

## Katherine Parr, Henry VIII, and Royal Literary Collaboration

*Micheline White*

The past fifty years have witnessed a series of critical re-assessments of the concept of the “author” in western literary culture. As Patricia Pender and Alexandra Day outline in the introduction, one of the many effects of such a re-assessment has been a new interest in the concept of textual collaboration. In the 1990s, scholars like Arthur Marotti, Wendy Wall, and Jeffrey Masten argued that early modern authorship was often collaborative, a fact obscured by a post-Enlightenment view of a text as the product of a single authorial consciousness, and since then many scholars have turned to examine various forms of textual collaborations, including co-authorship, team-authorship, coterie verse-exchanges, patronage, translation, editing, paratextual contributions, posthumous publication, and printing.<sup>1</sup> Surveying the body of work on early modern literary collaboration, Helen Smith has recently noted that most of it has focused on men—men who collaborated in the production of dramatic works or verse manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> The phenomenon of mixed-sex literary collaboration has received less attention, she observes, and has been taken up primarily by feminists studying texts that are attributed to women but were introduced or edited by

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M. White (✉)

Department of English, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada  
e-mail: micheline.white@carleton.ca

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men, or, more recently, by those examining how women contributed to the production of books attributed to men.<sup>3</sup> Some kinds of male-female literary collaborations have proved challenging, however, for scholars who seek to excavate lost female voices, to produce critical editions of female-authored texts, and to analyze the processes through which individual women became “authors.”<sup>4</sup> As Smith notes, it has been difficult to read male editorial interventions in women’s texts as “collaborations” rather than censorship or manipulation.<sup>5</sup> And yet as Thomas Freeman, Wall, and Pender have argued, it is more productive to abandon the futile quest to recover unmediated female voices in many early modern texts and to discuss collaborative texts on their own terms.<sup>6</sup> Such an approach asks us to think more carefully about the ways in which certain kinds of texts were generated by more than one person, and it opens our eyes to the ways in which women engaged with the textual possibilities afforded by a literary system so different from our own.

This chapter contributes to our understanding of mixed-sex literary collaboration by examining one book—*Psalms or Prayers taken out of Holy Scripture*—a work that appeared without any authorial ascriptions, but that is now understood to be a translation by Katherine Parr.<sup>7</sup> To explain: on April 18, 1544 Thomas Berthelet, Henry VIII’s printer, issued *Psalmi seu Precationes ex variis scripturae locis collectae* (RSTC 2994), an unattributed octavo edition of a work by Bishop John Fisher printed around 1525 in Cologne and in 1544 in Antwerp. The *Psalmi seu Precationes* consists of fifteen collage Psalms and two Psalm paraphrases, and it concludes with a prayer for Henry VIII, “Precatio Pro Rege.” On April 25, Berthelet printed an English translation of the same work, *Psalms or Prayers taken out of Holy Scripture* (RSTC 3001.7). This book contains the same Psalms, an English version of “A Prayer for the King,” and another unattributed prayer, “A Prayer for Men to Say Entering into Battle.” Tiny sextodecimo editions contain a third prayer, “For forgiveness of sins.”<sup>8</sup> As Kimberly Coles and Brenda Hosington have noted, the anonymous *Psalms or Prayers* was a best-seller, being printed at least twenty three times between 1544 and 1613 (RSTC 3001.7–3013.5).<sup>9</sup> The *Psalms or Prayers* has always had a close, but complicated, relationship to Katherine Parr’s *Prayers or Meditations*, a book that contains “A Prayer for the King” and “A Prayer for Men to Say Entering into Battle,” and that was printed by Berthelet in June 1545 (RSTC 4818). Berthelet (and others) printed octavo and sextodecimo versions of both books under Henry, Edward, and Mary; William Copland produced typographically similar editions in 1559; and from

1568 until 1613, the *Psalms or Prayers* was printed with the *Prayers or Meditations* (and the *Litany*) as part of one volume in which the texts were re-named *The King's Psalms* and *The Queen's Prayers*.<sup>10</sup>

I will begin this chapter by charting the ways in which Katherine Parr has been associated (or disassociated) with the *Psalms or Prayers* over the centuries, and has been variously identified as its composer, patron, or translator. Building on the work of Susan James, Kimberly Coles, and Janel Mueller, I will then argue that while Parr was indeed a skilled translator in her own right, the *Psalms or Prayers* is perhaps best seen as an instance of a particular kind of “royal collaboration,” one in which she (a queen) was writing for, writing with, and writing as Henry VIII as he waged war against the Scots, the French, and the Turks. Specifically, I will offer new evidence pertaining to some of Parr’s politically sensitive sources, and I will argue that a detailed consideration of the contents of the volume suggests that Henry’s military agenda was the force driving the volume, and that Parr must have been engaged in extensive consultations with Henry as she translated each of its parts. Further, I will argue that a close reading of the rhetorical mode of the book enables us to see that Parr was not only working *for* and *with* Henry, but was also authorized to write *as Henry* through the use of a royal, devotional “I.” I will conclude by briefly positing that the deluxe gift-copies of the *Psalms or Prayers* perfectly encapsulate the degree to which the book was an instance of royal collaboration: the books are obviously issued and authorized by the king, but they were produced by the queen and distributed by her at court.<sup>11</sup>

The kind of collaboration described here is not one involving co-authors (as we often find in Renaissance drama) nor one involving an author and an explicit editor or patron. As J. Christopher Warner, Kevin Sharpe, and others have noted, anonymous texts produced by the Tudor crown often involved a particular kind of collaboration, one in which royal servants wrote for the king and voiced his desires (with varying degrees of consultation), but did not attach their names to the texts.<sup>12</sup> The texts themselves appear only as works authorized and, in a sense, “authored,” by the king.<sup>13</sup> This is a mode of authorship that is particularly challenging for contemporary scholars because it is impossible to determine how involved the monarch was in any particular text (or part of the text), and because it is so far removed from our own sense of authorial ownership and accountability. In spite of these difficulties, the recognition that Parr produced such a work for Henry in the spring of 1544 is valuable in two regards. First, it sheds new light on the

production of late Henrician propaganda. Parr's book offers an unusually intimate royal devotional "I," one that, I suggest, sought to reassure Henry's people that he was acting as an exemplary wartime monarch and that served to inspire obedience to the royal voice that was issuing commands in wartime Proclamations. Second, it offers new insight into Parr's position as queen. The fact that Henry allowed or asked Parr (rather than a male courtier) to produce such an important piece of military propaganda indicates that she was at the heart of his military strategy before he set sail for France, and it provides a textual precedent for his decision to appoint her as Regent in July 1544.

### RECOVERING KATHERINE PARR AS THE TRANSLATOR OF THE *PSALMS OR PRAYERS*

It is well-known that many male and female writers published their works anonymously in the early modern period, for a variety of reasons pertaining to sex, class, religion, and politics. For feminists, the recovery of anonymous books by female authors has been important, not only for establishing a significant body of female-authored texts, but also for understanding how women negotiated the concept of authorship as they composed, circulated, and published their work. But the recovery of anonymous female-authored works is laborious and difficult, and the historical trajectory of the *Psalms or Prayers* is a case in point. It was printed without ascription from 1544 until 1618, but in 1721, church historian John Strype asserted that it had been written by Parr. Strype had observed that Nicholas Udall had praised Parr in 1545 for having "set forth" "Psalms and contemplative meditations" that were "read" by "many" in a dedication to his translation of Erasmus's *Paraphrase on the Gospel of Luke*.<sup>14</sup> Strype concluded that the "Psalms" mentioned by Udall could be matched with a volume of Psalm prayers that were bound together with a copy of Parr's *Prayers or Meditations* from 1545.<sup>15</sup> His detailed description of the contents of these "Psalms" makes it clear that he was working with a copy of Berthelet's *Psalms or Prayers*, but he does not give the full title of the book or provide a date. He was also clearly unaware of the Latin 1544 *Psalmi*, and so he asserted that the Psalms had been "made in Imitation of David's Psalms" by Parr, and he described the book as "Her Psalms."<sup>16</sup> Strype's claim that the Psalms were "made [by Parr] in Imitation of David's Psalms" was repeated by several eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors: Strype was quoted by George Ballard (1752);

in the *Biographium Faemineum* (1766); by Horace Walpole (1806); and by James Anderson (1855).<sup>17</sup> However, not all early biographers followed Strype in attributing a volume of Psalms to Parr and some authors referred only vaguely to “Psalms” with no indication of what they might have entailed. In 1821 Mary Hays wrote that Parr “composed” “prayers, psalms, and other devotional pieces”; in 1861, Jane Williams made no mention of any Psalms; and in 1920 Myra Reynolds stated only that Parr had written “many psalms, prayers, and meditations.”<sup>18</sup>

A turning point in the study of Parr and the *Psalms or Prayers* occurred in 1965 with James McConica’s influential study of Parr’s support of Erasmian Humanism. McConica devoted only two pages to Parr’s own published writing, and he made no mention of Strype’s hypothesis about Parr’s Psalms, even though he openly challenged Strype’s claim that Parr was the translator of a work by Savonarola.<sup>19</sup> The effect of McConica’s decision to ignore Strype’s hypothesis about Parr’s “imitation” of David’s Psalms was profound. Historians like William P. Haugaard and Anthony Martiensen followed his lead, and so when feminist scholars turned to the Short-Title Catalogue and to historians like McConica in the 1980s, the idea that Parr had a connection to a volume of Psalms had completely disappeared from view.<sup>20</sup> So, for example, there is no mention of Parr’s Psalms in the valuable “Recent Studies in Women Writers of Tudor England” essays printed in *English Literary Renaissance* in 1984, in 1990, and in 1994.<sup>21</sup> John King made no mention of any Psalms in his important study of Parr’s piety and patronage published in 1985.<sup>22</sup>

In 1999, Susan E. James gave new life to the *Psalms or Prayers*, offering another way of understanding its relation to Parr. Crucially, James realized (as Strype did not) that the *Psalms or Prayers* was a translation of the *Psalmi seu Precationes* printed only a week earlier, and that Bishop John Fisher was named as the author of the *Psalmi* in an edition printed around 1525.<sup>23</sup> James also assembled multiple pieces of evidence to argue that Parr was the translator of Fisher’s *Psalmi* and probably the author of the short concluding prayers.<sup>24</sup> For example, she noted that many copies of the *Psalms or Prayers* were bound with Parr’s *Prayers or Meditations*; she listed numerous verbal echoes between the collage Psalms and Parr’s other works; and she pointed out that Udall had praised Parr for “diverse most godly Psalms and meditations of your own penning and setting forth” in his 1548 dedication to Erasmus’s *Paraphrase on Acts*.<sup>25</sup> Importantly, James also drew attention to the fact that Parr had paid for fourteen deluxe copies of “books of

the psalm prayers” on May 1 and 4, 1544, books that were described as “gorgeously bound and gilt on the leather,” and for a copy of “Psalm prayers” in 1547.<sup>26</sup> James surmised that gender restrictions are what led Parr to issue her translation anonymously.

James’s argument was largely accepted by literary scholars, and the *Psalms or Prayers* re-entered scholarly discussions in relation to Parr.<sup>27</sup> In 2008 Kimberly Coles discussed the possibility that Parr had translated the book and argued that it contributed to a larger crown-sponsored program of reformed, vernacular devotion.<sup>28</sup> *Psalms or Prayers* was attributed to Parr in “Renaissance Cultural Crossroads,” a database of translations compiled by Brenda Hosington in 2010, and it was briefly discussed in two recent studies of female translators.<sup>29</sup> Most importantly, Janel Mueller printed a modernized version of the text in *Katherine Parr: Complete Works and Correspondence* (2011).<sup>30</sup> In her introduction, Mueller added new details to the evidence assembled by James and strengthened the argument that Parr was the translator of the text. She observed that Udall had referred to Parr’s “Psalms” a third time in his 1548 dedication to Erasmus’s *Paraphrase on the Gospel of John* writing: “England can never be able to render thanks sufficient” to Parr “for composing and setting forth many godly Psalms and divers other contemplative meditations.”<sup>31</sup> Mueller also described two copies of the first 1544 printing, noting that they have hand-coloured images of Henry VIII’s royal arms on the verso of the title pages, and that the copy preserved at Elton Hall contains two marginal notes made by Henry VIII as well as an “affectionate couplet” from Henry to Parr.<sup>32</sup> In her extensive notes, Mueller prints all of Fisher’s Latin text and identifies his Biblical sources, thereby enabling readers to study Parr’s linguistic dexterity and creativity for the first time. For both James and Mueller, the addition of the *Psalms or Prayers* to Parr’s literary “oeuvre” is vital because it provides us with new evidence of her engagement with Humanist writing, of her evolving religious views, of her literary skills, of her response to court culture, and of her ability to forge a public voice in print.

#### WRITING FOR AND WITH HENRY: PARR’S TRANSLATIONS OF FISHER, WITZEL, AND ERASMUS

If James and Mueller have successfully focused our attention on Parr as a literary translator in her own right, they have also acknowledged that her project was aided or enabled by powerful men. James, for instance,

proposed that George Day, Bishop of Chichester, Parr's almoner and a former chaplain to Fisher, had probably suggested that she translate the *Psalms*.<sup>33</sup> James, Coles, and Mueller also have also drawn attention to the relationship between Parr, Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, and the king.<sup>34</sup> Although Coles remained uncertain about whether Parr was the patron or the translator of the *Psalms or Prayers*, she stressed that the *Psalms or Prayers*, Parr's *Prayers and Meditations*, and Cranmer's new wartime *Litany* were all printed by the king's printer between 1544 and 1545 (and were later bound together), and she argued that they all worked together to promote new official forms of vernacular devotion. In particular, Coles astutely emphasized that Parr's books were "crown" publications printed by Thomas Berthelet, and that they were made possible by the king. Henry, she stressed, was at war and wanted to revise English forms of supplication and prayer, and she argues that whether Parr was the translator or the patron of the *Psalms or Prayers*, "[w]hat is certain is that she was a participant in the plan to revise devotional practice—and, further, that her husband granted her power in this domain."<sup>35</sup> Noting Henry's inscription in one extant copy of the *Psalms*, Coles states that Henry was "undoubtedly interested" in the book, but "whether Henry's attention was motivated by pride in his wife's achievement or by his own political initiatives is impossible to say."<sup>36</sup>

In the discussion that follows, I will build on Coles's observations and will focus in greater detail on the relationship between Henry, Parr, the *Psalms or Prayers*, and the war. Specifically, I will argue that by taking a closer look at the content and the politically sensitive sources of the *Psalms or Prayers*, we can begin to see that the book was driven by Henry's military agenda and that Parr *must* have been involved in discussions with him (and maybe others) about the precise make-up of the volume. For example, although Strype described the Psalm prayers as generic "pious devotions," when they are placed in the context of 1544, it becomes clear that they were designed to enable the nation to prepare for war through repentance and supplication and are thus perfectly aligned with the short, obviously wartime prayers that conclude the volume.<sup>37</sup> We must remember, here, that Henry and Cranmer repeatedly explained that nationwide repentance and imprecation (cursing one's enemies) were essential for England's military success. In response to the Turkish incursion into Hungary in July 1543, for example, Henry and Cranmer reminded the English people that it was necessary to "remember our sins," and "confess[...] ourselves unto God," and in June

1544 Henry noted that during a time of “cruel wars” it was imperative that his people call upon God who alone could “help and remedy” the situation and who would never “forsake” those who faithfully call upon him for help.<sup>38</sup> Fisher’s *Psalmi* were thus ideal texts to reprint and disseminate: in the first four Psalms, the speaker repents and asks God for mercy; in the fifth through seventh Psalms the speaker asks for wisdom and strength; and in the ninth through seventeenth Psalms the speaker asks God to destroy his enemies and offers thanksgiving for his triumph. That Parr’s book was designed to assist Henry’s war effort is supported by the fact that both the Latin and English volumes were printed on days of military significance: the Latin book was printed on April 18, the day that the English fleet set sail to raze Edinburgh to the ground, and the English translation was printed on April 25, a Rogation day of liturgical Processions that would have focused on the war.

If the book’s contents enable us to understand *why* Parr took the time to translate such a lengthy book in the spring of 1544, it is important to recognize that its pieces were all derived from politically sensitive sources, and that the volume is, in some ways, an unlikely assemblage. Indeed, recognizing the sensitive nature of all the sources is crucial to my argument because it allows us to infer that Henry and Parr must have engaged in serious political discussions as the materials were assembled, translated, and edited. Although it is impossible to determine the precise nature of the conversations between Henry and Parr, it is important to take into account the sorts of issues that the sources raised, and to recognize that this book must have been thought-through from a variety of political perspectives. For example, the decision to obtain a copy of Bishop John Fisher’s *Psalmi* and to reprint and translate it must have required some political and diplomatic calculus. Not surprisingly, the title was adjusted so that the Psalm prayers are described as being collected from “Scripture” without any reference to Fisher’s literary labour: the *Psalmi seu Precationes. D. Jo. Episcopi Roffensis* in the 1525 Cologne edition became *Psalmi seu Precationes ex variis scripturae locis collectae*, translated as *Psalms or Prayers taken out of Holy Scripture*. But even then, there must have been some discussion of its origins, for Fisher was still a *persona non grata* in 1544 and Henry surely did not want to be seen co-opting the words of a “traitor” to bolster his war effort. As Richard Rex has shown, Henry had executed Fisher in 1535 for refusing to take the oath of supremacy, and had then mounted a “systematic campaign” to “eradicate his memory at home and to blacken it

abroad.”<sup>39</sup> For instance, Henry had recalled his sermons in 1536; had suppressed the memory of him at St. John’s College, Cambridge; and had Richard Morison denounce him internationally in print as recently as 1537.<sup>40</sup> Fisher’s name was not returned to *Psalmi* in England until much later, the first extant example being one printed in 1568 (RSTC 2995a). Henry must have assumed that many readers would not recognize the 1544 *Psalmi* as Fisher’s, and he obviously decided that Fisher’s text was timely and valuable enough to reprint in spite of its origins.<sup>41</sup> He may also have hoped that the resuscitation of Fisher’s work would please his military ally, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who (as the nephew of Catharine of Aragon) had been sympathetic to Fisher’s refusal to accept Henry’s divorce or the Royal Supremacy. Certainly, Henry valued the Latin *Psalmi* as well as the English translation and a copy was placed in his Royal Library (Westminster inventory number 1427).<sup>42</sup>

Henry and Parr must also have thought carefully about the decision to circulate the “*Precatio Pro Rege*”/“Prayer for the King.” These prayers were innovative, being the first crown-sponsored non-liturgical prayers for the monarch to be printed in England, and they must have attracted considerable attention. Although Mueller attributed the Latin prayer to Fisher in 2011, I have recently demonstrated that it was a revision of a Latin prayer for the Holy Roman Emperor, “*Precatio Pro Romano Imperatore*,” printed in a prayer book by the German Catholic Reformer Georg Witzel in 1541.<sup>43</sup> It is unclear who shortened Witzel’s prayer into a Latin prayer for Henry, but Parr may have been involved for she translated and adapted another one of Witzel’s prayers.<sup>44</sup> Henry and Parr’s decision to import and adapt a Catholic prayer for the Holy Roman Emperor is a curious one that can be read in several ways. Witzel became a Lutheran in 1525, but he returned to the Catholic church in 1533 and spent many years working on bi-confessional projects that attempted to heal the schism within Christianity.<sup>45</sup> Witzel’s rejection of Lutheranism along with his openness to liturgical reform would have appealed to Henry in 1544. Witzel was apparently at the Diet of Speyer (February–June, 1544) when Charles V secured the support of the German Princes for his military alliance with Henry, and it may have been there that one of Henry’s emissaries became acquainted with Witzel’s prayer.<sup>46</sup> Katherine and Henry certainly had the Emperor on their minds at this time of heavy diplomatic and military negotiations, and it is also possible that Witzel’s book was brought to them in London: the Imperial Ambassador Eustace Chapuys reported to the

Emperor on February 18, 1544 that he and the Duke of Najera had visited with Henry and then with “the Queen and Princess [Mary], who asked very curiously for news of the Emperor and charged Chapuys to make their humble recommendations to his Majesty.”<sup>47</sup> In light of this it seems likely that Henry and Parr decided to have Witzel’s prayer for the Emperor reworked as a new prayer for Henry in order to join English and Imperial subjects together in shared supplication for their rulers, and in order to strengthen the fragile Anglo-Imperial alliance. There is also evidence, though, that Parr and Henry used the prayer to subtly engage in a bit of political one-upmanship. The Holy Roman Emperor was still loyal to the Pope and was, in fact, dependent on the Pope to crown him.<sup>48</sup> The Emperor’s subordination is emphasized in Witzel’s prayerbook where the prayer for the Emperor is preceded by a prayer for the Pope, “Pia precatio pro Pontifice Romano.”<sup>49</sup> In the 1544 *Psalmi*, however, Henry is the only figure of authority; moreover, the most interesting change that occurs in Parr’s English translation of the “Precatio Pro Rege” pertains precisely to Henry’s supreme authority. Parr alters the Latin description of Christ in ways that stress that Henry is ruled *only* by Christ. So where the Latin prayer describes Christ as “rex regum, dominus dominorum, *monarcha monarcharum*” (king of kings, lord of lords, monarch of monarchs), Parr describes him as “king of kings, lord of lords, *the only ruler of princes,*” a formulation that stresses that no earthly person has authority over Henry and subtly suggests that Henry had freed himself from the clutches of the Pope.<sup>50</sup> While it is impossible to determine who had the idea to make this change, Henry and Parr must have discussed the implications of importing Witzel’s prayer for the Emperor, of reworking it as a Latin prayer for Henry, and of having Parr adapt it and translate it into English.

Although the 1544 Latin *Psalmi* contains no further material, Parr’s English volume includes “A Prayer for men to say entering into battle.” John Strype commented on this prayer’s appearance in the 1545 *Prayers or Meditations* and attributed it to Parr: “which latter [the prayer] I make no doubt the Queen composed upon the King’s expedition into France with a great army, when she was left Regent at home.”<sup>51</sup> There has never been any reason to challenge this hypothesis, and the prayer has been tentatively attributed to Parr ever since.<sup>52</sup> Janel Mueller included it in her edition of *Psalms or Prayers* noting “this prayer was quite possibly composed by K[atherine] P[arr] with a view to the military campaign in France that Henry was preparing to conduct in July–September 1544.”<sup>53</sup> In fact,

though, this prayer is more complicated than that as it is a heavily edited translation of “Inituri Prælium,” a Latin prayer for soldiers by Desiderius Erasmus (d. 1536) published in his *Precationes aliquot Novæ* (1535).<sup>54</sup> The sextodecimo editions of the *Psalms or Prayers* contain a translation of yet another prayer, “For Forgiveness of Sins.” This piece is a translation of Erasmus’ “Pro Venia Delictorum,” also from *Precationes aliquot Novæ*. Erasmus was, of course, famous throughout Europe as a vocal and uncompromising anti-war activist who strongly condemned the wars between Christian monarchs and argued that they were motivated entirely by greed and a petty desire for honor.<sup>55</sup> Erasmus had specifically exhorted Henry VIII to avoid war when he sent him a hand-illuminated gift copy of his *Institutio Principis Christiani* in 1517, and in the 1523 dedication of his *Paraphrase on Luke*, he had attempted to persuade Henry to abandon war against France and become a champion of Christian peace.<sup>56</sup> It is clear that Erasmus would have been horrified by Henry’s war with Scotland and with his proposed siege of Boulogne had he been alive in 1544; the decision to translate and edit two of his prayers and to include them in a wartime volume is a provocative one that must have generated some lively discussion between Parr and Henry.

### WRITING AS HENRY: *PSALMS OR PRAYERS* AS A FORM OF ROYAL VENTRILOQUISM

In translating, editing, and assembling Fisher, Witzel, and Erasmus, Parr was certainly working for and with Henry. In taking an even closer look at the rhetorical mode of the collage Psalms, though, we can see that Parr was doing something more than writing for Henry: in translating the Psalms she was engaging in a fascinating form of royal ventriloquism, one in which she was writing *as* Henry by means of an intimate, monarchical, devotional “I.” As we have seen earlier, the fact that the anonymous *Psalms or Prayers* was speaking for Henry is made clear by Berthelet’s recognizable title-page compartment and by the colophon that announced that the book was issued by “Thomas Berthelet, printer to the King’s Highness.”<sup>57</sup> As J. Christopher Warner has argued, when English readers saw the royal arms or the words “Thomas Berthelet, printer to the king” on a text, they would have “understood that the text was doing official service: proclaiming new laws, stating the king’s views, representing the king as he wanted others to see him.”<sup>58</sup> Kevin Sharpe similarly argued that when readers encountered a text issued by

Berthelet or with royal arms, they read “the words contained in it as authorized, that is authored, by the king.”<sup>59</sup> But the *Psalms or Prayers* speak for Henry in yet another way, in that the seventeen Psalm prayers feature a devotional “I” that can be read as that of the king.<sup>60</sup> As many critics have noted, early modern readers were accustomed to reading Psalm texts in multiple registers: while the devotional “I” in a Psalm text could be that of the individual or the community, David was a king and the devotional “I” was also that of the monarch, especially in a Psalm book issued by the king. Thus, while readers of Parr’s book would have applied the text’s “I” to themselves, they would also have understood it as the voice of their monarch who was also duty-bound to repent and beg for help during a time of war. Insofar as Parr was translating Fisher’s devotional “I” into the “I” of their king, she was not just describing him in the third person (as she does in “A Prayer for the King”), she was also writing *as him*.

Although royal ventriloquism may seem odd to modern readers, Kevin Sharpe has noted that royal texts (proclamations, theological works, speeches, letters, polemics) were often produced by Henry’s Privy Councilors, Bishops, or Archbishops and then issued under his name.<sup>61</sup> It is worth emphasizing, however, that the rhetorical form of the royal voice varied from text to text, and that the degree to which another person was writing as Henry was more obvious in some texts than in others. In May 1544, for example, Berthelet printed the anonymous English *Exhortation* and *Litany*, and the title page announced that the *Exhortation* (a sermon) was “thought meet by the king’s majesty, and his clergy, to be read to the people in every church” before the chanting of the new vernacular *Litany*.<sup>62</sup> Because the *Litany* is a liturgical text and because the *Exhortation* is a sermon, it was relatively clear that they were written by the Archbishop on behalf of the king, who was the head of the English church. By contrast, between January 1543 and July 1544, Berthelet printed at least twenty royal proclamations that announce that they are “ordained and made by the King’s highness.”<sup>63</sup> It is not known exactly who actually penned each proclamation, but they purport to be “made” by the king and they proclaim his will. So for example, on August 2, 1543, the crown issued a Proclamation declaring war against France:

His highness now perceiving, that the said French King will not be induced by any gentle means to honesty and reason ... Hath

therefore entered into a most Christian and straight league and amity with his good brother and perpetual ally the Emperor's majesty ... Wherefore like as the King's majesty our sovereign lord hath thought meet, to notify the premises unto all and singular his most loving and obedient subjects, so his highness by virtue of this his majesty's proclamation doth declare the said French king to be his highness' enemy.<sup>64</sup>

Parr's collage Psalms are particularly interesting in this context because they offer a personal monarchical "I," one in which Henry aligns himself with the wartime kings of the Old Testament (David, King Asa, Solomon) and prepares for war through repentance and imprecation.<sup>65</sup> For example, in the first "Psalm," we can see Parr writing as Henry who is repenting for his sins and those of his people:

Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor punish me in Thy great displeasure.

Cast not Thy darts at me, nor lay Thy heavy hand upon me.

...

My iniquities be gone over my head, and like an heavy burden they daily press me down.

...

Wherefore my enemies do persecute me the more; the greatness of my pain maketh me to roar and cry.<sup>66</sup>

Having repented, the speaker of *Psalms or Prayers* then asks God for assistance in battle. In the imprecatory "Tenth Psalm," the devotional "I" would have been read as Henry's as he implored God to assist him in battle.

Instruct and teach my hands to battle; make my arms strong like a bow of steel.

Gird me with strength to battle; overthrow them that arise against me.

...

Cast down mine enemies before my face, and destroy them that hate me:

Lest mine enemies overcome me, and the companies of tyrants overwhelm me.<sup>67</sup>

And finally, in the thirteenth “Psalm,” the speaker ecstatically thanks God for helping him triumph. Here Parr writes as Henry anticipating his godly triumph over the Scottish and the French:

I will magnify and praise Thee, O Lord God, for Thou hast exalted me and set me up; and my enemies have not gotten the overhand of me.

O lord of hosts, I have cried unto Thee, and Thou hast saved me.

...

I will ever be singing and speaking of Thy mercies, and I will publish to other Thy fidelity and truth so long as I shall live.<sup>68</sup>

The narrative fiction, here, is that the reader is overhearing Henry engaging in exemplary wartime preparation and has been granted privileged access to an unusually intimate form of royal speech. It is not hard to hypothesize about the strategic usefulness of Parr’s/Henry’s textual fiction: the war with Scotland was part of an ongoing conflict with no end in sight; the proposed invasion of France was consuming a huge amount of money and human resources; and Henry was proposing to lead his army into France in person, in spite of his obesity and ulcerated leg. The Imperial Ambassador had grave doubts about Henry’s prospects and claimed that others did as well.<sup>69</sup> Parr’s and Henry’s “Psalms,” then, can be read as a carefully calculated project designed to reassure Henry’s subjects that he was doing precisely what was needed to win the war and to inspire enthusiasm for the proposed invasion. The devotional, royal “I” of the “Psalms” also surely sought to inspire obedience to other forms of royal speech, such as a Proclamation issued by Berthelet on May 18, 1544. In this Proclamation, “the King’s most excellent Majesty” denounced unauthorized accounts of his army’s recent victory in Scotland and “chargeth and commandeth all manner of persons into whose hands any of the said printed books be come, immediately after they shall hear of this proclamation, to bring the same books” to the authorities to be destroyed.<sup>70</sup> Anyone who disobeyed the king “shall suffer imprisonment of his body and be further punished at the King’s majesty’s will and pleasure.”<sup>71</sup> It is thus possible, I suggest, to read Parr’s devotional “I” as one piece of a broader strategy to inspire obedience to the king who “chargeth and commandeth” his

subjects in matters pertaining to the war. It is also worth noting that if Parr wrote as a devotional Henry in April 1544, on July 7, she was appointed to serve as Regent when Henry left for France. On July 19, she issued her first Royal Proclamation where she again wrote as Henry, but now in a legally binding way and now using the third person so typical of Proclamations. So, for example, she declared in his name: “*his highness* therefore straitly chargeth and commandeth, by this his present proclamation, that all Frenchmen and others ... repair to the house of the said Lord Chancellor.”<sup>72</sup> Henry’s willingness to let Parr, rather than one of the many male courtiers, speak for him in the *Psalms or Prayers* provides a precedent for the legal and political collaboration that soon followed.

The *Psalms or Prayers*, then, has had a complicated relationship with the concept of “authorship” since the day it was published. In April 1544, it appeared as an anonymous text authorized by the king, but was distributed by Parr at court, and in 1545 (and 1548), it was described by Nicholas Udall as a work “penned” and “set forth” by the queen. As I have argued, it is by seeing the text as a work produced by both the king and the queen that we can best understand its origins and multifaceted political and devotional goals. Although it is impossible to know the precise nature of the interactions between the king and queen, it is clear that Henry asked or allowed Parr, rather than a male advisor, to undertake this lengthy, challenging work of military propaganda and that he must have authorized the ways in which the sources were translated and edited by Parr. In further finessing the kind of “authorship” that this crown text entailed, it is worth briefly noting the material features of the extant gift-copies. In these beautiful vellum copies (which no longer have their original bindings), the title-page compartments have been hand-painted, and on the verso we find hand-painted images of Henry’s (not Parr’s) royal arms.<sup>73</sup> These painted royal arms recall the printed royal arms that accompanied some crown publications and thus emphasize that the book was produced by the crown and advances the needs and desires of the king.<sup>74</sup> At the same time, though, we know that Parr had these books “gorgeously bound and gilt on the leather” and distributed them as gifts. In imagining the moment when these books (with Henry’s arms) were distributed by Parr, we can perhaps best grasp the book’s complex collaborative origins.

## NOTES

1. Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995); Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
2. Helen Smith, “Grossly Material Things”: *Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 18.
3. *Ibid.*, 19–20. For recent studies investigating women who collaborated in the production of texts attributed to men, see Smith; Patricia Pender, *Early Modern Women’s Writing and the Rhetoric of Modesty* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 92–121; and Julie Crawford, *Mediatrice: Women, Politics, and Literary Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). I address two instances of textual collaborations between husbands and wives in Micheline White, “Power Couples and Women Writers in Elizabethan England: The Public Voices of Dorcas and Richard Martin and Anne and Hugh Dowriche,” in *Framing the Family: Narrative and Representation in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, eds. Rosalyn Voaden and Diane Wolfthal (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 119–138.
4. Pender, *Early Modern*, 51.
5. Smith, “Grossly Material Things,” 20.
6. Pender, *Early Modern*, 51; Thomas S. Freeman and Sarah E. Wall, “Racking the Body, Shaping the Text: The Account of Anne Askew in Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001): 1165–1196.
7. Janel Mueller provides a modernized version of this work in *Katherine Parr: Complete Works and Correspondence*, ed. Janel Mueller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 197–365.
8. See RSTC 3002.3. This third prayer was described by Susan James, but it was not included in Mueller’s edition. Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr, the Making of a Queen* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 208.
9. Kimberly A. Coles, *Religion, Reform, and Women’s Writing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 53, n. 39; Brenda M. Hosington, “Women Translators and the Early Printed Book,” in *A Companion to the Early Printed Book in Britain, 1476–1558*, eds. Vincent Gillespie and Susan Powell (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2014), 257. The Latin *Psalmi* was less popular and there is only one extant copy reprinted between 1544 and 1568. In 1568, Fisher’s

- name reappeared on the text, and in 1572 and 1598, it was printed with Thomas More's Psalms. See RSTC 2994–2995a.3.
10. This renaming does not occur until 1568, more than 20 years after the initial publication of the two books. See RSTC 3009–3013.5. Today, copies of the *Psalms or Prayers* and *Prayers or Meditations* from the 1540s are often bound together, although it is difficult to determine when the binding occurred.
  11. In a major new essay, David Skinner has noted that Parr's Ninth Psalm was set to music by Thomas Tallis, and he examines the complex textual/musical collaboration that must have taken place between the king, the queen, Cranmer, and Thomas Tallis, probably in the spring of 1544. David Skinner, "'Deliver me from my deceitful enemies':" a Tallis Contrafactum in Time of War," *Early Music* 44, no. 2 (2016): 233–250.
  12. J. Christopher Warner, *Henry's Divorce: Literature and the Politics of the Printing Press* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998). Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 79–115.
  13. Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, 88.
  14. John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials; Relating chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of it ... under Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary I* 5 vols. (London, 1721), II, 130. Udall's dedication to Parr was dated 30 September, 1545, but it was not printed until 1548. Udall says: "But the *Psalms* and contemplative meditations on which your highness, in the lieu and place of vain courtly pastimes and gaming, doth bestow your night-and-day's study, and *which ye have set forth* as well to the incomparable good example of all noblewomen, as also to the ghostly consolation and edifying of as many as read them." See *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 93 and 199. Parr was the patron of the *Paraphrases* translation project.
  15. *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 131.
  16. *Ibid.* Strype also makes no mention of the fact that the *Psalms or Prayers* concluded with "A Prayer for the King" and "A Prayer for Men to Say Entering into Battle." He mentions them appearing in Parr's *Prayers or Meditations* (1545). Unfortunately, Strype does not describe his source so it is impossible to know which books he was examining.
  17. George Ballard's *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, ed. Ruth Perry (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985), 118–119. *Biographium faemineum: The Female Worthies* 2 vols. (London, 1766), II, 180. Horace Walpole, *A Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London: John Scott, 1806), 13–14. James Anderson, *Ladies of the Reformation* (London, 1858), 196.

18. Mary Hays, *Memoirs of Queens* (London: T. and J. Allman, 1821), 465; Jane Williams, *The Literary Women of England* (London: Saunders, Otley, 1861), 45–46; Myra Reynolds, *The Learned Lady in England, 1650–1760* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1920), 14.
19. James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 228–229. He also entertained the possibility that Parr was the author of a French poem in the Cecil papers. It is unclear why he did not pursue the question of the Psalms.
20. William P. Haugaard, “Katherine Parr: The Religious Convictions of a Renaissance Queen.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 22 (1969): 346–359. See also Anthony K. Martienssen, *Queen Katherine Parr* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1973).
21. Elizabeth H. Hageman, “Recent Studies in Women Writers of Tudor England,” *English Literary Renaissance* 14, no. 3 (1984): 409–425, and her updated “Recent Studies in Women Writers of Tudor England,” in *Women in the Renaissance*, eds. Kirby Farrell, Elizabeth H. Hageman, and Arthur F. Kinney (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990), 258–264; and Georgianna M. Ziegler, “Recent Studies in Women Writers of Tudor England,” *ELR* 24.1 (1994): 229–242.
22. John N. King, “Patronage and Piety: The Influence of Catherine Parr,” in *Silent But for the Word*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985), 43–60.
23. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 200–208. James referred to Strype’s attribution in a footnote, 205, n. 48.
24. James also argued that she was the likely patron of the 1544 Latin edition.
25. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 202, 205. For Udall’s comments, see *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 163.
26. Frances B. Rose-Troup, “Two Book Bills of Katherine Parr,” *The Library*, 3rd ser. 2 (1911): 40–48. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 206. In 1544, two copies of the “Psalm prayers” were delivered to the clerk of Parr’s closet and 12 were delivered to George Day, her almoner. James also notes that Parr paid for an unspecified “book” to be delivered to friends in the summer of 1544 and that John Bale had referred to her as the author of “Meditationes psalmoreum” in *Illustrium Majoris Britanniae Scriptorum* (Wesel, 1548), f. 238.
27. Micheline White, “Recent Studies in Women Writers of Tudor England, 1485–1603,” *ELR* 30, no. 3 (2000): 466. James P. Carley accepted James’s attribution in his edition of *The Libraries of King Henry VIII* (London: British Library in Association with the British Academy, 2000), 227, 278.
28. Coles, *Religion*, 47–51.

29. Hosington, Brenda et al. *Renaissance Cultural Crossroads* <https://www.hrionline.ac.uk/rcc/>, ISBN 978-0-9557876-5-2; Hosington, “Women Translators,” 257. Jaime Goodrich, *Faithful Translators: Authorship, Gender, and Religion in Early Modern England* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2014), 24, 75.
30. *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 197–365.
31. *Ibid.*, 160, 199–200.
32. *Ibid.*, 199, 215, 621–623. Coles, *Religion*, 51.
33. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 200–201. Mueller concurs, *Katherine Parr*, 200.
34. See James, *Kateryn Parr*, 215, 223–224; Coles, *Religion*, 47–51; *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 14.
35. Coles, *Religion*, 51. With regard to the *Prayers or Meditations*, Coles stresses that Henry “apparently involved his wife—or, at least, permitted her involvement—in the project of advancing and shaping the devotional forms of the nascent English Church” *Religion*, 47.
36. *Ibid.*, 51.
37. I discuss the war at greater length in Micheline White, “The Psalms, War, and Royal Iconography: Katherine Parr’s *Psalms or Prayers* (1544) and Henry VIII as David,” *Renaissance Studies* 29, no. 4 (2015): 554–575.
38. Paul Ayris, “Preaching the Last Crusade: Thomas Cranmer and the ‘Devotion’ Money of 1543,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 49 (1998), 699; Natalie Mears et al., eds, *National Prayers: Special Worship since the Reformation. Volume 1: Special Prayers, Fasts, and Thanksgivings in the British Isles, 1533–1688* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013), 15–16.
39. Richard Rex, *The Theology of John Fisher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 11–12.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Some older readers may have remembered the text from the mid-1520s, and some elite readers may have discovered the text’s origins because an edition of the *Psalmi* clearly ascribed to Fisher was published in Antwerp in 1544. It is unclear whether this book was printed before or after the London editions, but it means that Fisher’s *Psalmi* were in circulation under his name in the mid-1540s. *Sacri Sacerdotii Defensio contra Lutherum, per D. Joannem Episcopum Roffen. Eiusdem Psalmi seu Precationes; Item Missa S. Joannis Chrysostomi* (Antwerp, 1544).
42. Carley, *Libraries*, 225.
43. Georg Witzel (Wicelio), *Formulae Precationum aliquot Evangelicarum* (Mainz, 1541), 112–115. See my “Pray for the Monarch: The Surprising Contributions of Katherine Parr and Queen Elizabeth I to the Book of Common Prayer.” *Times Literary Supplement*, April 3, 2015: 14–15.
44. Parr’s *Prayers or Meditations* contains a short prayer, “Another Prayer,” which is also adapted from Witzel.

45. For discussions of Witzel's life and works see Barbara Henze, *Aus Liebe zur Kirch Reform: die Bemühungen Georg Witzels (1501–1573) um die Kircheneinheit* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1995).
46. For Witzel's presence at Speyer, see Henze, *Liebe*, 7, 26.
47. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, R. H. Brodie 21 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1920), XIX, i, no. 118.
48. Charles V was crowned by Clement VII at Bologna in 1530.
49. Witzel, *Formulae Precationum*, 107–111.
50. *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 363, my emphasis. I discuss all the changes to the Latin prayer in "Psalms, War, and Royal Iconography," 567–573. Patricia Pender discusses the 1545 reprinting of the prayer in *Early Modern Women*, 84–85.
51. Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, II, 131.
52. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 209–210.
53. *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 364.
54. Erasmus, *Precationes aliquot Novæ, ac rursus novis adauctæ, quibus adolescentes assuescant cum Deo colloqui* (Basil: Froben, 1535). This book was reprinted many times in Cologne, Lyon, Friburg, and Leipzig.
55. For Erasmus's hostility to war see Ross Dealy, "The Dynamics of Erasmus' Thought on War," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 4 (1984), 53–67.
56. For discussions of Erasmus's advice to Henry VIII regarding war, see Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Neil M. Cheshire and Michael J. Heath. Ed. Lisa Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xxii; and Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, "Erasmus' Prescription for Henry VIII: Logotherapy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (1978): 161–172.
57. *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 365. Coles, *Religion*, 50.
58. Warner, *Henry's Divorce*, 83.
59. Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, 88.
60. It is perhaps because of this that the text was later renamed *The King's Psalms*. See n. 10.
61. Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, 87.
62. Anon, *An Exhortation unto Prayer... Also a Litany with Suffrages to be said or sung in the time of the said processions* (London: Berthelet, 27 May, 1544; RSTC 10620).
63. See the header on the Proclamation in RSTC 7805. Repinted (without the header) in Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds., *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 3 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), I, 331.
64. Hughes and Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, I, 320–321. RSTC 7801.
65. I discuss other examples from the mid-1540s that show that Henry was expected to petition for God's help in the wars in "Psalms, War, and Royal Iconography," 557–562.

66. *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 229.
67. *Ibid.*, 318–319.
68. *Ibid.*, 338–339.
69. On May 18 Chapuys wrote that in addition to “his age and weight, [Henry] has the worst legs in the world, such that those who have seen them are astonished that he does not stay continually in bed and judge that he will not be able to endure the very least exertion without danger of his life.” *Letters and Papers*, Brewer, Gairdner, and Brodie, XIX, i, no. 529.
70. Hughes and Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, I, 329.
71. *Ibid.*
72. *Ibid.*, I, 337. *Katherine Parr*, Mueller, 54–55.
73. RSTC 3001.7. I have examined the three extant copies.
74. See the printed royal arms in Berthelet’s edition of Lily’s *Grammar* (1543; STC 15610.7) or his *Pia et Catholica Christiani Hominis Institutio* (1544; RSTC 5178).

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## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

**Micheline White** is Associate Professor in the College of the Humanities and Department of English at Carleton University in Canada. She is the editor of *English Women, Religion and Textual Production, 1500–1625* and *Secondary Work on Early Modern Women Writers: Isabella Whitney, Aemilia Lanyer, and Anne Lock*. She has published on women and religion in venues such as the *Times Literary Supplement*, *Renaissance Studies*, *ELR*, *Modern Philology*, and *Sixteenth-Century Journal*. Her work on Katherine Parr has been featured in interviews with the *CBC's* *Tapestry*, Radio Canada's *les voies de retour*, and the Anglican Communion News Service.



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