Alessandra Petrina and Laura Tosi. *Representations of Elizabeth I in Early Modern Culture*.
New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. xv + 282 pp. $85. ISBN: 978–0–230–27817–2.

Alessandra Petrina and Laura Tosi, the editors of this important new collection of essays on early modern representations of Elizabeth I, have put together a volume that examines many facets of the queen's cultural presence in England and Europe, both during her own lifetime and afterward. The collection, divided into three sections and elegantly framed by Stephen Orgel's prologue, begins with essays on the queen's official portraiture, her handwriting, her correspondence with James VI

https://doi.org/10.1086/665894 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of Scotland and Henry IV of France, and her manuscript poems. Orgel moves deftly from Elizabeth's famous remark in 1601 ("I am Richard II, know ye not that?") to the longer history of this queen's identification with "the last English monarch with an unquestioned claim to the throne" (16) before opening into a much broader consideration of the interplay of politics, theater, and royal portraiture in the Tudor and Stuart periods. Jonathan Gibson's fascinating essay on "The Queen's Two Hands" leads into the section on Elizabeth's own writing by examining how gender, education, and princely pragmatism influenced the development of the queen's script styles. Paola Baseotto and Guillaume Coatalen shed new light on Elizabeth's foreign correspondence, and raise timely questions about the queen's strategies of self-representation, early modern authorship, collaborative writing practices, and the "huge volume of correspondence" (4) that she maintained in languages other than English. Finally, Carlo M. Bajetta suggests what is lost when we isolate Elizabeth's poems from the print and manuscript miscellanies in which they originally circulated. The material evidence provided by these collections, he argues, tells us "much about the significance of [her] written work for the men and women of its time" (114).

The essays in the remainder of the collection consider the work of others — principally writers and dramatists — in making and remaking the early modern image of Elizabeth I. A great many of these essays echo the concerns of Orgel's prologue as they examine the interplay of politics and performance and the kinds of theater that shaped the queen's public image through the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries — from the coronation ceremony that marked the beginning of her reign to the Jacobean court masques that sought to free her successor from "the bonds of the Elizabethan past" (153), and not least the plays produced for the London theaters both during and after her reign. This multifaceted approach works to complicate and enliven our understanding of a queen whose "well-known warmth towards her people on public occasions was a strategic choice" (135), and whose memory proved troubling for a successor who "hated public appearances and refused to court popularity in this way" (136).

The book's second section, which takes us into the realm of royal self-display, opens with Janette Dillon's study of the English ceremony of coronation. Dillon shows how Elizabeth resisted or even ridiculed parts of the ceremony, and found opportunities in it for "carefully cultivated performances of accessibility" (135). The two essays that follow, by Effie Botonaki and Sara Trevisan, turn our attention to another kind of courtly performance, the Jacobean masque, where the "late queen of famous memory" often figured as her mythic counterpart, Diana or Cynthia. Botonaki discusses the various strategies employed in Jacobean masques to appropriate, contain, or marginalize the memory of Elizabeth, while Trevisan's essay examines Elizabeth's influence on the representation of female power in a pair of masques commissioned by James I and his queen, Anne of Denmark, in honor of their son Henry's appointment as Prince of Wales in 1610.

The book's final section turns our attention from royal self-display to literary and dramatic representations of the queen. Jessica L. Malay writes fascinatingly of

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the Sibylline discourses associated with Elizabeth I, while Giovanni Iamartino considers the "verbal portraits" of the queen that appear in works by Petruccio Ubaldini, "a man who spent most of his life at Elizabeth's court and tried to act as a link and an intermediary between the Queen and the Italian political and cultural world" (193). The four remaining essays all focus on the ways that Elizabethan and Jacobean drama reflected the realities (or fantasies) of life under an aging, childless queen: Kristine Johanson examines the Elizabethan rhetoric of nostalgia for a "merry world" or a "golden age"; Yvonne Oram asks how the drama of the period responded to the "social reality" of an aging queen; Kavita Mudan makes the case for aligning Shakespeare's version of Elizabeth Woodville with Elizabeth I, not least in her opposition to the tyrannical Richard III and the "slow stripping away of the trappings of wifehood and motherhood as her rhetorical power increases" (246). If the prologue of the collection considers Elizabeth's strategic use of portraiture, the final essay, by Laura Tosi, recalls the aging queen's vexed relationship with mirrors both literal and literary, reading Elizabeth's ambivalence toward these devices against their broader cultural significance and their representation, not long after Elizabeth's death, in Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*. Together and individually these diverse and fascinating essays greatly enrich our understanding of the complex ways that Elizabeth I signified for early modern readers, writers, dramatists, and spectators — not just in England and Scotland, but also in Italy, France, and other parts of Continental Europe.

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