A Body Politic to Govern

A Body Politic to Govern:
The Political Humanism of Elizabeth I

By

Ted Booth

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To my loving wife Kristen who has supported me through all of this and to my two joys Eliza and Daisy. All I do is for you three.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACFLO	*Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*, ed. Janel Mueller and Leah Marcus [Chicago University Press, 2003]
BL	British Library
CSP	*Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547-80, 1581-90, 1591-94, 1595-97, 1598-1601, 1601-03*, ed. Mary A. Everrett, [London, 1870].
	Calendar of State Papers Edward VI, ed. C. S. Knighton [London, 1992]
	Calendar of State Papers Mary, ed. C. S. Knighton [London, 1998]
CW	*Elizabeth I: Collected Works,* ed. L. S. Marcus, J. Mueller, and M. B. Rose [Chicago University Press, 2000]
Hartley	T. E. Hartley, ed., *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I,* 3 vols., (Leicester, England, 1981-1995)
LP	Brewer and Gairdner, eds. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII.*..[London, 1864-1905]
NAS	National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh
RH	Register House
TNA	The National Archives, Kew (formerly PRO)

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the prominence of Elizabeth I as a subject for academic and popular inquiry, few scholars have examined her own self-promotion as a classical humanist. Therefore, this book intends to illuminate an area of Elizabethan scholarship that has yet to be the primary focus of a study using original published research. The main issue in question will be how Elizabeth, as a female monarch in the sixteenth century, used her humanist education to project the image of a competent, learned, and devout prince. Particular attention will be paid to how Elizabeth constructed a political persona or "body politic" that reflected the influence of the political humanism of her male contemporaries.

This study will also foreground Elizabeth's self-presentation as a ruler who enjoyed the special favor and sanction of God. In so doing, I will argue that Elizabeth began her scholarly career as a humanist concentrating on the classical idea of the *vita contemplativa* (contemplative life) most likely expecting to be a future patroness of religious learning. Yet, in 1558, when faced with the opportunity to rule, Elizabeth entered the pursuit of the *vita activa* (active life) and thus began to utilize her humanism to build, project, and sustain her political image as sovereign. I will also demonstrate that this political humanism which stressed the civic virtues of *amor patriae,* the *vita activa,* and the good of the state was the civic language of the day. This language was found in the writings and speeches of contemporary humanists such as Sir Thomas More, Thomas Elyot, and members of Elizabeth's Parliaments.

Despite the absence of a focused study on Elizabeth's classical education, scholars have previously noted and commented on its presence and influence. For example, Christopher Haigh describes Elizabeth's education as "classical" and also labels her a "political realist." [1] Wallace MacCaffrey in his biography of Elizabeth hinted at the connection between Elizabeth's education and her political projection, writing:

> However, the question remains how far her immersion in the classical authors affected her conduct as a ruler. It might well be argued that

[1] Christopher Haigh, *Elizabeth I: Profiles in Power*, (Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 1989), p. 31.

> Elizabeth's coldly calculating view of politics and her secular view of the function of religion in society owed something to her reading of the classical moralists.[2]

This study, however, intends to break new ground in that it focuses on the classicism noted by MacCaffrey and how Elizabeth found the practical application of humanism in the *realpolitik* alluded to by Haigh.[3]

Elizabeth I was a public figure whose literary output and records of government are well-chronicled and preserved. As she has also been a favorite topic of scholarly inquiry, there is an abundance of printed editions of sources dealing with both the history of her life and government. Therefore, in this I will primarily be consulting and analyzing known sources rather than relying on newly-discovered documents. What this book contributes is an examination and analysis of her written and printed works within their historical contexts with an eye towards how they reflect influence from the political humanism of the day. I will argue that Elizabeth used this political humanism to create a sustainable and defensible image of the learned prince who extolled the political virtues of the *vita activa* in service to the state. This study presents a new and fresh approach to a much studied historical figure by connecting Elizabeth's projection of her political persona to her reliance upon political humanism.

Italian and English Humanism

What modern scholars label humanism; intellectuals in sixteenth-century England described using the phrase the *studia humanitatis* ("studies of human nature" or "of the things that characterize a civilized man"). Scholarly consensus has generally settled on the definition of humanism given by Paul O. Kristeller.[4] Kristeller connected renaissance humanism to three distinct influences: the tradition of the medieval *dictatores* (clerks or scribes), the study of Latin classical works dating back to the twelfth century, and the introduction of Greek classical works.[5] These early humanists were drawn to the Roman writers Seneca, Cicero, and Virgil seeking the eloquence and wisdom of the ancient writers for practical

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[2] Wallace MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1993), p. 7.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Paul O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).
[5] "The Philosophy of Man in the Italian Renaissance," in *Italica*, vol. 24, no. 2. (June 1947), pp. 94-95.

purposes of the day such as writing a letter or to aid them in the area of local politics.

Hans Baron expanded upon this definition of humanism by coining the phrase *Bürgerhumanismus*, or "civic humanism." He argued that within the Italian humanist movement was a group of politically-minded individuals seeking the *vita activa*. Civic humanists placed a primary emphasis on man in the world and man as the center of power within that world with the obligation to make positive contributions to his surroundings. Notable examples such as Leonardo Bruni looked back to the Roman Republic as the ideal form of government with its citizens actively engaged in public affairs.[6] Consequently, the early civic humanists held up Cicero and his writings and speeches in defense of the ideals of the Roman Republic as the model for good government during the renaissance. These humanists valued the ideals of republicanism, political participation, and civic-mindedness. They further represented a resurgence of the republican ideology of the ancient classical period.[7]

Baron's conception of civic humanism has had its share of critics. Pocock and Skinner have disagreed with any idea of a progressive continuum of republican thought with the Italian civic humanists as the key.[8] Mark Jurdjevic argued that "civic humanism" was not really a democratic or republican movement but was also compatible with the government of an autocrat—as in the case of the Medici.[9] James Hankins, in the introduction of *Renaissance Civic Humanism*,[10] also joins the chorus that has risen up against Baron's arguments. Hankins views "civic humanism" as more of a transitional political and intellectual movement situated between the medieval guilds and moving slowly towards the monarchies of Western Europe. Hankins also argues that historians could salvage the term "civic humanism" if they first realized that it was not necessarily innovative or Florentine, but of Roman origin. Christopher Celenza also rejects Baron's arguments for the Florentine component of

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[6] See Leonardo Bruni, *In Praise of Florence: The Panegyric of the City of Florence and an Introduction to Bruni's Civil Humanism*, intro and trans. Alfred Sheepers, (Amsterdam: Olive Press, 2005).

[7] See chapters 16 and 17 of Baron, *In Search of Florentine's Civic Humanism, Essays on the Transition from Medieval to Modern Thought*, Vol. II (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[8] See Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*; and Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[9] Mark Jurdjevic, "Civic Humanism and the Rise of the Medici," pp. 994—1020.

[10] James Hankins, *Renaissance Civic Humanism*, introduction, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1—13.

"civic humanism" stating that much of Baron's thoughts came from the social contexts in which he wrote. Celenza writes that because Baron was a Jewish scholar forced from his home in pre-war Germany, "it is unsurprising that he invested so much faith in the ideology of republicanism that the Florentines expounded and unsurprising as well that he cast the Renaissance as a dramatic struggle of freedom versus tyranny."[11]

Despite these criticisms, scholars have not rejected the idea of a politically-minded humanism beginning in Italy and gradually moving into the intellectual and political world of sixteenth-century England. Charles Stinger in his work, *The Renaissance in Rome,* argues that "the humanist rediscovery of epideictic oratory became fundamental…to the intellectual character of the Roman Renaissance."[12] He has further argued that Italian humanists played a central role in shaping the political discourse of the inner court of the Renaissance Papacy.[13] This work will argue that a similar political humanist discourse dominated English politics during the time of Elizabeth's reign. By her participation in it, Elizabeth shaped her "body politic" with a medium that both was understood and respected by her male contemporaries.

This study sides with the modified definition of a political humanist as put forth by scholars such as James Hankins and J.G.A. Pocock and places Elizabeth I within this tradition. These political humanists (such as Sir Thomas More, Thomas Elyot, and others) used their education for the sake of the common good, held high the values of the *vita activa*, *amor patriae*, and valued all forms of government including monarchy. They esteemed the study of the classics for solving practical problems of the day. When Elizabeth became queen and took the reins of government, she utilized her own political humanism to pursue the *vita activa* in service to the greater good of her realm as well as to project and defend her own political persona.

This study also contends that early English humanism had much in common with its Italian forerunner. Alistair Fox's definition of English humanism has removed the Protestant characterization from this intellectual movement and instead described it as a diverse trend that focused on classical literature and primarily affected and impacted the areas of

[11] Christopher Celenza, *The Lost Italian Renaissance*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), p. 38.
[12] Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), p. 73.
[13] Ibid.

English culture and education.[14] Diarmaid MacCulloch writes that English humanism was not so much a "New Learning," as it was actually a "refocusing of old learning."[15] He also argues that Pope Pius II played a major part in helping make humanism attractive to the intellectuals of northern Europe. In England, bishops and cardinals became patrons of this new "refocused" old learning and played a major part in founding several colleges and universities in England with the goal to increase the study of the Biblical languages.[16] Thus, MacCulloch agrees with Fox that the early English humanism was found in both Catholic and Protestant circles.

Although it is difficult to give a precise date for the entrance of humanism into England, the historian Roberto Weiss dated its beginnings around the year 1485.[17] While some scholars suggest the presence of earlier influences,[18] it is generally accepted that by the late fifteenth century, humanist ideals, or the "New Learning," were beginning to enter England via academic circles centering around Oxford University. These English scholars were originally interested in education in classical languages, especially the learning of Greek.[19] This revival of enthusiasm in the value of the classics for educational and academic purposes was due to the humanist connection between knowledge and morality. Joanna Martindale asserts that for the English humanists: "The central emphasis was literary, rhetoric was believed to hold the key to the good life."[20]

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[14] Alistair Fox and John Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician Age: Humanism, Politics, and Reform 1500-1550*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1986), pp. 32—33.

[15] MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, p. 74.

[16] See also Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome.*

[17] Roberto Weiss, Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century, 3rd ed. (London: Blackwell, 1967), pp. 5-6, 185. See also Paul Lawrence Rose, "Erasmians and Mathematicians at Cambridge in the Early Sixteenth Century," in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Humanism in the Early Sixteenth Century. (Jul., 1977), pp. 46-59. Maria Dowling, *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII*, (London: Croom Helm, 1986).

[18] For a discussion of earlier influences and a nice review of pertinent secondary literature see Rosemary Masek "The Humanistic Interests of the Early Tudor Episcopate," in *Church History*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Mar., 1970), pp. 5-17. See also David Rundle, "Humanism Before the Tudors: On Nobility and the Reception of the studia humanitatis in Fifteenth Century England," chapter 2 in *Reassessing Tudor Humanism*, ed. Jonathan Woolfson, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2002).

[19] Weiss, *Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century*, pp. 5-6, 185.

[20] For a good collection of renaissance humanist texts on education see Craig W. Kallendorf ed. and trans., *Humanist Educational Treatises*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts:

Thus, to the humanist scholar, (like Sir Thomas More) true education produced morality.[21] Martindale writes that for the English humanist "the *studia humanitatis* leads to knowledge and virtue, and hence to good government."[22] Therefore, English humanists, such as Elizabeth I, felt that they should pursue the *vita activa* and use their education for the common good.

However, as a female monarch in the sixteenth century, Elizabeth I, faced special challenges as, initially, humanist educators considered a classical education only fit for men. Humanist treatises on education focused on how to train aristocratic boys for the *vita activa*. General acceptance of humanist education for women was slow during this time even among writers such as Vivés and More. Hilda Smith writes that although most humanists agreed that women were capable of learning, "it was a question of what they would do with such learning and whether it might interfere with their more important responsibilities as wives and mothers."[23]

Not surprisingly, before the reign of Henry VIII, most humanist educational tracts focused on the education of young boys and not aristocratic girls. Erasmus wrote several works focusing on education of young men.[24] Thomas Linacre, a physician to Henry VIII, authored three separate Latin grammars for the instruction of young boys in schools.[25] The Spanish humanist, J. L. Vivès in 1523 published *De tradendis disciplinis*, which was influential in England due to his close ties with the first wife of Henry VIII, Queen Katherine of Aragon. In 1531, Thomas Elyot authored his most famous educational treatise *The Boke Named the*

Harvard University Press, 2002); Joanna Martindale ed., *English Humanism: Wyatt to Cowley*, (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1985), p. 20.

[21] See Constance Jordan, *Renaissance Feminisms* and Maria Dowling, *Humanism in the Court of Henry VIII.*

[22] Martindale, *English Humanism: Wyatt to Cowley*, p. 26.

[23] Hilda Smith, "Humanist education and the Renaissance concept of woman," in *Women and Literature in Britain: 1500-1700*, ed. Helen Wilcox, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 11.

[24] Desiderius Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis Christiani* [1503], *De ratione studii* [1511], *Institutio principis Christiani* [1516], and *De pueris instituendis* [1529].

[25] Kristian Jensen, "De Emendata Structura Latini Sermonis: The Latin Grammar of Thomas Linacre," in *Journal of the Wartburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 49. (1986), pp. 106-125.

Gouernour. This work is significant as it is the first book in English primarily concerned with the education of boys.[26]

Like their Italian predecessors, English scholars considered that to be fully educated, one must be trained in the *studia humanitatis*. This included instruction in the languages of Greek, Latin, and often Hebrew.[27] They further countenanced a wide spectrum of immersion in classical authors such as Seneca, Cicero, and Virgil as well as the Bible and the church fathers. These English humanists felt this curriculum would produce morality and character in their students.[28] Although early English humanist tutors assumed the masculinity of their students, their ideas would later find expression in the progress and content of Elizabeth's education as princess.

However, during the reign of Henry VIII, humanists such as Juan Vivés, Erasmus, Richard Hyrde, and Sir Thomas More, began to advocate the beginnings of a limited education of aristocratic women in classical studies.[29] It is important to underscore that these early recommendations for women's education, while innovative, still took a demeaning approach to women in regards to the early modern view of their subservient role in society. In fact, Vivés seminal work on female education, *Institutione Faeminae Christianae* (1523), only has nine pages touching on specifics for academic curriculum. The remainder of his work covered such topics as "manners and family, and especially how a wife should establish respect toward her husband and his relatives."[30] Smith writes that Vivés "offered training that aided women to become well-informed and charming companions to their husbands, pious and good Christians, and individuals able to deal easily and sympathetically with Scripture and catechism."[31]

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[26] Donald W. Rude, ed., introduction to, *A Critical Edition of Sir Thomas Elyot's The Boke Named the Governour*, [1531], (London: Garland Publishing, 1992), p xi.

[27] See Erika Rummel, *The Case Against Johann Reuchlin: Social and Religious Controversy in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), and Johann Reuchlin, *De rudimentis hebraicis*, (Pforzheim, Thomas Anshelm, 1506).

[28] Maria Dowling, *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII*, pp. 179-180.

[29] J. K. Sowards, "Erasmus and the Education of Women," in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (Winter, 1982), pp. 77-89. See also Thomas More (1478-1535), *Sir Thomas More: Selected Letters*, ed. Elizabeth Francis Rogers (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 104-105.

[30] Smith, "Humanist Education and the Renaissance Concept of Women," p. 16.

[31] Ibid.

Henry VIII's first wife, Katherine of Aragon, was very influential in the development of the education of royal women by her own supervision and interest in the education of Princess Mary.[32] Sir Thomas More also provided for his own daughters' education with several well-accomplished tutors in classical languages and literature.[33] In support of this trend, humanists began to add to the works on the education of women. For example, Thomas Elyot in *The Defence of Good Women* wrote that:

> Women (specially) moughte be prouoked to imbrace virtue more gladly, and to be circumspecte in the bryngynge vp of theyr children. But with that imagination there came also to my remembraunce, the vngentyll custome of many men, whiche do set theyr delyte in rebukynge of women, althoughe they neuer receyued displeasure.[34]

While the humanist influence in England began to fuel the idea that women were worthy of an education, these works still viewed women in a secondary role to men limiting both the scope of their education and public role. English humanists still had the primary motive to promote virtue and morality in women and not to prepare them for public service.

English scholars advocated that their female students, which would include Elizabeth and other royal and aristocratic ladies, pursue such scholarly activities as reading, writing, and translation of religious texts. These activities were viewed as "safe" as it was thought that they would not stimulate sinful or original thought. Erasmus wrote that for women "reading and studying of books so occupieth the mind, that it can have no leisure to muse or delight in other fantasies."[35] One very early figure in women's translation was Margaret Beaufort [Elizabeth's paternal great-grandmother], who had excerpts from Thomas à Kempis' *De imitatione Christi* published posthumously in 1504.[36]

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[32] Dowling, *Humanism*, pp. 89-90.
[33] Ibid., pp. 220-221.
[34] Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Defence of Good Women* [1540], ed. Edwin Johnston Howard, (Oxford, Ohio: The Anchor Press, 1940) pp. 1-2. This is a reprint in original spelling but not a facsimile.
[35]Richard Hyrde, "Preface," to *A Devout Treatise Upon the Pater Noster in Renaissance Women: A Sourcebook*, ed. Kate Aughterson, (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 174.
[36] See *Early Tudor Translators: Margaret Beaufort, Margaret More Roper and Mary Basset Printed Writings 1500–1640*: Series I, Part II, vol. 4. ed. Lee Khanna, (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, August 2001).

Sir Thomas More was also an early advocate for women's education stressing that women had the ability to learn as equally as men.[37] He further laid out an educational curriculum for his daughters which included the church fathers, the Scriptures, and classical authors.[38] More's daughter, Margaret Roper, had her own translation of Erasmus' *A Devout Treatise Upon the Pater Noster* published as early as 1526.[39] However, Valerie Wayne argues that translation and reading of religious texts were normally "presented as an agent of control more than enlightenment and was identified with that other occupation, the handling of wool and flax, as a craft."[40]

Due to the gradual acceptance of educating elite women according to humanist principles, many royal women, some of whom would have a direct influence on the course of Elizabeth's education, rose in stature to become supporters and even patrons of the humanist education of women.[41] Many of these same women also engaged in translation of texts, especially religious ones, as part of their efforts. Such figures as Katherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, and Katherine Parr stand prominently in this regard. Juan Luis Vivès book *Institutione Faeminae Christianae* was dedicated to Queen Katherine of Aragon. He also dedicated his work *Satellium sine Symbola* to Princess Mary in which he advocated a more extensive classical education program as befitting to a possible future female monarch.[42] At the time, Mary was as the king's only legitimate offspring and there was the distinct possibility that Mary might rule one day. Therefore, Vivès recommended a classical education including Plato's works on government, More's *Utopia*, Erasmus' *Institutio Christiani*

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[37] Hilda Smith, *Humanist Education and the Renaissance Concept of Woman*, p. 21.
[38] Ibid., p. 22.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Valerie Wayne, "Some Sad Sentence: Vivés' Instruction of Christian Women," in *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and writers of Religious Works*, ed. Margaret Hannay, (Kent: Kent State Press, 1988), p. 20. See also Erica Longfellow, *Women and Religious Writing in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) and *Women and Literature in Britain: 1500-1700*, ed. Helen Wilcox, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
[41] For a good summary of the progress of Tudor women see Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women: 1450-1550*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[42] Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England*, p. 130. See also Juan Luis Vivès, *A very fruitefull and pleasant booke called the instructio[n] of a Christen woma[n]*, (London: In Fletestrete, in the house of Thomas Berthelet). [1531].

Principis, the Scriptures, theological works, and classical authors such as Plutarch, Seneca, Lucian, and Cato.[43]

It is difficult to know much about Elizabeth's early education due to lack of any direct evidence. However, Katherine Parr, the last of Henry VIII's wives, was an accomplished intellectual who was very interested in providing for the education of the royal children. When the young Elizabeth sought the appointment of Roger Ascham to replace her tutor, William Grindal, after his death, Queen Katherine and her husband, the Lord Admiral Thomas Seymour, were intimately involved.[44] J.L. McIntosh has also argued that two influences were present in Elizabeth's household as a princess: "Protestant erudition and an appreciation for Italian artistic forms."[45] She cites Elizabeth's preference for Ascham as her tutor, and Elizabeth's own competency and zeal for the Italian language and culture as evidences of this.[46] In an early defense of her right to rule, Elizabeth referenced the thoroughness of her own humanist studies in a 1566 speech to Parliament stating:

> It is said I am no divine. Indeed, I studied nothing else but divinity till I came to the crown, and then I gave myself to the study of that which was meet for government, and am not ignorant of stories wherein appeareth what hath fallen out for ambition of kingdoms, as in Spain, Naples, Portingal, and at home.[47]

Roger Ascham also provided anecdotal evidence about Elizabeth's later education in the *studia humanitatis.* He wrote that he tutored Elizabeth in:

> Saint Cyprian and Melanchthon's *Common Places*…as best suited, after the holy Scriptures, to teach her the foundations of religion, together with elegant language and sound doctrine.[48]

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[43] Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England*, p. 130.
[44] See Janel Mueller, "Devotion as Difference: Intertexuality in Queen Katherine Parr's 'Prayers or Meditations,'" in *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 53, No. 3. (Summer, 1990), pp. 171-197. Roger Ascham, "Letter LXXXV to Sir John Cheke, February 12, 1548," in *The Whole Works of Roger Ascham*, ed. J. A. Giles, Vol. 1, pt. 1, (London: John Russell Smith, 1865), p. lvi, and 160.
[45] J. L. McIntosh, *From Heads of Household to Heads of State: The Preaccession Households of Mary and Elizabeth Tudor, 1516-1558*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 98.
[46] Ibid., pp. 98-101.
[47] Ibid., pp. 96-97.
[48] Ascham, "Ascham to Sturm," pp. lxii-lxiii.

Elizabeth's brother's education is documented a bit more thoroughly. After Prince Edward reached the age of six, he left behind his initial education and began his own humanistic studies outright.[49] This included the addition of Jean Belmain, his French tutor, to the distinguished group of scholars—Cox and Cheke.[50] There is also ample testimony that Elizabeth and Edward lived together in the years before he ascended to the throne. The Imperial ambassador Chapuys states in 1538 he saw the princess Elizabeth at dinner with Edward living in the same residence.[51] In 1543 he authored another letter in which he noted that Elizabeth and Edward still lived together.[52] Since Elizabeth and Edward shared a residence for a time during his early years, it is reasonable to suppose that Elizabeth might also have enjoyed the instruction of her previous tutors along with Belmain.[53]

David Carlson provides some insight into the education of Elizabeth and her siblings by examining the education of Henry VIII and his brother, Prince Arthur. He argues that while the curriculum that the Tudor children studied cannot be ascertained exactly, "what can be known of their tutors provides the best indication of the sort of education the Tudor royal children would have received. The distinguishing characteristics of this education would seem to have been its professionalism and a pervasive, if primitive, humanism."[54] Most certainly this included language study in ancient and modern languages, Biblical study and theology, as well as a thorough study of the classical authors such as Plato, Seneca and Aristotle.[55]

Elizabeth's paternal uncle, Prince Arthur, was educated by the humanist scholars John Rede and Bernard André.[56] Furthermore, André left a detailed description of Arthur's education. He wrote:

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[49] Edward speaks of himself in the third person describing his transition from education from "the women" to the scholars Coxe, and John Cheek. Edward VI, *England's Boy King: The Diary of Edward VI, 1547-1553,* Jonathan North ed., (Welwyn Garden City, United Kingdom: Ravenhall Books, 2005), p. 15.

[50] Ibid.

[51] *CSP, Spanish*, Vol. V—Part II (1536-1538), p. 509.

[52] *CSP, Spanish*, Vol. VI—Part II (1542-1543), p. 459.

[53] Certainly, Elizabeth's later proficiency in classical and modern languages attests to the excellent instruction that she had as a child. Edward VI, *England's Boy King: The Diary of Edward VI, 1547-1553,* p. 15.

[54] David Carlson, "Royal Tudors in the reign of Henry VII," in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 22, no. 2 (Summer, 1991), p. 253.

[55] Charlton gives list of Vivés recommended curriculum for the Princess Mary. Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England*, p. 130.

[56] Carlson, "Royal Tudors in the reign of Henry VII," p. 253.

> This above all I would wish to emphasize particularly, that, before he had reached his sixteenth birthday, he had either committed in part to memory or had at least handled and read, at one time or another, with his own hands and eyes, all of the following: in grammar, Guarino, Perotti, Pomponio Leto, Sulpizio, Aulus Gellius, and Valla; in poetry, Homer, Vergil, Lucan, Ovid, Silius Italicus, Plautus, and Terence; in oratory, the *De officiis*, the *Letters*, and the *Paradoxa stoicorum* of Cicero, and Quintilian; and in history Thucydides, Livy, Caesar's *Commentaries*, Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny, Valerius Maximus, Sallust, and Eusebius.[57]

Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, was also educated by such noted scholars as John Skelton, John Holt, and William Hone.[58] Contemporary accounts confirm his aptitude at a young age. Erasmus wrote in a preface to his *Prosopopoeia Britanniae*, stating: "The boy Henry, favoured with his father's name, contemplates Athena's arts from earliest childhood, with the poet Skelton showing him the sacred fonts."[59] Therefore, while little direct evidence exists for Elizabeth's early education, her extant literary output coupled with the preference of the Tudors for classical education suggests her education must have been extensive for the time.

Gender and the Body Politic

Despite the limited advances of royal and aristocratic women in the eyes of their humanist educators, Elizabeth still had to contend with the issue of her gender when she became Queen of England in 1558. For Elizabeth's accession to the throne came in the very same year that John Knox published his famous tract *The First Blast against the Monstrous Regiment of Women.*[60]Amanda Shepherd argues that Knox actually intended to target any woman who inherited a title of monarchy and not just Mary Tudor, the queen of England, Marie de Guise-Lorraine, and her daughter, Mary Queen of Scots.[61] She further argues that Elizabeth's Protestantism

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[57] Translation by Carlson. Bernard Andre, *Vita Henrici Septimi*, ed, Gairdner, *Historia*, 43, as cited in Carslon, p. 256.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Erasmus, *The Poems of Desiderius Erasmus*, ed. Cornelis Reedijk, (Leiden: Brill, 1956), 253 as quoted in Carlson, pp. 255-256.
[60] John Knox, *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstruous regiment of women*, (Geneva : J. Poullain and A. Rebul, 1558); See also Christopher Goodman, *How superior powers ought to be obeyd of their subiects and wherin they may lawfully by Gods Worde be disobeyed and resisted*, (Geneva : John Crispin, 1558).
[61] Amanda Shephard, *Gender and Authority in Sixteenth-Century England*, (Staffordshire: Keele University Press), May 15, 1998.

did not help her in regards to Knox's opinion. Knox's arguments against her Catholic sister, Mary I, were "on the grounds of her religion and her marriage to a foreigner, but above all because of her sex."[62] However, Shepherd does argue for a more complicated understanding of gender in the sixteenth century as she discusses several prominent male scholars who came to the defense of women rulers.[63] She writes that "gender and power were high on the political agenda in the sixteenth century."[64]

Adding to the current scholarly discourse on gender in sixteenth-century England is Carol Levin's work *The Heart and Stomach of a King*.[65] Levin, like Shephard, argues for a more complicated and nuanced understanding of Elizabeth's presentation in regards to her gender. She asserts that Elizabeth's subjects viewed her as both "King and Queen." She cites a speech by Nicholas Health, the Archbishop of York early in Elizabeth's reign in which he described Elizabeth in both male and female terms as "our sovaraigne lord and ladie, our kinge and queen, our emperor and empresse."[66]

This is an adaptation of the famous medieval concept, first studied by Ernst Kantorowicz, that a king had two bodies—one material and one spiritual.[67] A king was thought to be endowed with an earthly body as well as a spiritual one which was not subject to mortal decay. In this way, this concept affirmed the divine sanction of his rule and put the king into the realm of the divine. This political sentiment had its origins in the theological doctrine of Christ's dual nature: man and God. James I mentioned this concept in a speech to Parliament in 1609 where he advocated the unity of England and Scotland (two bodies) under one head.[68] Francis Bacon suggested–without immediate success-that England and Scotland be united under the one name of "great britainne" to demonstrate the newness of the union of the two different bodies.[69]

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[62] Ibid., p. 21.
[63] Shephard references works by John Aylmer, Richard Bertie, John Leslie, David Chambers, and Lord Henry Howard. Ibid., p. 7.
[64] Ibid., p. 201.
[65] Carol Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*, (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994).
[66] Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King*, p. 121.
[67] See Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[68] James I, *The Political Works of James I*, ed. Charles McIlwain, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918), pp. 307-309.
[69] "The United Kingdom of Great Britain" did not come into official use until the Act of Union in 1707. For Bacon's quote, see Francis Bacon, *A Brief Discourse*

Marie Axton discussed the concept of the monarch's two bodies in regards to female rulers such as Elizabeth.[70] Axton writes that contemporary English lawyers argued that the queen also had two bodies: "a body natural and a body politic."[71] The historical record supports that Elizabeth's subjects recognized this concept of viewing her as both king and queen. In a 1566 speech in the House of Commons, an unnamed MP requested that Elizabeth deal with her succession. In his speech he stated "and therefore we beseche your Majesty of your *princely* care and *motherly* love towards us your servantes and children" (Italics mine).[72] Axton argues that in the person of Elizabeth the concept of the king's two bodies became the concept of the queen's two bodies. However, for Elizabeth this conceptualization helped to compensate for a perceived weakness—her gender. Levin states that this dual nature "had a particular value to the Queen."[73] She writes: "If a kingly body politic could be incorporated in to an actual female body—her natural self—how much more right Elizabeth had to rule, and to rule alone."[74] Elizabeth herself stated in her very first speech to the Lord's of the realm "as I am but one body naturally considered, though by his permission a *body politic to govern*" (Italics mine).[75]

It is this kingly "body politic" of Elizabeth I with which this study is primarily concerned. I will demonstrate that Elizabeth consciously shaped her "body politic" as a learned and devout prince in the style of her contemporary male political humanists. Elizabeth's awareness and presentation of her political persona fits well with Stephen Greenblatt's argument that "in sixteenth-century England there were both selves and a sense they could be fashioned."[76] Alison Heisch gives a motive for Elizabeth's use of political humanism to shape her "body politic" as "to rule effectively, Elizabeth had to control Parliament."[77] In order to push

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Touching the Happie Vnion of the Kingdomes of England, and Scotland, (London: Faelix Norton, 2603), p. a 7.

[70]Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: drama and the Elizabethan Succession*, (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977).

[71] Ibid., p. x.

[72] T. E. Hartley, *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, vol. 1, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1981), p. 157.

[73] Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King*, p. 123.

[74] Ibid.

[75] TNA, SP Domestic, Elizabeth 12/1/13; also cited in *CW*, p. 52.

[76] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 1.

[77] Alison Heisch, "Queen Elizabeth I: Parliamentary Rhetoric and the Exercise of Power," in Signs, Vol. 1, No. 1, (Autumn, 1975) p. 31.

her agenda, Elizabeth had to speak the political language of her male statesmen and courtiers.

Elizabeth relied upon this concept of the two bodies to present herself, as Levin has argued, as both "King and Queen."[78] Levin writes that Elizabeth demonstrated power and "blurred the definitions of gender and role expectation in her particular position as ruler of Renaissance England."[79] This study expands upon Levin's argument and differs from it by its primary concentration on Elizabeth's construction of the outward "body politic" in the style of the English political humanists.

To her subjects there was no doubt that Elizabeth was their queen. However, when ruling politically and promoting her agenda, Elizabeth employed a "body politic" in the language of a learned and devout prince—a political humanist. This political image was obviously not seen visibly but consisted in her political dialogue through both her spoken and written words. When Elizabeth defended her power, she relied upon her classical education speaking in the common tradition and style of the political discourse of her male contemporaries. This study adds to both gender and political studies in that it discusses how Elizabeth chose to deal with the issue of her gender in a political manner. Elizabeth relied upon her "body politic" to project and justify her power through the image of a political humanist.

Sources and methods

In this study I will reference the original manuscript in the first citation when I have examined it. In any secondary citations, I will also cite the reliable and readily accessible printed editions of Elizabeth's works, such as the *Collected Works*, for the ease of the reader. For this I owe a large debt of gratitude to the scholars who have gone before me in collecting, editing, and translating many of these works. Much appreciation is especially due to the work of Janel Mueller, Joshua Scodel, Leah Marcus, and Mary Beth Rose.[80] In 2000, Mueller, Marcus, and Rose immeasurably advanced Elizabethan studies when they co-edited an edition of most of Elizabeth I's written works. The editors arranged this volume chronologically and included original poems, letters, prayers, and speeches of Elizabeth in English. In this volume, the editors corrected and updated the spelling of

[78] Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King*, pp. 121-123.
[79] Ibid., p. 148.
[80]Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, hereafter referred to as *CW*, ed. Leah Marcus et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

her words to make a modernized English version. They also translated her foreign language works into English to help make them accessible to a wider audience.

Shortly after these works were published, Mueller and Marcus published another work on Elizabeth entitled *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals.*[81] In this volume, the editors left the spelling in the manuscripts as Elizabeth recorded it and even included such details as strike-outs and marginalia which help reveal the processes by which Elizabeth composed many of these works. They also left her foreign language compositions in her original Latin, Greek, Italian, French and Spanish.

In 2004, Steven W. May added to this corpus of literature with an edited collection of Elizabeth's works including some of her shorter translations of Latin authors, e.g. Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch.[82] In 2009, Janelle Mueller and Joshua Scodel released two new and updated texts, *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1544-1589*, and *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1592-1598*, which provided printed copies of Elizabeth's translations as well as useful literary criticism and analysis of them.[83] Before these publications, the only published work in this area was that of a nineteenth-century English scholar, Caroline Pemberton.[84]

Peter Herman has recently written a monograph entitled *Royal Poetrie: Monarchic Verse and the Political Imaginary of Early Modern England*.[85] In this work he examines the poetry of Henry VIII, Mary Stewart, Elizabeth I, and King James I and how each of these monarchs used their poetry in the defense of their political standings. He also wrote an article entitled "Authorship and the Royal 'I'," where he argues that King James VI/I "used verse as an instrument of diplomacy" especially in regards to a

[81] *Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*, hereafter referred to as *ACFLO*, ed. Janel Mueller and Leah Marcus, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
[82] Steven May, *Elizabeth I: Selected Works*, (Washington Square Press, New York, New York, 2004).
[83] Elizabeth I, *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1544-1589*, ed. Janel Mueller and Joshua Scodel, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); and Elizabeth I, *Elizabeth I: Translations, 1592-1598*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
[84] Caroline Pemberton, *Queen Elizabeth's Englishings of Boethius, Plutarch and Horace*, (1899; repr., Kessinger Publishing, April 30, 2004).
[85] Peter Herman, *Royal Poetrie: Monarchic Verse and the Political Imaginary of Early Modern England*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

previously unstudied sonnet James composed for Elizabeth.[86] His consideration of the monarch's use of humanist models for the projection of power fits into my argument that Elizabeth I used her humanist education, including her penchant to write poetry, as a means of both political persuasion and image projection.

When Elizabeth I chose to assert or defend her political power, she utilized her humanist education. Elizabeth relied upon her own adaptation of English political humanism when she presented her "body politic" to her subjects and the world. This study further aims to place Elizabeth I within the wider context of English political humanism which included such notable figures as Sir Thomas More, Thomas Elyot, Juan Vivés, and other courtiers and statesmen. These scholars were humanists because they were trained in the *studia humanitatis.* They were political humanists because they adapted their education for use in the political sphere for the greater good of society. Thus, when Elizabeth participated in the ideals and virtues of political humanism, she was not innovative; she was part of the common tradition of a larger movement within the English and European political context.[87]

When the youthful Princess Elizabeth was not in a position to rule, she devoted herself to academic study, or the *vita contemplativa*, focusing on the *studia humanitatis*.[88] When the *vita activa* presented itself after the death of her childless sister Mary I, Elizabeth as England's prince refocused her literary interests on authors who gave her examples of civic values and virtues to aid in the workings of government. Elizabeth underscored her reliance on her education in a 1566 speech to Parliament: "I thank God I am indeed endued with such qualities that if I were turned out of the realm in my petticoat, I were able to live in any place of Christendom."[89] However, Elizabeth was not "turned out of the realm" but rather she remained as England's prince for nearly forty-five years applying her humanist education to the task of ruling her kingdom.

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[86] "Authorship and the Royal 'I': King James VI/I and the Politics of Monarchic Verse," in *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Part 2 (Winter, 2001), pp. 1495-1530.

[87] See Daniel A. Crews, "Juan de Valdes and the Comunero Revolt: An Essay on Spanish Civic Humanism" in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 22, no. 2, (Summer 1991), pp. 233-252.

[88] The evidence for this is found in her prolific *juvenilia*. See *CW* and *Elizabeth I: translations, 1544-1589*.

[89] *CW*, p. 97.