* reference is made to the Vestal Virgin Tuccia, whose closed sieve magically reflected her chaste body and allowed her to ward off attacks on her reputation and life.<sup>62</sup> This myth could act as a reassuring allegory when applied to Elizabeth herself, since it suggested that in some miraculous way her virginity would protect ruler and realm from the Catholic threat, which was particularly acute after 1579. But the 'Sieve Portraits' probably contained a more specific albeit oblique message, namely hostility to the marriage project between Elizabeth and Francis duke of Anjou which was high on the political agenda between 1578 and 1581. The 'Sieve Portrait' attributed to Quentin Massys is best interpreted in that light. Its elaborate symbolism seems designed to identify Elizabeth with not only Tuccia but also Aeneas, who according to popular legend was the ancestor of the Roman people and (as the grandfather of the mythical Brutus) of English monarchs.<sup>63</sup> The tale of Dido and Aeneas, as depicted in the medallions hanging on the pillar to the left of the queen, told a story of relevance to Elizabeth. Like her legendary ancestor, her destiny was to reject marriage and found an empire; hence, an imperial crown was placed at the base of the column and a luminous globe on the right showed ships leaving England for the New World.<sup>64</sup> The patron of the painting was almost certainly Sir Christopher Hatton; his device, the white hind, is displayed on the hanging sleeve of one of the courtiers standing in the background. As a leading opponent of the Anjou marriage and a patron of Drake's voyages, Hatton had worked hard to promote the political programme implicit in the painting, and it is likely that he commissioned Massys to celebrate his success some time around 1583, the date on the globe.

Thereafter, many paintings followed the Sieve Portraits in incorporating signifiers of the queen's virginity and/or divinity into their iconography. According to many art critics influenced by gender theory, this iconographic feature enabled Elizabeth to assert power. Given that the natural female body denoted vulnerability and submis-

siveness, they claim, Elizabeth had to be disembodied to present an image of authority: 'While Henry [VIII's] right to dominate is confirmed by his virility . . . Elizabeth's depends by contrast on sexuality subdued, on the self-containment and self-control of the Virgin-Queen.'<sup>65</sup> This explanation, however, fails to account for the *new* emphasis on the power of virginity in the later paintings. The most likely key triggers for this innovation were the foreign situation and the succession issue.

As the threat from Spain intensified during the 1580s, Elizabeth's impenetrable physical body became a natural trope for the impregnable body politic. Given the difficulty of depicting an elderly woman as a military leader and possible anxieties surrounding the figure of the armed maiden, this mode of representation seemed safe as well as effective.<sup>66</sup> It also had the advantage of expressing visually the long-established metaphor of the King's Two Bodies that claimed the monarchy was impervious to the weaknesses of age, sex or disability which might afflict the natural body. The effectiveness in turning Elizabeth's virginal body into an icon of sovereignty and imperial power is evident from the 'Armada' and 'Ermine' portraits. The virginity in the former is denoted by the strategically placed bows and pearls on the queen's body, while England's imperial ambitions are indicated in the presence of the imperial crown, the globe with Elizabeth's hand on the Indies and the prow of a ship carved like a mermaid. As the geometric shapes and lack of depth to the painting make Elizabeth look totally unnatural, her body is probably intended to stand for the state rather than its human ruler. In the latter portrait, the ermine (a symbol of virginity because of the legend that it died if its white coat became soiled) alludes to the chaste Laura, the unobtainable object of Petrarch's desire, whose banner is described in the *Triumph of Death* as embroidered with an ermine 'wearing a chain of topaz and of gold'.<sup>67</sup> The creature's gold collar in this painting is in the form of an open crown and, together with the sword of justice on the table close to the ermine, this insignia of royalty implies that the body politic, like the queen's natural body, is pure, uncorrupted and strong. Perhaps too, there is a cryptic reference to a victorious England triumphing over the threats to its existence, since Laura in the poem not only vanquishes love but also 'the great foe', death.<sup>68</sup> Unlike the 'Armada Portrait', the 'Ermine' was not reproduced or widely viewed, but for its patron, William Cecil, it represented an idealised conception of the state and the monarch he served.

In both paintings Elizabeth is shown ageless, her face a 'mask of

youth'. Banishment of signs of age in most of the later portraits was not simply the result of the queen's personal vanity for there were obvious political advantages in the practice. After the failure of the Anjou match, no one doubted that the queen would die childless and many feared a disputed succession was likely to follow. Her refusal to allow any discussion of the succession issue silenced her councillors but did little to quell anxieties. As one poet wailed in verses presented as a New Year's gift to the queen:

Woe and Alas the people cry and shriek  
Why fades this flower and leaves no fruit nor seed.<sup>69</sup>

As well as creating political uncertainty, the unclear line of succession could also activate criticism of the queen herself who was understandably held responsible for the perilous state of affairs. Alexander Dickson, safely based in Scotland, could afford to give vent to such criticisms of the queen in the late 1590s when he urged her to name a successor 'for to make amends of the wrong she hath done us in her profession of a maiden life'; but most English residents were too prudent to express similar thoughts.<sup>70</sup> In these circumstances, paintings that truthfully showed the queen's advancing years would draw attention to the dangers ahead and encourage political unrest. Similarly, portraits of an ageing queen could only remind observers of the presence of an adult male ruler with his own live progeny, waiting impatiently in Scotland for Elizabeth's demise. At the same time, the 'mask of youth' reinforced the idea embedded within the theory of 'the King's Two Bodies' that Elizabeth remained awesome despite growing older. No wonder, then, that the council tried to secure control over the queen's image in July 1596 by ordering the defacement of unauthorised and 'unseemly' portraits.<sup>71</sup>

The identification of the queen with the chaste goddess Diana responded to the political needs outlined above.<sup>72</sup> The goddess was a perfect image for a queen who had remained unmarried, ruled a country at war and was nearing death. Though repugnant to us today, Diana's punishment of Actaeon appeared to many Elizabethans as exemplary royal conduct in curbing uncontrolled passions and revenging a wrong.<sup>73</sup> Armed with bow and arrow to hunt her prey, she was also a suitably independent and assertive figure for a female ruler at war, yet lacked the dangerous martial qualities of the mythical Amazons. More importantly, in her guise as the moon goddess, Cynthia or Phoebe, Diana had command over the tides and thus

symbolised England's maritime power over the seas and oceans. Finally, the cycles of the moon, like the emblem of the phoenix, represented constancy despite change, and therefore operated as a metaphor both for the monarchy and Elizabeth's personal motto *Semper Eadem*.<sup>74</sup>

Although Elizabeth herself commissioned many of the miniatures of the 1580s and 1590s, giving them to courtiers and servants as a sign of royal favour, she left the task and expense of commissioning the paintings to her courtiers. These patrons evidently not only experimented with devising novel and fashionable ways of representing their monarch but also gave careful thought to methods of incorporating signs or symbols to denote their own status, intimacy with the queen, or political standpoints.<sup>75</sup> As already seen, Hatton probably commissioned the Massys 'Sieve Portrait' to memorialise the success of his good counsel to the queen. Similarly, Sir Henry Lee commissioned the 'Ditchley Portrait' most likely to commemorate Elizabeth's visit to his house in September 1592; the painting certainly compliments her as the queen of heavens and controller of the elements, but it also honours Lee by the device of placing the royal foot on the globe at his estate in Oxfordshire.<sup>76</sup> The 'Cynthia' miniature given by Sir Francis Drake to the queen made obvious references to his sea exploits, as did his gift of a fan, which held her portrait within a half-moon, enamelled on the handle. Likewise, the 'Hardwick Hall' painting records the countess of Shrewsbury's New Year's gift to the queen of an elaborately embroidered gown, thereby marking both her intimacy with Elizabeth and her skill as a needlewoman. It is also possible that the complicated iconography of the 'Rainbow Portrait' was intended to draw attention to its patron, either William or Robert Cecil.

The 'Rainbow Portrait' is the most mystifying of Elizabethan portraits, not least because it is undated and therefore impossible to link to an event or patron with any degree of certainty. It is generally accepted that one of the Cecils commissioned it and that Elizabeth was wearing a masque costume, presumably for a special occasion.<sup>77</sup> At least one writer has postulated that this was an entertainment held at Robert Cecil's house in 1599, but the evidence is at best circumstantial, while the gauntlet ornament on Elizabeth's ruff perhaps indicates that the queen wore the garment at a masque after a ceremonial tilt.<sup>78</sup> Scholars, moreover, have so variously interpreted the emblems on her sleeve and mantle in the painting that it has become a post-modernist delight.<sup>79</sup> Consequently, although there is a fairly general

consensus that the portrait elevates Elizabeth as a goddess, historians divide over whether that goddess is Astraea, the 'Queen of Love and Beauty', the sun goddess, or Cynthia. I have nothing to add to these debates, but would like to suggest that some of the emblems included in the painting make reference to the patron (one of the Cecils) as well as the queen. Following the explanation of symbols in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593) the ruby heart jewel in the mouth of the serpent embroidered on Elizabeth's left sleeve signifies wise counsel. A serpent traditionally symbolised wisdom and prudence, while a heart which hangs from a chain, according to Ripa, represents good counsel (since it comes from the heart); red, moreover, is the colour of charity, and giving counsel to the doubtful was considered one of the seven acts of charity.<sup>80</sup> This dominant motif of counsel is extended with the symbols of eyes, ears and mouths dotted on the golden mantle. It seems unlikely that they represent 'winged fame' as Yates first proposed, but they may well represent the eyes, ears and mouth of the good councillor, especially the royal secretary (a post held by both William and Robert) who had sight of all official documents and controlled much of the governmental intelligence system. Rene Graziani has maintained that the device of symmetry connects the serpent with the rainbow in Elizabeth's right hand; and, if she is correct, the rainbow would be linked thematically to the wise counsel given by the Cecils, as symbolised by the serpent. This seems to fit together well, since contemporary emblem books associate the rainbow with peace and tranquillity, and both William and Robert were known as advocates for peace with Spain in the late 1590s.<sup>81</sup> It is dangerous to speculate but with the 'Rainbow Portrait' there is really no other choice. Putting the jigsaw pieces together in this way, it seems to me that like several other portraits of the queen, the 'Rainbow' was partially designed to focus attention on the patron, both his relationship with the queen and his political programme.

#### IV

From the evidence of portraits is there evidence of a cult of the Virgin Queen? As seen above, there was no systematic presentation of Elizabeth as a virgin queen before the 1580s, but thereafter allusions to her virginity dominated her representation in miniatures and recurred frequently in court paintings. English book illustrations, however, continued to depict her in ways that illustrated the theme of the particular book, and very few exploited her virginity at all. As far

as prints are concerned, Elizabeth's maiden state was often embedded in the verses which accompanied them, but the visual imagery tended to emphasise her Protestantism (as can be seen in Rogers's 'Tudor Succession') or her victories against Spain (as in his 1589 'Eliza Triumphans' and De Passe's 1596 print).

Even though virginity was only one aspect of the representation of the queen, is it still useful to refer to a 'cult' of Elizabeth? If by 'cult' we mean a spontaneous upsurge of adoration as appeared, if only momentarily, at the death of Princess Diana, there is obviously no evidence of any cult. If by it is meant an orchestrated campaign of image-making for propaganda purposes, as occurred this century in Communist and Fascist states, the term is equally inappropriate. Elizabeth certainly tried to control her image by enforcing a standard face pattern and ordering the destruction of offensive portraits, but there was no official censor as existed for drama and printed books nor any one governmental source for producing and disseminating portraits of the queen.<sup>82</sup> Instead, authors of books, or in some cases their printers, as well as peers, courtiers, councillors and prominent citizens commissioned and created the royal image themselves within certain prescribed limits. In some cases their motive was to flatter the queen and thereby secure her favour and patronage; in others it was to express pride in their own power and closeness to the monarch. Perhaps too some individuals and institutions felt the need to make a public statement of loyalty in displaying the royal portrait during a period of religious upheaval and threatened invasion.

The number of these pictures should not, however, be exaggerated; the sum total of original paintings of the queen is unknown but about 135 have survived, while her picture illustrated only about 25 printed books, although well over 150 were dedicated to her when queen.<sup>83</sup> The fact that her face does not adorn books such as Camden's *Britannia* (1600) or the translation of Ubaldino's *A Discourse Concerning the Spanish Fleete* (1590) should lead us to question the standard assumption that the person of Elizabeth came to be equated with the English nation. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether many ordinary men and women had much access to the royal portrait, especially after her image was removed from newer editions of the Bible. Paintings were seen by a relatively closed group, whether courtiers and their kin, privileged members of a livery company or university college, or important foreign visitors. Some of her subjects might see small versions of her portrait on official documents or commemorative medals. Most people, however, probably only saw the royal visage



on their coins and took as little notice of it as we do of the present queen's head on our stamps or currency. In any event the royal image on coins was entirely conventional.

Finally, by using the term 'cult' of Elizabeth, the implication is that the style and iconography of her portraits were somehow unusual or unique. Again this is debatable. First, there was considerable continuity in the iconography of the English monarchy. Not only did her medieval and Tudor forebears employ similar symbols (most obviously the rose and St George, though even the *trionfo* was not entirely new), but also prints and drawings of her Stuart heir, James I, sometimes included the flamboyant decoration and symbols usually associated with Elizabeth.<sup>84</sup> A royal letter patent of James VI dated 1619, for example, includes decorations of roses, thistles, strawberries, pansies carnations, an eagle, peacock and winged caterpillar.<sup>85</sup> Second, England was far less cut off from European cultural influences than is sometimes thought. Many of Elizabeth's portraits reflect the Continental mannerist style in their composition, exaggerated forms and lack of naturalism, though they are usually less well executed and often taken to extremes.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, royal portraits of the French and Habsburg courts used similar artifices and pictorial codes to create icons of their rulers. A Nicolò Bellin miniature of Francis I, for example, depicts the king with the attributes of classical deities, both male and female: the helmet of wise Pallas-Minerva, the winged boots of eloquent Mercury, the sword of valiant Mars, and the horn, bow and arrow of chaste Diana.<sup>87</sup> Portraits of Philip II compare the king to Solomon or identify him with Apollo, the sun god, who like Astraea appeared in Virgil's Fourth Eclogue and was associated with the new Golden Age.<sup>88</sup> While sycophancy knows no boundaries of time and place, the symbols and emblems within Elizabethan visual panegyric were a European phenomenon, as patrons and artists borrowed from the same stock of political imagery. Elizabeth's maidenhood may have rendered her unique as a ruler while her gender made her unusual, but the symbols used in her representation were generally more varied and conventional than either modern historiography or the popular media allow.

## Notes

Unless otherwise stated, reproductions of the portraits of Elizabeth mentioned in this essay can be found in Roy Strong *Gloriana* (1986).

1. See the blurb on the video box and Tom McGregor, *Elizabeth, A Novel Based on the Screenplay* (New York, 1998), 243–6.
2. The first important work on the cult of Elizabeth was Elkin Calhoun Wilson, *England's Eliza* (Cambridge, MA., 1939). But, as explained in the introduction, he saw the idealisation of the queen in poetry as a popular reaction to her extraordinary qualities as a ruler rather than a deliberate governmental stratagem.
3. Frances Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (1975); Roy Strong, *The Cult of the Virgin Queen* (1977).
4. Early examples include Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 1980); and Louis Adrian Montrose, 'Shaping Fantasies: Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture', *Representations* 2 (1983), 61–94. Philippa Berry, *Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen* (1989), 83–110.
5. For example, Margaret L. King, *Women of the Renaissance* (Chicago, 1991), 158; Theodora A. Jankowski, *Women in Power in the Early-Modern Drama* (Urbana and Chicago, 1992), 60–4; Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia, 1994), 27.
6. Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (Oxford, 1993); Louis A. Montrose, 'Idols of the Queen: Policy, Gender and the Picturing of Elizabeth I', *Representations* 68 (1999), 133; Berry, *Chastity*, 83–110.
7. Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (1995).
8. John N. King, *Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in an Age of Religious Crisis* (Princeton, 1989), 105–6, 153–4, 234–5.
9. See Chapter 1 in this volume.
10. John King, 'The Godly Woman in Elizabethan Iconography', *Renaissance Quarterly* 38 (1985), 59. For letters patent, Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram, 'The Iconography of the *Acts and Monuments*', in David Loades, ed., *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 1997), 126–7. For the identification of Cecil, see Elizabeth Evendon and Thomas S. Freeman, 'John Foxe, John Day and the Printing of the "Book of Martyrs"', in Robin Myers, Michael Harris and Giles Mandelbrote, eds, *Lives in Print: Biography and the Book Trade* (forthcoming).
11. King, *Iconography*, 233–6.
12. Another example is the 'Dover Portrait' (1598?) where a pillar next to

- Elizabeth is inset with medallions of the virtues. The link was also a literary device: Henry Chettle, *England's Mourning Garment 1603* facsimile (Amsterdam, 1973).
13. Arthur M. Hind, *Engravings in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1952), i: 39, 45 and plates 18a and 18b. Note too the unique edition at Eton College.
  14. As a common Renaissance device, see Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (Oxford, 1980), 197. For its relation to Elizabeth in pageants and poetry, John D. Reeves, 'The Judgement of Paris as a Device of Tudor Flattery', *Notes and Queries* NS 1 (1954), 6–11.
  15. For the significance of the imperial crown in Tudor iconography, see Hoak's essay in Dale Hoak, ed., *Tudor Political Culture* (Cambridge, 1995), 54–103.
  16. Reference to Trojan War from Stephen Bateman, *The Golden Booke of the Leaden Goddes* (1577; STC 1583) fo. 7. Literate Elizabethans were well aware of the myth and critical of Paris. See Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes and Other Devises* (facsimile, Amsterdam, 1969), 83.
  17. Louis Adrian Montrose, 'Gifts and Reasons: The Contexts of Peele's "Araygnement of Paris"', *English Literary History* 47 (1980), 445–7. See also David Evett, *Literature and the Visual Arts in Tudor England* (Athens, GA, 1990), 117–18; and Stephen Bennett, 'Reading Elizabeth: Menopause and the Cult of the Virgin Queen' (Ph.D. Dissertation New York University 1997), 136–43.
  18. In Renaissance art on this theme, Cupid is usually shown aiming his arrow at Paris, as in the 1511 woodcut by Altdorfer and paintings by Cranach the elder (1530) and Niklaus Manuel.
  19. Elizabeth owned surprisingly few self-portraits. This was a relatively rare one on show and noted by Baron Waldstein at Whitehall. Oliver Millar, *Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Royal Collection* (1963), i: 12–3. G. W. Gros, ed., *The Diary of Baron Waldstein: A Traveller in Elizabethan England* (1981), 45. Strong suggests Cecil was the patron and that the picture was commissioned to commemorate the defeat of the 1569 Northern Rebellion, but there is no strong evidence for this opinion.
  20. Quotation from Michael Bath, John Manning and Alan R. Young, eds, *The Art of the Emblem: Essays in Honor of Karl Josef Höltgen* (New York, 1993), 5–6, 72–4. Stephen Orgel makes a similar point in 'Gendering the Crown', in Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass, eds, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge, 1996), 133–6.
  21. For their identification with the Madonna, Peter McClure and Roger Headlam Wells, 'Elizabeth I as a Second Virgin Mary', *Renaissance Studies* 4 (1990), 38–70.
  22. Whitney, *Emblemes*, 165

23. Hyder Edward Rollins, ed., *The Phoenix Nest* (Harvard, 1931), 198.
24. See portrait of Elizabeth Brydges (1589) in Karen Hearn, ed., *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530–1630* (1995), 114.
25. Richard Haydocke, *A Tracte containing the Artes of Curious Paintinge . . .* (1598; STC 16698), sig. KK v.
26. Sidney Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (1994), 128.
27. For Henry VII's portraits, Christopher Lloyd and Simon Thurley, ed., *Henry VIII, Images of a Tudor King* (Oxford, 1990), 11–12. For Mary I, Hearn, *Dynasties*, 55. The red rose was the impresa of the Lancastrians; the eglantine that of Elizabeth of York.
28. Freeman M. O'Donoghue *A Descriptive and Classified Catalogue of Portraits of Queen Elizabeth* (1894), 12. Roy Strong, *Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford, 1963), plate 29.
29. Frontispieces to *The recantations . . . by W. Tedder and A. Tyrrel, With a epistle dedicatorie vunto her maiestie* (1588; STC 23859); George Puttenham, *The arte of English poesie* (1589; STC 20519); Henry Lyte, *The light of Britayne . . .* (1588; STC 17122.5); the end page of BL Sloane MS 1832, fo. 28v; and borders of Bodl. Fre.e.1.
30. For example, Sir John Davies's Hymn 7 to the rose in his *Hymnes of Astroea in Acrostic Verse* (1599; STC 6351); Maurice Kyffin, *The Blessednes of Brytaine . . .* (1587; STC 15096) verse 19; Stephen Bateman, *Batman vppon Bartholome* (1582; STC 1538), sig. Hhh3v. See also Hackett, *Virgin Mother*, 107, 167.
31. Janet Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd* (Leeds, 1988), 24–5, 74. Elizabeth also wore a pelican jewel in a painting of 1584–5. Hind, *Engravings*, plates 124, 140, 144 display the phoenix and pelican.
32. Whitney, *Emblemes*, 87. Lyly is quoted in Wilson, *Eliza*, 238.
33. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton, 1997 reprint), 389–94, 413.
34. *The Heroical Devises of M. Claudius Paradin, Canon of Beaulieu*, Translated into English by PS (1591), 110. For other examples, Huston Diehl, *An Index of Icons in English Emblem Books 1500–1700* (Oklahoma, 1986), 161–2.
35. S. John van-der Noodt, *A Theatre . . . [of] Worldlings* (1569; STC 18602), sig. Aiiiiir. Interestingly, the phoenix did not appear in Elizabeth's portrait on the frontispiece despite this reference to her in his dedication.
36. For Henry IV, see Ashmolean, Sutherland Print BL.438. For Henry's queens, see Ulpian Fulwel, *Flower of Fame* (1575; STC 11475) fo. 40.
37. Ronald B. McKerrow, *Printers and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland* (1913), 60, 68–9.
38. David Howarth, *Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance 1485–1649*, 104–6.
39. *Diary of Waldstein*, 106.

40. Emblem books explained that the columns, which signified 'the hope to proceed further', had been the personal device of Charles V alluding to the vast extent of his empire, his potential as a Christian ruler, and universal theocratic monarchy. For Solomonic and theocratic references, see Marie Tanner, *The Last Descendant of Aeneas: The Habsburgs and the Mythic Image of the Emperor* (New Haven, 1993), 155.
41. The motto also appeared on her coinage, as it had on that of other English sovereigns since 1351.
42. Aston, 'Iconography', 127–8. Bodl. Library, Mason F142–144 (1570 edition).
43. Elizabeth enthroned also disappeared from the quarto edition of the 1577 edition. Bodl. Library Bib Eng. 1577d.2. For iconophobia, Margaret Aston, 'The *Bishops' Bible* Illustrations', in Diana Wood, ed., *The Church and the Arts*, Studies in Church History, 28 (Oxford, 1992), 267–85.
44. STC nos 1892–4
45. Patrick Collinson identified Elizabeth as the figure on Christ's right-hand side, *Elizabethan Essays* (1994), 107. King, however, called the woodcut the apotheosis of Katherine Parr in *Iconography*, 152–4. It is referred to as 'Catherine Parr at the Last Judgment' in Ruth Samson Luborsky and Elizabeth Morley Ingram, *A Guide to English Illustrated Books, 1536–1603*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts 166 (Tempe, AZ, 1998), ii: picture no. 61.
46. Katerina Hilská (trans.), *The Bride in the Enclosed Garden* (Prague, 1995).
47. Richard Day, *A Booke of Christian Prayers* (1578), facsimile edition The English Experience no. 866 (Amsterdam, 1977). The text comes from 2 Chronicles 6:14.
48. The lion in the royal coat of arms was also likened to the Lion of Judah in Francis Thynne, *Emblemes and Epigrames 1600*, ed. F. J. Furnivall. Early English Text Society (1876), 53.
49. In the original biblical text the word is 'Shiloh' not 'the Messiah' but the marginal gloss in the Geneva Bible explains that Shiloh stood for Christ the Messiah. The last line is a complete fabrication. In the Geneva Bible the verse finishes 'and the people shall be gathered unto him'.
50. STC 18197.7, sig. i.
51. McClure and Headlam Wells, 'Second Virgin Mary', 45–6. Andrew and Catherine Belsey think that Elizabeth is depicted not just as the Madonna of Mercy but as God, the prime mover of the universe. 'Icons of Divinity: Portraits of Elizabeth I', in Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn, eds, *Renaissance Bodies* (1990), 22–3.
52. Jonathan Woolfson, 'Between Bruni and Hobbes: Aristotle's Politics in Tudor Intellectual Culture', in Jonathan Woolfson, ed., *Reassessing Tudor Humanism*, (Basingstoke, 2002), 197–222.
53. Craig Harbison, *Symbols in Transformation* (Princeton, 1969).

54. *Diary of Waldstein*, 151.
55. In another painting of the Tudor family group in 1597, Edward is again overshadowed by his father and Protestant sister, while Mary is omitted. Margaret Aston, *The King's Bedpost*, 130.
56. Hearn, *Dynasties*, 81.
57. Strong's dating is based on the fashion of Elizabeth's dress. Even if the painting was created a little earlier, as John King believes, the same point applies. From 1570 until late 1571 Walsingham was engaged in negotiating the Henry of Anjou matrimonial alliance.
58. Hind, *Engraving*, 270.
59. The armillary sphere is a celestial sphere with the band of the zodiac encircling it. For its Protestant associations, Strong, *Gloriana*, 138–9.
60. Whitney, *Emblemes*, 1.
61. *Ibid.*, 68; PS, *Heroical Devises*, 184. The translated motto is 'the good falls to the ground while the bad remains in the saddle', which represented the action of the sieve in removing the bran from flour.
62. Leonard Forster, *The Icy Fire: Five Studies in European Petrarchism* (Cambridge, 1969), especially 129–6.
63. Elizabeth was also associated with Aeneas in verse. Rollins, *Phoenix*, 46.
64. Strong, *Gloriana*, 101–3. See also, Constance Jordan, 'Representing Political Androgyny: More on the Siena Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I', in Anne M. Haselkorn and Betty S. Travitsky, eds, *The Englishwoman in Print: Counterbalancing the Canon* (Amherst, 1990), 157–76, though her interpretation is somewhat idiosyncratic; for Jordan 'the sieve symbolically enfolds a sexually potent prince who rides and commands', p. 168.
65. Belsey, 'Icons of Divinity', 12. See also, Susan Frye, 'Of Chastity and Violence: Elizabeth I and Edmund Spenser in the House of Busirane', *Signs* 20 (1994), 49–78.
66. For anxieties surrounding Boadicea, see Jodi Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea: Gender and Nation in Early-Modern England* (1998), 116–29.
67. The banner is also depicted in the illustrations for the *Triumph of Chastity*.
68. *The Triumphs of Petrarch*, trans. by Ernest Hatch Wilkins (Chicago, 1962), 53–4.
69. BL Cotton MS Vespasian E VIII fo. 173r.
70. National Library of Scotland Advocates MS 31. 4.8 fos 9v–10. The criticisms of Elizabeth cover several pages of this manuscript.
71. *Acts of the Privy Council 1596–7*, 69.
72. Elizabeth is linked to Diana most obviously in the Jesus College Oxford portrait, the Drake miniature, and frieze panel of the Great Chamber at Hardwick. Crescent moons alluding to Diana appear frequently in portraits.
73. *The Diary of Waldstein*, 160–1.
74. For the correspondence in verse, see Walter Raleigh's poem in *The*

- Phoenix Nest*, 7; and John Dowland's verse in *English Madrigal Verse 1588–1632*, ed. E. H. Fellowes (3rd edition, Oxford, 1967).
75. The active engagement of patrons in the process of designing allegories can be seen in the programmes of work BL Sloane MSS 1041, 1096.
  76. Although control of the elements was a traditional device in epideictic literature, it became a common descriptor of the queen because of the defeat of the Spanish Armada.
  77. The queen's head-dress has been identified as coming from J. J. Boissard's *Various Clothes of People of the World* (1581), a book of drawings which was sometimes used as a source of designs for masque costumes.
  78. Mary C. Erler, 'Sir John Davies and the Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth', *Modern Philology* 84 (1987), 359–71.
  79. Apart from Yates, Strong and Erler, see Rene Graziani, 'The "Rainbow Portrait" of Queen Elizabeth I and its Religious Symbolism', *JWCI* 35 (1972), 247–59; Daniel Fischlin, 'Political Allegory, Absolutist Ideology, and the "Rainbow Portrait" of Queen Elizabeth I', *Renaissance Quarterly* 50 (1997), 75–205; Montrose, 'Idols', 139–48.
  80. For an English edition, Cesare Ripa, *Baroque and Rococo Pictorial Imagery*, ed. Edward A. Maser (New York, 1971), 53, 144.
  81. According to Claudius Paradin, the rainbow was 'an infallible sign of peaceable calmness and tranquillity', *Heroical Devises*, 76.
  82. A proclamation was drafted in 1563 that prohibited people from drawing, painting or engraving Elizabeth's image apart from a painter who was to be specially commissioned for the work, but it was never enacted. Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds, *Tudor Royal Proclamations* (2 vols, New Haven, 1969), ii. 240–1.
  83. Luborsky and Ingram *Illustrated Books*, i. 144. Not all Elizabeth's pictures are listed in the index.
  84. Paul Gwynne, 'The Frontispiece to an Illuminated Panegyric of Henry VII: A Note on the Sources', *JWCI* 55 (1992), 266–70, plate 47.
  85. National Register of Archives Scotland S2177 bundle no. 524.
  86. Nanette Salomon, 'Positioning Women in Visual Convention: The Case of Elizabeth I', in Betty S. Travitsky and Adele F. Seeff, eds, *Attending to Women in Early-Modern England* edited (Newark, 1994), 69–70; Marianna Jenkins, *The State Portrait: Its Origin and Evolution* (1947), 7, 12.
  87. The miniature from the Bibliotheque Nationale is reproduced in *Early Modern Europe: An Oxford History*, ed. Euan Cameron (Oxford, 1999).
  88. Tanner, *Aeneas*, 223–37, 155.