A Queen, and a Queen of England Too:  
The Intersection of Gender and Nationality  
for Mary and Elizabeth Tudor

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# Table of Contents

**Introduction**  
*The Power of Nationality Before the Power of Nations* ........................................... 1  

**Chapter 1**  
*Mary and Elizabeth in Context* ..................................................................................... 8  

**Chapter 2**  
*All in the Family: The Impact of Lineage* ........................................................................ 24  

**Chapter 3**  
*To Marry or Not to Marry: A Question with Consequences* ........................................ 45  

**Chapter 4**  
*Defenders of the Faith, But of Different Faiths* ................................................................. 66  

**Chapter 5**  
*More than Just a Monarch?* ............................................................................................. 81  

**Conclusion**  
*Nationality and Gender, Nationality Beyond Gender* ...................................................... 93  

**Appendix** ....................................................................................................................... 97  

**Bibliography** ................................................................................................................. 104
To Amy Leonard, for always asking the tough questions.

And to my parents and friends, for giving me the support to answer them.

I grant permission for the publication of this thesis.
INTRODUCTION
The Power of Nationality Before the Power of Nations

Over five hundred years after the end of this British dynasty, the Tudors unmistakably hold a strong presence in today’s society. As illustrated by the breadth of books, movies, and television series, twenty-first century popular culture maintains an interest in the likes of Henry VIII, his wives, and his children. Unsurprising given this widespread appeal, the Tudors also stand as an area of recurrent focus within the realm of scholarship. Historians have extensively addressed the subject, but, considering the richness of the era and the characters involved, topics have not yet been exhausted. In spite of the considerable attention devoted by scholars to the Tudors, there certainly remains notable space in which to examine and explore.

For reasons ranging from the eventfulness of their reigns to the uniqueness of their positions as queens regnant, England’s Mary I and Elizabeth I have functioned as sources of particular fascination for numerous historians. By and large the existing studies have encompassed examinations of the issue of gender from a great variety of angles. Whereas Carole Levin has generally focused on the latter’s transcendence of her sex and Roy Strong on her gendered iconography, David Loades has conducted thorough biographical research of the former as both a woman and a sovereign. Given that Elizabeth in countless ways “represented everything that Mary was not,” scholars have produced a vast body of comparative analyses regarding the two queens.¹ Across a broad spectrum of traits from bloodline and faith to style of governance and capacity for self-representation, the sovereigns stood in stark contrast to one another. The differences in personality and talents generated two very distinct reigns shaped by the monarchs’ innate

¹ Tracy Borman, Elizabeth’s Women (New York: Bantham Books, 2009), 156.
and extrinsic individualities. In establishing this oppositional comparison, scholars regularly concentrate on the ability of each to manage as a female ruler in a male-dominated world.

Though historians have examined and re-examined the queens’ handling of their femininity, studies have dedicated little consideration to their specifically English femininity. As such, research comparing these two sovereigns has thus far failed to comprehensively address the theme of nationality. One of the most frequently-cited sources from the Tudor era originates from Elizabeth’s 1588 speech at Tilbury in which she proclaimed to her troops, “I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too.”² Scholars including Anna Whitelock and Janet M. Greene have comprehensively discussed the consequence of this statement in relation to gender, but none have addressed the fact that the sovereign made an explicit reference to her nationality. In view of that, the famous Tilbury serves as a single example of the void that this paper seeks to fill and as just one representation of the vast evidence attesting to the interrelation. Moreover, in evaluating the rhetorical strategies of Mary and Elizabeth, the historian Cristy Beemer emphasizes the importance of constructing for the people of England a strong image of their monarch in which “the monarch is England.”³ While she accordingly confirms the connection between kingdom and sovereign, no in-depth examination of this link has been undertaken as of yet. The impact of national identity on the rule of each queen regnant remains hitherto untouched despite the fact that the unmarried, wholly-English Protestant stood, quite obviously, as a stark contrast to the

half-Spanish Catholic with a Spanish husband. To that end, the intersection of gender and nationality yields further grounds for comparison and understanding of Elizabeth and Mary.

Although the concept of nationality did not fully emerge until decades after the end of the Tudor dynasty, the term proves valuable for encapsulating each sovereign’s connection to her kingdom and her subjects. The early modern era did not witness the comprehensive development of the English nation, but the inhabitants of sixteenth-century England nonetheless viewed their homeland as offering some sense of collective self. As the Renaissance scholar Richard Helgerson explains, “Things English came to matter with a special intensity both because England itself mattered more than it had and because other sources of identity and cultural authority mattered less.”  

4 In this way, an individual’s self-identification stood necessarily linked to the kingdom. Further confirming this connection, the historian William S. Malty asserts of the late Tudor era, “Englishmen were unquestionably aware of their national identity.” 5 Accordingly, even before the full development of the concept of nationalism, the early modern English demonstrated a bond with their kingdom to which many felt “no Realme in the world is able to match.” 6 The notion of nations did not yet exist during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth, but their subjects still self-identified with what would eventually become the English nation.

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Without disregarding the fact that “nationality” did not develop as a discernible concept until the late eighteenth century, this paper will employ the expression to signify the cohesiveness felt by the English as a population separate from other Europeans. Here, national identity will be defined in a more expansive manner than present-day usage in order to more thoroughly encompass sixteenth-century perceptions of what it meant to belong to England. For the purpose of this paper, the nationality of each queen can be understood as a combination of her lineage, marital status, religion, and relationship with her subjects. Despite the anachronism of the term, this redefined understanding allows for the more complete realization of the projected and recognized personas of Mary and Elizabeth. They were not merely queens but, rather significantly, queens of England. This latter characteristic must be explored in order to more fully appreciate the divergent trajectories of the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth.

For the most part, analyses of the sovereigns tend to develop from the foundation that each woman lived in a patriarchal society and sat in a traditionally male position. Works from Judith M. Richards’ “To Promote a Woman to Beare Rule” to Paulina Kewes’ “Two Queens, One Inventory: The Lives of Mary and Elizabeth Tudor” uniformly articulate that this anomalous situation led the monarchs’ femininity to function as a considerable obstacle that could not be ignored. Moreover, the general consensus among the scholarly community indicates that the queens not only addressed the issue of gender in distinct manners but also governed very differently as a result. In affirming that Mary’s limitations as a sovereign were “largely those which were imposed by sex,” Loades indicates that she never truly surmounted the difficulties created by her
status as a woman ruler. Elizabeth, on the other hand, effectively utilized her gender in a manner that simultaneously overcame resistance to her reign and in fact strengthened her sovereignty. Contemporaries of the Tudor queens, not solely modern historians, attest to the divergence in the capacity of each to cope with her vulnerabilities as a female monarch. Establishing this difference in character and ability, the English bishop John Aylmer declared that, in direct contrast to Elizabeth, “the late Quene Mary, who bearinge, and wearing, a womans hart, coulde not (I thincke) have used such rigoure.” Both primary and secondary sources thus verify that these half-sisters achieved unequal degrees of success as rulers of England.

Though there are certainly various sources for this disparity, one such explanation concerns nationality, as the distinctive perceptions of the monarchs’ Englishness contrastingly impacted their reigns. Given that subjects tend to favor sovereigns to whom they can relate, national identity held the power to garner regard on the basis of this correlation and, in turn, to enable more effective rule. In other words, the understanding of an English monarch as truly English could facilitate governance by validating the monarch’s authority and ensuring the people’s allegiance. However, this identification was not guaranteed by virtue of accession alone, and not all rulers benefited from the public’s perceptions of their nationality. Given the great number of distinctions between the two queens, it is arguably no surprise that Mary and Elizabeth encompassed opposing national identities, which in due course generated vastly different impacts on their reigns.

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Continuing the prevalent trend of evaluation through contrast, this paper will assess the sovereigns in direct relation to one another. Throughout this comparative analysis, the concepts of lineage, marriage, religion, and relationship with her people serve to illustrate the significance of national identity during the reign of each queen.

Though a sovereign of England, Mary did not enjoy a strong association with her kingdom. Quite simply, her subjects perceived their sovereign as decidedly un-English, and her reign suffered as a result. To that end, nationality stood as a further hindrance to her gaining the support of her people and governing without opposition. Positioned as both un-English and un-male, Mary faced hostility concerning her gender and her national identity. However, despite functioning as an additional hurdle for this first queen regnant, the concept of nationality served as an advantageous tool for Elizabeth to use to mitigate the obstacles imposed by her gender. Unlike her predecessor, she boasted a firm identification with the kingdom and employed this trait to affirm her legitimacy as England’s ruler. In comparing Elizabeth’s reign to Mary’s, the scholar E. Harris Harbinson states, “The spirit of the new reign was to be isolationist and nationalistic, largely because its leaders had reached maturity in a reign which was neither.” With obvious success the second queen regnant harnessed her Englishness as a means to suppress resistance and assert her authority as a monarch, regardless of her sex. Thus, while nationality compounded Mary’s vulnerability as a female ruler, this same category enhanced her successor’s ability to surmount these same gendered obstacles. On the whole, the fully-English Elizabeth benefited from precisely what further limited her seemingly-foreign sister. Whereas many of her contemporaries questioned Mary’s

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11 E. Harris Harbinson, *Rival Ambassadors at the Court of Queen Mary* (Freeport: Books for Libraries, 1970), 331.
Englishness and thus resisted her rule, these same subjects had little doubt that the last
Tudor was a queen, and a queen of England, too.
CHAPTER 1
Mary and Elizabeth in Context

Although neither queen regnant ruled until the mid-sixteenth century, the context of their reigns extends back to the series of dynastic civil wars that ultimately led to the accession of the Tudors to the English throne. The Wars of the Roses (1455-85) pitted against each other the houses of Lancaster, symbolized by the red rose, and of York, represented by white. While this latter branch of the Plantagenet dynasty gained ascendancy in 1461, this Yorkist victory proved relatively short-lived. In 1485, Henry Tudor, a distant relative of the Lancastrian kings who dubiously assumed their claim, defeated Richard III at Bosworth in 1485. Crowned Henry VII, this sole surviving male of the House of Lancaster seized the crown of England and quickly married Elizabeth of York, the niece of the last Yorkist king. As embodied in the new heraldic emblem that combined the white and red roses of the two Plantagenet houses, this union not only ended the political upheavals of the War of the Roses but also launched one of the most famous dynasties in British history. The House of Tudor brought to a close decades of intermittent fighting and thus established a degree of stability in England, despite the somewhat tenuous claim of the new dynasty’s founding member.

Immediately upon his accession, Henry strove to secure his hold on the throne by executing any adversaries, undermining the power of the nobility, imprisoning potential rivals, and ruthlessly but efficiently taxing his subjects. With his accession based on conquest rather than law, this first Tudor king sought to bolster his family’s prestige by gaining the acceptance of a major foreign power and arranging advantageous marriages

for his children. Accordingly, Henry looked to the Spanish kingdom to strengthen his position on the throne as well as to ensure the continuation of his dynasty.

Just over thirty years prior, the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile had united most of the Iberian Peninsula, and their eventual conquest of the Kingdom of Granada further extended their domains. This alliance laid the basis for the full unification of Spain under their grandson Charles who, before succeeding as Holy Roman Emperor, stood as the first person to rule Castile-León and Aragon simultaneously in his own right. Viewing this increased prominence of Spain as a means to enhance the validity of the Tudor dynasty, Henry negotiated a marriage contract between his eldest son Arthur and Catherine, the youngest surviving daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. The Spanish princess wed the Prince of Wales in 1501, but this heir to the English throne died within a year and left in England his sixteen-year-old widow. Arthur’s death presented Henry with the obligation of returning Catherine’s dowry to her father Ferdinand, but the frugal sovereign was reluctant to part with the 100,000 crowns he had already been paid by Spain. As a result, Henry entertained the idea of marrying the princess to Henry, his younger son and new heir, but no definite plans materialized over the next eight years, and the widow remained in England ambiguously.

Upon the death of his father in 1509, Henry VIII acceded to throne and, with a dispensation from Pope Julius II to allow for his marriage to his brother’s widow, soon took Catherine as his wife. Over the next eighteen years, the queen experienced

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15 Mattingly, 55.
16 Scarisbrick, 8.
numerous pregnancies, but of these only one child survived infancy. Though Catherine gave birth in 1516 to a daughter Mary, Henry deemed this female inadequate to eventually continue the Tudor dynasty and rule England. By 1525, the king was both desperate for a son and infatuated with Anne Boleyn, an English commoner who served as a lady-in-waiting to the queen. He consequently campaigned to obtain an annulment from the current Pope, claiming that his union with Catherine violated the biblical injunction forbidding marriage to the former wife of a deceased brother.\textsuperscript{17} Declaring the absence of a son as an indication of G-d’s displeasure, Henry appealed to Rome, but Clement VII, hesitant to anger Catherine’s nephew Charles V and reluctant to overturn a previous exercise of papal power, resisted conceding to his wishes. Despite this hurdle, Henry’s determination to produce an heir, marry Anne, and achieve unopposed sovereignty within his kingdom ultimately led to England’s break from Roman jurisdiction. Without ever truly repudiating Catholic doctrine, the king nonetheless split from Rome and, under the title of Supreme Head of the Church of England, established himself as the spiritual leader of his kingdom. In assuming the role of God’s deputy on earth, Henry created a national church that independently annulled his marriage, dissolved England’s monasteries, demanded the full allegiance of English clergymen, and enhanced his own power.

With the settlement of the “King’s Great Matter” (as his efforts to obtain an annulment were called) finally achieved in 1533 through his divorce of Catherine and resultant bastardization of his daughter Mary, Henry married his mistress Anne, the same Englishwoman who had once served his former queen. From the time of her affair with the king even before their wedding, she had established herself as a highly-unpopular

\textsuperscript{17} Scarisbrick, 150-152.
figure, with nobility and commoners alike disliking her arrogance, the power she held over the king, her family’s covetousness, and her replacement of the well-loved queen who preceded her.\textsuperscript{18} Despite the extensive hostility toward Anne, England’s new Church validated the king’s second marriage in the same year as the annulment of his first. Shortly after this defiance of Rome and exercise of royal autonomy, Henry’s new wife gave birth to a daughter that the royal couple named Elizabeth, in honor of the king’s mother. Like her predecessor, Anne failed to produce a son, and her miscarriages similarly lost her the favor of her husband. With the intrigues of the king’s court already having generated for the queen numerous enemies on political and religious grounds, Henry’s desperate longing for an heir and the existence of a new royal mistress virtually guaranteed Anne’s downfall.\textsuperscript{19} In 1536, the queen was arrested and imprisoned on the charges of adultery, incest, and high treason. With her sham of a trial resulting in a predestined guilty verdict and the dissolution of her marriage, Anne was executed, Elizabeth was disinherited, and Henry was free to marry yet again.

Immediately thereafter, the king married his mistress Jane Seymour, another Englishwoman, and this third wife finally bore him the male heir he so desired. However, after giving birth to this son christened Edward in 1537, she died of postnatal complications. Though Henry eventually married an additional three times, none of these wives produced any offspring and thereby left the king with a sole male heir and two daughters. To ensure the continuation of the Tudor dynasty in case disaster befell his only son, the king issued the Act of Succession of 1543 to restore both Mary and Elizabeth to the line of the succession behind Prince Edward. Whereas the Henry’s firstborn upheld

\textsuperscript{18} Carolly Erickson, \textit{Bloody Mary} (New York: Doubleday, 1978), 100.
\textsuperscript{19} Scarisbrick, 348.
her mother’s faith and remained a staunch Catholic throughout her life, his later offspring, both born after the break with Rome to reform-minded mothers, received humanist educations at the hands of Protestant tutors.20 This divergence in religion would prove significant throughout the reigns of the late Tudor era.

Apart from his tumultuous personal life, Henry’s reign included the imposition on England of considerable religious discord, the destruction of religious structures and treasures, the ruthless persecution of his adversaries, and a return of the kingdom to debt.21 Nevertheless, “the bluff, confident patriotic king” stands as one of the more celebrated rulers of Britain’s monarchy. As the Henrican biographer J. J. Scarisbrick states, “[D]espite everything, he was indisputably revered, indeed, in some strange way, loved.”22 His subjects adored the glamorous, larger-than-life figure who dressed extravagantly, created an exciting court, organized elaborate tournaments, and stood as a symbol of England’s power. Both then and now, Henry has earned considerable admiration for his support for humanist learning, the founding of the English Navy, his patronage of the arts, the launch of the English Reformation, a further centralization of the monarchy’s authority, and the improvement of significant buildings across the kingdom.23 When he died in 1547, his sole male heir Edward, a sickly boy of nine, ascended as the new king of England.

Raised a Protestant and guided by Protestant advisers, this son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour brought to the kingdom reforms ranging from the elimination of the Mass and abolition of clerical celibacy to the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer and

20 Scarisbrick, 457.
21 Scarisbrick, 510.
22 Scarisbrick, 506.
23 Scarisbrick, 498.
stricter enforcement of the injunctions against images. Yet apart from establishing Protestantism in England, Edward VI achieved little else, with his reign instead marked by social unrest, economic troubles, and power struggles within the Council of Regency. After just six years on the throne, the boy king died, though not before he altered the succession. Fearful of the potential re-instatement of the Catholic Church, Edward excluded his half-sister Mary on the basis of her religious beliefs but simultaneously recognized the difficulty in disinheriting only one sibling. As a result of this predicament and the influence of power-hungry councilors, he eliminated Elizabeth from the succession as well. Persuaded by the selfish motives of advisers who hoped to increase their own authority, Edward named as his successor Jane Grey, the great-granddaughter of Henry VII and daughter-in-law of the Lord Protector John Dudley. Proclaimed queen on the day of the young king’s death in 1553, Jane lasted as the de facto monarch of England for a mere nine days.

Upon her half-brother’s death and the news of the altered succession, Mary quickly rallied supporters, including both Catholics and those who felt her lawful claim to the throne as a direct descendent of Henry VIII overrode religious considerations. With the backing of “innumerable companies of the common people” and powerful members of the nobility, she quickly forced Dudley’s surrender, deposed her cousin, and ascended to her father’s throne amidst a wave of popular support. In consequence, England witnessed its first queen regnant, positioning the new sovereign as an anomaly forced to navigate the difficult albeit not insurmountable path toward establishing herself as an autonomous sovereign. Without precedent, Mary acceded as a female ruler in a

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24 Erickson, 227.
patriarchal society that widely viewed women as inferior and without independent legal status. Nevertheless, sixteenth-century Europe had begun to modify, as the era witnessed a prevalence of powerful women, the rise of the humanist view regarding the capabilities of exceptional women, and a growing understanding of female virtues beyond solely beauty.\textsuperscript{26} As such, Mary’s reign cannot accurately be viewed as doomed from the start. Although her sex made governance more challenging, it by no means generated for the queen an impossible task.

Despite declaring shortly after her accession that “her highness mindeth not to compel any of her said subjects” to adopt Catholicism, the queen almost immediately ordered the arrests of reformers, overturned the annulment of her parents’ marriage, and abolished Edward’s religious laws.\textsuperscript{27} Furthermore, as an additional measure to return England to Rome and as a step to prevent the future succession of her Protestant half-sister, Mary sought to find a Catholic husband. Heavily influenced by her first cousin Charles V and his ambassador to her court, the queen soon made up her mind to marry the Emperor’s son Philip, despite the widespread hostility of the English toward the alliance. This opposition to Catholicism and foreign interference manifested itself in a number of insurrections, with Wyatt’s Rebellion standing as the most famous. Though all ultimately unsuccessful, the mere existence of the series of plots in early 1554 demonstrates the vast unpopularity of the match.\textsuperscript{28} Against the popular opinion of her subjects and the expressed wishes of many members of her government, the queen married Philip later that year. Prior to the marriage, the English council successfully

\textsuperscript{26} Loades, \textit{Mary Tudor: A Life}, 6-7.
\textsuperscript{28} Loades, \textit{Mary Tudor: A Life}, 215.
achieved a marriage treaty that stipulated numerous safeguards to prevent any exercise of power by the new king consort. Nonetheless, the antagonism toward the Spanish alliance and Philip would remain a divisive issue throughout the queen’s reign.

With the execution of the majority of these anti-Catholic rebels and a husband eager for reconciliation with Rome, the queen vigorously strove to bring her kingdom back under papal jurisdiction. This endeavor would ultimately prove quite detrimental to her rule. With little concern for or perhaps even knowledge of the animosity her actions would provoke, she reinstated the ancient heresy laws, restored the Latin Mass, removed married clergy, and formally abrogated the title of Supreme Head. Many of the English, however, were unwilling to return to the old religion. Consequently, Mary, with the support of notable Catholics in her government, launched extensive persecutions of religious nonconformists. Her campaign to impose Catholicism and eliminate dissent led to the burning of nearly three hundred individuals as well as the elective exile of many more. This brutal policy greatly exacerbated anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish sentiments throughout England in addition to inciting resentment against Mary herself. Accordingly, the queen’s religion and her pro-Catholic efforts came to position her as a widely-unpopular monarch who, even beyond the basis of gender, struggled to rule effectively.

To the devastation of his deeply-besotted wife, Philip left England in 1555 to temporarily escape his taxing role as a powerless king in a hostile country and as a target of wifely infatuation. When he returned in 1557, the Spanish king strove to persuade

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31 Anna Whitelock, *Mary Tudor: England’s First Queen* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009), 266.
Mary to provide English support to Spain in a war against France.\textsuperscript{32} Though the queen readily assented, her councilors opposed any declaration of war because of England’s impoverished state, its lack of interest in the conflict, the risk to English trade with France, and the foreign entanglement that would breach the marriage treaty.\textsuperscript{33} Yet despite her government’s reluctance against involvement, Thomas Stafford’s French-supported invasion of England in 1557 led to a declaration of war that Mary had previously pursued as a means to please her husband. England struggled from the start, and in early 1558 French forces took Calais, the last English foothold on the continent. This loss not only wounded English self-esteem but also provoked increased anti-Spanish propaganda in a kingdom already hostile to the European power and prince, their king consort. Moreover, this military defeat that resulted from Philip’s power over his wife severely damaged Mary's prestige in the eyes of her subjects and stood as part of a trend concerning her acquiescence to external influence. In this way, her actions and not merely her sex undermined her legitimacy as a sovereign.

Despite her deep desire to exclude her Protestant sister from the throne, Mary, whose marriage included a number of false pregnancies, failed to produce a child with Philip. Though the queen’s will made no specific provision for the succession, Elizabeth stood as the lawful and uncontested successor to the crown of England. After months of deteriorating health, Mary died in November 1558 amidst jubilation for the new queen rather than sorrow for the deceased. At the time of her death, Mary was vastly unpopular

\textsuperscript{32} Loades, \textit{Mary Tudor: A Life}, 253.
\textsuperscript{33} Loades, \textit{Mary Tudor: A Life}, 272.
among the majority of her subjects who resented the Spanish marriage, her reign’s harsh religious policies, the persecutions of Protestants, and the recent loss of Calais.\footnote{Erickson, 482.}

As “all the churches in London did ring, and at night did make bonfires,” Elizabeth I acceded the throne as the fifth and last monarch of the Tudor dynasty.\footnote{The Diary of Henry Machyn, 178.} From the start, the queen sought a solution to the religious divisions created during the previous few reigns. She attempted to find a compromise that would not overwhelmingly offend her Catholic subjects but would also meet many of the desires of reformers. Seeking “to be Queen of all the English, not just the Protestants,” Elizabeth emphasized the theme of national unity even as she maintained a degree of ambiguity about her own religious views.\footnote{Levin, The Reign of Elizabeth I, 14.} Still, in 1559 a series of statues known as the Elizabethan Religious Settlement outlined the structure of the Church of England and re-established its independence as the official church of the kingdom. Together, the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity once again severed England’s ties with Rome, granted the monarch the title of Supreme Governor of the Church, abolished the Catholic mass, and returned the kingdom to Edwardian Protestantism.\footnote{Levin, The Reign of Elizabeth I, 23.} These religious policies not only differentiated Elizabeth from Mary but also linked the queen back to her popular father and proclaimed her exclusive commitment to her kingdom. Accordingly, she enjoyed far greater esteem among her subjects, which, in turn, minimized many anxieties regarding her sex and allowed for her more successful governance. Likely exaggerated but not entirely removed
from the truth, Elizabeth commented, “I established without opposition my own religion in the country, under which my subjects have since lived in great peace.”

Much like her religious policies indicated a sharp contrast with her predecessor, Elizabeth’s choices concerning marriage further distinguished this last Tudor from Mary. While at the outset of her reign her subjects and councilors expected their sovereign would marry, she defied this anticipation. Despite numerous offers for her hand and her prolonged entertainment of various marital proposals, Elizabeth never chose a husband. There exists no general consensus on the precise reasoning behind this course of action, but the decision likely stands as a result of some combination of factors like the absence of an ideal choice of groom, potential loss of authority, possible alienation of her subjects, dangers of childbirth, and psychological trauma from her parents’ marriage. Though scholars speculate whether or not Elizabeth intended to remain single from the very start, the queen without question effectively employed her unmarried state to her and England’s advantage. Marriage negotiations constituted a key element in her foreign policy that sought to find a balance between the two powers on the continent and to avoid their interference in Scotland or Ireland. For example, Spain would not realistically declare war on England when Elizabeth was entertaining a French suitor for fear of having to face a combined Anglo-French force. While she understood the great value of these marital negotiations and enjoyed being courted, the queen came to encourage the use of her virginity as a symbol of virtue, source of national pride, and trait distinguishing her from all other women. However, Elizabeth’s single status also dictated the absence of

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40 Levin, “*The Heart and Stomach of a King*,” 40.
children, which stood as a source of considerable anxiety among her advisers who implored their sovereign to marry and later simply desired her to select an heir. In the end, the decision to remain unwed uniquely established the second queen regnant as a fully-autonomous female sovereign with a fully-English allegiance. This position precluded doubts against her sovereignty and loyalties, thereby enhancing her ability to govern England even as a woman.

Despite choosing divergent paths in the spheres of religion and marriage, Elizabeth could not entirely separate herself from her predecessor, as she unavoidably inherited England’s involvement in the war between Spain and France. Yet recognizing the lack of strategic value of this conflict, she pursued peace negotiations with France and within six months of her accession approved the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis to resolve the issue of Calais and gain the French King’s recognition of her lawful claim. At least for a time, Elizabeth was thus able to shield England from any foreign embroilments, which came to be a defining characteristic of her reign. When possible, the queen sought to maintain peace in her kingdom, and this avoidance of war stood as a well-reasoned decision rather than a womanly whim. Elizabeth’s subjects largely recognized the political astuteness of her foreign policy that worked to benefit England’s interests alone and appreciated this re-prioritization that incorporated neither Spanish nor Catholic influence. As follows, she largely came to be seen as an English monarch committed to the welfare of the English.41

Despite Elizabeth’s efforts to establish a balance between the desires of her Protestant and Catholic subjects, extremists on both sides felt the 1559 Settlement to be unacceptable. Yet whereas the Puritans of England generally resisted the sovereign and

her religious policies through words, the kingdom’s radical Catholics plotted to depose her. This latter opposition grew more intense after the first decade of her reign when Mary Stuart fled Scotland after her forced abdication and arrived in England in 1568. With serious concerns about sending her Scottish cousin either back to her own country or to the continent, Elizabeth chose to confine this potential claimant to her throne. Over the next nineteen years Mary engaged with other Catholics in a number of conspiracies to replace the English sovereign and return the kingdom to Catholicism. The first, referred to as the 1569 Northern Rebellion, involved a scheme to free Mary and place her on the throne of England. Though Elizabeth proved victorious over the rebels, the Rising in the North led the Pope to issue a papal bull known as *Regnans in excelsis* to depose Elizabeth, thereby absolving her English Catholics of all loyalty and obedience to the ruler. This official excommunication not only inspired conspiracies, like the Ridolfi plot that same year, to assassinate the queen but also more firmly aligned her government and many of her subjects against the Catholic minority. Though for some time Elizabeth resisted her councilors’ persistent calls for Mary’s death, the evidence of letters written during the 1586 Babington Plot ultimately led her to approve the execution of the Queen of Scots. This decision eliminated the chief mouthpiece of the Catholic opposition, but conspiracies against the English monarch arose periodically throughout the remainder of her reign. However, England on the whole came to exhibit greater protectiveness toward Elizabeth, and this fierce loyalty strengthened her position as a ruler.

While Elizabeth generally strove to avoid foreign entanglements, the 1570 papal bull, the continued religious turmoil across Europe, and the threat of Spanish domination

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forced England’s involvement in affairs on the continent and ended the relative insularity of her reign. After the 1584 murder of the Protestant leader William of Orange and the surrender of a number of Dutch towns to the Count of Parma, Elizabeth signed the Treaty of Nonesuch as a pledge of military assistance to the Protestant Dutch in their rebellion against Spain. In consequence, the queen in 1585 sent forces to aid the rebels in the Spanish Netherlands against Philip II. The campaign, however, proved largely unsuccessful, and war between Spain and England appeared imminent. After years of English harassment of Spanish shipping, Elizabeth’s excommunication, the Pope’s support for an attack against England, and the 1587 execution of Mary Stuart, Philip began to prepare for an invasion to overthrow his former sister-in-law and reestablish Roman Catholicism in her kingdom. Yet when the Spanish Armada sailed toward England in 1588, Elizabeth’s navy defeated the force that Europe had once believed to be invincible. The Anglo-Spanish war would not officially end until the Treaty of London in 1604, yet this victory held an immense psychological impact throughout England. Though simply the figurehead for her army, Elizabeth was celebrated as having “led” a successful military campaign, and the triumph largely overshadowed her limitations as a woman. Her subjects came to see this defeat of Catholic Spain’s superior force as a sign of G-d’s favor and England’s inviolability under the queen.

Throughout her reign, Ireland stood as a particularly challenging situation to confront because although Elizabeth technically ruled over the kingdom, the English administration there lacked full control. Willing to defy the queen and conspire with her enemies, the hostile, Catholic population pursued a number of bloody insurrections that

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proved quite difficult and costly for England to attempt to suppress. One of the more disastrous of these campaigns occurred in 1599 when Elizabeth sent the Earl of Essex, a favorite courtier, to subdue the Irish rebels. His failure in Ireland earned him the queen’s wrath, and the resultant disgrace he faced upon his return to England ultimately moved him to stage a rebellion in 1601. This last of a series of plots to overthrow the sovereign similarly proved unsuccessful, and Essex was executed that same year.

Both her contemporaries and modern scholars note Essex’s rebellion as a factor that contributed to the deterioration in the queen’s health. Over the next year and a half, Elizabeth grew increasingly melancholy and ill until her eventual death in 1603. Though she produced no heir and refused to name a successor, the general consensus of the time understood that James VI of Scotland, the son of Mary Stuart, would follow. When he seamlessly acceded to the throne, James I terminated the Tudor dynasty but also united the English and Scottish crowns with little resistance. Though virtually uncontested as Elizabeth’s successor, the new king’s political mismanagement, personal failings, and preference toward his country of birth generated considerable resentment throughout England. As follows, James’s reign served to produce a strong feeling of nostalgia that essentially eradicated Elizabeth’s shortcomings and enhanced her prestige.

Despite critiques concerning the concluding period of her forty-five year rule, Elizabeth had gained the esteem of the majority of her subjects and the respect of much of Europe “as a Prince feared of her enemies, honored by her confederates, beloved of

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49 Hunt, 2-3.
her own people.”\textsuperscript{50} Known in later times as “The Golden Age,” the queen’s reign encompassed triumphs such as the defeat of the Spanish Armada, promotion of English literature, encouragement of trade, support for overseas expansion, and recognition of England as a leading power. Though partially a result of a nostalgic revival of the cult of Elizabeth after her death, “this great princess,” much like her father, remains one of the most beloved sovereigns in British history.\textsuperscript{51}


CHAPTER 2
All in the Family: The Impact of Lineage

Lineage functions as a vital component in a hereditary monarchy, assuring continuity in governance and proclaiming the legitimacy of a successor. Like most other European kingdoms of the era, medieval and early modern England judged the strength of a claimant by his (or, after 1553, possibly her) connection to the preceding line of rulers. In other words, the closeness of a successor to the former monarch served to validate the transfer of power and thus bolster the new monarch’s authority. This heritage in turn helped to affirm the sovereign’s connection with and allegiance to the kingdom, which even in this era before the emergence of nations can be labeled most accurately as nationality. While the idea of nationhood had not yet fully developed by the time of the Tudor dynasty, sixteenth-century society nonetheless held a conception of Englishness that incorporated ties to England’s land, culture, and history. In an age without passports or national anthems, nationality involved the establishment of a link with the kingdom and an association with particular values or skills. Not unlike today, this characterization, as defined in the context of this paper, stemmed in part from parentage, with the transfer of an English identity issuing from parent to offspring. Because bloodline thus assured a continued bond with England, lineage contributed significantly to perceptions of a monarch’s Englishness, or the degree of association with the “nation.”

Though in England the emphasis on a successor’s heritage focused almost exclusively on males, this standard approach proved especially significant in the reigns of the Tudor queens regnant. Immediately disadvantaged by their sex in an era dominated and governed by men, Mary and Elizabeth were particularly vulnerable to attacks against
their right to rule. In consequence, dynastic connections functioned as a crucial tool to validate her claim, regardless of her gender. As with the earlier kings of England, the parentage of each stood as a variable with the power to either strengthen her authority or undermine her legitimacy. Unfortunately for Mary, she in general suffered from the latter, as the English tended to perceive a disconnect between her and her predecessors. Because this association with parents and grandparents played a key role in the monarchs’ national identity, the first queen regnant, by virtue of both pedigree and action, stood as un-English in the eyes of many of her subjects. In contrast to her half-Spanish, Spanish-leaning sister, Elizabeth enjoyed an untainted connection to the dynasty and thus to England. Her lack of foreign blood and her resemblance to her predecessors reinforced the position of this last Tudor as a sovereign and a specifically-English sovereign. Although both monarchs, their supporters, and even their adversaries employed the concept of lineage, only Elizabeth benefited from an affirmation of the validity of her rule. While this theme appeared prominently throughout the reigns of both, the particulars of the two distinct parentages ultimately generated a stark contrast between the ability of each queen regnant to govern effectively. Although merely one among numerous features that distinguish Mary and Elizabeth, the issue of heritage contributed to the differences not only in England’s reception of each sovereign but also in her comparable success.

In a unique position as England’s first queen regnant, Mary faced the difficult challenge of persuading her subjects that as the direct, albeit female, offspring of a Tudor king she possessed as much of a right to rule as her half-brother and father. Accordingly, emphasis on her ancestry was a key strategy to declare the validity of her claim to the throne despite her sex. As indicated through the range of primary sources produced
during her reign, Mary and her supporters stressed her connection to her predecessors in order to affirm her authority as a legitimate successor to the English throne. While not an approach remarkably different from that employed by earlier kings, assertions of the queen’s national identity here proved particularly crucial, for this highlighting of her heritage attempted to confirm the rightness of her accession regardless of her gender.

In the official 1553 proclamation, “Announcing Accession of Queen Mary I,” the new monarch affirmed the continuity and character of her reign by declaring to her subjects, “They shall find us their benign and gracious sovereign lady, as other our most noble progenitors have heretofore been.”52 The queen thus overtly associated herself with the men of her dynasty as a means to confirm her rule “by the same authoritie and power” as these predecessors.53 Mary sought to affirm that, even as a female, her kinship with previous kings would enable her to rule “[i]n as full large and ample maner as it hathe done heretofore to any other her most noble Progenitours, Kinges of this Realme.”54 She alleged that her direct descent from English monarchs confirmed her accession to the English throne and validated her sovereignty over the people of England.

As part of this strategy, Mary, at the very start of her reign, issued a statute to revalidate her parents’ marriage, which Henry had annulled in 1533. She intended this proclamation to remove suspicions in regards to her legitimacy and bolster her position as the valid successor to the Tudors. While on one hand “AN ACTE declaring the Quenes Hyghnes to have bene borne in a most just and lawfull Matrimonie” resulted from the

54 “AN ACTE declaring that the Regall Power of this Realme is in the Queene’s Majestie,” Statutes of the Realm 222.
practical need to overturn her previous illegitimate status as well as a more personal desire for redemption, the promptly-issued statute also demonstrates Mary’s recognition of the significance of a claimant’s lineage. The fact that the monarch almost immediately decreed that the acts of Parliament that had tarnished her connection to Henry VIII “shalbe and bee repealed, and bee void and of no force nor effecte” indicates the vast importance of parentage in acceding to the English throne.55

Much like the queen herself, the champions of Mary’s reign sought to similarly validate her position as the direct descendant of an established line of kings. Numerous speeches, poems, and other works from the period of 1553 to 1558 highlighted the sovereign’s lineage as a means to assert the legitimacy of her accession. For example, in a ballad celebrating Mary’s marriage to Philip, John Heywood, a writer who enjoyed the patronage of multiple monarchs, happily described the queen as “Both red and whight,” which, as the colors of the Tudor crest, identified her as a product of the union of Lancaster and York.56 With most Englishmen opposing her marriage to a Spaniard, Marian supporters sought to remind the kingdom of her lineage as a tool to proclaim her supreme sovereignty in the face of this resistance. Likewise establishing the sovereign as the embodiment of this powerful duality, the English writer Robert Wingfield labels her “Sacred Mary, child of both Houses” and thus continues the trend of referring to heritage to assert authority.57

55 “AN ACTE declaring the Quenes Hyghnes to have bene borne in a most just and lawfull Matrimonie,” Statutes of the Realm, 201.
56 John Heywood, A Balade Specifieng partly the...Mariage betwene our Soueraigne Lord, and our Soueraigne Lady (London: Wyllyam Ryddell, 1554?).
However, despite the words of the queen and her supporters, these appeals to lineage largely failed to enhance the monarch’s national identity and to confirm her legitimacy in the eyes of the majority of her subjects. Though the historian Charles Beem argues, “Mary’s position as Henry VIII’s eldest daughter carried with it an almost automatic esteem and respect from her subjects,” her failure to fully capitalize on this advantageous factor and confront her opposition’s challenges undercut these benefits. 

While the sovereign stood as the offspring of both an English and Spanish parent, it is this latter heritage that appears to have played the more significant role in defining her nationality. As Loades maintains, “No one took her professions of Englishness very seriously.” Against the comparatively-limited efforts to emphasize the queen’s connection to the Tudor dynasty, the larger body of primary sources from the monarch’s era demonstrate the general failures of these attempts, for many of her contemporaries viewed and proclaimed Mary as less than fully English. Perhaps most illustrative of this point is the comment from Giovanni Francesco Commendone, a papal Legate and Marian supporter, that “the way of life of the Queen favoured foreigners.” Thus, despite her pedigree of English kings and accession to the English throne, Mary fell short of establishing herself as a fully-English monarch and as a result diminished her own capacity to govern.

Notwithstanding her uncontested descent from Henry VIII, Mary also stood as the offspring of a princess of Spain, and this fact unavoidably designated her as half-Spanish. However, despite “the strength of feeling among her xenophobic people,” Mary’s foreign

59 David Loades, Mary Tudor: A Life, 334.
blood did not necessarily doom her to fail as a ruler of England. Though the historian Laura Hunt Yungblut maintains the general consensus among scholars in stating, “The English, especially Londoners, actively disliked foreigners,” early sixteenth-century accounts illustrate England’s positive opinion of Mary’s mother Catherine. Illustrating the capacity of this xenophobic nation to accept a foreigner, an unnamed observer of this warm reception described how Englishmen appeared pleased with “the goodly endutying [composition] of this noble lady and Princess of Hispayne.” Admittedly, a woman’s lineage stood weaker than that of her husband, so, generally speaking, the heritage of a Spanish woman marrying an English man would be subsumed by his masculine Englishness. While Catherine thus surrendered some of her foreignness upon marriage to the Tudor prince, England’s immediate and continued approval indicates the possibility for the society to set aside its xenophobic tendencies. Accordingly, it was not as much Mary’s Spanish blood as her foreign connections and habits that severely disadvantaged her reign.

Even while affirming her place in the House of Tudor, Mary purposefully as well as unintentionally emphasized her ties to Spain. For one, drawing from her Spanish heritage and assuming her mother’s tradition, this first queen regnant of England adopted the pomegranate of Aragon as her own personal device. Mary also frequently appeared in Spanish rather than English styles, overtly favoring the fashions of the Iberian Peninsula like the saya alta, or “high dress.” Particularly after her marriage to Philip, she tended to appear, both in person and in paintings like Hans Eworth’s Mary I, in the sartorial

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61 Borman, 144.
traditions of Spain (see image 1).64 While these may appear as insignificant acts, the decisions stand as elements of a noticeable pattern of leaning toward Spain and, at least in the minds of her xenophobic subjects, away from England. More broadly, Mary’s obvious reliance on Emperor Charles, her husband Philip, and various Hapsburg courtiers indicated the foreign influence present in her reign and consequently produced a perception of her un-Englishness. Unambiguously illustrating this dependence, the imperial ambassador Simon Renard wrote to the Bishop of Arras concerning the relationship between the Emperor and the queen, “His Majesty, she hoped, would have a thought for the government of the realm…she desired to obey him as if he were her own father.”65 By continually looking outside England for guidance, Mary undermined the benefits of her position as Henry VIII’s eldest daughter and, in the words of the scholar Philip Edwards, “proved herself not to be a genuine, nationalistic Tudor.”66 Though Emperor Charles advised her to perpetuate an image as “a good Englishwoman, wholly bent on the kingdom’s welfare,” the queen seems to have failed to fulfill this recommendation by maintaining both foreign intimacies and Spanish customs, such as her personal device and choice of dress.67 In this manner, Mary independently damaged her own national identity and thus alienated subjects who, regardless of their monarch’s sex, expected an English ruler with whom they could identify. With its xenophobic tendencies and geographic isolation, England objected to the questionable nationality of this queen on the grounds that she lacked a true connection to the kingdom.

Beyond undermining her nationality through her own actions and choices, Mary’s opponents worked to further weaken her national identity by disconnecting “this vngodlie serpent Marie” from her parentage and kingdom.\(^68\) Although the sovereign and her followers made some effort to stress her lineage as a means to support her claim, their Protestant contemporaries used the same theme to weaken her position and challenge her authority. By and large, these adversaries successfully represented Mary as an un-English traitor “[w]ho seeketh but to consume the Englishe nation,” and these charges, in the minds of sixteenth-century English as well as through a scholarly lens, contain considerable validity.\(^69\) Widely adopted by the queen’s subjects, the accusations stemmed with justification from the queen’s imposition of Catholicism, evident proclivity toward Spain, and persecution of Protestant subjects.

Not content to merely question her allegiance, anti-Marian propagandists additionally sought to dissociate the monarch from the Tudor dynasty, and many Englishmen came to see the ruler as a sort of pariah of the family. In drawing a stark contrast with “her brother Godly kinge Edwarde,” Christopher Goodman, a Protestant clergyman and writer, strove to sever Mary’s connections to her predecessors and, as a result, undermine her sovereignty.\(^70\) As a similar attempt to drive a wedge between Mary and Henry VIII, Laurence Saunders, author of *A Trewe Mirrour of the Wofull State of Englande*, declared, “The Quene goeth about to breake her fathers wil and al such lawes and statutes as were made for the preservation and safegarde of hys realme.”\(^71\) This

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\(^{69}\) Goodman, 129.

\(^{70}\) Goodman, 99.

English preacher, like many other Protestants of his era, represented the half-Spanish, Catholic monarch as detrimental to the realm precisely because of her divergence from the Tudors on religious, ideological, and hereditary grounds. In accusing Mary of “utterly abhorring the Englishe nation” on the basis of her foreign blood ties, Goodman irretrievably separated the queen from her heritage and kingdom.\textsuperscript{72} While these Protestant activists opposed the Catholic queen primarily on religious grounds, attacks against her lineage served as an additional tool to undercut her authority in a monarchy based on bloodlines and a society deeply concerned with allegiance.\textsuperscript{73} Overall, despite the efforts of some to stress Mary’s parentage as an assertion of her sovereignty, the breadth of sources that employ the same concept to destabilize her position as England’s monarch appear far more vociferous.

Moreover, in direct opposition to the queen’s statute overturning Henry’s annulment of his marriage to Catherine, Protestant activists of the 1550s attacked Mary’s legitimacy as a means to contest her claim to the throne. Much like the emphasis on the queen’s divergence from her predecessors’ nationality and commitments, the accusation of “being a bastarde indeed” served to establish a disconnect that likewise increased her unpopularity and thus limited her ability to rule effectively.\textsuperscript{74} Given that lineage served as the foundation of sovereignty in early modern England, pamphlets like the anonymously-written \textit{Certayne Questions Demaunded and Asked by the Noble Realme of Englanede} challenged the validity of Catherine and Henry’s marriage precisely in order to challenge their daughter’s validity as a ruler. As another example of this denigration of Mary’s

\textsuperscript{72} Goodman, 100.
\textsuperscript{73} Loades, \textit{Mary Tudor: A Life}, 334.
\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Certayne Questions Demaunded and Asked by the Noble Realme of Englanede} (Wesel: Hugh Singleton, 1555), A2v.
parentage, *A Suplicacyon to the Quenes Maiestie*, though primarily intended to condemn particular Catholics in England, nonetheless made the point of noting, “The voice of nature and gods commandment agreeing in one…that the brother shold not mary the brothers wiff,” or, more specifically, that Henry VIII’s marriage to Catherine violated a biblical injunction.\(^75\) Despite Marian efforts to the contrary, adversaries of the queen vocally undermined the legitimacy of her parents’ marriage, which further enabled opponents of the regime to dominate the dialogue concerning her lineage.

On the whole, the issue of lineage proved exceedingly influential in the construction of the queen’s national identity and, for the most part, produced an impression of a nationality disliked by the majority of her subjects. While Beem maintains, “Mary’s lifelong residence in England allowed her a totally English identification,” the body of primary sources demonstrates otherwise, as representations of the monarch largely presented her as un-English and un-Tudor.\(^76\) For this first queen regnant, her heritage predominantly worked to her disadvantage by not only preventing any reliance on her Englishness to overcome the disadvantages resulting from her sex but also providing additional, non-patriarchal grounds for her subjects’ misgivings.

Though ultimately taking on a very different shape, the concept of lineage also played a significant role throughout the reign of Mary’s half-sister and successor. This facet of Elizabeth’s identity similarly stood as a factor in generating her national identity, but the notable differences in the queens’ heritages created quite divergent perceptions of their nationalities. Thus, while the issue maintained a comparable presence during the reigns of both monarchs, the unmistakable differences between the parentage of each

\(^{75}\) *A Suplicacyon to the Quenes Maiestie* (Strasbourg: W. Rihel, 1555), A6v.

\(^{76}\) Beem, 75.
sovereign as well as the extent of her ability to take advantage of the theme contributed to the discrepancy in their successes as rulers.

Issuing from two very different women, the half-sisters Mary and Elizabeth issued received from their mothers divergent sorts of heritage. While the former inherited foreign connections and arguably a degree of Spanish allegiance from Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn generated for her daughter a legacy that, though often disadvantageous during her youth, ultimately benefited Elizabeth during her rule. In replacing a Spanish princess with an Englishwoman, Henry produced a child who, though not fully royal, stood perhaps more importantly as fully English. Throughout her adolescence the vast majority of Elizabeth’s future subjects viewed her mother as an incestuous traitor, yet decades after the execution of this condemned wife England largely came to celebrate “[t]he most clere and most noble lady QUENE ANNE.”77 Though the kingdom once vilified this “other woman” at the behest of her husband, her adversaries at court, and many staunch Catholics, Elizabeth’s reign witnessed a rewriting of history in order to reinforce her legitimacy as well as to underline her Englishness.78 Beyond seeking to confirm the validity of her parents’ marriage and thereby repudiate accusations of illegitimacy, the queen regnant recognized the value of her mother’s English birth in further affirming her own connection to the English kingdom and her English subjects.

As follows, the monarch’s supporters proactively sought to commemorate “The right worthy lady Queen Anne, wife to the said King Henry VIII and mother to our most sovereign lady” in order to remove any tarnish against her daughter resulting from her

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77 A Suplicacyon to the Quenes Maiestie, Bv.
supposed high treason or lack of royalty. Yet rather than merely negate these potential vulnerabilities, Elizabeth’s followers actively worked to use this side of the ruler’s parentage to her advantage. Countless representations of the queen regnant depict her as an exemplar of Englishness precisely because of her mother’s wholly-English blood and ties. In his famous *Book of Martyrs*, John Foxe joyfully described how Henry “married this gracious lady, making a happy change for us, being divorced from the princess and also from the Pope, both at one time.” Similarly portraying Anne Boleyn as the catalyst for English autonomy and the rise of Protestantism, the English bishop John Aylmer praised “the mother of this blessed woman” for enabling England to separate from “the beast of Rome,” or, in other words, for motivating Henry to break from the Catholic Church. Thus, while certainly a contrast to the beloved, unblemished royal princess who preceded her as queen of England, Anne Boleyn nevertheless offered her daughter a heritage that enhanced her national identity and largely strengthened her position on the throne. Despite the stigmatization experienced during her early years, Elizabeth ultimately, in the words of her chief adviser William Cecil, benefited from “being descended by father and mother of mere English blood, and not of Spain, as her sister was.”

Even with different mothers, Elizabeth and Mary still shared the same paternal line, and these connections to their father and grandfather more appreciably impacted perceptions of their lineages. Not unlike her predecessor, the second queen regnant, albeit

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81 Aylmer, B4v.
more aggressively and continually, emphasized her Tudor lineage as an affirmation of her legitimacy and a declaration of her sovereignty. Using language very similar to that in “Announcing Accession of Queen Mary I,” Elizabeth promised to her subjects “on our part no less love and care towards their preservation than hath been in any of progenitors.” Accordingly, the last Tudor, like her predecessor, worked to underscore her relationship to an established line of kings in order to eclipse the difference in sex that held the potential to divide her from her male ancestors. Directly addressing the issue of gender, Elizabeth declared her validity as a ruler, “Although I am a woman, nevertheless I am the daughter of predecessors who knew how to deserve this kingdom.” She highlighted “the royal blood I boast” not only as a means to bolster her position on the throne but also to distinguish herself from all other women. The queen’s royalty functioned as an instrument with which to validate the accession of a woman: she deserved to rule because she was a Tudor. Elizabeth thus sought to overshadow her femininity with her ancestry by repeatedly underscoring this latter facet of her identity. For example, in adorning her person, her representations, and her palaces with Tudor roses, the queen employed this quintessential symbol of her dynasty as a recurrent emphasis on her heritage and a declaration of national pride. In contrast to Mary’s pomegranate, this unambiguously-English device served as a common feature in portraits of Elizabeth as well as functioned in metaphoric applications by writers like Edmund Spenser.

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Yet rather than merely underscore her dynastic ties, Elizabeth specifically emphasized her descent from and similarities to her father. In a conversation with a French ambassador, she succinctly stated, “I am a lion’s cub, and inherit many of his qualities.”86 With Henry VIII being “remembered as the man who had made England independent and great,” Elizabeth successfully capitalized on his popularity by continually highlighting both her pedigree and their resemblances.87 Joining together the themes of heritage and gender, Elizabeth unequivocally proclaimed her authority with the statement, “Though I be a woman, yet I have as good a courage, answerable to my place, as ever my father had. I am your anointed Queen.”88 Time after time, the monarch demonstrated her understanding of the influential role of parentage by referring to the theme as a means to declare her legitimacy and validate her exercise of power. In a pamphlet describing the last Tudor’s coronation, one chronicler wrote, “Her grace smyled…for that she had heard one say, Remember old King Henry the eight.”89 Illustrating the queen’s desire to remain firmly associated with her father, this observation makes clear that Elizabeth quite effectively took advantage of her position as “A naturall child” of a revered king.90 To a far greater degree than Mary, this succeeding queen employed the theme of lineage and specifically stressed her descent from Henry to assert that she, as a Tudor, possessed the right and the ability to rule England. Quite

86 Elizabeth I, “To Fénelon,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 160.
90 “The Quene’s Majestie’s Passage,” 37.
representative of this strategy, she declared to the French monarch, “I govern an empire and am invested with a crown granted to me by the late King, my father.”

Given her mother’s English blood and her firmly-established association with her father, Elizabeth enjoyed a more fully-English identity than her half-sister could even hope or ever sought to achieve. As a result of both her lineage and her efforts, this sovereign did not experience the same questions about allegiance or accusations of foreignness that plagued Mary throughout her reign. Affirming this stark contrast between the two queens, Goodman’s *How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed* described Elizabeth as “that Godlie Lady, and meke Lambe, voyde of all Spanishe pride, and strange bloude.” Interestingly, though paternal lines traditionally function to overshadow a mother’s pedigree, here the anti-Marian writer employed Catherine of Aragon’s Spanish blood as an excuse to undermine her daughter’s nationality. This approach, mirrored in the works of other Elizabethan supporters, established the queens as foils for one another by measuring a foreigner against a true Englishwoman. In her typical adroit manner, Elizabeth recognized her purely-English heritage as a chief strength and accordingly used this characteristic to her advantage in occasions ranging from processions to speeches. As one example, her coronation pageants highlighted that, in contrast to the half-Spanish Mary, the new sovereign was “English *par excellence*” and thus a legitimate, desirable successor. Not only her followers but also Elizabeth herself drew direct comparisons with her half-sister as a vehicle to exploit the differences in lineages for the purpose of elevating her own national identity. Asserting her authority as

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91 Elizabeth I, “To the King of France,” 1577, *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, 163.  
92 Goodman, 53.  
an autonomous and capable ruler, the last Tudor monarch proclaimed to her parliament, “Was I not born in the realm? Were my parents born in any foreign country? Is there any cause I should alienate myself from being careful over this country? Is not my kingdom here?” As perfectly demonstrated in this one instance yet repeated in many more, Elizabeth routinely emphasized her heritage and resultant nationality as a method of validating her sovereignty and mitigating the obstacles imposed by her sex.

Much like the sovereign herself, Elizabeth’s contemporaries employed the theme of lineage to bolster her position as a legitimate, competent ruler who inherited her ancestors’ throne and ability. In their minds, the queen, “[b]eing heir to the House of York,” represented her dynasty’s continuation, and countless works from the era incorporate this powerful symbolism. From the very start of her reign, Elizabeth’s supporters strove to further entrench and then broadcast her link to the rest of the Tudors, making use of mediums from pageants to pamphlets. In praising that fate “Did set thee in the throne where thy grandfather sette,” celebrations at the time of her accession explicitly established the new ruler as the embodiment of dynastic continuity and stability. Given that Englishmen valued Elizabeth as “The most excellent Fruit of Your Progenitors” and found much to praise in the heritage of their sovereign, it is no surprise that representations throughout her reign expressly underscored her lineage as the source of the validity of her claim and as a testament to her capacity to rule. With imagery quite similar to Heywood’s previously-discussed description of Mary, Spenser’s “The

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94 Elizabeth I, “To the delegation of both houses,” 30.
95 Mulcaster, 93.
96 “The Quene’s Majestie’s Passage,” 35.
97 Sir Henry Sydney, Letters and Memorials of State in the Reigns of Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Etc... Written and Collected by Sir Henry Sydney, Etc., vol. 1, ed. Arthur Collins (London: Printed for T. Osborne, 1746), 292.
Shepheardes Calendar” alludes to Elizabeth as “The Redde rose medled with White yfere [together]” and accordingly positions the monarch as the quintessence of the union between Lancaster and York. By these means, the queen’s contemporaries utilized her lineage as tool for bolstering her legitimacy without directly confronting the issue of her gender. In addition, her supporters linked the monarch not simply to an ancestor but more purposefully to that ancestor’s virtue. As one observer of her coronation wrote, “Like as Elizabeth [of York] was the first occasion of concorde, so she another Elizabeth might maintaine the same among her subjects.” The queen’s connection to the Tudor thereby served to remind any would-be challengers of the validity of her claim and the prospect of effective governance.

Furthermore, in keeping with their monarch’s own approach, Elizabeth’s supporters specifically celebrated her descent from Henry to substantiate her right to rule and allege similar capabilities. For sixteenth-century Englishmen, there was no greater mark of esteem or confirmation of sovereignty than “Being King HENRY’S royal daughter.” While Mary and her followers failed to fully capitalize on this rhetoric, those devoted to Elizabeth, who enjoyed physical resemblance to and religious views consistent with Henry VIII, refused to let pass by such an advantageous opportunity to strengthen the queen’s position. As a great admirer of his sovereign, Spenser included numerous references throughout his poems and pointedly chose to highlight her connection to her father as a means of veneration. Representing Henry through the figure of the god of the wild, shepherds, and nature, the English poet wrote, “Pan may be proud,

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99 “The Quene’s Majestie’s Passage,” 19.
that ever he begot / Such a Bellibone,” or a fair maid.\textsuperscript{101} Throughout Elizabeth’s reign, her father’s legacy stood as a powerful instrument for overcoming the complications generated by her sex, as the queen stood associated with a dominant male rather than linked to any feminine weakness. To that end, while noting England’s continued admiration of Henry, one chronicler proclaimed of his daughter “In her doinges she will resemble the same.”\textsuperscript{102} In a manner unimaginable in the time of her Catholic, half-Spanish predecessor, the later queen’s supporters went beyond merely underscoring the monarch’s link to the Tudor dynasty and actually presented her as its most eminent member. As the sixteenth-century writer Edward Hake declared, “Of all that ever scepter bare, of all that ever came / From English loins to royal seat, I say, none worthy more / Amongst the race of English kings that ever scepter bore.”\textsuperscript{103} On top of highlighting her heritage, the English writer positioned Elizabeth as superior to her unmistakably-male predecessors and thereby rejected the potential for any misgivings based on her gender.

Yet not only sixteenth-century writing but also the era’s portraiture promoted Elizabeth’s lineage as an assertion of her sovereignty. Presented to, rather than commissioned by, the monarch in 1569, \textit{Queen Elizabeth and the Three Goddesses} included representations of royalty through which her followers hoped to remind viewers of her heritage (see image 2). As symbols of authority and specifically of Tudor power, the visible images of roses, the orb, and Windsor Castle underlined the queen’s royal blood and thus plainly asserted her right to the throne. In an even more unambiguous manner, Hans Eworth’s obvious display of Elizabeth’s red hair served to reinforce her

\textsuperscript{101} Spenser, 415.
\textsuperscript{102} “The Quene’s Majestie’s Passage,” 37.
\textsuperscript{103} Edward Hake, “A Commemoration of the Most Prosperous and Peaceable Reign of Our Gracious and Dear Sovereign Lady Elizabeth,” \textit{Elizabeth and Her Age}, 229.
link to the auburn-headed Henry VIII and thereby further affirm her legitimacy. While similarly emphasizing her lineage through the depiction of her father and the royal arms, *Allegory of Tudor Succession* went a step further than the earlier painting and, like countless early modern writers, explicitly contrasted Elizabeth with her half-sister (see image 3). In this way, Lucas de Heere, a Protestant exile in England, venerated the dynasty without allowing its final ruler to suffer any taint resulting from her unpopular predecessor. With the larger scaling of the latter group intended to indicate their superiority, *Allegory of Tudor Succession* encompassed a structural division between the trio of Mary, Philip, and Mars and Edward, Elizabeth, Peace, Plenty. Beyond linking the last Tudor to her much-beloved father, the artist, by associating two of the monarchs with important virtues, celebrated the queen and her half-brother as embodiments of Protestant reform. Accordingly, sixteenth-century artwork, like its concurrently-produced pamphlets and literature, employed the theme of heritage to bind Elizabeth to the good qualities of her dynasty and separate her from the undesirable.

Despite the queen’s considerable popularity, Elizabeth's reign nonetheless witnessed resistance. Her adversaries, much like the anti-Marians of the previous period, looked to the issue of lineage as a means to challenge the monarch’s authority. In direct conflict with the efforts of her supporters, Catholic attacks against Elizabeth focused on her parentage to undermine her validity and question her character. As perhaps the most famous piece of anti-Elizabethan propaganda, Nicholas Sander’s *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, referencing the predating relationship between the king and Mary Boleyn, employed the so-called “incestuous marriage of Henry and Anne Boleyn” to
allege the illegitimacy and immorality of the queen regnant.\textsuperscript{104} Contending “The child of his concubine Anne Boleyn” possessed a dubious claim to throne as a result of the circumstances of her parents’ marriage, this Catholic polemicist sought to weaken the Protestant monarch’s position and thus diminish her power.\textsuperscript{105} Moreover, in questioning the morality of the entire family through statements like, “Anne Boleyn…could not have been the daughter of Sir Thomas,” Sander strove to indicate depravity as a systemic problem that Elizabeth would have inherited from her mother.\textsuperscript{106} In this way, lineage, while such a powerful tool with which to affirm sovereignty, simultaneously stood as grounds for attacking this last Tudor sovereign.

Yet overall, Elizabeth’s own supporters employed the theme of heritage to a more successful, expansive extent. In consequence of their efforts as well as her own, the queen benefited from her lineage in a manner that facilitated her ability to govern effectively. Even in the face of propaganda to the contrary, the majority of Elizabeth’s subjects viewed the monarch as the rightful successor of the dynasty and subscribed to the notion that “In whose seat his true heir, though, Queen Elizabeth, doth sit.”\textsuperscript{107} For that reason, as a ruler and specifically as a female ruler, she benefited from the emphasis on her lineage that allowed for a wholly-English, unmistakably-Tudor identification. In the words of Sir Robert Naunton, “That she was of a most noble and royal extract by her father will not fall into question.”\textsuperscript{108} Ultimately, the nationality that resulted from her heritage offered Elizabeth credibility and popularity that helped the queen to overcome some of the obstacles imposed by her sex. As the queen herself straightforwardly

\textsuperscript{104} Nicholas Sander, \textit{Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism} (London: Burns and Oates, 1877), 100.
\textsuperscript{105} Sander, 241.
\textsuperscript{106} Sander, 23.
\textsuperscript{107} Mulcaster, 94.
\textsuperscript{108} Naunton, \textit{Fragmenta Regalia, Or Observations On Queen Elizabeth, Her Times, & Favorites}, 37.
declared, “I mean to hold what is mine in my own kingdom as my father did.” And for the most part, she truly did.

109 Elizabeth I, “To the Spanish Ambassador, at the beginning of her reign,” *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, 262.
CHAPTER 3
To Marry or Not to Marry: A Question with Consequences

For Mary and Elizabeth, the issue of whether or not to marry bore serious consequences on their reigns. As women in traditionally-male roles, the sovereigns faced particularly difficult circumstances in which the decision involved a wide spectrum of considerations, from autonomy to succession. Though both confronted this complex situation, the queens chose divergent paths and in turn experienced very different repercussions. Whereas Mary’s marriage to a Spaniard lost her the esteem of her people and limited her ability to govern, Elizabeth enjoyed a fully-English identification as a result of her unmarried status. In this way, the choice not to marry ultimately functioned as a contributor to the latter’s success.

When Mary acceded to the throne in 1553 as England’s very first queen regnant, the general consensus anticipated that she would soon take a husband, and she too saw marriage as inevitable. Sixteenth-century Europe expected its aristocratic women to marry in order to produce offspring and bolster their family’s position. For royalty, the need for male heirs was especially imperative as a means to ensure the continuation of the dynasty. Though this obligation stood exceedingly important to all monarchs, childbirth was especially the principal function of a queen.110 Mary certainly held additional responsibilities as a queen regnant, but both the kingdom and the sovereign herself hoped she would secure the succession with her own offspring. Moreover, as a result of the traditional belief in female inferiority, women regardless of rank were assumed to require male protection and to be dependent on a husband. Yet in this society that defined women in relation to men, a married queen regnant would not fit neatly into

110 David Loades, Mary Tudor: A Life, 4.
one role or the other, and as seen throughout the propaganda materials of the era, this ambiguity caused significant anxiety among her subjects. Facing the unique situation of a reigning female monarch, the English wondered how Mary could simultaneously be both a sovereign and a wife. Would her marriage, in the words of Renard, “impl[y] a divorce between her and her first spouse, namely the Crown of England”?\textsuperscript{111} Where would her chief loyalties lie? How would she balance her wifely duties and royal responsibilities? Would she submit to the authority of her husband or remain fully autonomous?

These worries emerged even before the start of Mary’s reign, as Edward VI had expressed specific concerns that his sisters would choose foreign husbands and thus subject England to foreign domination. According to Commendone’s “Events of the Kingdom of England,” the king had been persuaded to disinherit Mary and Elizabeth in part because of “the damage that would ensue to the said Realm…in view of the marriage they may contract with foreigners.”\textsuperscript{112} As The Chronicle of Queen Jane attests, he believed that if either “should then happen to marry with any stranger borne out of this realme,” the foreign husband would seek “to have the lawes and customes of his or their own native countrey or countreyes to be practis[ed]” in England.\textsuperscript{113} The widespread perception not only incited considerable resistance among Mary’s subjects but also further undermined her national identity because of her readiness, in the words of a contemporary chronicler, “to tende to the utter subversion of the comon-welth.”\textsuperscript{114} This vulnerability stood as a direct result of the monarch’s gender, for marriage alliances were

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{111} Simon Renard to the Emperor, 5 February 1554, Calendar of State Papers, Spain, vol. 12, “Spain: February 1554, 1-5.”
\item \textsuperscript{112} Commendone, 5.
\item \textsuperscript{113} The Chronicle of Queen Jane, and of Two Years of Queen Mary, ed. John Gough Nichols (London: Printed for the Camden Society, 1850), 93.
\item \textsuperscript{114} The Chronicle of Queen Jane, 93.
\end{itemize}
particularly fraught for sixteenth-century females. Because early modern Europe did not consider women to be an independent entity, husbands essentially subsumed their wives’ identities.115 Thus precisely because of her sex, Mary’s marriage generated serious questions regarding her autonomy and loyalties, for many feared a spouse would dominate both.

Despite these uncertainties and concerns regarding the queen’s marriage, there was never any real doubt that Mary would take a husband.116 As the papal legate Commendone stated in regard to the period immediately following the death of Edward VI, “Owing to the unrests and divisions of that Kingdom, it was necessary to have a King powerful enough to settle them.”117 With this uncontested expectation of marriage, the only remaining question was whom the queen would marry. In many ways, Philip of Spain stood as a logical choice for king consort, as he offered political experience, resources, and commercial ties to the Low Countries. As a Catholic and the son of her cousin Charles V, he also appeared highly desirable to Mary herself. In celebration of their eventual marriage, the writer John Heywood described the couple as “So meete a matche in parentage/So meete a matche in dignite,” thereby indicating the suitability of the match in terms of rank.118

However, from the start of the marriage negotiations the English displayed xenophobic opposition to Mary’s choice of a husband who was both Spanish and Catholic.119 In a letter from Renard to the Bishop of Arras, the imperial ambassador frankly described, “The English did not at all want his Majesty or his Highness…partly

115 Loades, Mary Tudor: A Life, 2.
116 David Loades, The Reign of Mary Tudor, 57.
117 Commendone, 37.
118 Heywood.
because they dreaded the rule of Spaniards and partly for religious reasons.” Thus, although her subjects expected Mary to marry, many were displeased with her selection of a foreigner whose religion made him in their eyes all the more foreign. This resistance to Catholicism was a more recent phenomenon resulting from Henry’s break with Rome and the spread of Protestantism, but England’s antagonism against Spain can be traced back well before the queen’s accession. Resulting in part from its geographic isolation and cultural insularity, the island kingdom long-maintained “a continuous anti-alien sentiment” that over the centuries generated hostility toward foreigners ranging from princesses to merchants. The decline of Anglo-Spanish relations during the reign Henry VIII’s served to exacerbate this general xenophobia and specifically focus antipathy on England’s perennial foe. As a member of Philip’s retinue would later reflect, “The English hate us Spaniards worse than they hate the Devil, and treat us accordingly.”

Hence, when the time came for the part-foreign, female monarch to select a spouse, the kingdom’s persistent xenophobic tendencies erupted as Mary’s distinctive position produced serious anxieties concerning her possible allegiance to Spain and subservience to a husband. As an illustration of this trepidation, the author of a pamphlet entitled A Suplicacyon to the Quenes Maiestie warned his “native contremen” that the Catholic members of government “intend by one crafte or other that the prince of Spaine shal be crownid King of England.” Anticipating with dread “the bondage and

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121 Yungblut, 40.
123 Loades, The Reign of Mary Tudor, 397.
124 A Suplicacyon to the Quenes Maiestie, C5r.
tyranny of the Spanyardes,” many feared that the marriage of their half-Spanish queen to a Spanish prince would make the kingdom a satellite of Charles V and the Hapsburgs.\textsuperscript{125} They viewed Philip as a threat to their national independence because his foreign blood and position as heir to the Spanish dominions held the potential to entangle England in his affairs and subsume the English under his authority. With a genuine anxiety over the possibility of subordination, Goodman asserted, “Philip will be crowned kinge of Englande…Come they to make a spoyle of the whole Realme.”\textsuperscript{126} To that end, Mary’s impending marriage stood synonymous with a loss of English autonomy. As the anti-Marian tracts and pamphlets of the time readily demonstrate, countless people feared “the perilous Dominion of the Spaniards” and deemed the proposed alliance a sign of the queen’s un-English identity.\textsuperscript{127}

Moreover, the foreign influence apparent in the execution of the marriage certainly did not allay these anxieties of external domination. According to Renard, Mary “said she knew no one in England with whom she would wish to ally herself, asking whether the Emperor had yet selected a suitable person.”\textsuperscript{128} Just as the queen’s tendency to depend upon foreigners undercut the benefits of her lineage, this same reliance validated her people’s concerns of subjugation and thus further established a perception of un-Englishness. Even Mary’s own supporters confirmed the prospect of Spanish domination, as Wingfield celebrated how Philip “will rule over the men of England, France, and the Low Countries with the utmost felicity.”\textsuperscript{129} Given Mary’s ties to Spain,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{125} Certayne Questions, A3r.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Goodman, 100.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Certayne Questions, A2r.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Simon Renard to the Bishop of Arras, 9 September 1553, Calendar of State Papers, Spain, vol. 11, “Spain: September 1553, 6-10.”
\item \textsuperscript{129} Wingfield, 293.
\end{itemize}
her willingness to adhere to foreign guidance, and Philip’s brutal rule in the Low Countries, the apprehension that the marriage would prove detrimental to England were far from unfounded.

Much like her Spanish heritage cast doubts on her allegiance and nationality, so too did her selection of a Spanish husband, and likely to a far greater degree. As Gómes Suárez de Figueroa, the Count of Feria, later noted, “The English were resentful of her partiality for foreigners…for the English do not usually like foreigners.” Specifically, many of her subjects saw her intent to marry Philip as an indication she was “determined of a selfe wyll to brynge England into the subjeccion of a foren Prynce.” In their minds, a foreign king consort signified foreign domination, especially given their monarch’s foreign blood and ties. Deeming the match as injurious and un-English, the breadth of sources from the 1550s indicates the considerable extent of the opposition against the queen’s choice of spouse. Even Renard recognized this deep-seeded hostility when he wrote that the marriage between Philip and Mary would be achieved “if the English could be induced to accept a foreign alliance; which will be a difficulty.”

Yet although she never persuaded any significant number of her subjects to support the alliance with Spain, Mary insisted on marrying Philip. For one, she routinely deferred to the judgment of Emperor Charles and likely sought to please her cousin in selecting his son as her king consort. As the Hapsburg ambassador wrote to his master, “[S]he was determined to follow your advice, and choose whomsoever you might

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131 Saunders, Bii.
132 Simon Renard to Juan Vazquez de Molina, 6 September 1553, *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*, vol. 11, “Spain: September 1553, 6-10.”
recommend.”  

Yet beyond this desire to adhere to the Emperor’s counsel, Mary found great appeal in a husband who similarly possessed a connection to Spain. In the words of a Venetian ambassador to the English court, “The Queen, being born of a Spanish mother, was always inclined towards that nation.” Philip shared not only this heritage but also the sovereign’s religion, which made him all the more ideal in the eyes of a monarch seeking to re-impose Catholicism in England. For these reasons, Mary ignored the opposition of her people and remained committed to this choice of spouse. The decision, however, would quickly prove destructive and in due course limit the queen’s ability to rule effectively.

Even prior to Philip’s arrival in England in the summer of 1554, insurrections broke out across the kingdom for, in the words of the sixteenth-century historian John Clapham, the purpose of “protecting the realm against strangers.” As the most famous of these conspiracies, Wyatt’s Rebellion demonstrated her subjects’ widespread fear that Mary “intended not onelie by alteracion of Religion to bringe in the Pope, but also, by the mariage of a straunger to bringe the Realme into miserable servitude.” Though all ultimately unsuccessful, the plots underscore England’s firmly-entrenched xenophobia and, more specifically, antagonism toward the Spanish alliance. As a demonstration of this distrust of Philip as well as a display of a sense of nationalism, one contemporary recorded Wyatt’s remark:

I thought that by the marriage of the Prince of Spain, this realm should have been in danger: and that I, that have lived a free born man, should,

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136 Clapham, 55.
with my country, have been brought to bondage and servitude by aliens and Strangers.\textsuperscript{138}

While the failure of the insurrections weakened England’s vocal opposition to the match, and Mary married Philip shortly thereafter, her subjects nevertheless persisted in their perception of the marriage as a confirmation of her un-Englishness, an obstruction to her sovereignty, and a detriment to England.

Although Mary failed to anticipate the full extent of her subjects’ antagonism toward her marriage, the queen and her councilors did take some pains to dispel England’s concerns. Summarizing the marriage treaty signed and publicized prior to Philip’s arrival, one sixteenth-century observer wrote, “The queen shoulde rule all things as she dothe nowe; and that ther should be of the counsel no Spanyard, nether should have the custody of any fortes or castelles, nether bere rule or office in the queens house, or elsewhere in all Inglande.”\textsuperscript{139} In this way, \textit{The Chronicle of Queen Jane} reveals both the fears of foreign domination and the attempts to confront them. Precisely because many of her subjects worried that the Spanish prince would subjugate their queen and control their country, Mary issued “Announcing Articles of Marriage with Philip of Spain” in order to proclaim the constancy of her loyalties and authority. Among other assurances, the document declared, “The said noble Prince shall leave unto the said lady his wife Queen Mary the whole disposition of all the benefits and offices, lands, revenues, and fruits of the said realms and dominions.”\textsuperscript{140}

However, these efforts largely failed to calm England’s unease, for her subjects “had enough to deal with in reconciling themselves to a female ruler, let alone one who

\textsuperscript{138} John Proctor, “The History of Wyat’s Rebellion: With the order and manner of resisting the same,” \textit{Tudor Tracts}, 254.
\textsuperscript{139} \textit{The Chronicle of Queen Jane}, 35.
\textsuperscript{140} Mary I, “Announcing Articles of Marriage with Philip of Spain,” Westminster, 14 January 1554, \textit{Tudor Royal Proclamations}, 21.
had allied herself to a foreigner."141 With the queen already somewhat distrusted as a women and a half-Spaniard, her foreign husband stood as an additional obstacle against absolute acceptance by her people. As one such example, during the marriage negotiations with Spain, reports spread across England that Edward was still alive and thus the lawful ruler of the kingdom.142 Though these sorts of would arise at other points in Mary’s reign and even during Elizabeth’s, the episodes occurred only at times of high anxiety when the kingdom felt especially vulnerable and fearful. Those negative sentiments would certainly describe the mood of the English at the time of the Spanish marriage and even well beyond. Throughout the entirety of Mary’s reign, her subjects expressed deep resentment toward “the Spanishe kinge: to whome she hathe, and dothe continually labor to betray the whole kingdome.”143 While Philip certainly faced significant hostility, this quotation, in line with other tracts from the 1550s, demonstrated that the English directed their hostility not only toward the king consort but also toward Mary herself. As such, this marriage served as an easy target on which her opponents could capitalize and use in attacks against her rule. By disseminating writings like Goodman’s How Superior Powers Ought to Be Obeyed and Saunders’ A Trewe Mirroure of the Wofull State of Englannde, anti-Marians fueled the resistance to the queen in a way that lost her both approval and legitimacy.

Yet despite the xenophobic tendencies entrenched in England, it must be noted that the majority were certainly capable of welcoming a foreigner, as they did with “Katherine, the first, most virtuous and by far the most noble of all [Henry VIII’s]

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141 Borman, Elizabeth’s Women, 144.
142 Levin, “The Heart and Stomach of a King,” 97.
143 Goodman, 100.
wives.”\textsuperscript{144} However, Mary’s distinct position as a queen regnant inviting a foreign consort to her side made full acceptance of her spouse exceedingly unlikely. As a male, Philip subsumed his wife’s identity in a way that Catherine did not for Henry’s. In this society where men traditionally ruled over women, many feared that this Spaniard would exercise power over their queen, regardless of the marriage treaty or Mary’s assurances. Her subjects worried how as a married female she could maintain her autonomy and her duty to her kingdom. Thus, Philip not only further distanced Mary from her English nationality but also undermined her authority in the eyes of her people. As Aylmer succinctly stated, “It is a miserable case.”\textsuperscript{145}

In a sense confirming her subjects’ concerns that in marrying a foreigner the queen would “sell away the realme to a Straunger,” Mary indeed failed to reconcile the roles of independent sovereign and obedient wife.\textsuperscript{146} Her demonstrated partiality toward Spain and compliance with Philip’s interference in England’s affairs undercut her own national loyalty by positioning her in opposition to her kingdom’s customs and interests. One example of this dilution of her Englishness is the queen’s virtual abandonment of English dress upon her marriage. As discussed in Hilary Doda’s thesis, “Of Crymsen Tissue: The Construction of a Queen,” Mary purposefully opted for Spanish fashions as a means to visually emphasize the union between England and Spain, even the English largely expressed a desire for separation.\textsuperscript{147} Though this sartorial selection may seem insignificant, the submission to and preference for Spain stood as part of an evident pattern of the queen’s alignment with her husband’s (and, as previously discussed, her

\textsuperscript{144} Wingfield, 245. \\
\textsuperscript{145} Aylmer, O4r. \\
\textsuperscript{146} Certayne Questions, A2v. \\
\textsuperscript{147} Doda, 100.
mother’s) country. From her selection of Spanish styles to “warre agaist the french kyng in her husbandes behalfe,” Mary time after time demonstrated a lack of Englishness that lost her the favor of many of her subjects.\textsuperscript{148}

Accordingly, her “very moche mysliked” marriage and subsequent actions eroded the benefits conferred by her Tudor heritage, for, as sources from the 1550s readily suggest, she came to be perceived as a tool of the Spanish.\textsuperscript{149} With her status as wife to “such a Prince as seketh all meanes possible to deliver them…into the handes of Spanyardes” thus superseding her status as Henry VIII’s daughter, the Spanish alliance undercut Mary’s connection to her kingdom and her legitimacy as a sovereign.\textsuperscript{150} One such manifestation of this replaced association can be seen in the Antonis Mor’s 1554 portrait of the queen (see image 4). With her wedding ring visibly depicted and in a skirt of Spanish origin known as a farthingale, Mary appears aligned with the country of her husband rather than her family. In addition, Mor further removes the sovereign from England by employing an artistic style that differs greatly from that used by his contemporaries in conventional paintings of Tudor royalty. Unlike the iconographic images of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, \textit{Portrait of Queen Mary I of England} portrays the sovereign seated and with realistic features. Given that this approach resembles the style of paintings of other Hapsburg brides, Mor arguably intended to represent Mary as a Hapsburg consort rather than an English sovereign in her own right. These artistic choices certainly correspond to the general perception of the queen regnant as foreign. On the whole, Mary’s marriage destabilized her position as a truly-English monarch and thus weakened her ability to rule effectively.

\textsuperscript{148} Grafton, X3r.
\textsuperscript{149} The Chronicle of Queen Jane, 35.
\textsuperscript{150} Certayne Questions, A3v.
Although the alliance with Spain may have proven detrimental to Mary’s reign, the expectation of marriage that existed for this first queen regnant persisted for her successor. Foreigners and natives alike largely assumed that Elizabeth, like her half-sister, would choose a husband after her accession.\footnote{David Loades, *The Chronicles of the Tudor Queens*, 125.} However, this last Tudor defied expectation and never married, thereby contributing to her capacity to maintain an untarnished identification with England. Without doubt this defining characteristic of her reign contributed to her popularity and effectiveness as a ruler.

Although she faced significant pressure to marry primarily in order to ensure the succession, Elizabeth, for a variety of compelling reasons, resisted the urgings of many of her people to, “by mariage, take the paine to bring furth princely children.”\footnote{Anonymous to Elizabeth I, 10 February 1563, *The Chronicles of the Tudor Queens*, 123.} On one hand, the sovereign readily demonstrated opposition to taking a husband on personal grounds. She once commented to a German ambassador, “Many people regard it as incredible that I should shrink from matrimony, but nevertheless that is the plain fact of the case.”\footnote{Elizabeth I, “To the Ambassador of the Count of Württemberg,” *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, 61.} As a woman in a traditionally-male role, Elizabeth, like Mary, stood vulnerable to a loss of authority. However, unlike her predecessor, this second queen regnant appreciated the vast importance of closely guarding her independence. Demonstrating a desire to maintain personal and perhaps even political autonomy, Elizabeth once declared to a close companion, “I will have here but one mistress and no master.”\footnote{Naunton, 41.} Moreover, numerous historians have suggested that she suffered psychologically as a result of the marital unhappiness of both her sister and her...
parents. As an indication of this personal aversion, Elizabeth frankly declared, “When I think about marriage, it is as though my heart were being dragged out of my vitals.”

While statements like this must be taken with an understanding of the sovereign’s flare for drama, the frequency of Elizabeth’s expressed distaste testified to her genuine feelings toward marriage. As she once stated to a foreign ambassador, “I would rather be a beggar and single than a queen and married.”

Yet individual sentiments aside, Elizabeth’s resolution against marriage can also be understood as a shrewd political decision resulting from well-reasoned considerations. Given that sixteenth-century Europe assumed its aristocratic women would marry or enter a nunnery, the queen’s determination to remain single served to markedly distinguish her from other members of her sex. As the Elizabethan biographer Christopher Haigh rhetorically questioned, “How could she admit that she was just the same as the rest, and submit herself to a husband?” To that end, Elizabeth’s refusal to marry functioned as a means to surmount gendered stereotypes. This exercise of personal autonomy flouted societal boundaries in a manner that raised some alarm, but this concern was predominantly restricted to pressure from her parliament. Even in the face of these anxieties relating to the succession, Elizabeth recognized the value of maintaining her complete independence, with the Count of Feria’s noting, “She is determined to be governed by no one.”

As a witness to the negative repercussions of Mary’s marriage on both the monarch and the kingdom, this last Tudor could not help but come away with

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156 Elizabeth I, “To the French Ambassador,” *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, 68.
159 de Figueroa, 331.
the lesson that a husband, specifically a foreign husband, was no true benefit to a queen regnant. Keenly aware of society’s views on women and concerns regarding female rulers, the queen understood what was at stake: submitting to a man as a wife would suggest submitting to a man as a monarch. Whereas Mary voluntarily deferred to the will of another despite her position as a monarch in her own right, her successor refused to yield any of her authority. By never taking a husband the queen avoided the issue of male domination and proved herself capable of ruling independently. In this manner, Elizabeth confirmed her equality with “any other her most noble Progenitours, Kinges of this Realme” and diminished her vulnerability as a female ruler.160

Furthermore, the liabilities associated with any potential husband for the queen regnant stood as additional grounds for Elizabeth’s rejection of marriage. In a dispatch to Philip, the Count of Feria recorded the comment of an English statesman who affirmed “that there was no one she could marry outside the kingdom nor within it.”161 For Elizabeth, marriage with one of her own subjects would have awarded too much power to one political faction and offended rival noblemen. Additionally, any suitor within England would stand far below the queen in terms of rank, for the War of the Roses and the brutality of the first two Tudor kings virtually eliminated any Englishmen with royal blood. Illustrating this awareness, Elizabeth stated to a French ambassador, “If I thought that one of my subjects was s presumptuous as to seek me for his wife, I would never want to see him, and I would give him a bad time.”162 Because of the power imbalance and inequality associated with choosing any of her own countrymen, the queen could not

160 “AN ACTE declaring that the Regall Power of this Realme is in the Queene’s Majestie,” Statutes of the Realm, 222.
161 de Figueroa, 335.
162 Elizabeth I, “To the French Ambassador,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 63.
realistically select an English husband. Thus, since “[i]n England…there is no one disposable in marriage,” a foreign match stood as her only viable option.163

However, Elizabeth simultaneously recognized the detrimental impact of an alliance with a European prince. As demonstrated throughout Mary’s reign, marriage to a foreigner could drag England into the complex politics on the continent, exacerbate xenophobic hostilities, and weaken the queen’s sovereignty. After just recently experiencing one foreign king consort, the English visibly appeared reluctant to accept another. In a letter arguing against her marriage to the Count of Anjou, one of Elizabeth’s advisers asserted of their fellow countrymen, “How their Hearts will be galled, if not alienated, when they shall see you take a Husband, a Frenchman and a Papist.”164 Unlike her predecessor, this last Tudor appreciated these anxieties and, concerning this same marital proposal, declared:

Shall it ever be found true that Queen Elizabeth hath solemnized the perpetual harm of England under the glorious title of marriage with Francis, heir of France? No, no, it shall never be.165

Here the monarch simultaneously presented England’s wellbeing as her chief priority and recognized that a foreign match might work against the interests of her kingdom.

Accordingly, Elizabeth made clear that, despite pressures to the contrary, she would strive to avoid such harm. Yet even with this apparent opposition to marriage, the queen put forth the appearance of genuine consideration in order to use marital negotiations for political gain. In boasting to a French ambassador, “There is no prince in Christendom who has not courted me,” the sovereign demonstrated successful capitalization on her

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164 Sydney, , 1746), 287-88.
singlehood. Ultimately these various personal inclinations and political concerns led Elizabeth to pursue an unprecedented course as an unmarried queen of England. By virtue of this distinctiveness and its unique consequences, the queen’s decision markedly distinguished her from her predecessor in reputation, ability, and legacy.

Overall, Elizabeth’s decision against marriage markedly contributed to her success as a sovereign. For one, she was able to establish an exclusive relationship with her country, uncompromised by the presence of a spouse. In response to urgings from her Parliament, Elizabeth asserted, “I am already bound unto an husband, which is the kingdom of England, and that may suffice you.” Making this “pledge of this alliance with [her] kingdom,” she underscored that her loyalties and responsibilities were to England, and England alone. As an unmarried sovereign, Elizabeth avoided any perceptions of acting in the interests of another kingdom since she, unlike Mary, did not face spousal pressure to support any other nation. Expressing disapproval toward Mary’s commitment of English troops to Philip’s war on the continent, this last Tudor condemned that “Englishmen were sent to die outside their own country” as a result of her predecessor’s compliance. Given the prevalent belief that a “Queen must of necessity be ingaged in her Husband’s Quarrel,” Elizabeth’s lack of a husband precluded unnecessary entanglements in European affairs, and the military engagements of her reign were accordingly pursued on the basis of English interests alone. This absence of foreign influence confirmed her exclusive allegiance to England and thus her fully-English

166 Elizabeth I, “To the French Ambassadress, 1699,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 69.
168 Elizabeth I, “To the French Ambassadress,” Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 259.
nationality. Yet moreover, Elizabeth successfully used warfare to reinforce nationalist sentiment. Underscoring her allegiance to and protectiveness over her kingdom, she declared in regard to the threat of the Spanish Armada, “Take foul scorn that Parma or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm.”170 By proclaiming this unquestionable loyalty and evading what her subjects perceived as the “hurts that England have received through royal intermarriages,” Elizabeth noticeably benefited from her refusal to marry.171

Moreover, between her own observations of her predecessor and the remarks of her subjects, Elizabeth readily appreciated the loss of esteem that Mary experienced after “[s]he had made an odious Marriage with a Stranger.”172 As previously discussed, the Spanish alliance generated much hostility toward the first queen regnant, and the last Tudor astutely recognized this correlation. In his account of Mary’s final days, the Count of Feria wrote of Elizabeth, “She commented that the queen had lost the affection of the people of this realm because she had married a foreigner.”173 While this successor certainly recognized the role of public opinion in a monarch’s ability to rule effectively, her resistance to a foreign match concerned more than just popularity. With no husband desiring power or looking to dominate her, Elizabeth retained full personal and sovereign authority, thereby affirming the validity of her rule regardless of her sex. Beyond managing to govern as an autonomous monarch despite gendered obstacles, she also reigned as a wholly-English monarch devoid of any taints to her nationality. Whereas

170 Elizabeth I, “Queen Elizabeth’s Speech to the Troops at Tilbury, August 9, 1588,” Elizabeth I: Collected Works, 326.
172 Sydney, 291.
173 de Figueroa, 334.
Philip served as a detriment to perceptions of his wife’s Englishness, Elizabeth possessed no husband to complicate her priorities or loyalties, thus enabling her to remain English through and through. Given that Mary’s marriage generated explicit attacks against her nationality, the decision to remain unwed suggests her successor understood that a foreign husband could alter the perception of a reigning queen’s national identity and allegiance. Rather than take any man as her spouse, the queen portrayed herself as wedded to her kingdom and consequently established a firm bond with the nation. In a response to the Scottish ambassador, Elizabeth declared, “I was once married to this realm at my coronation, in token whereof I wear this ring.”\textsuperscript{174} Between the absence of a foreign husband and this marriage to England, the queen achieved an absolute identification with her kingdom that proclaimed her fully-English nationality and resultanty strengthened her position on the throne.

In addition, her refusal to marry offered Elizabeth the opportunity to use her virginity as a form of propaganda that had been unavailable to any of her predecessors. Given her unique marital status, both the sovereign and her supporters celebrated the distinguishing characteristic “that a queen, having reigned such a time, lived and died a virgin.”\textsuperscript{175} Elizabeth’s position as an unwed woman allowed her to locate herself within a tradition of revered female figures from the goddess Diana to the Virgin Mary. This association worked to mitigate concerns in regards to the monarch’s sex by drawing on these examples of women with legitimate power. Additionally, her virginity came to stand as a sign of the nation’s independence and inviolability. The 1583 painting by Quentin Metsys the Younger known as “The Sieve Portrait” serves as one such

\textsuperscript{174} Elizabeth I, “To the Scottish Ambassador, 1561,” \textit{Elizabeth I}, 28.
\textsuperscript{175} Elizabeth I, “Queen Elizabeth’s First Speech Before Parliament, February 10, 1559” version 1, \textit{Elizabeth I: Collected Works}, 58.
illustration of this theme (see image 5). As a sign of chastity and purity, the sieve reinforced Elizabeth's image as “the virgin queen,” and the coexisting symbols of empire, like the column and a globe, celebrate her virginity as essential to her rule. The column behind the queen depicts the story of Aeneas and Dido, thereby implying that the English sovereign must reject marriage in order to rule over a great realm. Elizabeth herself played on these same themes and, as a master of public relations, quite successfully used this unique rhetoric to increase her prestige and the esteem of her subjects.

Yet although the absence of a husband eliminated considerable disadvantages and conferred valuable benefits, Elizabeth’s refusal to marry nonetheless inserted some additional complications to her rule. Overall, her decision against marriage indeed functioned as an asset to her rule, but the choice was not without negative repercussions. For one, the anomaly of an unmarried woman stood as a target of great ridicule in a society that basically categorized the entire sex as either wives or whores (or potentially nuns in Catholic countries). Whereas “the princely persona” of male rulers concentrated on aspects like courage and piety, female monarchs faced particular susceptibility in regard to sexuality. Consequently, Elizabeth’s unwed status elicited sexual speculation among some of her contemporaries who assumed her decision must either issue from or result in “her filthy lust.” As Cardinal William Allen, a Catholic clergyman and exile, charged, “[S]he hath abused her body, against G-d’s laws, to the disgrace of princely majesty, and with the whole nation’s reproach.” However, these gendered accusations bore limited influence precisely because Elizabeth recognized her vulnerability. As she once stated, “The world, when a woman remains single, assumes there must be

177 Levin, *Heart and Stomach of a King*, 66.
something wrong with her.” By anticipating these potential attacks Elizabeth was able to successfully formulate approaches, such as virgin and maternal representations, with which to confront the hostilities. Suggesting the value of these strategies, her chief adviser William Cecil stated, “In truth she herself is blameless, and hath no spot of evill intent.” Through effective propaganda campaigns to assert the queen’s virtue and distinction from other women, the attacks against her sexuality fell short of markedly damaging her reign. Moreover, in the words of the Spanish ambassador Guzman de Silva, “It is no new thing for great princes to be the subjects of gossip.” The statement suggests that Elizabeth, as a reigning monarch and not only as a woman, would face critique regardless of her sex, so her decision against marriage simply altered the manifestation of anticipated circumstances.

In a different manner, Elizabeth’s refusal to marry strained her relationship with her advisers, as she infuriated her parliament for refusing their advice on the matter. As one councilor wrote, “This irresolution doth weary and kill her ministers.” Nevertheless, Elizabeth enjoyed fierce loyalty among her advisers, so her disregard of their pressure neither impeded their work with the queen nor lost her their esteem. Indicating full satisfaction with his unmarried monarch, the statesman Sir Henry Sydney put forth the rhetorical question, “What can be added to the being of an absolute born, and accordingly respected, Princess?” Despite the anxieties surrounding her refusal to conform to gender expectations and to name heir, “Elizabeth was deeply loved by her

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179 Elizabeth I, “To de Silva, the Spanish Ambassador,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 64.
182 Sir Thomas Smith to William Cecil, March 1575, Elizabeth I, 62.
183 Sydney, 287.
subjects,” notwithstanding her decision against marriage and perhaps in part because of it.\textsuperscript{184} Thus, although her unprecedented course generated some drawbacks, these downsides prove insufficient to overshadow the advantages she gained as an unmarried queen.

Having observed the damage done to her predecessors’ authority, popularity, and national identity, Elizabeth learned from the mistakes of her half-sister and governed as an unwed, untainted queen regnant. On the whole, sixteenth-century England came to appreciate the resultant benefits and enjoyed the fruits of this decision. Quite representatively, the English writer and politician Sir Robert Naunton, in discussing “the helps and advantages of her reign,” expressly named Elizabeth’s lack of a husband as one of these key assets.\textsuperscript{185} Although her refusal to marry brought to an end the House of Tudor, this same decision contributed to the effective rule of the dynasty’s final member.

\textsuperscript{184} Levin, \textit{Heart and Stomach of a King}, 67.\textsuperscript{185} Naunton, 46.
CHAPTER 4
Defenders of the Faith, but of Different Faiths

In his book *Nationalism and the State*, John Breuilly paraphrases and endorses the sentiments of the English historian Lewis Namier with the straightforward sentence, “Religion is a sixteenth century word for nationalism.”\(^{186}\) Though perhaps here overstated, religion certainly did play a considerable role in the construction of national identities during the reigns of the Tudor queens. In this era before the notion of separation between church and state, monarchs maintained significant involvement in the sphere of faith by regulating, monitoring, and influencing the spiritual lives of their subjects. For that reason, religion was more of a public, rather than a private, matter that contributed not only to an individual’s sense of self but also to his identification with others. Just as where you were born established an association with one particular country, so too did what you practiced. While individuals following the religion of the majority could be seen by their fellow countrymen as true loyalists, those of dissenting beliefs might incur mistrust regarding their national allegiances and characters. As primary sources and historical analyses demonstrate, this tendency held true for early modern sovereigns as well. In thus helping to shape perceptions of individuals’ nationalities, religion possessed the potential to unify or divide a population.

This ability to polarize emerged in full force during the religious turmoil of the sixteenth century, as faith became a factor in determining one’s obedience to the Crown. In their own ways, both Mary and Elizabeth nationalized religion, thereby defining what it meant to be a dutiful Englishman under the judgment of the state. Whereas the former restored Catholicism and the latter reestablished the Church of England, each queen

underlined religion’s role in national identity by aligning the Crown, and thus the kingdom, with a single faith. Despite their distinct religious beliefs, both sovereigns used a royal style that included “Defender of the Faith,” a title that the Pope (in retrospect somewhat ironically) had granted to Henry VIII for his writings against Martin Luther. The similarities, however, virtually end there. While Mary and Elizabeth quite obviously held divergent religious views and pursued divergent policies, these differences correspondingly produced opposing impacts on their reigns.

Perhaps more than any other action or event, Mary’s desire to restore Catholicism in England stood as the dominating aspect of her five years on the throne. Although upon Edward’s death she initially gained supporters by promising not to impose her own faith on her predominantly-Protestant subjects, the new sovereign’s intent to reinstate the Catholic Church quickly became apparent. As the papal legate Commendone noted, “Shortly after the Coronation was performed, Parliament was summoned to give order to the matters of the Realm,” and the records of her government’s proceedings from 1553 include measures to bring Catholicism back to England. With the support of Philip and her Catholic councilors, Mary quickly set about overturning the changes made by her father and brother in order to reestablish a foreign institution that at the time was religious as well as political. In his account of the queen’s accession, the English chronicler Richard Grafton wrote, “Soone after, the Queene summoned her highe Court of Parliament…and all the olde Religion was wholly restored againe.” Although the complete return to Catholicism was “simply destined to fail” according the historian Peter

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188 Commendone, 36.
189 Grafton, Wr.
Marshall, Mary’s efforts nonetheless held a momentous and, as will be seen, detrimental impact on her reign.¹⁹⁰

In this kingdom that had experienced a national church for the past twenty years, Mary’s campaign to restore England to Rome essentially disconnected her from her country and from many of her people. Though Catholicism had existed as the dominant faith for a far more extensive period, Henry VIII’s establishment of the Church of England officially aligned the Crown with a new, national religion that shielded his generally-insular people from foreign influence. For the two decades prior to the queen’s accession, most of the elites had practiced a uniquely-English faith that bound these subjects to both the monarch and the kingdom as well as unmistakably distinguished them from the rest of Europe. As a result, Mary’s rejection of Anglicanism stood as a break from a national, not solely religious, institution. Although there remained a Catholic presence in England in the 1550s, the Protestants who made up the English majority perceived the queen’s intent to alter the kingdom’s religion as yet another sign of her foreignness. To that end, while the Catholic polemicist Nicholas Sander praised “the restoration of the ancient observance of ecclesiastical obedience and submission,” many more of Mary’s subjects perceived this endeavor as a betrayal of her kingdom’s interests and an indication of her alternate loyalties.¹⁹¹

In a letter to the Count of Anjou, Elizabeth would later describe the “Roman religion” as “a thing so hard for the English to bear that would not be able to imagine it without knowing it.”¹⁹² This hostility seems to have resulted from a conception of

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¹⁹⁰ Marshall, 86.
¹⁹¹ Sander, 224.
Catholicism as a form of subjugation through which the Pope, not the monarch, controlled the kingdom. Explaining the fears of the English over Mary’s accession, Commendone named the widespread concern that she would “endeavor to bring this noble and free Realm under the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome.” Many of her subjects perceived the queen’s desire to return the English church to Roman jurisdiction as a demonstration of her desire for foreign meddling. Whereas the Anglican Church positioned the sovereign as an entirely-autonomous ruler, the restoration of Catholicism offered Rome religious and political influence over the island kingdom. Illustrating clear resentment toward this interference, one anti-Marian pamphlet decried of the Catholic bishops, “They go about without doubt to bringe this hole Realme of England into the hands of strangers.” As follows, in the minds of English Protestants, Mary’s reestablishment of Catholicism signified a surrendering of her independent sovereignty in favor of papal control. Simply put, her faith became synonymous with an invitation for foreign domination and with unfaithfulness to her kingdom.

Moreover, these same subjects saw Mary’s religious policies as an encouragement not only for Rome’s intervention but also of Spanish domination. Because the queen’s marriage to Philip visibly advanced the process of bringing England under the Church of Rome, Spain and Catholicism in effect came to mean one in the same. Throughout Mary’s reign, her subjects’ virulent opposition to the former thus generally involved antagonism toward latter and vice versa. The queen’s marriage to “His Most Catholic Majesty” exacerbated both xenophobic sentiments and anti-Catholic hostilities across her kingdom. In this way, Mary’s choice of husband again proved detrimental to her reign,

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193 Commendone, 10.
194 A Suplicacyon to the Quenes Maiestie, B5v.
195 Maltby, 29.
for Philip’s religion further increased her unpopularity and further distanced her from England. Much like the Spanish alliance engendered fears of Hapsburg dominion, the queen’s imposition of Catholicism raised similar concerns regarding Spanish and papal intrusion. Underscoring this conflation of foreign interference, the reformer John Knox proclaimed with disgust, “They [the English] were compelled to bow their necks under the yoke of Satan, and of his proud ministers, pestilent papists, and proud Spaniards.”

In consequence of her subjects’ association of Catholicism with Spain and Rome, Mary’s religious views thus came to be perceived as un-English. The sovereign’s Protestant subjects largely classified her faith as a foreign religion that encompassed foreign influence and foreign allegiance. As an expression of the hostile feelings resulting from this impression, John Proctor’s account of Wyatt’s Rebellion included the declaration, “We seek no harm to the Queen, but better counsel and Councillors.”

Given the number of detested Catholics and Spanish advisers in Mary’s government, here “better counsel” implied Protestant Englishmen and thus highlighted her kingdom’s resentment toward her preferences. In the eyes of many of her countrymen, the restoration of the Catholic Church signified the sovereign’s willingness to disregard England’s interests and instead welcome foreign influence. Consequently, the preexistent concerns surrounding Mary’s national identity and loyalty became even more firmly instilled throughout the kingdom. Using the absence of affirmative propaganda to suggest that the queen neglected to confront these attacks, the scholar Kevin Sharpe affirmed,

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197 Proctor, 212.
“She allowed others to present her religion as un-English.”198 Because she neglected to address this correlation between faith and nationality, Mary’s religion rendered her an un-English monarch.

Beyond creating this perception of foreignness, the queen’s religious beliefs and policies further separated her from a fully-English nationality due to the sharp contrast she drew with her immediate predecessors. In respectively breaking from Rome and promoting Protestantism throughout the kingdom, Henry VIII and Edward VI established a new precedent for the spiritual position of England’s sovereign. As a result, Mary’s repeal of the religious laws of her father and half-brother unambiguously divided her from the House of Tudor. Already vulnerable in consequence of the taints of her Spanish blood and husband, the queen further weakened her connection to the dynasty by favoring a Roman institution over the national church her family had created. As an affirmation of this dynastic separation, Elizabeth would later critique her sister for being “so averse to our father’s and brother’s actions as to undo what they had perfect.”199 This disconnect from her lineage and kingdom certainly did little to help mitigate the misgivings regarding her national identity and her susceptibilities as a female ruler. Instead, against the “wave of nationalist and anticlerical sentiment which Henry and Edward had ridden,” Mary positioned herself as anti-nationalist and pro-clerical, neither of which gained her favor in the eyes of her subjects.200

Additionally, the burnings of Protestants she pursued under the Heresy Acts further diminished her reputation and generated greater doubts about her nationality. As

199 Elizabeth I, “To the Deprived Bishops,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 124.
200 Marshall, 86.
an indication of this antagonism, her contemporary John Foxe asserted, “The realm of England felt more of God’s wrath in Queen Mary’s time.” Quite overtly, the sovereign-sponsored persecutions of religious dissenters within her kingdom turned public opinion against her, for she came to be seen as a murderer of her own people. Protestant writers from the time emphasized the nationality of these victims precisely in order to undermine the monarch’s relationship to the kingdom and elicit mistrust regarding her allegiance. Illustrating this perceived betrayal of her subjects, Foxe denounced, “Before her never was…so much Christian blood, so many Englishmen’s lives, spilled within this realm, as under Queen Mary.” The decreased popularity and suspicious nationality that resulted from this willingness to kill her own countrymen severely impaired her ability to govern. In consequence of her religious policies, Mary largely lacked the support and trust of her people, as her actions against them weakened the attitude toward and thus effectiveness of her regime. Further demonstrating this resentment, one anti-Marian pamphlet emphatically declared, “It be a ponynte of tyrannye for a Prince…to condemne one of the most innocente to death because he shall not assent to them in religion.” Although Elizabeth’s reign witnessed the executions of Catholic Englishmen, these persecutions produced far less hostility throughout the kingdom. Beyond standing as the minority in England, those slain were considered traitors to the nation as a result of the conflation of Crown and Church under the Act of Supremacy. To that point Elizabeth later commented, “I would never have castigated the

201 Foxe, Foxe’s Book of Martyrs, 448.
202 Foxe, Foxe’s Book of Martyrs, 447.
204 Certayne Questions, A2r.
Catholics except when they would not acknowledge me as their queen.” Mary’s persecution of non-Catholics, on the other hand, not only lost her significant standing in the eyes of many of her subjects but also strengthened the resolve of the Protestant movement. In this manner, England’s first queen regnant both limited her own capacity to rule and paved the way for a more popular successor.

After five years of persecutions, papal influence, and a campaign to re-impose Catholicism, England stood quite eager for change. As the reformer John Aylmer expressed, “Englende is of late both in honor and possession, not a lytle maimed…through the negligence of the Nurce halfe made a creple.” Here, “the Nurce” refers to Mary who, in seeking to reestablish the Catholic Church and eliminate Protestantism, “maimed” her kingdom by way of her misguided priorities and the brutality of her efforts. For that reason, the majority of the English welcomed Elizabeth as a rejection of Rome and return to true Englishness. While the new queen ascended to the throne with “the smoke and fire of her sister’s martyrdoms scarce quenched,” her accession marked the termination of the attempts to restore papal jurisdiction to England. In celebration at this reversal, Elizabeth would later condemn her predecessor’s religious policies with the statement, “My sister could not bind the realm.” Because this Protestant queen “refused to submit to the ecclesiastical laws” of the Catholic Church, Mary’s struggle ultimately proved unsuccessful, and her successor immediately established herself as an obvious, and for the most part desirable, contrast.

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205 Elizabeth I, “To Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador,” *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, 123.
206 Marshall, 87.
207 Aylmer, Br.
208 Naunton, 40.
210 Sander, 241.
In regard to the accession of this last Tudor monarch, Grafton described how there
“weare suche soundes and rejoysinge of the people...as before that tyme hath beene
seldome seene.”

Perceiving Elizabeth as a polar opposite to her Catholic, half-Spanish
sister, her subjects widely anticipated a renewed focus on English interests and a rebuff
of foreign interference.

This desired prospect quickly materialized with the reestablishment of the Church
of England, as the Elizabethan Religious Settlement reduced Catholicism and reinstated
Anglicanism. Though in many ways the queen sought to remain ambiguous and thus
inoffensive concerning religious matters, the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity sent a
clear message about the monarch’s autonomy, Englishness, and Protestant beliefs. By
restoring the Church of England, Elizabeth established a uniquely-English state religion
led by the sovereign and entirely independent of any foreign powers. As the Anglican
queen straightforwardly declared to the Catholic bishops within the kingdom, “Your
Romish supremacy is usurped.”

Whereas many of her subjects perceived Mary as
bound to Rome and therefore disloyal to her own kingdom, Elizabeth’s position as the
head of this national church proclaimed her English identity and allegiance. She was
neither beholden to the Pope nor aligned with non-English institutions. As an affirmation
of her devotedness to her people, the queen stated to the Count of Feria, “I shall not let
my subjects’ money be carried out of the realm to the pope any more.”

In thus coming
to represent both England and its Church, Elizabeth joined herself to these entities in a
valuable manner entirely unavailable to her Catholic predecessor.

211 Grafton, X6v.
212 Elizabeth I, “To the Deprived Bishops,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 124.
213 Elizabeth I, “To de Feria, representative of Philip II,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 116.
Given that an individual’s subscription to the Acts of Settlement signified one’s allegiance to the Crown, adherence to Anglicanism became virtually synonymous with genuine Englishness. Accordingly, a good Englishman during Elizabeth’s reign embraced not only obedience to the monarch but also commitment to the national church and thus the practice of Protestantism. As the sixteenth-century scholar Thomas Hill declared, “To worship the kinge is to worshippe Religion and God.”

Similarly, in An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subjectes, Aylmer asserted that because sovereigns are divinely-chosen, submission to Elizabeth, regardless of her sex, was part of the duty of all true Christians in her kingdom. He further defined faithfulness to the sovereign and Supreme Governor of the Church as a demonstration of the English’s love for their country. In contrast, England’s Catholics were widely criticized as a result of the conflation of “[t]reason, offence against Maiesty” and “Treason against God.”

Hence, Elizabeth’s replacement of Catholicism with Anglicanism strengthened her authority by demanding obedience on spiritual grounds and more closely uniting her with the kingdom. In consequence of this intertwining of faith and nationality, the queen appeared as the personification of Protestant England.

Accordingly, Elizabeth’s religious identification as an Anglican reinforced her national identity as an Englishwoman yet also underlined her connection to both her father and brother. For many of her subjects, the restoration of the Church of England signified a return to the faith of her more popular predecessors, in contrast to the Catholicism of her reviled sister. Shortly after her accession, Elizabeth told the Count of

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215 Munday, L.2r.
Feria that she was “resolved to restore religion as her father left it.”

Thus, by immediately aligning her religious policies with those of Henry VIII, the queen emphasized her decent from and connection to this beloved member of the dynasty. Though Anglican structures and rituals changed over the course of various reigns, the English nonetheless identified the Church of England as a Tudor institution and, as a result, recognized Elizabeth as a true Tudor. Though Mary disrupted this new religious tradition, her successor’s espousal of Anglicanism re-established a sense of continuity that in turn strengthened her connection to her lineage and thus her position on the throne. By supporting the Church of Henry and Edward VI, Elizabeth confirmed herself as an equally powerful and legitimate sovereign, regardless of her sex.

Furthermore, the restoration of the Church of England not only bolstered the queen’s own English nationality but also generated considerable nationalist sentiment among her people. To that end, sixteenth-century Anglicanism stood strongly associated with English nationalism, and religion therefore carried the potential to strengthen subjects’ connection to the country. While the religious divisions during Mary’s reign functioned as an obstacle to “effective expression of English national sentiment,” Elizabethan England witnessed the development of a national church that encouraged a sense of cohesiveness throughout much of the population. Precisely because of this union between religion and state, English Protestants as a whole felt simultaneously bound to one another, to the monarch, and to the kingdom. The Church itself played a significant role in encouraging patriotism and actually used Christianity to bolster

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216 Count de Feria to the King, 19 March 1559, Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English Affairs, vol. 1, ed. Martin A. S. Hume (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1892-99), 37.
218 Harbinson, 308.
Elizabeth’s authority. For one, each Sunday, Anglican pastors across England preached homilies against rebellion, thereby enforcing the monarch’s authority and demanding obedience to the Crown on spiritual grounds. Perhaps even more illustrative is the fact that the frontpiece to the 1569 edition of the *Bishops’ Bible* depicted not a religious scene but Elizabeth herself (see image 6). In this fashion, the Church plainly affirmed a union among G-d, England, and the sovereign.219 Anglicanism enabled Elizabeth to stand as a symbol of both divine approval and nationalism, with this imagery confirming her legitimacy as a ruler.

After praising Elizabeth as divinely-chosen and worthy of complete obedience, Aylmer urged his fellow countrymen, “Though wouldest vii times of the day fall flat on thy face before God, and geve him thanks, that thou wart born an English man.”220 Here and elsewhere throughout *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subiectes*, the reformer emphasized the queen and the Church as specific assets for which the English should be grateful. Anglicanism unequivocally differentiated England from the Catholicism of Spain and France as well as from the non-state churches of Germany and Switzerland. Accordingly, the kingdom’s official religion stood as a distinguishing feature for which the English could feel a sense of uniqueness and pride. The Church became an entity around which Elizabeth’s subjects could rally, and these adherents did not forget that their monarch stood as its head. In consequence, the reinstatement of Anglicanism not only positioned England as distinct from and supposedly superior to the rest of the continent but also identified in the person of the sovereign a new target for celebration. By drawing together religion, the monarch, and the kingdom, the Anglican Church

219 Carole Levin, “*The Heart and Stomach of a King,*” 26.
220 Aylmer, P4r.
allowed for the refocusing of pre-Reformation loyalties that had previously been directed toward the pope and various saints. As one such example, the queen’s birthday and accession day virtually became religious holidays throughout England. To some extent replacing the various Catholic festivities, these celebrations paid homage to Elizabeth as both a monarch and a spiritual leader. Illustrating this union between Crown and Church, Sander, as a devout Catholic, complained of his countrymen, “[T]o show greater contempt for our Blessed lady, they keep the birthday of queen Elizabeth in the most solemn way.”

Protestants throughout England, however, expressed no such qualms and instead appreciated the chance to fill the celebratory void precipitated by the reestablishment of Anglicanism.

Similarly, Elizabeth’s status as a sacred monarch and unwed (thus presumably chaste) woman offered her the opportunity to generate around herself a following to replace that of the Virgin Mary. Capitalizing on this unique and powerful symbolism, she proclaimed to her parliament in 1575, “I attribute to G-d aloane the prince of rule, and counte my self no better than his handmayde.”

While the Reformation minimized the focus on the revered figure of Mary, Protestant England largely redirected its love for the mother of Jesus toward its monarch. Though not prevalent until the second decade of the queen’s reign, Elizabeth and her supporters created a cult of the Virgin Queen that established the sovereign, like the Virgin Mary, as an untouchable ideal that warranted her subjects’ esteem and absolute submission.

Expressing this regard for the queen, one Englishman declared during a procession in 1579, “Who ever found on earth a

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221 Sander, 284-85.
constant friend/That may compare with this my virgin Queene?/Whoever found a bodie
and a mynde/So free from staine, so perfect to be seen?"225 By in this manner
proclaiming her virtue and conferring a degree of divinity, the iconography of the Virgin
Queen enhanced Elizabeth’s popularity and thus reinforced her position on throne. Yet
these representations went beyond a generic replacement of the Virgin Mary and instead
produced a specifically-English object of worship. Describing sixteenth-century
perceptions of Elizabeth, the modern scholar Janel Mueller stated, “This Lord’s
handmaid is equally and utterly the servant of England’s well-being.”226 Through this
role, the monarch affirmed her correlation with the Virgin Mary as well as her connection
to England. The cult of the Virgin Queen associated virginity with this particular national
identity and, given that early modern Europe viewed chastity as a desirable asset,
contributed to the rise of English patriotism during Elizabeth’s reign.227 Elizabeth’s
adherence to Anglicanism, paired with her decision against marriage, enabled her to
develop a powerful iconography that had been unavailable to her Catholic predecessor
but that greatly benefited her reign.

On the whole, religion worked to advantage of the last Tudor monarch, for its
affirmation of her Englishness validated her authority as England’s ruler. Whereas
Mary’s religion weakened her nationality by rendering her un-English, Elizabeth’s
Anglican affiliation strengthened her identification with her kingdom and consequently
helped her to overcome some of the obstacles imposed by her sex. As the Protestant

225 “The Oration of Stephan Limbert, Publicke Schoolmaister, to the Most Magnificent Prince, Elisabeth,”
Johnson, 1808), 399.
Gender: Fantasies of Subjectivity and Embodiment, ed. Mary Ann O’Farrell and Lynne Vallone (Ann
queen declared in regard to her predecessor, “I did differ from her in religion and I was sought for divers ways.”

Quite obviously, one of these “ways” involved the ability to rule. With her Englishness reinforced by her restoration of the national church, Elizabeth’s religious policies established for her a greater connection with her subjects and proclaimed her unwavering loyalty to England. This resultant esteem bolstered her position on the throne and thus enabled the queen to govern effectively, even as woman. Though, as the historian Jacqueline Vanhoutte concedes, “Elizabeth’s sex ensured she shared Mary’s vulnerability to certain types of nationalist critique,” her religion enhanced her acceptability by firmly binding her to her kingdom.

While her subjects celebrated, in Aylmer’s words, that “G-d is English,” these same countrymen could also celebrate that their Protestant queen was English.

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230 Aylmer, P4v.
CHAPTER 5
More than Just a Monarch?

Though the general public of the sixteenth century largely lacked access to rulers due to logistical barriers and a move toward absolutist tendencies, Europeans of the era did possess a sense of a personal relationship with their sovereign.\textsuperscript{231} Despite the fact that the concept of nationalism would not fully emerge for another three centuries, individuals nonetheless felt themselves tied to their country, and the leader of the country could not easily be excluded from this association. As the seventeenth-century monarch Louis XIV declared, “In France the nation is not a separate body, it dwells entirely within the person of the King.”\textsuperscript{232} Thus, by virtue of their relationship to the kingdom, Frenchmen and women accordingly established for themselves a relationship with the person of the sovereign. Similarly, the English recognized this interconnection of self, kingdom, and monarch that fused together the understandings of the three entities.\textsuperscript{233} The people of England viewed their bond with the ruler as a component of their English identities and as an indication of that ruler’s Englishness. In this sense, the subject-sovereign bond functioned as an additional element of sixteenth-century nationality.

Beyond the factors of lineage, marriage, and religion, the construction of this bond played a key role in perceptions of Mary’s and Elizabeth’s connections to England. Simply put, the establishment of a tight-knit relationship with one’s subjects unequivocally proclaimed the sovereign’s Englishness. How each queen linked herself to her people impacted how they felt toward her, and the esteem of her countrymen in turn facilitated her governance. Because this sort of link contributed to her capacity to govern

\textsuperscript{232} Quoted and translated by Breuilly, 45.
\textsuperscript{233} Breuilly, 45.
with the support of the people, the ability of each to cultivate and disseminate an effectual relationship greatly impacted her success as a monarch. Underlining the importance of this esteem, Sir Henry Sydney noted to Elizabeth, “Your inward Force…consisteth in your Subjects.” As such, a monarch’s popularity and familiarity with the English clearly contributed to his or her effectiveness as a ruler. Specifically, the subject-sovereign relationship held the power to reinforce national identity by directly linking the monarch to her kingdom and population. However, of the Tudor queens, only Elizabeth enjoyed this advantage. Like many factors relating to the half-sisters, the construction of this relationship manifested itself quite divergently, as the monarchs ‘differed in their appreciation for “the uses of princely magnificence” and the accessible forms of self-representation.’ In consequence, these disparities in ability and availability generated opposing impacts on the reign of each queen.

The first obstacle preventing Mary’s construction of a meaningful relationship with her subjects was simply the absence of concerted efforts to propagate any sort of effective image. As the Marian biographer Robert Tittler explains, “She lacked the Henrican sense of public occasion which would be perfected as a royal art form under Elizabeth.” With primary sources testifying to her limited recognition of the power of public relations, the monarch demonstrated little ability and little concern with her own self-representation. Relying on specific examples of this ineptitude, such as the queen’s disengagement from the crowds at her coronation procession, Loades affirms, “Unlike her father and sister, she seems to have made no attempt to project an image for the

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234 Sydney, 287.
benefit of her subjects.” Instead, Mary prioritized the suppression of her adversaries’ propaganda over the proliferation of positive portrayals of herself. Through an examination of the raw data concerning materials published from 1553 to 1558, Edward J. Baskerville’s *A Chronological Bibliography of Propaganda and Polemic* finds that Protestant writers of the time greatly outproduced the queen’s Catholic supporters. The historian thus concluded “that Mary’s government did not mount…a sustained campaign of printed propaganda and polemic,” for no evidence exists to contest this disparity or suggest otherwise. Moreover, the titles of Catholic pamphlets from the period of her reign indicate that the Marians published mostly sermons and homilies rather than writings in support of their sovereign. In failing to direct her supporters to disseminate flattering representations, the queen missed the opportunity to establish and advertise a close relationship with her subjects. Whereas Elizabeth would successfully portray herself as the “louing Quene and mother” of the English, Mary’s inattention to self-representation in effect precluded the circulation and even the construction of such a compelling image. Accordingly, she lost a powerful tool with which to bind herself to her the English and thereby bolster her damaged nationality.

As the first of England’s queens regnant, Mary lacked any concrete precedent that delineated how a female sovereign should relate herself to her people. Whereas a king could link himself to the English as a father, chivalrous knight, or “Master,” these representations were immediately unavailable to Mary by virtue of her sex. This gendered difference therefore presented a void in which the queen should have sought an

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239 Aylmer, Q3v.
alternative sort of relationship. Mary, however, failed to do so. Although admittedly
disadvantaged due to her unprecedented position, she did not employ sufficient ingenuity
to craft and propagate a union to join her to her people. While Elizabeth would later
construct an intimate relationship with her “dere Englysh chiydren,” this first queen
regnant neglected to effectively use maternal, marital, or any other type of rhetoric to
bind her subjects to her person.241

Having wed Philip early in her reign, Mary’s marriage certainly posed the
difficulty, though not the impossibility, of proclaiming herself as wed to or the mother of
England. Yet given that the Bishop of Winchester’s funeral sermon celebrated “[t]hat she
married herself unto her Realm; and in Fidelity, put a Diamond Ring upon her Finger,”
the English arguably would have accepted portrayals of such a relationship, had the
queen offered them.242 The primary sources from her reign, however, reveal few
examples of any representations of this sovereign as wife to the kingdom. Though a
contemporary’s account of Wyatt’s Rebellion records the monarch as having declared, “I
am already married to this Common Weal,” this declaration, which occurred prior to her
marriage to Philip, stands as a unique instance in which she employed this type of
bond.243 Perhaps a result of discomfit with the notion of being married to both a man and
a kingdom, Mary chose not to employ marital rhetoric to tie herself to her people after
her marriage to Philip. Yet regardless of this personal sentiment, discounting such a
relationship can nevertheless be understood as a product of her incompetence in regards
to self-promotion. Quite simply, she precluded a powerful tool for reinforcing her

241 Aylmer, Rr.
243 Proctor, “The History of Wyat’s Rebellion: With the order and manner of resisting the same,” Tudor Tracts, 239.
nationality when she could have used marital rhetoric to her benefit. Just as her marriage to a Spaniard imposed on Mary an un-English identity, the image of marriage to England would have declared her Englishness and tightly bound the queen to her subjects. Without this English “husband” to counteract her tainted nationality, the sovereign forfeited the much-needed chance to underscore her validity as an English ruler.

Furthermore, apart from one exception, neither Mary nor her supporters choose to represent the monarch as mother to her people, likely in order to avoid dissonance with the children many hoped she would bear on her own. Whereas Winchester’s sermon suggests the acceptability of the portrayal of the queen as wife to England, the complete absence of maternal language after her marriage to Philip implies she could not, rather than merely would not, construct this sort of relationship. Given the potential for Mary to become a mother in the biological sense, perhaps the metaphorical use of the theme appeared too inappropriate in the eyes of the monarch and/or her subjects. Illustrating the unfeasibility of this image, Loades asserts, “The most effective image, that of mother, was denied her.”

There does, however, exist a deviation to this trend, for prior to her marriage Mary successfully rallied supporters through the use of maternal rhetoric. Assuming this later-inadmissible role, Mary declared to her subjects:

And I say to you, on the word of a Prince, I cannot tell how naturally the mother loveth the child, for I was never the mother of any; but certainly, if a Prince and Governor may as naturally and earnestly love her subjects as the mother doth love the child, then assure yourselves that I, being your lady and mistress, do as earnestly and tenderly love and favour you.

Historians widely consider this confrontation of Wyatt’s Rebellion to be the shining moment of Mary’s reign, and this moment conspicuously included the use of maternal

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244 Loades, *The Chronicles of the Tudor Queens*, 270.
language. Arguably it is no coincidence that this outpouring of support corresponded with one of the monarch’s few efforts to construct an intimate relationship with her people. As such, Mary’s obvious triumph over the rebels testifies to the value of the image of the queen-mother and simultaneously underlines the disadvantage she ultimately faced when the rhetoric became incompatible with her potential childbearing. While not truly blameworthy for the unavailability of her portrayal as “a natural mother” to her subjects, the sovereign still suffered in consequence of this lost opportunity to bind herself to her kingdom and her people.

Although Mary’s marriage to Philip produced difficulties in her ability to cultivate a close-knit relationship with Englishmen and women, she nevertheless failed to formulate any kind of creative alternative to either the maternal or marital rhetoric that so benefited her successor. Quite evidently, she lacked a strategy with which to associate in her subjects’ minds “Love to your country, loyaltie to your queen” and thus lacked that firm connection to her people. Added to her general incompetence regarding public relations, Mary’s inattention and lack of resourcefulness precluded the construction of an image that could have functioned to affirm her national identity and strengthen her position on throne. Though she surely would have benefited from an affirmation of her Englishness, the queen never successfully established an intimate relationship with the English and thus once again failed to overcome the obstacles imposed by her sex. Unlike Elizabeth whom many viewed as “the most loving Mother and Nurse of all her good Subiectes,” Mary merely stood as a ruler. And at least in part because she was never

247 Stubbs, 49.
248 Aylmer, Pr.
249 Munday, A3r.
able to securely confirm her Englishness in the minds of most Englishmen and women, she was not a well-liked one.

As with many aspects of governance, Elizabeth unmistakably surpassed her predecessor in matters pertaining to public relations. In the words of the English writer Sir Robert Naunton, “I believe no prince living that…was so great a courter of her people.” With her success deriving from both the inheritance of her father and her observation of Mary's mistakes, Elizabeth demonstrated both a natural aptitude for self-representation and an awareness of its vast importance. Having “inherited Henry VIII’s gift for public relations in abundance,” she worked to use her image to her advantage and on the whole brilliantly succeeded. Unlike Mary, Elizabeth understood the power of self-representation to assert authority and gain esteem among her subjects. Indicating the sovereign’s success at this endeavor, the Count of Feria noted, “She puts great store by the people and is very confident that they are all on her side—which is certainly true.” In this way, the Spaniard confirmed Elizabeth’s adept capacity to bind herself to the English and the English to her. Likely learning from Mary’s mistakes and certainly capitalizing on her own innate abilities, this last Tudor worked to portray herself in a manner that established an intimate relationship with her subjects. As Liah Greenfeld states, “Elizabeth might not have been much of a nationalist herself, but…she found it in her interests to acquiesce to and support the growing national sentiment.” Simply put, the queen recognized the value of emphasizing her connection to England.

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250 Naunton, 44.
251 Borman, 137.
252 de Figueroa, 331.
253 Greenfeld, 65.
Given that the fourth chapter of this paper discusses Elizabeth’s self-representation as England’s wife, this section will instead focus on her use of maternal rhetoric to strengthen her position on the throne. Because as an unmarried woman she lacked the potential to bear legitimate heirs, the second queen regnant was able to portray herself as a universal mother to her people. With no corporeal husband or offspring to complicate the image, Elizabeth depicted her subjects as the issue of her union with England. She declared in response to her parliament’s calls for her marriage, “And reproach me so no more...that I have no children: for every one of you, and as many as are English, are my children and kinsfolks.”

Through this maternal language Elizabeth forged a tight-knit bond to unite herself to her people in a way that garnered esteem and allegiance. Interestingly, her overtly-gendered representation as “a most loving mother” actually enabled the queen to mitigate some of the obstacles imposed by her sex. As a motherly figure to the people of England, she firmly established her fidelity to the English and thus simultaneously asserted her own Englishness. Underscoring the validity of this relationship as well as her steadfast commitment to her people, the sovereign affirmed, “Though after my death you may have many stepdames, yet shall you never have a more natural mother than I mean to be unto you all.”

Elizabeth thus represented herself as the legitimate, devoted nurturer of her subjects. This type of image proved so effective that the queen’s supporters, particularly after resigning themselves to her singlehood, employed similar rhetoric in their celebrations of Elizabeth. The political commentator John Stubbs wrote with admiration,

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254 Elizabeth I, “Her answer to [the Commons’] petition that she marry, 1559,” Elizabeth I: Collected Works, 59.
255 Stubbs, 5.
256 Elizabeth I, “To a delegation of the House of Commons, 1563,” Elizabeth I, 30.
“We her poor subjects that have been governed hitherto by a natural mother.”257 Even more persuasively, Aylmer established Elizabeth as a foil for Mary by extolling how the former reigned “lyke a mother, and not like a stepdam.”258 Using each queen’s link to the English as the basis for this comparison, the Bishop of London drew a sharp contrast between the neglectful “Nurce” and the succeeding “mother and mistres.”259 Given that the divergent degrees of esteem coincided with distinct feelings of closeness, Aylmer’s *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subiectes* attests to the significance of the sovereign’s ability to cultivate a relationship with her people. Thus the propagation of an intimate subject-sovereign bond served as a notable benefit to the monarch’s popularity and governance. With the widespread perception that “The Queen bare such a Motherly Love to England,” Elizabeth proclaimed a shared identity with the English people and confirmed her status as an Englishwoman.260

Moreover, considering that the Fifth Commandment famously decrees, “Honour thy father and thy mother,” Elizabeth, as both Defender of the Faith and the proclaimed mother of her country, positioned herself as deserving England’s full submission.261 Alluding to this correlation between motherhood and authority, Aylmer declared to his countrymen, “Sticke to youre mother, as she sticke to you.”262 Precisely because of this reciprocal parent-child relationship, the queen obliged the complete allegiance of her subjects. Yet the propagation of this maternal image additionally worked to emphasize that Elizabeth, as a mother to her people, acted in their best interest. As she pronounced

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257 Stubbs, 49.
258 Aylmer, N4v.
259 Aylmer, B1r.
260 Camden, 25.
261 Exodus 20: 1-17.
262 Aylmer, Rv-R2r.
to her parliament, “I will never conclude anything in that matter which shall be hurtful to the realm, for the preservation and prosperity whereof as a loving mother I will never spare to spend my life.” This self-representation underscored that she warranted England’s obedience not simply because of her position as a maternal figure but also because of her attentiveness to her so-called children. With the widespread sentiment that she “lyke a faithful mother nourished,” Elizabeth generated an intimacy that in turn bound together monarch and subject. Undoubtedly this “self-appointed role as mother of the nation” proved exceedingly advantageous. By increasing her people’s esteem, establishing a shared identity, and validating her authority, the use of maternal rhetoric unmistakably bolstered the queen’s position on throne.

Yet throughout her reign Elizabeth portrayed herself not only as mother to the English but also as England itself. As with the use of maternal rhetoric, this “deep identification of the person of the sovereign with the national life itself” firmly bound together queen, kingdom, and subjects. However, by making synonymous in the eyes of her subjects “Your countrey, your Quene,” Elizabeth here expressly reinforced her status as a truly-English monarch. Through her own adept self-representation and the efforts of her supporters, she came to embody England and thus left little room for any to doubt her true Englishness. With declarations like, “They are my people,” the queen regularly demonstrated a degree of possessiveness over the English, which presumably resulted from her role as the manifestation of their kingdom. Continuing this trope,

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263 Elizabeth I, “To the House of Commons, 1559,” Elizabeth I, 27.
264 Aylmer, Rr.
265 Sharpe, 341.
267 Aylmer, P2r.
268 Elizabeth I, “To her judges upon their assumption of office, 1559,” The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth, 11.
Aylmer, in the personified voice of the nation, avowed to his countrymen, “You can not be my children, if you be not her subiectes: I wyll none of you, if you will none of hir.” Accordingly, the positioning of kingdom and monarch as one in the same served to affirm Elizabeth’s Englishness. She unequivocally appeared as the incarnation of England itself and thus the quintessence of English nationality. In a similar fashion, Marcus Gheerraerts’ painting of Elizabeth, known as the Ditchley Portrait, conflated sovereign, Crown, and kingdom (see image 7). In portraying the queen with her feet planted on England, the artist unambiguously united the entities. As the scholar Roy Strong explains of the portrait, “Elizabeth is England, woman and kingdom are interchangeable.” Quite certainly there exists no stronger testament to Elizabeth’s Englishness than the complete conflation of “our queen, and our native country” that pervaded her reign.

On the whole, Elizabeth succeeded in representing herself not merely as a ruler but rather as an integral part of her subjects’ understanding of themselves and their country. Whereas Mary largely failed to bind herself to the English and confirm an English nationality, the second queen regnant fruitfully established a union with her people. By way of this intimate relationship, Elizabeth ensured the esteem and allegiance of her subjects. Accordingly, as the “Monarch held in more precious Reckoning of her People,” she was able to rule more effectively. Through her representations as a mother to the English and as England itself, Elizabeth asserted her Englishness and thus obtained a valuable tool with which to diminish the vulnerabilities imposed by her sex.

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269 Aylmer, R2r.
270 Strong, 136.
271 “The Bond of Association for the Defense of Queen Elizabeth, 1584” Elizabeth I: Collected Works, 185.
272 Sydney, 292.
CONCLUSION
Nationality and Gender, Nationality Beyond Gender

Although the rise of nation-states occurred well after the sixteenth century, nationality nonetheless held a visible place in Tudor England and bore a noteworthy influence on perceptions of the kingdom’s first queens regnant. For Mary and Elizabeth, their subjects’ evaluation of their Englishness markedly shaped their reigns, whether by undercutting sovereignty or by reinforcing authority. While both monarchs faced considerable vulnerabilities as women in traditionally-male roles, only “Fayre Elisa, Queene of shepheardes all” mitigated these obstacles by securely aligning herself with her people and her kingdom.273 Mary positioned herself as un-English through both inherent characteristics and her own ineffectualness, but her successor used her untainted nationality to strengthen her position on the throne, and did so with impressive finesse. In the words of the Henrican biographer J. J. Scarisbrick, Elizabeth, like her father, “became the quintessence of Englishry and the focus of swelling national pride.”274 Accordingly, this last Tudor benefited from her people’s perception of her national identity in ways Mary neither did nor could. In fact, England’s first queen regnant actually suffered as a result ‘of her nationality, for her foreignness further alienated subjects who had in advance exhibited apprehensions regarding her sex.

Though unmistakably disadvantaged by gender and nationality, Mary still ascended the throne of England, apparently even with “Great…triumphe hear at London.”275 As follows, nationality did not prove an insurmountable barrier to a sovereign’s accession but instead held the potential to seriously hinder one’s ability to

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273 Spenser, 413.
274 Scarisbrick, 506.
275 The Chronicle of Queen Jane, 11.
rule effectively. Although Mary ruled England, she did not rule particularly well. The English may not have prevented her coronation, but the kingdom still distrusted and resisted a monarch whom they viewed as “a Straunger.”276 Given that her un-English identity “offended a significant segment of the population in its national consciousness,” Mary never gained the widespread support of her subjects.277 Already disadvantaged on account of her sex, the queen thus doubly struggled to competently govern a kingdom that did not see her as one of its own. Perceptions of Mary as foreign severely impaired her reign precisely because she lacked a firm connection to England and the English.

The stark contrast of Elizabeth additionally testifies to this correlation between nationality and ability to rule, for her position as a fully-English monarch serves as an unquestionable source of her success. Unlike Mary, this “loving Queen” established a collective identity with her subjects and consequently affirmed her status as a true Englishwoman.278 In the words of her contemporary John Clapham, “And as she was beloved of the common people, so was she no less honored by her nobility.”279 By binding herself to England, Elizabeth not only gained the esteem of the English but also asserted her legitimacy as the kingdom’s ruler. The sense of oneness she achieved with her subjects helped the sovereign to relieve some of the anxieties surrounding female rule and thereby mitigated the difficulty generated by her sex. For the most part, the fact that she was unmistakably a queen of England overshadowed her kingdom’s uneasiness that she was merely a queen. To that end, Elizabeth’s capitalization on her national identity enabled her to govern far more successfully than her un-English predecessor.

276 Certayne Questions, A4v.
277 Greenfeld, 71.
278 Hake, 228.
279 Clapham, 69.
Though certainly manifest throughout the rules of these last Tudor monarchs, the power of nationality was not unique to these queens regnant alone, for the reign of Elizabeth’s successor attests to the broader applicability of this paper’s main argument. Though a king rather than a female ruler, James I nevertheless faced significant difficulties in direct consequence of his national identity. Despite peacefully acceding as England’s monarch upon the death of Elizabeth in 1603, he was throughout his reign forced to confront nationalist opposition from his English subjects.\textsuperscript{280} With his Scottish origins, antecedent position as Scotland’s sovereign, and “palpable partiality toward his countrymen,” this first Stuart never achieved a shared identity with the English.\textsuperscript{281} Like his cousin Mary I, James failed to secure the full acceptance of the people of England due to his disconnect from the kingdom. As the scholars William Hunt and Reginald Lane Poole affirm, “He remained to the last a foreigner who never really understood the English character or English institutions.”\textsuperscript{282} Nationality proved to be a critical hindrance to James, as extensive anti-Scottish sentiment forced him to rule without the popular support of his English subjects. His un-Englishness, in the words of his contemporary Francis Osborne, “rendered him no higher place than of a king-in-law, not a prince of any natural affections to the people of this nation.”\textsuperscript{283} Because his foreignness neither asserted his legitimacy as England’s sovereign nor gained him the regard of England’s population, James struggled to govern effectively. Even as a male in a traditionally-male position, the king experienced noteworthy disadvantages as a result of his un-English identity.

\textsuperscript{280} Roger Lockyer, \textit{James VI & I} (London: Longman, 1998), 60.
\textsuperscript{282} Hunt, 3.
\textsuperscript{283} Osborne, 145.
Quite evidently the nationality of a monarch impacted the ability to rule, regardless of one’s gender. No matter the difference in sex, nationality similarly undercut the authority of Mary and James. While perceptions of foreignness proved detrimental to both sovereigns, the queen indeed faced greater hindrances to her reign because her un-English identity exacerbated the existent obstacles imposed by her sex. Though she experienced corresponding vulnerabilities as another female ruler, Elizabeth enjoyed a nationality that enabled her to govern successfully not only as a queen but as a monarch in general. As the sixteenth-century writer Richard Mulcaster proclaimed of his fully-English sovereign, “All English hearts and her natural people must needs praise God’s mercy, which hath sent them so worthy a prince.” These “English hearts” saw the last Tudor as one of their own, and this shared identity accordingly facilitated Elizabeth’s sovereignty over her people. In this era before the emergence of nations, the concept of national identity held power by virtue of its influence over power. Simply put, a monarch, and especially a female monarch, ruled England most effectively when perceived as a monarch of England.

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284 “Richard Mulcaster’s Account of Queen Elizabeth’s Speech and Prayer during her Passage throughout London to Westminster the Day before her Coronation, January 14, 1559,” *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, 55.
APPENDIX

Image 1
Hans Eworth, *Mary I*

In this 1557 portrait commissioned by the queen herself, Mary stands in dress typical of the fashions of sixteenth-century Spain: the full-length overcoat that opens down the front, the puffed upper sleeves, the non-fitted waistline, the trim of traditional Spanish design. Thus, the monarch made the deliberate decision to appear in the fashion of the country of her mother and husband rather than that of her father and her subjects.
Hans Eworth, *Queen Elizabeth I and the Three Goddesses*

Elizabeth appears as the crowned figure toward the left-hand side of the painting. Holding the orb, a symbol of royal power, she stands in triumph over Juno, Minerva, and Venus. The scepter and quiver of arrows indicate the queen’s defeat of the three goddesses. Red and white roses at the bottom right corner are intended to remind the viewer of the queen’s lineage as a daughter of York and Lancaster. Windsor Castle, the foremost palace of the Tudors, stands in the background to further proclaim Elizabeth’s authority.
Image 3

Lucas de Heere, *Allegory of Tudor Succession*

Enthroned under the royal arms of England, Henry VIII sits in the center of this painting that creates an unmistakable politico-religious division. To the left stand the Catholic monarchs, Mary and her husband Philip. The accompanying figure of Mars, the god of war, serves to remind the viewer of the Hapsburg-induced conflicts with France that led to England’s loss of Calais. Across the scene, Edward VI and Elizabeth, as Protestant rulers who made peace with France, usher in the goddesses Peace and Plenty.
Antonis Mor, *Portrait of Queen Mary I of England*

Mary appears in her wedding ring and a Spanish-style skirt known as a farthingale, thereby making evident her connection to Spain. Moreover, the artist, in depicting the queen seated and with realistic features, employs a style unconventional in royal portraits of the Tudors. The painting thus seems to align Mary with Spain and Philip rather than England and her dynasty.
The portrait receives its name from the instrument placed in Elizabeth’s hand, which served as a common symbol of virginity. Accordingly, Metsys uses the sieve to proclaim the queen’s maidenhood as a valuable strength. In comparing Elizabeth to Aeneas, who is depicted on the roundels behind her, the painting suggests that the decision against marriage can enable a ruler to govern a great empire.
Image 6

1569 Bishops’ Bible

Queen Elizabeth sits in the center of this frontpiece, surrounded by and thus associated with the words “justice,” “mercy,” “fortitude,” and “prudence.” The text at the bottom of the Bible’s cover reads “God save the queene.” In this manner, the work stands as a representative example of the merger of Crown and Church that resulted from the reintroduction of Anglicanism in England.
Image 7

Marcus Gheerraerts the Younger, *Ditchley Portrait*

This portrait of Elizabeth depicts the queen standing on a map of England with her feet planted near Ditchley, the home of the Englishman who commissioned the painting as a means to regain her favor. The positioning of monarch and kingdom functions to unite the two entities. Here, Elizabeth and England are one.
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**Secondary Works**


