

**PRINCESSES MARY AND
ELIZABETH TUDOR
AND THE GIFT BOOK
EXCHANGE**

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**GENDER AND POWER IN THE
PREMODERN WORLD**

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PRINCESSES MARY AND ELIZABETH TUDOR AND THE GIFT BOOK EXCHANGE

by
VALERIE SCHUTTE

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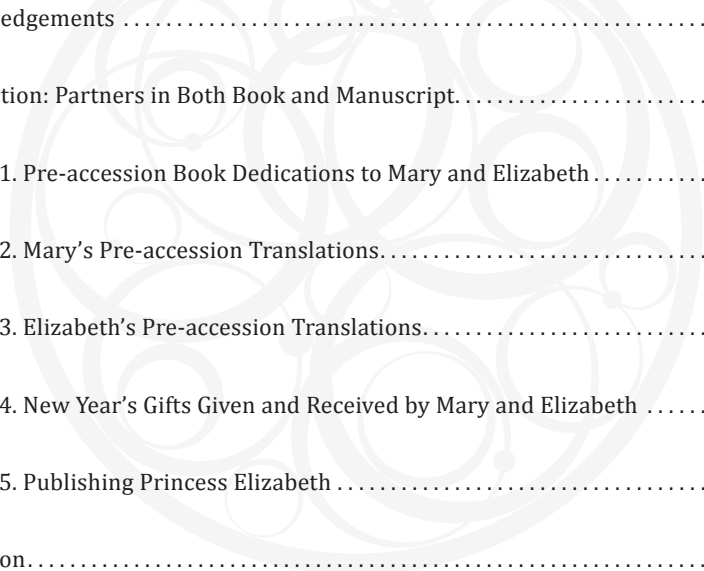
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CONTENTS



Acknowledgements	vii
Introduction: Partners in Both Book and Manuscript.....	1
Chapter 1. Pre-accession Book Dedications to Mary and Elizabeth.....	9
Chapter 2. Mary's Pre-accession Translations.....	23
Chapter 3. Elizabeth's Pre-accession Translations.....	35
Chapter 4. New Year's Gifts Given and Received by Mary and Elizabeth	53
Chapter 5. Publishing Princess Elizabeth	63
Conclusion.....	85
Select Bibliography.....	91
Index.....	95

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INTRODUCTION: PARTNERS IN BOTH BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT

ELIZABETH TUDOR'S "VIRTUES procured Her more Honour and Esteem in all Nations, than all these Ornaments of Industry, Learning, and Ingenuity, though they appeared in Her to an higher and more illustrious degree, than ever was found in any other Lady."¹ Edmund Bohun published these words in his biography of Elizabeth in 1693. Yet, Mary Tudor, Elizabeth's virtuous, equally learned, elder half-sister, and first queen regnant of England, is very infrequently, if ever, afforded the same praise.

One such source often taken as evidence of Elizabeth's superiority are the four translations that she undertook as a young princess; they are included in multiple edited collections of Elizabeth's letters and writings, but nothing of the sort exists for her sister Mary even though she engaged in similar activities. The primary focus of this present study is the four dedications that Elizabeth wrote to Henry VIII, Katherine Parr, and her brother Edward, that accompanied her four pre-accession translations. Yet, it is clear that to fully understand these dedications, Elizabeth's work cannot be separated out from that of her sister Mary. The dedications must be examined by themselves, as well as alongside the New Year's gift-giving tradition in which she gave them, both her and Mary's youthful translations, and how her dedications and translations came to be represented after she completed them. Comparing dedications, then, is another way to compare the pre-accession experiences of Mary and Elizabeth, a time period for both women which is largely ignored for their later years as queens.

Importantly, rather than treating the pre-accession translations of Elizabeth and Mary as separate and not equal, this study examines them together, as Mary and Elizabeth undertook some of their translations at the exact same time. I show that Mary's translations need to be considered as important as Elizabeth's translations, and how in fact, Elizabeth's translations were of little importance at the time she created them. As such, what follows is skewed more heavily toward Elizabeth, even though it offers analysis of Mary and Elizabeth together to present a more well-rounded picture of their literary activities before they each became queen.

While Elizabeth's translations are the direct result of her education, and perhaps even exercises required by her tutors, the dedications she wrote to accompany her translations show her own understanding of her place within the royal family.² What

¹ Edmund Bohun, *The Character of Queen Elizabeth. Or, A Full and Clear Account of Her Policies, and the Methods of Her Government both in Church and State* (London: Chiswell, 1693), 10.

² Brenda M. Hosington, "The Young Princess Elizabeth, Neo-Latin, and the Power of the Written Word," in *Elizabeth I in Writing: Language, Power, and Representation in Early Modern England*, edited by Donatella Montini and Iolanda Plescia (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 35.

makes the dedications by Elizabeth so exceptional is that they were written by a royal princess. Typically, dedications were given by clients seeking patronage, monetary benefit, or the continuation of a relationship with the dedicatee. Elizabeth, as a royal princess, should not have had to give dedications for patronage or reward, yet she chose to add them to her translations anyway. This is reflective of her precarious status as a second daughter who was bastardized through the annulment of her parents' marriage.³ Her dedications to her father, stepmother, and brother confirm she had lesser status than Mary; she placed herself in supplication to them, similarly to how authors and translators approached the monarchs. This study suggests that the dedications written by Elizabeth should be seen not only as deferential gifts to her relatives, but should also be interpreted as an effort by a demoted princess to show off her education, make her loyalty well known, and express her desire not to be demoted again.

My focus, however, is not the translations as literary works, but simply as the materials that were accompanied by dedications. Moreover, my approach to Elizabeth's dedications is different from previous scholars' approaches because almost all previous analyses of Elizabeth's translations have focused on the translations as a genre, Elizabeth's linguistic abilities that could not be ignored, Katherine Parr's inspiration, their place in the religious divide, and have checked for how her translations differed from her source material. Yet, I am not interested if or how she changed Marguerite of Navarre's tone to be less sexual and more appropriate for an eleven-year-old girl. But I am interested in why she gave the texts, and suggest that the dedications will be the best place to find any possible answers.

In her essay on translations by Tudor Englishwomen, Brenda M. Hosington argues: "the works of women translators ... must be situated within the context of the literary production of the time and aligned with contemporary original compositions and other translations."⁴ The same can be said for book dedications. Recent scholarship had made it apparent that dedications are a different genre from translations, although dedications usually accompanied a translated text. In addition to my own publications, Helen Smith has used dedications as evidence of female involvement in book production, and just recently Elizabeth Dearnley has analyzed prologues written by medieval translators, among others who have used dedications as sources separate from the texts to which they were attached.⁵ Marie-Alice Belle and Brenda M. Hosington have an

Susan James suggests that Elizabeth's tutors encouraged her to frequently correspond with Katherine so that she would support her education. James, *Catherine Parr: Henry VIII's Last Love* (Stroud: The History Press, 2009), 118.

3 Valerie Schutte, *Unexpected Heirs in Early Modern Europe: Potential Kings and Queens* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 64–65. Judith Richards, *Elizabeth I* (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), 13, 17–18.

4 Brenda M. Hosington, "Tudor Englishwomen's Translations of Continental Protestant Texts: The Interplay of Ideology and Historical Context," in *Tudor Translation*, ed. Fred Schurink, 121–42 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 122.

5 Valerie Schutte, *Mary I and the Art of Book Dedications* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Schutte, "Perceptions of Princesses: Pre-accession Book Dedications to Mary and Elizabeth Tudor,"

entire edited collection that demonstrates the importance of paratexts.⁶ A dedication was where an author or translator could speak personally to a dedicatee and reveal details about his or her process of book or manuscript creations as well as address the dedicatee with concerns or counsel.⁷

An analysis of Elizabeth's dedications is important because in the dedications she directly addresses her dedicatees and explains why she dedicated the text and the process whereby she chose the specific texts to dedicate. By examining the four dedications written by Elizabeth, it is possible to see how a well-educated young woman presented herself as an author/translator, princess, and student of another woman author, Katherine Parr.

While Katherine Parr appears frequently in the discussions that follow and she was both recipient of two of Elizabeth's dedications and supporter of one of Mary's translations, it is not the purpose of this book to re-evaluate Katherine's influence over Mary and Elizabeth.⁸ Katherine had very good relationships with all of Henry's children. After Katherine Parr married Henry VIII, Mary and Katherine remained good friends and sometimes lodged together. They also "exchanged gifts, shared servants and even

in *Unexpected Heirs in Early Modern Europe: Potential Kings and Queens*, ed. Valerie Schutte, 63–83 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Helen Smith, *Grossly Material Things: Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Elizabeth Dearnley, *Translators and their Prologues in Medieval England* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2016).

6 Marie-Alice Belle and Brenda M. Hosington, eds., *Thresholds of Translation: Paratexts, Print, and Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Britain (1473–1660)* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). For a theoretical approach, see Kevin Dunn, *Pretexts of Authority: The Rhetoric of Authorship in the Renaissance Preface* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). For other scholarship that uses dedications, see Micheline White, "The Perils and Possibilities of the Early Modern Book Dedication: Anne Lock, Queen Elizabeth, and John Knox," *Parergon: Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 29, no. 2 (2012): 9–27; Nieves Baranda Leturio, "Women's Reading Habits: Book Dedications to Female Patrons in Early Modern Spain," in *Women's Literacy in Early Modern Spain and the New World*, ed. Anne J. Cruz and Rosilie Hernández (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 19–39; John Buchtel, "Book Dedications in Early Modern England: Francis Bacon, George Chapman, and the Literary Patronage of Henry, Prince of Wales" (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2004); John Buchtel, "To the Most High and Excellent Prince: Dedicating Books to Henry, Prince of Wales," in *Prince Henry Revived: Image and Exemplarity in Early Modern England*, ed. Timothy V. Wilks (London: Holberton, 2008), 104–33; John Buchtel, "Book Dedications and the Death of a Patron: The Memorial Engraving in Chapman's Homer," *Book History* 7 (2004), 1–29; Tara Wood, "To the most godlye, virtuos, and myghtye Princess Elizabeth: Identity and Gender in the Dedications to Elizabeth I" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2008).

7 Felicity Heal has also identified book dedications as "words to laud the recipient and thereby to expose him or her more fully to public view than in the past." Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 43.

8 For the influence of Katherine Parr over her stepchildren, the seminal work is still James McConica, even though it has since been shown that McConica's thesis of Katherine providing a scholarly nursery was overstated. James McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics Under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

wrote courtesy letters on the same sheet of paper.”⁹ While Katherine may have supported Mary’s return to the succession, Mary did not need to go through Katherine to get to her father and restore her reputation. Mary never lost her reputation, even if she did fall from favor based on her relationship with her father’s current wife, just her title. As Henry’s eldest child, and considered by many to be his rightful heir, Mary always had more power at court, although her relationship with her father was frequently troubled. Elizabeth, however, needed Katherine as an intermediary to her father.

It is well known that Elizabeth had an exceptional education and was well-regarded for both her reading and writing abilities as well as her knowledge of foreign languages. Though Elizabeth’s childhood and pre-accession years are always treated by biographers, they are done so in myriad different ways. Not surprisingly, older biographies, such as that by J. E. Neale, address the situation around Elizabeth, but really not the demoted princess herself.¹⁰ Some address her education, while others do not at all. Susan Doran offers an inclusive biography of Elizabeth’s pre-accession years. Doran gives mainly a timeline of events for Elizabeth during her father and brother’s reigns, only really suggesting that it is difficult to discern the relationship Elizabeth had with her father and her feelings toward her dead mother. Like many historians, she highlights Elizabeth’s education (although she does not find Elizabeth to be any brighter or more knowledgeable than other educated females of her time) and suggests Elizabeth’s truly formative years were during Edward and Mary’s reigns when she was accused of sexual indiscretion with Thomas Seymour and possibly involved in plots against Mary. These events most likely shaped her later decisions regarding marriage, childbearing, and naming an heir.¹¹ Judith M. Richards suggests that it is difficult to know the real Princess Elizabeth because of the propaganda produced to shape her reputation later.¹² Most at least mention her youthful translations.¹³ What they tend to have in common is the focus on the Seymour Affair and her possible role in Wyatt’s Rebellion. Yet, for these being some of the most formative events in her pre-accession years, next to her mother’s execution, only one full-length study has been written on Elizabeth and the Seymour Affair and none of Elizabeth during Mary’s reign.¹⁴

9 Aysha Pollnitz, “Religion and Translation at the Court of Henry VIII: Princess Mary, Katherine Parr, and the *Paraphrases* of Erasmus,” in *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 130.

10 J. E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth* (London: Cape, 1934, reprinted London: Penguin, 1988).

11 Susan Doran, *Queen Elizabeth I* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 8–34.

12 Richards, *Elizabeth I*, 190.

13 Frank A. Mumby, *The Girlhood of Queen Elizabeth, a Narrative in Contemporary Letters* (London: Constable, 1909), 24–26. Anne Somerset, *Elizabeth I* (New York: Knopf, 1991), 13.

14 Elizabeth Norton, *The Temptation of Elizabeth Tudor: Elizabeth I, Thomas Seymour, and the Making of a Virgin Queen* (New York: Pegasus, 2016). Sheila Cavanagh has also written an article about Elizabeth and the Seymour affair. Cavanagh, “The Bad Seed: Princess Elizabeth and the Seymour Incident,” in *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana*, ed. Julia M. Walker (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 9–29.

The historiography of Elizabeth's pre-accession years focuses on events after the death of her father, most likely because scholars are looking for connections to her later behavior as queen. Only three books have focused solely on Elizabeth's pre-accession years, and one of them spends its final seven chapters covering Elizabeth's years as queen to show the impact of her upbringing on her style of rule.¹⁵ Even in Carole Levin's groundbreaking cultural biography of Elizabeth, she boils Elizabeth's childhood down to her stepmothers and the Seymour Affair.¹⁶ What has recently received the most scholarly attention is Elizabeth's education.¹⁷

As Susan Frye astutely notes, "picturing Elizabeth Tudor as a young woman can be a difficult historical project, in part because one of the principal obstacles to imagining the young Elizabeth is Elizabeth herself." Furthermore, "representations of her political youth continue to obscure Elizabeth's physical youth."¹⁸ Overall, it is obvious that her princess years are understudied and it is hard to separate the successes of her rule from her childhood; she *must* have been smart because she was a good queen. Yet, we lack the sources, and many sources that do exist during her reign and later exaggerate her childhood sufferings and achievements in propaganda for her as queen. While this book obviously does not address all of these points, it offers a different facet for understanding some existing sources: her own words separate from her translations. This study is one effort to recover Elizabeth's physical youth through the translations she undertook and the New Year's gifts that she gave, as well as contextualizing her youth with that of her sister.

Mary has certainly fared worse in her historiographical treatment, as "until very recently it has been customary, among historians of the Tudors, to contrast Mary unfavorably with Elizabeth, not only in their comparative success or failure as rulers by also in their intellectual ability and the quality of the education which they received."¹⁹ In the last decade or so Mary's reign has been re-evaluated, yet like Elizabeth much of her childhood is unexplored except through the lens of those around her. Mary still suffers from Sir Geoffrey Elton's assumption that she was "arrogant, assertive, bigoted, stubborn, suspicious and (not to put too fine a point on it) rather stupid."²⁰ Over the course of this study it will become apparent that Elton's assessment was simply wrong.

15 Mumby, *The Girlhood of Queen Elizabeth*. David Starkey, *Elizabeth: The Struggle for the Throne* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2000). Louis Wiesener, *La jeunesse d'Elisabeth d'Angleterre, 1533–58* (Paris, 1878). The next year it was translated into English. Wiesener, *The Youth of Queen Elizabeth, 1533–58*. Edited from the French by Charlotte M. Yonge, 2 vols. (London, 1879).

16 Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*, 2nd ed (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

17 For the most recent work on Elizabeth's education, see Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely Education in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 11, 241–63.

18 Susan Frye, "Elizabeth When a Princess: Early Self-Representations in a Portrait and a Letter," in *The Body of the Queen: Gender and Rule in the Courtly World, 1500–2000* (New York: Berghahn, 2006).

19 John Edwards, *Mary I: The Daughter of Time* (London: Allen Lane, 2016), 21.

20 Sir Geoffrey Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England 1509–1558* (London: Arnold, 1977), 376.

In light of these gaps in the historiography for both Elizabeth and Mary's pre-accession years, this study re-evaluates important literary achievements made by both princesses before they became queens. Chapter 1 is an analysis of the book dedications that were given to Princesses Elizabeth and Mary to show how Elizabeth's dedications were part of a genre that used supplication and modesty to make a personal connection with the recipient of the dedication. These dedications also show how both Mary and Elizabeth were perceived as princesses by their dedicators and perhaps influenced how Elizabeth wrote her own dedications to shape others' perceptions of her.

Chapter 2 concentrates on Mary's translations. Unlike those by Elizabeth, neither had an accompanying dedication and she did not give either as New Year's gifts. Rather, one of Mary's translations was meant for circulation at court, and was likely under the instruction and supervision of her mother, Catherine of Aragon, while the other was published as part of a large-scale English translation of Erasmus' *Paraphrases*. Mary's own princess-era translations may have influenced Elizabeth's translations, although she had other influences too, such as her tutors and even Katherine Parr.²¹

Chapter 3 is the crux of my interpretation of Elizabeth, offering an examination of the four dedications alongside an explanation of the texts that they accompany. I suggest that Elizabeth had to give Henry, Edward, and Katherine Parr translated texts with dedications to both prove her loyalty and show her desire to not be demoted from the royal family, and possibly the succession, again.

To greater emphasize the singularity and importance of Elizabeth's dedications, Chapter 4 examines extant New Year's gift-exchange information for the years in which Elizabeth gave her translated manuscripts to her relatives. In it, I examine what Mary and Elizabeth gave their father, brother, and their stepmother at this time and what the sisters received in return. This will give us a glimpse as to how each princess understood her own position at court and within her immediate family. It is important to know what Elizabeth received and what she gave other relatives as a way to explain the great undertaking of these manuscript gifts.

Chapter 5 concentrates on the printed publications of Elizabeth's translation of Marguerite of Navarre's *Le Miroir de l'âme pécheresse*. Editions of the translations of both princesses appeared in print in 1548; Mary's Gospel of John was printed in January 1548 and Elizabeth's *The Glass of the Sinful Soul* was printed in April 1548. The compilers of these printed editions "presented Mary and Elizabeth as crucial participants in the Edwardian regime and suggested that they possessed a measure of political agency."²² Elizabeth's translation was printed five times by the end of the sixteenth century and was handwritten in one presentation manuscript at the beginning of the seventeenth century. With each compiler and editor of Elizabeth's translation came new meaning and representations of Elizabeth as a princess and queen. Neither princess appears to have made any attempt to censor any printed editions.

²¹ Jaime Goodrich, *Faithful Translators: Authorship, Gender, and Religion in Early Modern England* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2014), 88.

²² Goodrich, *Faithful Translators*, 67.

This study contributes to the ongoing scholarship of Mary and Elizabeth Tudor by comparing the actions of the sisters as princesses through the lens of their pre-accession translations and dedications. Did Elizabeth have to give personal translations in intricately embroidered bindings to be noticed? Did she give them as a reminder of her royal status? Or, did she give them as a “thank you” for beginning her formal education at the same time she was put into the succession? Perhaps she wanted to show that she was just as educated and talented as Mary, her older sister, who probably had a better relationship with her father and stepmother and was certainly more revered at court. Were these translations her attempts to show her feminine skills and hopefully get a good marriage match, unlike her sister who was still unmarried at nearly thirty years old? There really could have been so many motivating factors for Elizabeth to give these translations and her dedications offer the closest evidence that exists as to why she gave them and her intended effect. This book hopes to answer at least some of these questions.

