THE HUMANISTIC EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN TUDOR ENGLAND: HISTORICAL INFLUENCES AND PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

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Sixteenth century Tudor England was the setting for Humanist programs of educating women. Based on the radical idea that women were as capable as men of liberal learning, these programs offered substantially different approaches from medieval notions for educating women; the medieval view emphasized non-literary training, but the Humanist view, initiated and advocated by such men as Thomas More and Juan Vives, among others, advocated literary training in classical languages and writings and other liberal subjects. The Humanist educational programs contributed to the appearance of a number of aristocratic women who were as well versed as men in classical and liberal subjects. These humanist trained women included, among others, three women who became queens of England, Mary Tudor, Catherine Parr, and Lady Jane Grey.

The research in this study focused on humanist educational programs for women in Tudor England. One

intention of the research was to discern the historical background which influenced these humanist educational programs for women. A second intention was to examine these programs in relationship to humanist programs for men, specifically to see whether (1) the aims, curricular content and pedagogical method of the educational programs for women were similar to those in programs for men; and (2) the educational opportunities advocated for women were similar to those available for men.

The findings of the study indicate that the historical influences for humanistic educational programs for women were many and varied. These included such influences as Renaissance humanistic activity in Italy, England's participation in the Hundred Years War and Wars of the Roses, the marriage of Catherine of Aragon to Henry VIII, and More's education of his daughters. In regard to the relationship between programs for women and those for men, the findings show that the aims and curricular content of educational programs for women were similar to those of the men's programs. However, the educational opportunities for women were not the same as those advocated for men, as women were limited to specially designed schools in households and the royal court and not allowed to attend universities and grammar schools.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Peggy, through whom I learned about and have come to appreciate the spirit and meaning of feminism, and, ultimately, humanism, as approaches to life.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to acknowledge the inspiration of Thomas More, who affected me, much as he did the characters of Doonesbury, with the classic work "Miami Beach" -- that is, Utopia. It was in that work that I first became acquainted with the sixteenth century English Humanist notion that women were as capable as men of learning. Of course, the idea itself was not shocking to me, but it was fascinating to me that such an idea was considered in the sixteenth century; thus, the ensuing study.

Second, I wish to acknowledge the advice and counsel rendered to me by members of my committee in the course of researching and writing this dissertation. The time which Richard Featherstone, Marvin Grandstaff and Justin Kestenbaum shared with me is greatly appreciated.

Third, and of special note, is the contribution of my chairperson, Keith Anderson, who has been a source of support throughout my doctoral program. Keith has given freely of his time and advice, offered many timely and sage suggestions, and listened openly and empathetically to my concerns during the last four years. For these things I am especially grateful.

Fourth, I want to acknowledge the assistance rendered to me by individuals in England during the course of my research. Specifically, these people include John Warner-Davies, the archivist of the Birmingham City Library; the research staff of the Bodleian Library, Oxford; and the Reading Room staff of the British Library, London. Also, in this regard, I am grateful to James K. McConica, All Souls College, Oxford, and Kenneth Charlton, Kings College, London, for taking time from their busy schedules to discuss my research and offer suggestions. Moreover, in regard to their general hospitality, I wish to express my gratitude to the English families, too numerous to list individually, who opened up their homes and shared their lives with me while I was conducting my research.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge my friends and family members who have provided encouragement and support to me over the years. Notably, my friend, Jeff Frumkin, who has helped make my time at Michigan State enjoyable in a most spirited fashion; my brothers and sister, who have

often wondered why I was studying humanism and the education of women in sixteenth century England but have, nonetheless, been sources of support and enjoyment; my parents, who helped me to develop a thirst for learning and provided me with my early educational foundations which encouraged me to seek an understanding of the development of education in our civilization; and Peggy, to whom this work has been dedicated, who provided me with her support and encouragement throughout the doctoral program, and pushed me to undertake a study, such as this, which was really important to me.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> Nor do I think that the harvest of learning is much affected whether it is a man or a woman who does the sowing. They both have the name human being whose nature reason differentiates from that of beasts; both, I say, are equally suited for the knowledge of learning by which reason is cultivated.[1]

During the reign of Henry VIII, many English aristocratic women participated in humanist initiated educational programs. These programs, based on the idea that women were as capable as men of learning, offered a radically different approach from medieval notions of educating women. The medieval view emphasized non-literary training, but the humanist view, initiated and advocated by such men as Thomas More--author of the introductory quote--and Juan Luis Vives, advocated literary training in the classics and other liberal subjects. One result of these programs was, as Lawrence Stone has noted, the appearance in sixteenth century England of many aristocratic

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[1] Thomas More, "Letter to William Gonell" (May, 1518), in Selected Correspondence of St. Thomas More edited by Elizabeth Rogers (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 105.

women who were as expert as men in classical grammar and language, among other subjects.[2]

The catalysts for these programs were seemingly many and varied, including previous humanist educational programs for women in Italy and Spain. Nonetheless, contemporary scholars have for the most part neglected consideration of causes of the English humanist educational programs for women, other than offering probable ideational and personal influences. Foster Watson and Mary Agnes Cannon, for example, have suggested that the support of Catherine of Aragon, Queen to Henry VIII, was a leading cause for the development of educational programs for women in Tudor England.[3] Pearl Hogrefe offers the idea that Thomas More's ideas and training of his daughters were key factors in promoting humanist programs, and suggests that he and other English humanists were influenced by Renaissance humanist activity in Italy.[4] Garrett Mattingly suggests the

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[2]Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800 (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1977), p. 141.

[3]Foster Watson, Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912); and Luis Vives, El Gran Valenciano (London, England: Humphrey Milford, 1922); and Mary Agnes Cannon, Education of Women During the Renaissance (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University, 1916). English activity is discussed in Chapter III, pp. 97-123.

[4]Pearl Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1959), p. 216-17; and Tudor Women (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1975), p. 100.

early education of Catherine of Aragon, during which her mother, Queen Isabella of Spain, emphasized humanist training for women.[5]

Besides these ideational and personal factors, however, virtually no other causes are considered in accounts of the humanist educational programs for women in Tudor England. In short, treatments of these schemes have not placed English humanist education for women into an historical context. One purpose of this study is to provide this historical context with the aim of suggesting a broader framework than solely ideational and personal causes for the development and promotion of humanist pedagogical programs for women in sixteenth century England. To fulfill this purpose, this study will include consideration of economic political, religious and social developments of the preceding two centuries. During this period, European and English society experienced a variety of afflictions, such as the Black Plague and the Hundred Years War, which paralleled a transition from a medieval perspective to the humanist perspective of education. As such, these and other developments provide the historical background which will be examined in this study to discern the causes for the development of humanist education for women in Tudor England.

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[5]Garrett Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon (London, England: Butler and Tanner Ltd., 1950), p. 17.

In addition to presenting the development of humanist education for women in Tudor England in its historical context, this study will also consider the relationship of the English humanist pedagogical programs for women to the total English humanist education scheme.[6] To fulfill this purpose, the study will include consideration of the following questions:

1) Were the aims of English humanist educational programs for women similar to the aims of English humanist education for men?

2) Was the curricular content and pedagogical method advocated by English humanists for the education of women similar to the curricula and methods advocated for the education of men?

3) Did the designers of humanist educational programs advocate similar educational opportunities for women as were available for men?

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[6] In referring to "English Humanism," it is necessary to denote the difference between this movement and Renaissance Humanism. English Humanism, which is a by-product of Renaissance Humanism, refers to that program developed in England during the late fifteenth century and flourishing in the sixteenth century under the leadership of Thomas More, Desiderius Erasmus, Juan Vives, et al. As Fritz Caspari, Joan Simon, et al. have noted, English Humanism is a broad social philosophical movement, of which education was a major part, based on the idea that men could shape their own destiny and create a better world and concerned with promoting new outlooks towards the world. This educational 'facet' included but was not limited to involvement with works of classical antiquity. English Humanism differs from Renaissance Humanism in the sense that it brings together all of the diverse strains of the earlier movement, e.g., concern for the classical antiquity, and textual integrity, study of Greek and Latin, new educational methods and a regard for a new role in the world for man. In Chapter Three of this study, the evolution from Renaissance to English humanism is considered. See Fritz Caspari, Humanism in the Social Order in Tudor England (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago, 1954), p. 1; and Joan Simon, Education and Society in Tudor England (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 61, et al.

The reasons for examining this relationship are related to the fact that English humanist education for women has been for the most part ignored or considered inconsequential in contemporary treatments of Tudor humanist educational practices, or has been placed completely outside the realms of humanism. The major exceptions to this oversight have been works focusing on such leaders of English humanist education as More and Vives.

M. L. Clarke and Joan Simon, for instance, exemplify the neglect of education for women as a part of the total English humanist pedagogical program. Clarke concentrates on a consideration of humanist classical education for men as the foundations for traditional liberal education in England.[7] Simon, who provides a good definition of humanist education in England, gives consideration to humanist educational programs in Tudor England without mention of education for women. This is especially amazing since she focuses on the ideas of Juan Vives, a leading advocate of humanist education for women.[8]

Treatment of education for women as an inconsequential facet of the English humanist educational program is exemplified by Kenneth Charlton and James McConica. Charlton

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[7]M. L. Clark, Classical Education in Britain 1500-1900 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1959).

[8]Simon, op. cit.

briefly mentions humanistic educational programs for women in his work on education in Renaissance England.[9] McConica, in his work on English humanism and politics in Reformation England, comments on Thomas More's educational program for his daughters and the patronage by English women of humanist activity.[10] However, neither Charlton nor McConica give consequential status to the role of education for women in the total English humanist pedagogical agenda.

Finally, an example of education for women being placed outside the limits of humanism is seen in Pearl Hogrefe's treatment of the ideas of Thomas More and his associates. Hogrefe, who has offered perhaps the most complete renditions thus far available on educational practices for women in Tudor England, finds traditional interpretations of humanism too confining. This is a result of her consideration of Renaissance humanism as a concern for antiquity, or a concern for man developing new concepts about himself. Given these seemingly narrow views of humanism, Hogrefe opts to see the ideas and practice of such English humanists as More and Vives as "non-humanistic."[11]

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[9]Kenneth Charlton, Education in Renaissance England (London, England: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1966).

[10]James McConica, English Humanists and Reformation Politics (Oxford, England: The Clarendon Press, 1964).

[11]Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle (op. cit.); Hogrefe alludes to Roberto Weiss' definition of "Renaissance Humanism" and Gerald Walsh's concept of "Medieval Humanism" among others in making her determination (see Chapter One).

This study is based partially on the contention that these treatments which have downplayed the relationship of education for women in Tudor England to the total English humanist educational program have neglected to consider educational programs for women in their proper light. For this reason this study will undertake an examination of the aforementioned questions and present the argument that educational programs were a consequential and important part of the total English educational program. In order to make this argument and consider answers to the posed questions, the humanist ideas and programs for women in Tudor England as well as the development and establishment of humanism in England will be traced. In regard to the ideas and programs examined, this study will focus primarily upon those elucidated and initiated by such leading English humanists as Desiderius Erasmus, Thomas More, and Juan Vives.

Desiderius Erasmus, while not a native of England, is credited by many as being the catalyst for the blossoming of the English humanist movement. After his initial arrival in 1499, he spent many years in England in the company of More and other English humanists.[12]

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[12]On Erasmus, see P. S. Allen, The Age of Erasmus (Oxford, England: The Clarendon Press, 1914); Caspari's Humanism and the Social Order in Tudor England, op. cit.; Clarke's Classical Education in Britan, op. cit.; Johan Huizinga's Erasmus and the Age of the Reformation (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1957); McConica's English Humanism and Reformation Politics, op. cit.; et al.

Erasmus's views on humanist learning were clearly expressed in several works including De Rationii Studii or "On the Method of Study," De Pueris Instituendis, or "On the Education of Children," and The Learned Lady and the Abbott, among others which we will consider in the course of this study. Many of the ideas expressed in his works became incorporated into the humanist educational approaches which were handed down from the Renaissance period.[13]

Thomas More, Weiss comments, "was the most striking figure in the English humanism of his time."[14] He was endowed with exceptional gifts and exemplified the real flavor of humanism. More's most notable mark in humanist history has been due to his authorship of Utopia, and his relationship to Erasmus. But, More was an important humanist educator in his own right. His views and practical applications of these views were admired by his contemporaries.[15] While not writing a

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[13]Clarke, op. cit., p. 6.

[14]See Roberto Weiss, "Learning and Education in Western Europe, 1470-1520" in Cambridge Modern History (Volume 2), ed. A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero and Stanley Leathes (New York: MacMillan Company, 1902), pp. 110-111.

[15]John Colet, a fellow humanist and founder of St. Paul's School, noted that "in all Britain, there is only one genius - Thomas More." Erasmus also admired More's genius and became convinced of the educability of women through More's education of his daughters. Writing to William Budé in 1521, Erasmus said: "More . . . has brought up his whole family in excellent studies - a new example, but one which is likely to be much imitated, . . . so successful has it been." On More, see R. W.

major treatise on humanist education, More expressed his educational ideas in Utopia and in his correspondence. Most importantly, More developed a school, for his children and those of his associates, in his house which served as a model of English humanist pedagogical practices, for girls as well as boys. More's daughters, who received a humanist education at this school, later provided strong evidence of the educability of girls and women.[16]

Juan Luis Vives, another non-native of England, came to that country in 1523, at the invitation of King Henry VIII and Queen Catherine of Aragon, and with the encouragement of Erasmus, More, and Cardinal Thomas Wolsey. While in England, Vives was a doctor of classical letters at Oxford, lived for a time at More's house, and prepared the court studies of the Princess Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine. Vives had gained distinction as a humanist scholar prior to his arrival in England, and was well respected by Erasmus and More. His educational ideas were expressed in such treatises as De Tradendis Disciplinis or "The Transmission of Education," De

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Chambers' Thomas More (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1958); Hogrefe's The Sir Thomas More Circle, op. cit.; Cresacre More's The Life of Sir Thomas More, edited by Joseph Hunter (London, William Pickering, 1828); E. E. Reynolds' The Field Is Won (London, England: Burns and Oates, Ltd., 1968); E. M. G. Routh's Sir Thomas More and His Friends (London, England: Humphrey Milford, 1934); et al.

[16]Hogrefe, Tudor Women, p. 100.

Rationii Puerilis or "A Plan of Studies - for Boys and for Girls," and De Institutione Feminae Christianae or "Instruction of a Christian Woman," which will be examined in Chapters Three and Four below to determine the relationship of English humanist advocacy of education for women to the total humanist program.[17]

By suggesting a broader base of influences for humanist educational programs for women and showing the nature of the relationship between these programs and the total English humanist education program, I hope to overcome limitations of earlier scholarship. In doing so, I will also meet a need recognized by such scholars as Rosemary Masek, who, in an article titled "Age of Transition, 1485-1714" (1979), cites the need for scholarship in the area of educational activity of women during the Tudor era.[21] This study, however, in spite of meeting part of this need, is not without limitations. For example, this study is limited in its inability to discern from the research definitive statements regarding causes of particular activities. At best, I will suggest plausible rationales

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[17]On Vives, see Simon's Education and Society in Tudor England (op. cit.); Watson's Vives and Renascence Education of Women; Luis Vives, El Gran Valenciano (op. cit.); and Vives: On Education (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1913).

[18]Rosemary Masek, "Age of Transition, 1485-1714" in The Women of England, edited by Barbara Kammer (Hamden, Connecticut: Anchor Books, 1979), p. 152-153.

for the development, existence and flourishing of educational programs for women based on an analysis of the available data. The main reason for this limitation is the inability to reconstruct the exact climate in which humanist programs developed and in which particular humanists presented their ideas and programs. Nonetheless, it is hoped that the suggestions offered in the ensuing discussion will provide the foundation for other considerations of influences of the studied programs. A second limitation relates to the accounts of practical training for women. For the most part, the evidence considered has been the correspondence of More and his associates about his school, and the plan of Vives for Princess Mary. There were other women beside the More daughters and the Tudor princess who were educated, and accounts of the education some of them received have been pieced together from biographies and available primary source materials. One area for further study would be to seek out other evidence of educational activity for women during this period through searches for undiscovered manuscripts and/or correspondence.

Having noted the above limitations, the study will consider the pedagogical programs of Renaissance English humanism, the advocacy of such programs for women in Tudor England, and the social, political and religious climate surrounding same. In considering this latter topic, I

intend to depict a view of the medieval world in which humanism developed, as well as consider the possible influences on promotion of educational programs for women. This study will also consider the origins and evolution of Renaissance humanism, giving consideration to selected progenitors of early humanist activity in Italy. Among those considered will be Petrarch, one of the earliest humanists, who exemplified the humanist spirit in his quests for classical manuscripts, efforts to bring classical learning into the scholarly arenas and his critical evaluation of his contemporary world; Vittorino da Feltre, who exemplified humanist pedagogy with the methods he practiced at Mantua; and Giovanni Pico, who helped shape the humanist philosophical emphasis on man as the center of his universe and controller of his destiny with his work at the Florentine Platonist Academy. Additionally, we will examine some of the religious, social and political developments of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries which helped shape the climate in which humanism developed and evolved.

The study will begin in Chapter Two with an examination of the social, political and religious climate, considering some of the important developments in medieval Europe and England, such as the Black Plague, the changing status of the medieval Catholic Church, the

Hundred Years War and Wars of the Roses. Chapter Three will focus on the evolution and development of English humanism, examining the Tudor regency and English humanism, the ideas of such early Renaissance humanists as Petrarch, Vittorino and Pico, and the involvement of the English humanists. In Chapter Four, I will examine humanist ideas related to education for women, concentrating most extensively on the ideas of More, Vives, and Erasmus, but also considering traditional medieval views on women and education for women, and the role of Catherine of Aragon. Chapter Five will give its direct attention to the education of women as it was practiced in England, and some of the women who participated in the humanist educational programs. Finally, in Chapter Six, I will analyze the causes for development and promotion of educational programs for women, summarize the relationship between humanist programs for women and the total English humanist program, and, finally, make suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CLIMATE SURROUNDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMANISM IN THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

> In the latter part of the 15th century, England was plunged into that welter of bloodshed and shifting misgovernment which we know as the Wars of the Roses. Any atmosphere less healthy for letters it would be hard to imagine . . .[1]

The Wars of the Roses were indeed an unhealthy atmosphere for the development of letters. Yet it was only the last of a series of maladies which afflicted English, as well as European, society over a span of nearly two centuries, and paralleled the development of Renaissance Humanism. These disruptive developments, which included a changing status of the Church's position in society, the Black Plague, the Hundred Years War, and the aforementioned War of the Roses, affected the way humans looked at the world and their place in it. The first two developments caused man to question many of the time-honored dogmas and practices of medieval society and were at least partially responsible for early humanist activity. As

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[1] S. H. Steinberg (ed.), Cassell's Encyclopedia of Literature (Volume I) (London, England: Cassell & Company, 1957), p. 182.

C. W. Previte-Orton has commented, the aftermath of the Black Plague saw man become "for awhile . . . more reckless, less dutiful, more callous."[2] This, in combination with the practices of the fourteenth century Church, brought about a new "humanist" attitude among scholars to re-examine dogma and to refashion man's way of looking at the world. The Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses directly paralleled and impacted the development of English humanism, setting the foundations for the fruition of the movement in the 16th century. In essence, these events provided the climate, unhealthy as it may have been, in which Renaissance and English humanism evolved. For this reason we will discuss these developments in this chapter, beginning with the changing status of the medieval Church.

The Status of Church in the 14th Century

During the middle ages the Catholic Church played a central and important role in society. Buoyed by the successful Gregorian reforms of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the leadership of Pope Innocent III and his immediate successors in the thirteenth century, the Church had attained a position of unparalleled stature among the subjects of Christendom. In fact, the Church, through the

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[2]C. W. Previte-Orton, The Shorter Cambridge Medieval History (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 847.

Papacy, saw itself as the supreme authority over all of the Western world in temporal and spiritual matters alike. Proof of this combined authority was seen in the Pope's alliances with various monarchs which enabled the Church to acquire land and power during the thirteenth century. As the fourteenth century began, the Church was at its zenith. The Jubilee of the year 1300, called by Pope Boniface VIII, after being pressured from the ranks of the faithful, had been splendid and popular, implying as Beryl Smalley has remarked, "a moral triumph for Boniface."[3] The Jubilee also formed the backdrop for the proclamation of the Papal Bull, Unam Sanctum, in 1302. This Bull[4] was based on the theory that "Christ, as Son of God, possessed lordship, both spiritual and temporal, over the whole world" and the Pope, as Vicar of Christ and holder of the power passed to him through St. Peter, "wielded full power over all men, whether clerk or lay."[5] This idea was stated in the Bull's language that "it is necessary to salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman

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[3]Beryl Smalley, "Church and State, 1300-1377" in Europe in the Late Middle Ages (edited by J. R. Hale, J. R. L. Highfield and Beryl Smalley), (London, England: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1965), p. 22.

[4]Papal Bulls were formal documents issued by Popes and had the official papal seal or "bulla" attached.

[5]Smalley, op. cit., p. 16.

pontiff."[6] Soon, however, after issuance of Unam Sanctum, Boniface VIII's power was challenged by Philip IV (the Fair) of France and the ensuing Papal defeat served as catalyst for a series of events placing the Papacy in the so-called "Babylonian Captivity" at Avignon.[7] Three-quarters of a century later, in 1377, Gregory IX ended this captivity by moving the papal seat back to Rome, but, in the interim, the Church, although still given respect, had lost some of its stature and found many of its practices receiving an increasing amount of criticism of questioning. Some of the questioners, like John Wycliffe, anticipated the Reformation, others were the progenitors of humanism.

As noted, the Jubilee of 1300 was a triumph for the Papacy and as such did not serve any real warning to the demise to follow. Considered as the only way to salvation, the Church formed the nucleus of an unsteady, yet cohesive Catholic society stretched across Europe. The Jubilee Year offered methods for the faithful to gain grace and forgiveness, and as such many made long pilgrimages to pay homage in Rome. But even while this celebration

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[6]Barbara Tuchman, A Distant Mirror (New York: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1979), p. 25.

[7]The term, "Babylonian Captivity" referred to the licentious and luxurious environment of the Avignon where the Papacy was headquartered in the 14th century; as Petrarch commented, he was "living in the Babylon of the West."

occurred, the Church's foundations were already being shaken as a result of Philip IV's challenge to a Bull, Clericos Laicos, issued in 1296 which had forbidden the clergy to pay taxes to any ruler other than the Pope. A compromise between Boniface and Philip settled the issue temporarily, leaving an unsteady and potentially volatile situation. After publication of Unam Sanctam, Philip called for the convening of a council to judge Boniface on a variety of charges, including "heresy, blasphemy, murder, sodomy, simony and sorcery."[8] To this attack Boniface began to prepare a Bull to excommunicate Philip, but was attacked at his summer villa in Anagni before the Bull was issued. There, Boniface was held against his will until rescued by the citizens of Anagni. He, however, had suffered such a mortal blow to his personal esteem that within a month the 86-year-old Pontiff was dead.[9]

The importance of this challenge by Philip is seen in the facts that no one seemed surprised by the attack and Boniface's successors failed to rally immediate support for the Papacy. Many saw the claims of Boniface as ridiculous, as evidenced in a defense of Philip, entitled, A Dispute Between Clerk and Knight. There a knight is portrayed as saying, "I had a good laugh when I heard of

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[8]Tuchman, op. cit., p. 25.

[9]Ibid., p. 25.

Lord Boniface VIII's new statute, where he claims that he is and ought to be set above all principalities and kingdoms."[10] Although subsequent pontiffs echoed the claims made in Unam Sanctum, the Papacy soon became a virtual feifdom of the French monarch, moving to Avignon in Provence in 1309. During the period of stay in Avignon, Papal power increased at times due to its relationship with French kings and the role in European financial and cultural society which the Papal palace at Avignon played. Nonetheless, exercise of temporal authority was usually carried out with caution and tact. Additionally, in spite of some renewed respect, the Church's practices while at Avignon during the fourteenth century brought it under an increasing amount of criticism.

At Avignon, Smalley tells us, the Popes developed "the hub of a great legal, judicial, financial, administrative and diplomatic machine."[11] Often, it seemed the emphasis was on finance, and papal activities along these lines enabled them to build a splendid papal palace, and help make Avignon a "setting of international splendour."[12] Under the Church's financial scheme, "everything the Church had or was, from a cardinal's hat to a pilgrim's relic,

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[10]Smalley, op. cit., p. 23.

[11]Ibid., p. 33.

[12]Ibid., p. 33.

was for sale."[13] Among the many items to be sold were indulgences which Clement VI proclaimed in the Bull of 1343 were available for small contributions of money. Indulgences provided relief from sin through the conferment of grace, which was available, according to Clement, because of the inexhaustible supply compounded as a result of the many sacrifices of Christ, his mother and the saints. As indulgences and other "valuables" were sold, the Church got richer, leading many to begin criticizing the Church's practices. Among the critics of this fascination with riches was Petrarch, an early humanist, who observed that the Popes, who alleged to be "successors of 'the poor fishermen of Galilee,'" were now, 'loaded with gold and clad in purple.'"[14]

Others, however, were not as satisfied with verbal expression of their dissatisfaction and as the century progressed attacks, physical and dogmatic, began to occur. In 1338, for instance, a bishop at Constance was attacked, seriously wounded, and imprisoned by a crowd of dissatisfied "country folk." Another incident in Naples saw the Neapolitan King withdraw the vassals of the Bishop of Bisaccia "on the grounds that churches have no business to hold fiefs." Furthermore, the king ordered that anyone

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[13]Tuchman, op. cit., p. 26.

[14]Ibid., p. 28.

caught giving the Bishop food was subject to severe punishment and then subjected the Bishop to two days of torment.[15] Occurrences such as these became more common after the onset of the Black Plague, during which the selling of indulgences and relics only caused further antagonisms and outbreaks of violence. These practices also brought about more stringent verbal criticisms, some from early humanists and others from individuals like John Wycliffe of England.

Wycliffe, an Oxford scholar, examining age-old questions in the manner of early Oxford scholars, Robert Grosseteste and Roger Bacon,[16] began to question some of the claims and practices of the Church in the latter part of the fourteenth century. Anticipating the Protestant Reformation by nearly one-and-a-half centuries, Wycliffe challenged, among other things, the supremacy of the Pope, monasticism, and the financial richness of the clergy. Moreover, he believed that the Bible was the one sure method of salvation and "demanded that it should freely

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[15]Smalley, op. cit., p. 21.

[16]Gordon Leff, Paris and Oxford Universities in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries (New York: Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1968), p. 287; Robert Grosseteste and Roger Bacon had initiated at Oxford in the 13th century the study of the Bible, emphasizing spiritual exposition of the scriptures. This, they believed, was the only way to achieve moral reformation of society.

be placed in lay hands."[17] Although eventually branded a heretic, Wycliffe and his ideas were well received by peasants and knights alike, with protection being given to him by John of Gaunt, King Edward III's third son. Such, in fact, was Wycliffe's influence that in the 1390s a group in the House of Commons brought forth reform demands based on Wycliffe's teachings. During the fifteenth century, the Lollards, which Wycliffe's followers came to be called, continued to pursue institution of Wycliffe's views, promoting a vernacular Bible and preaching against Church practices. Increasingly, the Lollards suffered persecution until little was heard from them during the middle of the fifteenth century.

Nonetheless, the Lollard challenge did not die out, as evidenced by late fifteenth and early sixteenth century involvement. Criticism of the church only became more intense as ecclesiastical claims and practices continued to offend the Church's faithful and others joined the Lollard criticisms. Not all critics took the same road as Wycliffe and his adherents, but such critics as the humanist scholars also questioned Church practices and teachings. The once-accepted high stature of the Church was changing and with it man's view of his

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[17] A. G. Dickens, The English Reformation (London, England: Collins Press, 1964), p. 41.

relationship to the Church and the world. From Unam Sanctum through the "Babylonian Captivity" to Wycliffe and beyond, the status of the Church in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries evolved from a position of generally accepted supremacy to questioned authority. The faithful who once looked to the Church for guidance had by the end of the fifteenth century observed questionable practices and serious criticisms, giving them reason to reconsider many of their traditional beliefs. The changing status of the Church, however, was not alone in causing this change in perspective of medieval man. It was aided by perhaps the most devastating development of the Middle Ages, the pandemic outbreak of the Black Plague.

The Black Plague

The Black Plague, or more simply, "the Plague," arrived in what seemed a sudden onslaught of disease and death, and effected all of Europe beginning in the middle 1340s. Starting in the seaport cities like Kafka on the Crimean and soon spreading along trade routes, the plague advanced as Previte-Orton tells us, like "a prairie fire, destroyable and unescapable," carrying its aura of death to an unsuspecting and uncomprehending populace throughout Europe.[18] But in spite of its seemingly sudden outbreak,

[18]Previte-Orton, op. cit., p. 847.

the conditions which allowed the disease to have the impact of eliminating nearly one-third of Europe's population had developed over time. The plague for this reason is probably best understood in the context of the period immediately preceding its initial outbreak in the 1340s.

The centuries leading up the fourteenth century were relatively prosperous ones. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries have been described by Friedrich Heer as having "characteristics of an open society."[19] During this period, economic expansion had occured due to new trade routes being opened with Bysantium and the Eastern Empires, the population had increased and there was a relatively high level of social mobility. These factors played a role in the creation of new towns and expansion of old ones. In Southern Europe, Venice and Genoa became leading centers of trade, and in Northern Europe, East-West commercial routes spread from England to the Eastern European countries. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries occasioned a gain in benefits for all strata of society, even the peasants. Some members of this class moved to the towns which, in spite of increasingly unhealthy and often overcrowded conditions, promised economic opportunity to many. Additionally, towns became associated as oases of freedom--"town air makes free" was a contemporary motto--and

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[19]Friedrich Heer, The Medieval World (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1961), p. 17.

serviced peasants went to the towns for relief.[20] The semblance of relief, however, was not limited to those who left the lands. Many peasants were able to free themselves from manorial service and obtain title to the land they worked. The times were prosperous, and being relatively free of blight, the land produced good harvests. The methods of farming were becoming better and the working of fields involved the "two-field" or "three-field" method in which "roughly a half or a third of the arable land lay fallow each year" to allow for grazing by cattle and better growing utility the following year.[21]

Nonetheless, as the population increased, the demand for goods also increased. For commercial traders, this brought dividends, but for the farming peasants, it led to search for new lands and eventual overworking of the available lands. As this shortage in arable acreage was developing, it seems that climate changes were also occurring at the beginning of the fourteenth century, with winters becoming longer and growing seasons shorter.[22] Farmers discovered that the combination of overworked fields and shorter growing seasons led to decreases in

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[20]Ibid., p. 75.

[21]Denys Hay, Europe in The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries (London, England: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1966), p. 30.

[22]Ibid., p. 32. See, also, Philip Ziegler, The Black Death (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), Chapter Two.

production and the result was a series of general famines in the first half of the 14th century. Fatalities occurred everywhere, most often in the towns where the decrease in food supplies was especially felt. In Bruges, in Northern Flanders, for example, 5 percent of the population is estimated to have succumbed to famine and in Ypres, another Flemish town, the fatality rate was 10 percent.[23] This general situation of famine and death was made worse by other developments as the fourteenth century progressed. War began in France between that country and England, which brought new modes of suffering to each country. Famine continued as the war progressed and there appeared to be little hope of respite on the horizons. No one could have predicted, however, the devastating effects of the Black Plague which appeared in Western Europe for the first time in 1346.

The Black Death decimated Europe as one-third of the population fell victim to it. France, in the midst of its war with England, first experienced the plague in Marseilles and then felt it in more remote areas and other cities during 1348 and 1349. One contemporary chronicler listed the death toll at 80,000 in Paris,[24] while in the

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[23]Hay, op. cit., p. 32.

[24]Desmond Seward, The Hundred Years War, The English in France, 1337-1453 (New York: Atheneum Press, 1982), p. 73.

Papal city of Avignon, it was reported that 400 died daily with graveyards filling so quickly that corpses were soon thrown into the passing River Rhone.[25] France's adversary in war, England, suffered no less after the plague first appeared in Dorset during the summer of 1348. In Cambridgeshire it was reported that 47 percent of the people died in one village, 57 percent in another and 70 percent in yet another,[26] while 100,000 people were said to have died in London.[27] The plague became so devastating throughout England and France that neither country's king could raise the money or the men needed to wage war. The plague, in effect, placed a temporary halt on war.

The reason for this sudden and pandemic impact upon all facets of activity was the dual potency of the disease. First, there was, as Fernand Braudel notes, a new form of pulmonary plague which was transmitted by fleas on the backs of the black rat, Mus Rattus;[28] and, second, as Barbara Tuchman writes, there was "a more virulent pneumonic type that infected the lungs and was

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[25]Tuchman, op. cit., p. 94.

[26]Ibid., p. 95.

[27]Ronald Webber, The Peasants' Revolt (Lavenham, England: Terrence Dalton Ltd., 1980), p. 10.

[28]Fernand Braudel, Capitalism and Material Life 1400-1800 (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1967), p. 46.

spread by respiratory infection."[29] The unsanitary conditions of the towns proved to be a thriving environment for the disease to spread and the prevailing conditions created by war and famine only served to further exacerbate the situation. Moreover, as people began to panic, they often went to cities for help, only helping to spread the disease more.

As noted, the plague brought a temporary cessation to almost everything. Wars were halted, the economy suffered, and, perhaps the greatest impact was delivered upon the common man, who thought he was witnessing "the most terrible of all the terrors."[30] For one Welsh poet, disease was like "a death coming to our midst . . . a plague which cuts off the young, a rootless phantom which has no mercy for fair countenance."[31] The common man was concerned, and confused, not knowing the source of his victimizer. It was generally assumed that the plague was a scourge of the Divine, being leveled upon man as a punishment for sins. In fact, it was believed that the plague might be God's terminal expression of his disappointment, causing one comtemporary chronicler to write that

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[29]Tuchman, op. cit., p. 92.

[30]Ibid., p. 102.

[31]Ibid., p. 93.

"this is the end of the world."[32] While in countrysides peasants fell in their fields and on the roads, the town poor died in alleyways and streets. No one was spared and as suffering continued, solutions were sought in many places, chiefly the Catholic Church, which in spite of the rise in its disrepute still offered hope of salvation to many of Christendom's subjects.

The initial response of the Church was on a localized basis and it encouraged efforts to satisfy the Divine. At Rouen, these efforts took the form of ordering a halt to everything that might be construed as displeasing to God. On a more general level, the Pope ordered processions for penance which, in drawing a large group of people together, only served as a catalyst for further spread of the plague rather than an effect for relief. Moreover, as a result of the Bull of 1343, indulgences were now openly sold as a remedy for cleansing Christian souls and providing spiritual if not temporal salvation. The effect of the sale of indulgences was a richer Church, and hostile subjects who, as noted above, attacked the Church's clergy and also sought other remedies outside the Church. Among the solutions considered as the disease continued was placing blame on a scapegoat, and often encouraged by Church and State leaders, who themselves sought relief

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[32]Ibid., p. 95.

from attacks, the Christian populace began to attack Jewish members of the population.

Blaming Jews for problems, of course, was not a new development of fourteenth century Europe. Anti-Semitic tendencies had been expressed before and continued to remain high among many segments of the population. Indeed, the Jews had been expelled from England in 1296 and were not well favored elsewhere. As the plague's cataclysmic conditions worsened, the Jewish population became subjected to a maniacal and homicidal reign of terror. The fact that Jews also were victims of the plague was overlooked and angry mobs charged Jewish members of the population with poisoning wells and spreading the plague with the aim of destroying Christendom.[33] Scattered incidents of lynchings and burnings began soon after the plague had started, but as mass hysteria raised itself to new heights, these practices became widespread. Barbara Tuchman tells us, for instance, that in 1349, in Basle, a "whole community of several hundred Jews was burned in a wooden house especially constructed for the purpose." In Strasbourg, she adds 2,000 Jews "were taken to the burial ground, where all except those who accepted conversion were burned at rows of stakes erected to receive them."[34] Soon, general chaos

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[33]Ziegler, op. cit., p. 98-104.

[34]Tuchman, op. cit., p. 113-114.

reigned with the mobs being led by self-appointed flagellants who at first inflicted torture upon themselves but later directed the physical harrassment toward Jews.[35] As the second half of the fourteenth century got underway, social turmoil was rampant, but fortunately the plague abated. While it would return again, eleven times in England for instance before the beginning of the sixteenth century,[36] its major impact had been felt.

Man came away from the plague more reckless and less dutiful, attitudes which were exhibited in many ways. In England, for example, there were severe shortages of labor. In 1351, this situation caused the English Parliament to pass a Statute of Laborers which was designed to prevent wages from rising.[38] In spite of this, laborers, especially peasants, found themselves with new economic power and were able to strike bargains for their services. As the manorial system was already breaking down, this new situation only intensified its erosion and enabled many peasants to own their own land and to become

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[35]Ziegler, pp. 85-98; Flagellants were individuals who saw themselves as redeemers, and re-enacted the scourging of Chirst upon their own bodies. By making blood flow, they hoped to atone for man's wickedness and gain mankind another chance.

[36]Hay, op. cit., p. 33.

[37]Previte-Orton, op. cit., p. 847.

[38]Hay, op. cit., p. 131.

prosperous. But while prospects for advancement were buoyed by the post-plague conditions, not all peasants reaped the benefits of the new prosperity. As a result, the dissatisfaction of some members of the lower classes was expressed violently, during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In 1381, peasant dissatisfaction with economic, as well as political and religious conditions helped create the "peasant revolt." For a brief period, members of the lower classes armed themselves and succeeded in taking control of many English cities including Canterbury and London.[39] King Richard II eventually restored order but the episode showed that the post-plague reckless attitude could be expressed in a violent way.

Violence, however, was not the only manner in which men expressed their new attitudes. The human condition after the plague was in such a dismal state that scholars began to examine man's plight. The universities, and new academies which began to appear in Italy, assumed the tasks of many new scholarly enquiries to reassess man's condition and role in the world. But as these humanist enquiries began, fourteenth century Europe suffered the further scourge of war. Namely, this was the Hundred Years War between England and France, which had begun before the plague and had been briefly interrupted due to the disease's impact.

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[39]Webber, op. cit.

However, it began again after a brief respite and continued, on and off, for more than a century. It paralleled the rise of humanism in Europe and England, and set the tone for the Wars of the Roses, which also deserves some mention here.

The Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses

The Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses spanned a period of nearly 150 years, from 1337 to 1485. While not incessant struggles, these wars, the first an international struggle and the second a series of civil disputes, placed an immense strain upon England. The nation succumbed to a variety of financial, political and social upheavals during this period leaving England weary and ready for some stability at the end of the fifteenth century. Included among these upheavals were losses of valuable lands; a depletion of the nation's treasury, social unrest and a civil war. By the end of this period, "most men . . . preferred almost anything to another . . . war,"[40] and were willing to give the Tudor kings unprecedented loyalty. This situation allowed Henry VII and Henry VIII to bring stability and relative peace to England, and to institute a strong central government. This development had a major impact upon the new humanist movement and the advocacy of educational opportunities for women.

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[40]K. B. MacFarlane, "The Wars of the Roses" in Proceedings of the British Academy, Volume 50 (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 117.

The Hundred Years War was a series of wars between France and England during the period 1337-1453. The origins of war are traced to the intertwining of Anglo-French relations dating back to William's conquest of England in 1066. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, William's successors, most notably Henry II, established strong ties in France, creating an empire which included the provinces of Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Poitou, Aquitaine and Gascony. These lands served as valuable sources of trade and revenues for the English, who had no desire to give them up. However, in the fourteenth century, the power of the French Crown was increasing, causing one contemporary observer to remark that "the King of France was the king of all earthly kings."[41] As this power grew, it became increasingly more difficult for the French monarchs to give way to English authority in lands which the French crown considered as part of their kingdom.

This tension between France and England became exacerbated by the claim of Edward III of England to the throne of France and the inability of the nations to successfully negotiate peaceful settlements. Edward's claim, based on the fact that his mother Isabella was the daughter and only surviving child of Philip IV of France, constituted a threat to Philip VI of France.

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[41]Seward, op. cit., p. 25.

Having been unable to reach an agreement with Edward over land holdings, Philip used the claim of the English king as one excuse to charge him with "rebellious and disobedient acts," and claimed that all English-held territories in France were forfeited.[42] In doing so, Philip began a conflict which would give to history such personalities as the Black Prince and Joan d'Arc, among others, and such important events as the Battles of Crecy, Poitiers, Orleans, and Formigny. More importantly, for our purposes, the war had serious political and social consequences.

From a political standpoint, England, in losing the war, suffered more immediate consequences due to its loss of control over valuable lands and due to the initiation of the Wars of the Roses. However, in addition to the civil war, there were other consequences of note for the English, such as the rising stature of Parliament. This development evolved initially from the need of the crown to continually seek financial assistance to wage war. The kings, who were unable to raise revenues through the general polity, relied on a tax of wool, England's most valued commercial commodity, to raise money. In order to get a high levy on wool, the crown had to exact a compromise with Parliament, the result of which empowered

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[42]Ibid., p. 33.

Parliament with the control over establishing rates on wool.[43]

In addition to this power, Parliament gained an immense amount of influence over other matters due to the tenuous status of the English crown during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Parliament became a forum for civil debate, a mechanism by which the English populace could express displeasure against the Papacy, and, perhaps most importantly, the device for seating claimants to the throne. However, in spite of the fact that Parliament became more powerful during this period, even the law-making body was unable to maintain domestic peace during various factional battles for the throne. Its policies, moreover, were often reflections of the wishes of the triumphant claimant to the throne.[44] Consequently, while Parliament made final confirmation of Henry Tudor as king in 1485 to bring an end to the Wars of the Roses, the crown in fact had already been won on the battlefield at Bosworth Field, where Henry's armies defeated those of Richard III.

In terms of social consequences of the Hundred Years War, effects began to accrue almost immediately after initiation of hostilities. In 1338 England endured

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[43]Hay, op. cit., p. 130.

[44]Ibid., p. 134.

a full scale invasion by France, starting with the burning of Portsmouth in March. Soon after, Southhampton was also burned and, in 1339, Dover and Folkestone suffered attacks. To these actions, Edward III responded with an invasion of his own in 1339, landing with 15,000 men and advancing through the countryside. As Edward's army made progress, they burned and plundered to such an extent that, as Desmond Seward informs us, "neither abbeys nor churches, nor hospitals were spared," and, "hundreds of civilians--men, women and children, priests, bourgeois and peasants--were killed, while thousands fled starving to the fortified towns."[45] Attacks such as these continued throughout the war, with the goals being to gain riches through plundering and ransoming hostages, and to strike terror throughout the populace. Such routs were known as "chevauchee" and terror was indispensable to them, with the intent to "reak the maximum 'dampnum'--the medieval term for that total war which struck at an enemy king through his subjects."[46] The results of these attacks were numerous civilians slaughtered, cities ravaged and many soldiers collecting riches and returning home prosperous.

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[45]Seward, op. cit., p. 38.

[46]Ibid., p. 58.

In addition, before the onset of the Black Plague, the occurrences of pillaging and slaughtering helped create an unhealthy environment conducive to spreading the disease. Afterwards, the continuance of dismal conditions promoted developments in England like the "Peasants Revolt" in 1381 and Cade's Rebellion in 1450, and in France they helped promote a civil war and such hopeless conditions that the country accepted a peasant named Jean d'Arc as leader of its army. Perhaps most of all, the ravaging of countrysides, attacking of forts, and continuous need to be on alert left the respective populaces tired and demoralized at the end of the period. For the English, the fatigue and demoralization only became intensified due to the civil war known as Wars of the Roses, which immediately followed the Hundred Years War.

The Wars of the Roses were the most significant political and social consequence to succeed the Hundred Years War. Pitting the Houses of Lancaster and York against each other, the Wars of the Roses were historically rooted in the instability of the crown, and had their immediate causes in the failures of the English at the close of the Hundred Years War. The disputes over the legitimate claim to the throne can be traced to the accession of Henry IV, the first king of the House of Lancaster, who had forced Richard II to abdicate in 1399 and whose hold in the crown, in spite of a faulty claim,

was legalized by Parliament. Henry IV was followed by Henry V, who was a formidable and strong king and under whom the English had experienced the zenith of their triumphs against France. However, Henry V was followed by his son, Henry VI, who was not able to maintain his father's stature. As K. B. MacFarlane has noted, "only an under mighty ruler had anything to fear from over mighty subjects; and if he were under mighty his personal lack of fitness was the cause."[47]

Such was the situation with Henry VI, whose temperament was not nearly as aggressive as his father and whose weak constitution lead eventually to a nervous breakdown. Henry was not a decisive leader and preferred to leave policy making in regard to France and other matters with advisors. Unfortunately, for Henry and England, this policy resulted in final defeat to France in 1453 to end the Hundred Years War. This result plus the large debts incurred in financing the war caused Henry VI's regime to become discredited. In addition, the ending of the war brought home many soldiers who had become prosperous through their adventures in France. The war for these individuals had brought opportunities for spoils and land. While the English controlled French lands in the 15th century, many Englishmen lived well in

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[47]MacFarlane, op. cit., p. 95.

France. As these men returned to their homeland, there was a bitter taste in the mouths of many who left behind land and titles.[48] Not wanting to forego their standard of living, those men were ready to pursue opportunities to regain their prosperous positions. The Wars of the Roses provided such opportunities.

The Wars of the Roses were basically composed of three major developments--the challenge to and eventual usurpation of the throne by Richard, Duke of York; Edward IV's accession to the throne and victories at Barnet and Tewkesbury; and, the events following Edward IV's death and Henry VII's victory at Bosworth Field. In total, hostilities lasted for nearly thirty years, with the first battle being fought in 1455 at St. Albans. However, nothing of consequence regarding the throne was decided until 1460, when Richard, Duke of York, made full claim to the throne. Defeated and killed in battle, Richard could not act upon his claim, but his son, Edward, took the throne as Edward IV in March, 1461, thereby unseating Henry VI. For the remainder of the decade, Yorkist and Lancastrian nobles fought each other, with Edward IV maintaining a tenuous hold on the throne. In 1471, Edward defeated a challenge by the Earl of Warwick at Barnet on Easter Sunday, April 14. A month later at Tewkesbury,

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[48]Hay, op. cit., p. 159.

Edward defeated Henry's son, Prince Edward, who was slain during the battle. When Henry VI's death in the Tower of London was announced soon after Tewkesbury, Edward IV's reign was secured.[49]

With Edward's victory, a period of strength and stability began for the monarchy. Part of this was due to lack of immediate rival claimants for the throne. However, it was also because the Wars of the Roses had, as A. R. Myers notes, "thinned by battle and executions the ranks of the nobility whose power had become a menace to the Crown."[50] War had a vast impact upon lines of noble descent, leaving few heirs to carry on the plots of their ancestors. For sure, the nobility did not disappear as evidenced by their presence in the last battles of the Wars of the Roses after Edward's death in 1483. But the fact that their numbers were dwindling is evidenced in part by comparing relative army strengths at different points in the war. For instance, in 1461 at Towton, it is estimated that 50-75,000 men were present, with approximately two-thirds of this number representing the Lancastrians. In 1471, at Barnet, the numbers for Edward IV were close to 9,000 and for Warwick, 15,000 - making a total of 24,000. Finally, at Bosworth Field, in 1485,

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[49]A. R. Myers, England in the Late Middle Ages (New York: Penguin Books, Inc., 1978), p. 128-130.

[50]Ibid., p. 131.

when Henry VII defeated Richard III, the forces under Henry were numbered at 7-8,000 and those under Richard approximated 10-12,000 - a total of about 20,000.[51] Thus we see a diminishing number of nobles being present as the hostilities wore on. Part of this was due to the aforementioned deaths by battle and execution, and part of this was a result of an unwillingness on the part of nobles to continue to risk life, property and reputation. By 1485, the country as a whole was demoralized and, as Professor MacFarlane speculates, it is very possible that members of the nobility had become "more self-effacing."[52]

This self-effacement and the thinning of the ranks had important consequences for the Tudor kings, who acceeded to the throne after the Wars of the Roses. As Stone has commented, "the state is a natural enemy to the values of the clan, of kinship, and of good lordship and clientage links among upper classes, for at this social and political level they are a direct threat to the state's own claim to prior loyalty." Moreover, noble clientage and kinship often result in factions and disputes such as the Wars of the Roses, and kinship loyalties help develop

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[51]Charles Ross, The Wars of the Roses (London, England: Thames and Hudson, 1976), p. 138-139.

[52]MacFarlane, op. cit., p. 117.

"independent centers of power."[53] With the nobility being eliminated by death in battle or execution, or deciding to place their loyalty with the crown, the foundations were set for the Tudor kings to assert control over England.

In combination with a demoralized populace seeking peace and stability after generations of war, the demise of the nobility allowed the Tudors to develop the machinery by which the state became the central and most potent factor in English society during the sixteenth century. After nearly two centuries of disease, war, and social disruption, the English received the stability they sought as the crown and its offices "increasingly assumed monopoly powers of justice and punishment, military protection, welfare, and the regulation of property."[54] The significance of this development was that few were willing to challenge the crown. When something became identified with the crown, it received favored status. Consequently, when the crown embraced humanism and endorsed the humanist education of women, the strong Tudor government served as a powerful influence and example for others to follow. In essence, the aftermath of the Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses provided the atmosphere in which English humanism and humanist education for women could flourish.

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[53] Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage (in England 1500-1800) (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1979), p. 99.

[54] Ibid., p. 100.

CHAPTER III

ENGLISH HUMANISM:

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

> I have found the climate both pleasant and healthy. And I have met with so much kindness and learning, not hackneyed and trivial, but deep, ancient, Latin and Greek, that I am not hankering so much after Italy . . . It is marvellous how widespread and how abundant is the harvest of ancient learning which is flourishing in this country . . .[1]

During the reign of Henry VII, Erasmus offered the above description of England. It was in this setting that English humanism began to flourish. Bouyed by a relatively peaceful atmosphere, as compared to the climate of years preceding the Tudor accession, England became a healthy setting for intellectual and educational activity. For the first time in over a century and one half, the crown could concern itself with matters other than war and this helped usher in a new era of learning in England. The agreeable climate for learning which Erasmus described above in 1499 continued to improve even further with the accession of Henry VIII to the throne in 1509, for in Henry humanists found a friend of learning. Erasmus

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[1]Desiderius Erasmus, "Letter to Robert Fisher" (December 5, 1499), in Thomas More by R. W. Chambers (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1979), p. 75.

noted in 1519 that "good letters are triumphing in England; the King himself [and] the Queen, . . . are protecting and fostering them with all their heart,"[2] and he saw a golden age on the horizon.

Henry VIII's attachment to the cause of humanism was partially a result of his love of learning, which was instilled in him at an early age by his grandmother, Margaret of Beaufort--herself a patroness of humanist activities. It was probably also encouraged by his association with Thomas More, whose household Henry VIII visited frequently as a child and as king.[3] More was a leading advocate and participant of the humanist movement in England and his home was a humanist academy of sorts. There, Henry VIII had occasion to meet with such leaders of the English humanist movement as More and Erasmus, and found scholarly activities which made More's house a most influential arena for promoting humanist programs in Tudor England.

Henry VIII also had practical reasons for involving himself with humanist activity. He was in need of competent advisors to help him rule the realm and found many of the most qualified to be humanist trained. In choosing

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[2]R. W. Chambers, Thomas More, p. 169.

[3]See Chambers, op. cit.; and Reynolds, E. E., The Field is Won, on More's relationship with Henry VIII.

advisors from among the ranks of humanists, Henry, who had been raised outside the central operations of government and was inexperienced when he acceded to the throne, was following the path of his father, Henry VII. Prior to the first Tudor's reign, the king's advisors had been chosen from the ranks of nobility, but Henry VII veered from this practice due to his distrust of possible contenders and because the Wars of the Roses decimated the ranks of the nobility--by Henry VIII's accession, only one duke and one marquis survived from traditional noble families.[4] Increasingly Henry VII chose men from the ecclesiastical and legal circles to assist him in dealing with the problems of the realm. Such advisors as John Morton and William Warham, both of whom served as Royal Chancellors under Henry VII, were active promoters of humanist activity and patrons of scholars. Additionally, these men posed no threat to Henry VII and assisted him in stabilizing England by developing a central network of authority.

Henry VIII's inexperience, combined with his desires to maintain the Tudor hold on the throne, undoubtedly affected his decision to continue the practice of choosing advisors who were clerics and lawyers. As in the case of Henry VII's chief advisors, many of Henry VIII's closest assistants were men who were involved in

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[4] Joan Simon, Education and Society in Tudor England, p. 64.

humanism, including Thomas Wolsey and Thomas More, among others. In entering the service of the king these men--especially More--hoped to give humanism official sanction and to apply humanist solutions to domestic problems. These problems, which persisted in spite of the efforts of the first Tudor king, included religious dissatisfaction prompted by abuses of clerical privilege and the affects of the enclosure movement.

The religious dissatisfaction which Henry VIII faced was not a new development in England. As noted in Chapter Two, the Lollard movement had raised objections to certain religious practices and Parliament had passed laws to limit clerical privileges.[5] Nonetheless, abuses continued and in Tudor England an increasing number of people were voicing concerns about clerical vices. Chief among the complaints was the amount of wealth owned by the Catholic Church and abuses of clerical privilege. This latter problem stemmed from the accepted practice of allowing church officials to be tried for crimes in ecclesiastical courts by their peers. The ecclesiastical court system had developed into an extensive network and traditionally gave less harsh penalties to those found guilty of offenses than the penalties given in civil courts. Moreover, due to the court's reputation of

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[5]See Chapter Two, supra.

leniency, many individuals who were charged with crimes and not members of the clergy would attempt to have their case heard in ecclesiastical court, by proving they were members of the clergy. To do this, two established practices were accepted: showing one's tonsure or proving literacy. The first of these was easily done by purchasing a tonsure from a barber. The second, however, was even easier as proof of literacy became conventionalized in the recitation of the first verse of Psalm 51--"have mercy on me, O God." Individuals who memorized this verse could prove clerical status and consequently be tried in the ecclesiastical courts. In the early sixteenth century, these practices, especially leniency toward clerics who committed major offenses, raised the ire of many English citizens. Such was the level of the outcry that Parliament's House of Commons demanded reforms and Henry VIII was faced with increasing levels of dissatisfaction.[6]

The second major domestic problem which Henry VIII faced was another age-old dilemma--the enclosure movement. G. R. Elton notes that enclosure meant several practices, some good and some disastrous. On a positive level, enclosure caused "the amalgamation of dispersed strips in the open field into efficient arable farms," but it also signified "the enclosing of wastes and commons for grazing

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[6]E. E. Reynolds, op. cit., p. 8.

of an entrepreneur's sheep or cattle," a practice with dire results for the country.[7] Begun in the fifteenth century, this latter practice continued, in spite of laws to control it, to create problems. As the English population increased in the early sixteenth century, enclosure forced depopulation of villages which could not survive once their commons were enclosed, and vagrants began to appear throughout England. In the cities and on roadways, many of these vagrants turned to crime in order to survive, assaulting and robbing passersby in increasing numbers. Henry VII's response to this was stricter law enforcement against the vagrants than against the enclosers; a response which caused additional dissatisfaction among his English subjects and further problems for his son at the time of his accession.[8]

The humanist-oriented advisers who Henry VIII chose, saw a variety of solutions to England's problems. On a practical level, Wolsey, More and others put their service to the king in attempts to institute new statutes and reform the legal system. On a theoretical level, More fashioned a "best commonwealth" in his book, Utopia, in which he decried the aforementioned abuses and offered

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[7]G. R. Elton, Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 3.

[8]Elton, op. cit., pp. 3-10. For more on Henry VIII's reign, see also Henry VIII by J. J. Scarisbrick (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1968).

a "utopian society" as one solution. More was joined by Erasmus and other humanists in calling for reforms in books and treatises, all of which held the same goals--directing the commonwealth toward serving the public good.[9] Among the reforms offered was a refashioning of the educational system to train individuals to serve and rule the state for the public good. The programs which constituted this refashioning will be discussed below, after considering earlier Renaissance humanist activity which established the foundations for the English humanist program.

Early Humanist Activity

Renaissance humanism emerged in late 14th century Italy, in the aftermath of the Black Plague. During this period, the effects of the plague were still very vivid in men's memories, and being felt through social disruption discussed in Chapter Two. Additionally, the abusive practices of the Church were continuing to make the ecclesiastical hierarchy rich at the expense of general society. This situation caused men like Petrarch and Giovanni Boccaccio to seek a reassessment of man's relation to his world. For these men and their humanist successors, the answers were sought in the pre-Christian,

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[9]Fritz Caspari, Humanism and the Social Order in Tudor England, p. 1-27.

classical literature of Greece and Rome. There, Petrarch, Boccaccio and other humanists found "a form of intercourse with great men," such as Virgil, Horace, Cicero, and Seneca, which showed the way to develop new "human aims and . . . human aspirations."[10] Moreover, in classical literature, the early humanists discovered the concept of humanatis, which in pre-Christian Rome represented "cultivated intelligence." In the Renaissance humanist sense, this concept of humanatis came to represent the high level which man held in this world. Humanatis also held the implication that from this high level, man had the freedom and responsibility for venturing into new areas of scholarly inquiry to help evaluate and improve his world.[11]

Such an approach, as Petrarch and Boccaccio advocated, represented a radical change from traditional scholarly methods handed down from the 13th century. During that earlier period, a format for intellectual and scholarly inquiry had been developed and sanctioned in the universities. The central activity in this format was the disputation, a method of scholarly inquiry and debate. The disputation was aimed at discovering truths, and in the medieval university of the fourteenth century, it was

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[10]Arthur Tilley, "The Early Renaissance" in The Cambridge Medieval History (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 19), 7:751.

[11]Giorgio de Santillana, The Age of Adventure (New York: The New American Library, 1956), p. 11.

patterned after the systematic approach developed by Thomas Aquinas. This approach included eight stages: statement of the question, answer, thesis, agreement, refutation, argument, suggested proof, and final resolution. This method of scholarly debate, which emphasized clear thinking and concise expression, was limited, however, in terms of the subjects that could be considered.[12]

Aquinas, in addition to prescribing a format for the disputation, had also developed the notion that knowledge consisted of two tiers. The first, or natural tier, included subjects related to the natural world and man, subjects that were disputable. The second, or theological tier, consisted of indisputable facts, those related to the supernatural or to the dogmas of the Church. For Aquinas and his contemporaries, the theological tier's superiority over the natural tier was analogous to God's superiority over man. Man's nature, indeed, was defined in terms of subservience to God, an idea that was irrefutable. Together with the Aquinas method of disputation and two-tiered perspective of knowledge, this view of man became institutionalized in the universities. There it came to represent the idea that man was limited in his attempts

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[12]Friedrich Heer, The Medieval World, p. 269.

to create new systems since the systems in existence were created by God and could not be challenged.[13]

In the latter half of the fourteenth century, the challenge to this view, advocated by Petrarch, Boccaccio, and other humanist progenitors, took on many forms. These included an interest in exploring the history of classical antiquity as a means to understand man and his world, the establishment of humanist academies, the development of new philosophical ideas about man, and the design of new approaches to education. The interest in exploring classical history served as a catalyst for Petrarch and others to search for copies of original works by classical writers. Travelling throughout Italy, France, and Greece, their efforts met with success and libraries of classical works were established in many university towns. Petrarch, especially, was successful in finding copies of manuscripts, and by the end of his life, in 1374, he had collected among other works, nearly all of the works of Cicero with which we are familiar today.[14] Additionally, in their travels, Petrarch and Boccaccio issued calls for the study of Latin and Greek classics and for new ways of scholastic contemplation. In such Italian cities as Padua, Florence, Naples and Venice, these calls were well received and these cities

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[13]Ibid., p. 272.

[14]Tilley, op. cit., p. 755.

served as the quarters for new academies which were emphasizing humanist activity. At these academies, students of the humanist perspective were given opportunities to engage "in quarrying the artistic, literary, and learned heritage of the ancient world to new ends."[15]

At Naples, the responsibility for establishing and leading one of the earliest humanist academies belongs to Antonio Panormita. Here, Panormita conducted studies on a variety of subjects related to classical antiquity.[16] In Padua, where Petrarch spent a large portion of his time just prior to his death, the university took a direct involvement in the study of Latin literature. Under the directorship of Gasparino Barzizza, the university at Padua held court to a critical consideration of Cicero's De Oratore.[17] At Florence, Manuel Chrysolaras had accepted an invitation in 1396 to begin the formal teaching of Greek thought and learning at the university. Chrysolaras had accumulated a variety of Greek manuscripts from travels to Constantinople, and this collection along with Chrysolaras' teaching served as the foundations for involved Hellenic

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[15]Ibid., p. 758.

[16]Weiss, "Learning and Education in Western Europe, 1470-1520 in Cambridge Modern History, 2:96.

[17]William Harrison Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1921), p. 12.

learning activities at Florence during the 15th century.[18] In total these activities provided the foundation for the humanist movement, which in Italy included the examination of Greek and Latin classical works and a concern for textual authenticity and integrity. This concern for the secrets of classical antiquity was designed to help man understand his relationship to the world and assist him in making a better world in which to live. In the 15th century, the academies continued to formulate humanist philosophical ideas, and the Platonist Academy at Florence was among the leaders in this effort.

Giorgio de Santillana refers to the Florentine Platonic Academy as "the most renowned of Renaissance philosophical movements."[19] Led by Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico, Count of Mirandola, this academy became a major center of intellectual inquiry and review of the past during the 15th century. For Ficino, Pico and their fellow Florentine Platonists, man was the key to controlling events in the universe. Ficino wrote that "it is a man's spirit which re-establishes the shaken universe."[20] This spirit is the binding force for all elements, nature righting itself only through the actions of man. Pico, adding to

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[18]Ibid., p. 16

[19]Santillana, op. cit., p. 12.

[20]Ibid., p. 14.

Ficino's views, brought forth a reconsideration of man's intellectual freedom and the relevance of man's position in the universe.[21] In the Dignity of Man, Pico claims man's distinction above all other beings is based on the fact that he has no fixed properties and the ability to share in the properties of other beings as he freely chooses. Man has the power to transform himself and his world into a place which is really open and full of infinite possibilities. He only has to be able to use his intellectual and spiritual capabilities to their fullest extent.[22]

With these ideas Ficino and Pico advanced beyond their medieval contemporaries who maintained the view that man had limited potential. Beginning with the ancient philosophies of Plato, the humanists at the Florentine Academy moved forth to a new consideration of man's position in the world and the prospects to be garnered from benevolent use of his powers. In professing their new ideas about man's place and nature in the world, Ficino and Pico challenged time-honored theological views and issued a call for tolerance toward new philosophical ideas.[23] In

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[21]Weiss, "Learning and Education in Western Europe, 1470-1520," p. 97.

[22]Santillana, op. cit., p. 15.

[23]Paul Edwards (ed.), The Encyclopedia of Philosophy (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1967), 3:72.

making their challenge Ficino and Pico anticipated the Enlightenment and Reformation movements of later centuries. Moreover, they helped bring to humanism a new intellectual spirit, one ingrained with belief in man's powers and his status as a central figure in the movements of the universe. Having begun in the aftermath of the Black Plague, when man believed himself powerless to control his destiny but reckless enough to seek new answers, humanism had now progressed to a new plane. Man was the key, and the educated man could control his destiny. For this reason a new form of education was needed. At the same time that Ficino and Pico were establishing their humanist philosophical creeds at Florence, this pedogogical program was being shaped by men such as Vittorino da Feltre at Mantua.

Vittorino, who William Harrison Woodward referred to as "the first modern schoolmaster,"[24] became involved in educational activities partially because of the lack of discipline he had witnessed in university settings. It is certain that in the universities, such as those in the Italian cities or at Paris and Oxford, the atmosphere was not always conducive to study. Often students lived in unhealthy housing, and ate meager meals. Moreover, at Bologna, Paris, Oxford and elsewhere, the presence of

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[24]Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, p. 92.

"nations"[25] brought outright disruption to the university. Ironically, these nations had been formed "primarily for mutual benefits, fraternal association and amity," but more often than not their relationship with the university was not of a fraternal nature.[26] Demonstrations were a favorite pastime among the nations, especially around time of "national" holidays and feast days of patron saints, and these demonstrations occasionally turned into war-like episodes. The response to these disruptive episodes was formation of colleges[27] at Oxford, while at Padua and other Italian universities, where humanism was taking root, the evolution was found in scholarly houses called "contuberniums." These houses were presided over by a teacher, such as Vittorino, and sheltered students who became

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[25]Nations were an important part of early medieval universities. They were composed of students and masters, divided along geographical lines. The nations elected representatives to serve on various faculties, e.g., Faculty of Arts, at the universities to help in governance of university affairs. In this way, plus the fraternal association that they provided, nations played an important role in the universities. See Pearl Kibre's The Nations in the Medieval Universities (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Medieval Academy of America, 1948).

[26]See Kibre, op. cit.

[27]Early colleges were founded as an answer to dissension and instability which characterized early universities. They were usually small communities of scholars living in a communal arrangement. Many of the early colleges were founded by philanthropic individuals, e.g., Merton College at Oxford University. Although small in the beginning, the colleges soon exercised an important influence at medieval universities. See Hastings Rashdall, Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages (three volumes) (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1895).

followers of the presiding master. Consequently, in 1416, Vittorino is found in Venice offering the sanctuary of his home to young students, rich and poor, who were interested in the new humanist learning and whom Vittorino sought to shelter from the unhealthy environment of the university setting.[28]

Although Vittorino's involvement in the humanist movement began earlier, his school at Venice begins his recognized career as a humanist educator. Prior to his move to Venice, Vittorino had spent 20 years at the University of Padua, where he became a master after completing his studies. At Padua, he came under the influence of Barzizza, who introduced Vittorino to the Roman classicists, Cicero and Quintillian. This initiated an involvement for Vittorino with the Roman scholars that reached fruition in his later years as a schoolmaster. In Quintillian, Vittorino found the persona of the highly educated person in the classical model of the good speaker, and from Cicero, Vittorino derived the idea that preparation of the educated man included the study of grammar, rhetoric and logic.[29] These disciplines helped one to develop, respectively, articulation, public speaking

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[28]Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, p. 18.

[29]Woodward, Studies in Education During the Age of the Renaissance, 1400-1600, pp. 14-23.

skills, and ability to think in a critical fashion. Through Barzizza, Vittorino became familiar with Quintillian's Institutio Oratore, and Cicero's Letters, De Senectute and De Oratore. By involving himself thoroughly in scholarly study, Vittorino, with Barzizza's encouragement, became a recognized authority on the works of Cicero and Quintillian.[30]

At Venice, Vittorino had opportunity to practice and share the teachings of the classicists with the students living in his home. Soon he had developed a reputation as one of the most capable and trustworthy schoolmasters in Italy, and this repute brought him an invitation to start an academy in Mantua. The position which Vittorino accepted was initially directed at starting a school for the children of Gianfresco Gonzago, of Mantua, but it soon became a humanist academy for aristocratic as well as poor youth of the region. His school was not the first humanist school of its sort, one being initiated earlier by Vittorino's humanist associate Guarino da Verona. But, unlike Guarino's school, which endeavored to simply make eloquent speakers, Vittorino's academy had the aim of preparing students to "serve God in Church and state" in any way that seemed suitable and honorable.[31]

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[30]Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, p. 13.

[31]Ibid., p. 37.

Vittorino expressed the view that "not everyone is called to be a lawyer, a physician, a philosopher, to live in the public eye, nor has everyone outstanding gifts of natural capacity," however, everyone is "created for the life of social duty," and is "responsible for the personal influence which goes out from us."[32] For this reason, Vittorino followed Quintillian's method of teaching other courses beside the languages and grammar of Latin and Greek. From Institutio Oratore, Vittorino had learned that education of the perfect orator must include teachings to prepare the good man. As Quintillian had written, the good citizen was the man "fitted to take his share in the management of public and private affairs, able to govern cities by his wise counsels, to establish them upon a sure foundation of good laws and to improve them by the administration of impartial justice." This man was "none other than the orator."[33]

The "orator" was defined by Quintillian as the "man who can truly be called wise, perfect not only in character, but also in knowledge and every sort of eloquence." To achieve the goal of a wise and useful man, Quintillian had prescribed special studies such as language

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[32]Denys Hay, Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, p. 351.

[33]Marcus Quintillian, Institutio Oratore translated by William Smail (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1938), p. 5.

and grammar, which Vittorino held as foremost among curricular offerings. However, in addition, Quintillian also noted that: "Puzzles about horns or crocodiles . . . are taught because a perfectly wise man ought not to be at fault even in the most trifling question . . ." and, "geometry or . . . music, or any other subjects which I add to these, will not make an orator . . . but . . . will help him towards perfection."[34] To this end, Vittorino introduced the study of arithmetic, geometry, history, natural philosophy and astronomy at Mantua. However, Vittorino encouraged fun, games and outdoor activity, giving the school at Mantua a reputation as the house of pleasantness, or the "Pleasant House," which it was eventually called.[35] Adding to this reputation of Vittorino's school was his practice of disdaining from corporal punishment. Again, this was taking from Quintillian's educational method, which included the view that: "corporal punishment, though it is a recognized practice . . . is disgusting, . . . and undoubtedly an insult," a chastisement which "will be quite unnecessary if there is someone ever present to supervise the boy's studies with diligence."[36] Quintillian adds that

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[34]Ibid., p. 48.

[35]Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, p. 31.

[36]Quintillian, op. cit., p. 32-33.

it is better to compel one to do what is right rather than punishing the student for doing wrong, warning as a final note to:

> Remember, too, that when children are beaten, many unseemly cries, of which they will afterwards be ashamed, often escape them in their grief or fear and the shame of this breaks and humiliates the spirit and makes them, sick at heart, shun the very light of day.[37]

Vittorino's academy thus became a humanist variation of Quintillian's classical school and provided a model for humanist pedogogical method. At the "Pleasant House," students - boys and girls, poor and rich - received a truly humanist education, at once "intellectual, moral and physical."[38] There, his students received the individual guidance and discipline of Vittorino or his hand picked masters, and excelled in their studies. For example, Cecilia Gonzaga, a daughter of Vittorino's patron, began learning Greek and Latin at the age of seven. Under the tutelage of masters like Theodore Gaza, an excellent Greek scholar, and Vittorino, she was at the age of ten surpassing older students who Vittorino had seen earlier at Venice.[39]

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[37]Ibid., p. 33.

[38]Richard C. Jebb, "The Classical Renaissance" in The Cambridge Modern History, edited by A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero, S. Leatheo (New York: MacMillan Company, 1902), 1:558.

[39]Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, p. 55.

The methods used and the level of excellence garnered at Vittorino's school helped in the development of a new educational ethic emphasizing service for the public good. For sons of the nobility, the aims, the methods and the subjects emphasized differed from traditional training which emphasized preparation for military service. For the scholar, the aims and methods were also different, as knowledge and truth alone were no longer acceptable goals in the humanist scheme and rigid discipline was not exercised. Additionally, in educating girls on an equal plane with boys, the new humanist pedagogy made a radical break from the past, when girls received different educations, if any at all, from boys. News of Vittorino's school, and the new aims and methods, as well as the education of girls, was publicized throughout Italy and Northern Europe. Among other countries receiving information was England, where in the sixteenth century, humanists such as Erasmus, Thomas More, and Juan Vives would elaborate upon the Italian humanist pedagogical method established at Vittorino's school. However, before these individuals had the opportunity to build their program, English humanism experienced a slow beginning.

English Humanism

English Humanism began in an auspicious manner, focusing primarily on patronage of Italian scholars to

come to England or English scholars to study in Italy. By this method, the patrons hoped to bring some measure of the new learning to England, which one contemporary observed as being at an intellectually low level and culturally underdeveloped.[40] Weiss comments that humanist activity in fifteenth century England was primarily a means "for the furtherance of scholastic ends," as contrasted to Italy, where "humanism had been considered as a new intellectual system displacing or revising all the conceptions of the Middle Ages."[41] In the fifteenth century, consequently, scholastic attitudes in England remained in the medieval world and humanism only was an aid to furthering them. Nonetheless, during the fifteenth century, Caspari notes the patronage of humanist scholars, plus the collection of classical works and improvement in Latin style among other developments helped set the foundations for English humanism to become a vital force in the sixteenth century.[42] During this period, there was a "slow but steady process of evolution . . . which was eventually to grow powerful enough to affect the

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[40]Simon, op. cit., p. 58.

[41]Roberto Weiss, Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century (Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell, 1941), p. 179.

[42]Caspari, op. cit., p. 19-22.

whole intellectual structure of England" in the sixteenth century.[43]

The early pioneers of this evolution were, as noted, patrons of learning and among the foremost was Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. The Duke, brother of King Henry V, came from a family which fostered a love of learning and books. Moreover, in his position as a member of the royal family, and a protector of the throne during the minority of his nephew, Henry VI, Humphrey had many contacts with diplomatic and Papal envoys. Many of these individuals such as Piero del Monte brought news of the new learning activity in Italy to England. Piero, educated by Guarino da Verona in Italy, was a Papal collector[44] and brought humanist writings with him to England, where he had been commissioned to serve by the Pope. Humphrey and Piero developed a good relationship, which continued after the latter's return to Italy, from where Piero kept Humphrey informed of humanist developments. With this love of learning and contacts such as the one with Piero, Humphrey was able to provide "a focus and stimulus for an active interest in humanistic studies

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[43]Weiss, Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century, p. 1.

[44]Ibid., p. 24.

in England" during the second quarter of the fifteenth century.[45]

Humphrey's main contributions to the humanist cause were his patronage of humanist scholars to come to England and his collection of manuscripts and copied humanist books. In 1438, for instance, Humphrey secured the services of Anthony Beccari, a student of Vittorino da Feltre, who transcribed several books for the Duke and maintained contacts for the Duke with other Italian humanists.[46] Additionally, he commissioned other Italians to do special works. These included Leonardo Bruni, whose translations of Aristotle's Ethics in 1416 first attracted Humphrey's attention. In 1434, Bruni and Humphrey began a correspondence, and although Humphrey did not succeed in securing Bruni's services as a secretary, Bruni accepted a commission to write a version of Aristotle's Politics, which was delivered in 1438. This connection with Bruni was paralleled by Humphrey in his commission of Pier Candido Decembrio in 1438, after Humphrey became disenchanted with Bruni.[47] From his

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[45]Richard Hunt (ed.), Duke Humphrey and English Humanism in the Fifteenth Century (Oxford, England: Bodleian Library, n.d.), p. 1.

[46]Charlton, Education in Renaissance England, p. 45.

[47]Weiss, Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century, p. 47-51.

relationship with Decembrio, Humphrey obtained copies of Cicero's Epistolae Familares, Quintillian's Institutio Oratore, and Decembrio's translation of Plato's Republic.[48] Through these relationships with Becarri, Bruni, Decembrio and others, Humphrey's reputation as a patron of learning grew and became known throughout Italy and England. This reputation enabled him to acquire the aforementioned texts and others, which served as the foundation for a formidable humanist library. Humphrey, eventually, donated this library to Oxford where it became in the late fifteenth century a foundation for English humanist inquiries.

Humphrey's contributions to English humanism are notable, but limited to his patronage and collection of texts. Humphrey was not a reputed scholar, nor was he accomplished in the study of Greek. While he knew Latin and was seemingly an avid reader, Humphrey's involvement in humanism was mostly a side interest of a noble, rather than the full-time interest of an enthusiastic scholar.[49] In the second half of the fifteenth century, humanist activity took on the latter complexion as a result of Englishmen beginning to study in Italy. Individuals like John Free, John Tiptoft, and others who were familiar with the schools of Vittorino and Guarino, nobility, and the

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[48]Charlton, op. cit., p. 44.

[49]Weiss, Humanism in England During the Fifteenth Century, p. 106.

general climate of learning, traveled to Italy to engage fully in humanist activity. Free, who studied and learned Greek under Guarino, is referred to by Weiss as "the first Englishman to become a professional humanist and reach the standards of the Italians."[50] In Italy, Free developed a strong reputation with Italian humanists due to his abilities as a lecturer at the University of Padua between 1458 and 1461, and his translations of classical works. In this latter venture, Free attempted to fully capture the essence of original writings and his reputation among Italian humanists is perhaps best manifested by John Leland's avowal that Free was asked to compose a Latin epitaph for the tomb of Petrarch.[51]

Free's reputation was also noticed by other Englishmen, who also went to Italy to study. John Tiptoft, who came under Free's influence at Padua, returned to England with new-found learning and large collections of texts, many of which were given to libraries at Oxford and Cambridge. More importantly, Tiptoft did his own translations into English, including, in 1460, a version of Buonaccorso da Montagno's Controversia de Nobilitate, which Tiptoft called the Declamation of Noblesse. Charlton notes the significance of this work is two-fold:

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[50]Ibid., p. 111-112.

[51]Ibid., p. 109.

one, it was a truly humanist work, elegantly written and reflecting the spirit of the original; and, two, the subject of the work was the nature of the true nobility, a subject which later played an important role in the humanist movement to Tudor England.[52] Tiptoft also approaches, in his writings, the view of state supremacy which became prevalent during the Tudor era, a period in which humanist activity flourished as well.

The foundations for this blossoming of humanism in Tudor England were established by Free, Tiptoft and others who were involved in the Anglo-Italian intellectual exchange. As the fifteenth century was ending, the effects of this exchange began to show themselves in educational developments. At Magdalen College, Oxford University, for instance, a grammar school was instituted for the purpose of teaching boys the classical humanities. Hastings Rashdall calls Magdalen "the home of the classical Renaissance in Oxford" and the school seems to have a rightful claim since many of its students, including William Grocyn, John Colet and Thomas More, were leaders of English humanist activity in the sixteenth century.[53] At Magdalen, the students were schooled in

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[52]Charlton, p. 52.

[53]Hastings Rashdall, Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages (Volume II-Part II: English Universities), p. 228-235; see also, R. S. Stanier, A History of Magdalen College School (Oxford, England: Oxford Historical Society, Clarendon Press, 1940) for humanists who were students at Magdalen.

Latin grammar with the goal of becoming oriented to classical works and by 1499, when Erasmus arrived in England, Magdalen held a pre-eminent place in English educational circles. Moreover, Magdalen helped foster an array of humanist activity at the universities and in small scholarly circles.

At Oxford, Grocyn, who had studied Greek in Italy in addition to his work at Magdalen, was teaching Greek language and Colet was delivering lectures on early epistles of St. Paul.[54] More was studying Greek with William Linacre, becoming familiar with the works of Pico, and forming a scholarly circle of which Erasmus became a part. These developments caused Erasmus to remark on the benefits of study in England and to comment that:

> When I hear Colet, I seem to be listening to Plato himself. In Grocyn, who does not wonder at the perfect compass of all knowledge? What is more acute, more profound, more keen than the judgment of Linacre? What did nature ever create milder, sweeter, or happier than the genius of Thomas More? . . .[55]

This circle of scholars became the center of humanist activity of England in the early sixteenth century. Of all of the members, only More never studied in Italy, a distinction which has caused Weiss to comment that More

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[54]Charlton, p. 58.

[55]Erasmus, "Letter to Robert Fisher" (December 1499), op. cit.

exemplified the real flavor of English humanism showing "that it was no longer essential for an Englishman to study in Italy in order to become an accomplished scholar."[56] In the early sixteenth century, More and his humanist circle built upon the pedagogical foundations of classical Greek and Rome and humanist precepts of fifteenth century Italy and Magdalen School to develop educational programs on a practical theory that gave new meaning to intellectual activity in England.

The practical fruits of the humanist activity of More and members of his circle were seen in new foundations at Oxford and Cambridge and the establishment of a humanist grammar school--St. Paul's. The foundations included St. John's College at Cambridge which emphasized Greek studies and Corpus Christi and Cardinal Colleges at Oxford, both established along humanist lines. St. Paul's School of London also stressed humanist education for boys although, very specifically, a Christian humanist education after the dictates of its founder John Colet.

In addition to these foundations, the English humanist education program was elucidated in the perspectives of More, Erasmus, and Juan Vives. More, in spite of his not writing any specific treatise on humanist education, offers theoretical views in Utopia, and his

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[56]Weiss, "Education and Learning in Western Europe, 1470-1520," p. 110.

extant correspondence, as well as practical approaches in discussions about his school. This school, developed in his home, served as a humanist laboratory school, providing a humanist education for girls as well as boys. Erasmus offers us a variety of works related to education, including De Rationii Studii, De pueris instituendis and the Instruction of a Christian Prince. These works provide the aims, methods, and substance of education as designed by Erasmus. Finally, in Vives, we again have a combination of theory and practice. Vives' De Tradendis disciplinis provides his overall view on education, while his "Instruction of a Christian Woman" and his teaching at the royal court give Vives' program for humanist education of women. As can be seen here, More and Vives were actively engaged in promoting educational opportunities of a humanist nature for women. Erasmus, for his part, only occasionally makes mention of education for girls in his early writings, but he later became convinced of the wisdom of the venture through the example of More's daughters, whom he praised for their learned abilities. In the education of women, which we will discuss in the next chapter more fully, as well as in other areas, these three leading humanist educators were not always in agreement. However, collectively, their ideas portray a clear idea of the English humanist educational program.

This educational program, as noted, was based on ideas from classical Greece and Rome, and from the Italian humanist concept of the role of the noble, partially formed in Vittorino's fifteenth century humanist school. In the classical Greek and Roman examples of government, the humanists noted some similarities with the government of Tudor England. Caspari notes that these similarities included the functions of the aristocracy, who held important positions in both the classical and Tudor social and political systems. Consequently, the educational ideals intended for the classical aristocracy provided a useful example for the English humanists.[57] From Plato's Republic of classical Greece, the English humanists derived the notion of virtue as the key to being a good leader. From classical Rome, Quintillian's educational program for the orator, as elaborated upon by humanists in Italy, appealed to the English humanists.[58] Additionally, the refined goals of the noble as pronounced in fifteenth century Italian humanist circles became the essence of training for a nobility dedicated to "service for the public good." From these components, the English humanists shaped their educational agenda, emphasizing, also, in spite of the use of pre-Christian works such as

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[57]Caspari, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

[58]Ibid., pp. 13-15.

The Republic and Institutio Oratore as their guidebooks, the importance of the teachings of Christ. In this vein, the writings of Augustine and other Church fathers played a role in forming the English humanist pedagogical viewpoint. The goal of English humanist education thus became the development of virtuous, ethical and Christian individuals who serve as citizens and rulers to ensure the best interests of a Christian commonwealth.[59]

Aware that achievement of this goal meant development of new forms of education, the English humanists proceeded to design one. On the methods used, the pedagogical program was in agreement with Quintillian and Vittorino in prescribing humane treatment in disciplinary matters.[60] More, writing in 1517 to his children, recalled how he gave them much love and kisses, as well as gifts to encourage their studies. More further noted that he infrequently hit his children, and when it was necessary, More used a loosely bounded peacock tail "so that welts might not disfigure [their] tender seats."[61] Erasmus offered the view that "teaching by beating . . . is not

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[59]Pearl Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 200

[60]Vives did not subscribe to the view that corporal punishment was bad; rather punishment should be given to youths according to age and circumstances (see Pearl Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 177).

[61]Hogrefe, op. cit., p. 146.

a liberal education."[62] In addition to substituting praise and reinforcement for corporal punishment, the humanist pedogogical program stressed a concern for students' native talents and the cultivation of pious and courteous manners from an early age.

Substantially, the educational program of the English humanists placed an importance on the learning of language. Vives believed that "the educative value of a language is in porportion to its apt suitability for supplying names of things . . . it should have the capacity to explain most aptly what they think."[63] Erasmus expressed the view that knowledge and language were inextricably intertwined; there was no need to know truths without having an ability to express one's knowledge.[64] The languages to be learned were Latin and Greek, preferably at the same time, because these languages held the keys to learning the truths. Additionally, a wide range of subjects were important, including astronomy, arithmetic, geography, history and nature study, as well as logic and rhetoric. Along with medicine and

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[62]Erasmus, De pueris instituendis, translated in Desiderius Erasmus concerning the Aim and Method of Education by William Harrison Woodward (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1904), p. 208.

[63]Simon, op. cit., p. 106.

[64]Ibid., p. 107.

philosophy, these were the subjects included by More in his Utopia.[65]

Finally, in promoting their educational program, the English humanists sought to further the Italian humanists' reform of nobility, equating it with, among other things, allegiance to Christ and learning. In his Enchiridion Militis Christiani (Manual of the Christian Knight), Erasmus wrote "that the only and most perfect nobleness is to be regenerate in Christ." And, in his Little Book of Good Manners for Children, Erasmus wrote

> Let others paint on their escutcheons lions, eagles, bulls, leopards. Those are the possessors of true nobility who can use on their coat of arms ideas which they have thoroughly learned from the liberal arts.[66]

Nobility, thus, was no longer the sole property of the long established feudal aristocracy. Rather, in the humanist view, it belonged to those who acquire Christian humanist learning. Such a learning, moreover, should be provided by the virtuous leader, upon whom it was incumbent to see that all boys and girls are educated in public or private schools. Furthermore, statesmen must be sure "to provide that there be a due supply of men qualified to educate the youth of the country. It is a public

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[65]Thomas More, Utopia, edited by Edward Surtz (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1964).

[66]Simon, op. cit., p. 69.

obligation in no way inferior . . . to the ordering of the army."[67]

In Henry VIII, Erasmus, Thomas More and Juan Vives, among other humanists, saw the potential for this humanist leader, and as such they praised him and entered into his service. More and Vives became part of the new "humanist" nobility, men of Christian liberal learning who gave service to the Christian state. Erasmus foresaw ". . . an Age truly Golden arising "encompassing advancements in law, order, peace and learning under Henry. Erasmus praised the king, and noted that the royal court was itself a university.[68] To be sure, the royal court of Henry VIII, membered by such humanists as Thomas Wolsey, More and later, Vives, and frequented by scholars such as Erasmus, was a center of humanist activity and encouragement for humanist learning throughout England. The members of the court echoed and followed this encouragement. The result was, for a time, a period of intense humanist activity which produced new writings on education and helped establish colleges and schools where humanist learning presided. Additionally, a number of treatises appeared which advocated education for women. One of these treatises, the "Instruction of a Christian Woman," was written by Juan

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[67]Erasmus, De pueris instituendis in Woodward, Desiderius Erasmus Concerning the Aim and Method of Education, pp. 209-210.

[68]Chambers, op. cit., p. 168.

Vives, who along with Thomas More pioneered the advocacy of education for women and were instrumental in the practical application of educational programs designed for women. The ideas and practices of these men and their humanist associates constitute the subjects of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER IV

ENGLISH HUMANISM AND THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN: ORIGINS AND IDEAS

> I have been moved partly by the holiness and goodness of your living, partly by your favour, love and zeal that your Grace beareth toward holy study and learning, to write some thing unto your good grace, of the information and bringing up of a Christian woman.[1]

With the above words, Juan Vives introduced his "Instruction of A Christian Woman" and dedicated the work to "the most Gracious Princess, Catherine, Queen of England."[2] This dedication was appropriate for at least two reasons. One of these reasons was Catherine's commissioning of Vives to write the book as part of a plan of education for her daughter, Princess Mary.[3] The second was due to Catherine's reputation as a learned woman, who encouraged as much as her husband, Henry VIII, humanist activity in England.

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[1]Juan Luis Vives, (A Very Fruitful and Pleasant Book Called) The Instruction of a Christian Woman, translated into English by Richard Hyrde.

[2]Ibid., p. 6.

[3]Foster Watson (ed.), "Introduction," Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1912), p. 1.

Catherine was the daughter of Isabella and Ferdinand of Spain. Isabella herself was self-taught to the extent that she had a critical knowledge of Latin which enabled her "to scan the texts of treaties and charters, and read with pleasure the Latin Vulgate and Caesar's Commentaries."[4] Isabella was aware of the humanist activity in Italy and sponsored scholarly work in her own country by bringing humanists from Italy to teach. Believing that her children needed the best preparation for their futures as rulers and wives of rulers, Isabella made sure that they were all educated in the new learning. For Catherine and her three sisters,[5] humanistic principles were combined with a traditional regimen for princely women. Their education thus included dancing, drawing, music, sewing and embroidery as well as readings of Christian poets, the Church fathers Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory and Jerome, and classical authors such as Seneca, plus history, and civil and canon law. The humanist regimen was so thorough and the daughters of Isabella were so well educated in the classics that "all of them were able to reply to the speeches of ambassadors in extempore

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[4]Garrett Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon (London, England: Butler & Tanner, Ltd., 1950), p. 17.

[5]Isabella had four daughters and one son. Besides Catherine, the girls were Isabella, Joanna and Maria. The son was Juan. See Mattingly, op. cit., p. 16.

Latin, fluent, classical, and correct, and Catherine appeared to Erasmus and to Luis Vives a miracle of feminine learning."[6]

From the court of Isabella, Catherine originally went to England in 1501 as the promised bride to Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII. The marriage, however, was ill-fated as Arthur died within its first year. The relationship, as were most marriages between children of royal families, was matched for diplomatic reasons, to secure an important alliance between Spain and England. For Spain, the alliance provided a strong ally in England against France, the chief rival of Spain on the continent. For England, the partnership gave recognition to the stability and legitimacy of the Tudor dynasty, the security of which an alliance with Spain helped secure. The alliance also gave Henry VII a strong friend among other European countries.[7] As Arthur's death threatened this alliance, arrangements were soon made after his death for Catherine to marry Arthur's younger brother, Henry, the new heir to the English throne. These arrangements were concluded in 1503, and six years later, in 1509, two

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[6]Mattingly, op. cit., p. 17.

[7]John E. Paul, Catherine of Aragon and Her Friends (London, England: Burns & Oates Ltd., 1966), p. 3-4.

months after Henry VIII was crowned, Catherine became his bride and Queen of England.[8]

As Queen, Catherine joined with Henry VIII in encouraging humanist activity. As her mother, Isabella, had done in Spain, Catherine sponsored humanist scholars, and built upon Isabella's example at her own court in England. This caused Erasmus to ask, "who would not wish to live in such a court as hers?"[9] Erasmus and Vives were among those who received her graces. Additionally, Catherine sought the best teachers for her daughter, Princess Mary, and for this reason commissioned Vives to undertake the above-noted work. The ideas set forth by Vives in the "Instruction of a Christian Woman" became part of the English humanist program for the education of women, which at least had the support of Catherine, if not directly influenced by her example.

At about the same time that Catherine was becoming Queen of England, Thomas More was beginning a school in his home for his children, who included three daughters. More set out his ideas on education for women in a number of letters, becoming the first Englishman to openly

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[8]See Mattingly, op. cit., p. 93; and Paul, op. cit., p. 31.

[9]Foster Watson, Luis Vives, El Gran Valenciano (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1922), p. 68.

advocate erudition in women.[10] Additionally, Richard Hyrde, who lived and studied in More's house, and to a certain extent, Erasmus, among others, expounded upon the subject of humanist learning for women. As a group, the English humanists were influential not only in pioneering new ideas, but also in making practical applications in regard to education for women. An examination of these practical programs will follow in the next chapter, after an examination of pedogogical ideas of the English humanists as related to women. However, before undertaking this examination, we will consider some of the medieval perspectives on education for women.

Medieval English Ideas on Education of Women

Ideas about education for women were necessarily related to views on the role of women in society. The medieval English view held that women were chattel--property of fathers and husbands.[11] As such, women had few rights, and were subject to arrangements made for them. These arrangements, as made by fathers, included marriage

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[10]Pearl Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1959), p. 217; also, Tudor Women; Commoners and Queens (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1975), p. 100.

[11]Lee Cullen Khanna, "No Less Than Ideal: Images of Women In More's Work," in Moreana, Volume XIV, no. 55-56 (Angers, France: Association Amici Thomae Mori, 1977).

to men who were reputable or placement in a nunnery, if suitable marriages could not be arranged.[12] As wives, women were expected to manage the household and, most importantly, bear children. This latter duty usually encompassed the greater portion of a woman's life. Alison Plowden notes that "from mid-teens to her early forties, the average woman could expect to face the ordeal of childbirth if not annually, at least upwards of a dozen times."[13] For those women placed in nunneries, childbearing was not required, but a life of celibacy, prayer, and service to the Church was.

Property of men, arranged marriages, childbearing, and possible placement in nunneries were all characteristics of the lives of women who lived in a patriarchial society. Indeed, these characteristics were a major part of family planning among members of the landed classes in fifteenth century England. Stone notes that this planning had three objectives--"continuity of the male line, the preservation intact of the inherited property, and the acquisition through marriage of further property."[14]

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[12]Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage (In England 1500-1800) (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1977), p. 37.

[13]Alison Plowden, Tudor Women: Queens and Commoners (London, England: Butler & Tanner, Ltd., 1979), p. 5.

[14]Stone, op. cit., p. 37.

Given the high fatality rates among children--estimated at between 25%-33% for those aged between birth and fifteen[15]--women were expected to bear many children to ensure the first objective. The second objective was assured by restricting claims of younger children on the inheritance from the father. This often meant delaying marriages, or prohibiting marriage altogether. The third objective was achieved through marriage into wealthy and influential families. "The second objective," Stone comments, "thus directly clashed with the third; and if the former were given priority . . . it meant the sacrifice of daughters by putting them into nunneries."[16]

Whether being prepared for marriage or life as a nun, the medieval woman was expected to be chaste, passive and obedient. Books of the period which addressed the desirable ideals for women placed an emphasis on "chastity, modesty, humility, sweetness, simplicity, peaceableness, kindness, piety, temperance, beauty, and sometimes learning, and always patience, charity . . . and obedience."[17] Usually, there was also some exhortation to read scriptures and to pray for a husband to whom the women should be

[15]Ibid., p. 55.

[16]Ibid., p. 37.

[17]Hogrefe, Tudor Women, Commoners and Queens, p. 3.

obedient. The Book of the Knight of LaTour Landry, written about 1371, stressed the view that a woman

> . . . should hear many masses and say many prayers in order to be rewarded with a rich and powerful knight as a husband; practice humility toward the poor . . . and learn good manners so as to be chosen as a wife by a man of influence.[18]

Another book, How the Good Wife Taught Her Daughters, written in the early 15th century, exhorts women to love God, attend Church, love their husbands, and obey him submissively.[19] The medieval woman was expected to at one and the same time model herself after Eve, the wife of Adam, and Mary, the mother of Christ.[20] She was to be a submissive and obedient wife, yet a modest, chaste, loving and humble woman fit to be a mother.

In the medieval treatises giving advice for the upbringing of women, mention is rarely, if ever, made of literary training for women. Much of the medieval view of the learned woman is epitomized by the "Abbot" in Erasmus' The Abbot and The Learned Lady. There, the Abbot comments that it is "not feminine to be brainy," "books ruin women's wits," men "wouldn't want a learned wife," and "as pack-saddles don't fit an ox, so learning doesn't fit a woman."

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[18] Ibid., p. 4.

[19] Ibid., p. 4-5.

[20] Kenneth Charlton, Education in Renaissance England (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1966), p. 205.

Moreover, the Abbot claimed that the learning of Latin does nothing for women, "because it does little to protect their chastity."[21] The medieval view thus held that women should not concern themselves with learning of any nature except that which protected women's chaste reputation. In this way, a woman was ready to be given in marriage or to a nunnery.

For those women placed in a nunnery, educational activity was meager. Living in cloistered settings, with usually a small number of sister nuns, women were usually schooled in manners and simple prayers. In turn, the nuns taught children who were placed with the nunnery in simple lessons such as the alphabet and polite courtesies.[22] Consequently, nunneries did little in terms of education except to protect the chastity and modesty of the woman. This was in line with the medieval view of the Abbot in Erasmus' tale.

The lack of emphasis on literary and liberal learning for women began to change in England in the early sixteenth century. One result of this change was the writing of several treatises, stressing liberal and

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[21]Desiderius Erasmus, The Abbot and the Learned Lady, in Classics in the Education of Women, edited by Shirley Nelson Kersey (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1981), p. 29-34.

[22]Doris Mary Stenton, The English Women in History (London, England: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1957), p. 42-43.

classical education for women, between 1518 and 1528.[23] The first of these was in the form of a letter written in 1518 by Thomas More to William Gonell, a tutor in his household school. This pioneer treatise, which Hogrefe notes was "the initial pronouncement and first complete statement of principle on the education of women in sixteenth century England,"[24] was followed by humanist works by Juan Vives and Richard Hyrde. In addition, More had earlier espoused ideas related to education for women in Utopia in 1516, and Erasmus discussed the subject in a letter to William Budé in 1521 and presented an image of the learned women in the aforementioned The Abbot and the Learned Lady. The ideas presented in these works represented the nucleus of the English humanist pedagogical program for women, which is discussed below.

English Humanism and Ideas for the Education of Women

The ideas of the English humanists in regard to education for women were based in part on Renaissance humanist developments in fifteenth century Italy, with their emphasis on the works of ancient classical writers.

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[23]Hyrde's translation of Vives' Instruction of a Christian Woman was not printed until 1540, but since Hyrde died in 1528, it was completed before then; probably in 1524 when it was most likely presented to More.

[24]Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 203.

One example of the works considered noteworthy by the humanists was Plato's Republic. In this work, Plato presents the idea that men and women who are employed in the same duties should be given the same education. Speaking of the role of women as guardians, Plato wrote

> "If, then, we use the woman for the same things as the men, they must also be taught the same things."
> "Yes."
> "Now music and gymnastics were given to the men."
> "Yes."
> "Then these two arts, and what has to do with war, must be assigned to the women also, and they must be used in the same way."[25]

Plato thus acknowledged the capacity for women to serve in similar roles as men if given similar educations. Women it followed, had the same capacity to learn as men.

In fifteenth century Italy, this idea was embodied in the writings and practices of Italian humanists, such as Leonardi Bruni, Vittorino da Feltre and Guarino da Verona. The learned woman and education for women became an ideal of those Italian humanists. Bruni, in 1405, was among the first "to advocate that the treasures of ancient literature should not only be thrown open to a woman but should form an integral part of her education."[26] In a letter to Baptista Malatesta, Bruni, in part, wrote

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[25]Alan Bloom (ed.), The Republic of Plato (Book V, 451 d) (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1968), p. 130.

[26]William Harrison Woodward, "Classics in Education, No. 32" Edition, Education in the Age of the Renaissance, 1400-1600 (New York: Teachers College Press, 1967), p. 205.

> I am led to address this Tractate to you, Illustrious Lady, by the high repute which attaches to your name in the field of learning; . . . Upon . . . the most distinguished of a long range of great names, I would have you fix your mind; for an intelligence such as your own can be satisfied with nothing less than the best.[27]

In his letter Bruni not only praises a learned woman, but acknowledges her capacity to learn by suggesting that she concern herself with the writings of the past. Bruni furthermore suggests study in Latin, the writings of classical and Church fathers and expository writing among other subjects, in essence, offering the foundations of humanist learning in his letter.[28] Bruni was followed by Vittorino da Feltre and Guarino da Verona who put humanist precepts on education for women into practice at their respective academies. As noted in Chapter Three, one of Vittorino's students, Cecilia Gonzaga excelled in her studies, including Greek. Guarino had similar success, most notably with Isotta and Ginevra Nogarola, who became fairly notable scholars.[29]

News of the Italian programs undoubtedly passed to the English humanists through the many Italian-Anglo scholarly exchanges made during the fifteenth century. Moreover, the Italian example was followed in Spain

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[27]William Harrison Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, p. 123.

[28]Ibid., p. 123-133.

[29]Ibid., p. 249.

where Queen Isabella promoted humanist learning for women and educated her daughters including Catherine, who brought both her learning and knowledge of Isabella's educational programs to England. Knowledge of Spanish implementation of humanist ideas was also available to Juan Vives.

Another influence for the English humanists in addition to the Italian and Spanish humanist programs for women was the presence of educated women in early sixteenth century England. Besides Catherine of Aragon, who, as noted above, was educated in humanist fashion by her mother, Isabella of Spain, the humanists could also see the example of Henry VIII's grandmother, Margaret, Countess of Richmond. Margaret, who educated her grandson along humanist lines, was not an open advocate of learning for women. However, she was quite educated herself, did translations, and maintained a classical literary collection. Additionally, she served as a patroness for learning and founded St. John's College at Cambridge where the study of Greek and the classics was emphasized.[30]

For Catherine's part, she brought to England her knowledge of classical writings and a fluency in classical

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[30]Pearl Hogrefe, Women of Action in Tudor England (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1977), p. 136-153; see also Myra Reynolds, The Learned Lady in England, 1630-1760 (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith Publishing, 1964), p. 5.

languages. Furthermore, Catherine followed her mother's example from Spain in encouraging learning in England and establishing a school for women at her court.[31] For this school, designed to teach her daughter Mary and other women of the court, Catherine sought the best scholars. In this vein, she commissioned Juan Vives to write "The Instruction of a Christian Woman" and a plan for her daughter's education, which was called "A Plan of Studies for Girls."[32]

With these female models and classical and humanist ideas to guide them,[33] the English humanists developed a program of classical learning to challenge the medieval view that women were foolish to become learned. In doing so, More and others were fully aware that the program they encouraged was new and might be criticized. In anticipation of this expected criticism, Thomas More wrote:

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[31]Mattingly, op cit., p. 17; also, Reynolds, op. cit., p. 6.

[32]Mary Doris Stenton, op. cit., p. 122; Foster Watson, Luis Vives, El Gran Valenciano, p. 67-68, et al.

[33]Hogrefe has reservations about assigning personal or ideational causes for English humanist ideas on education of women as More and others fail to assign it themselves. However, it should be noted that in dedicatory prefaces, correspondence and treatises, references to classical, church and modern figures give substantial clues; author's note. See Chapter Six: "Summary" for author's analysis.

> Since erudition in women is a new thing and a reproach to the sloth of men, many will gladly assail it, and impute to literature what is really the fault of nature, thinking from the vices of the learned to get their own ignorance esteemed as virtue. On the other hand, if a woman . . . to eminent virtue should add an outwork of even moderate skill in literature, I think she will have more profit than if she had obtained the riches of Croesus and the beauty of Helen.[34]

Richard Hyrde, following the views of More, encouraged women to

> take no heed unto the lewd words of those that dispraise [learning for women] . . . follow the wise men and regard the foolish sort, but apply all your might, will and diligence, to obtain that especial treasure, which is delectable in truth, comfortable in age and profitable at all seasons; of whom, without doubt, cometh much goodness and virtue.[35]

For More, Hyrde, Vives, and other English humanists disposed to the education of women, women were considered the equal of men in their capacity for learning. In the letter to Gonell, More clearly enunciates this view, writing

> Nor do I think that the harvest [of learning] is much affected whether it is a man or a woman who

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[34]Thomas More, "Letter to William Gonell" (May 22, 1518), in Selected Correspondence of St. Thomas More, edited by Elizabeth Rogers, p. 103.

[35]Foster Watson (ed.), Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women - Chapter IV: "Richard Hyrde on the Education of Women;" quote from Hyrde's "dedicatory preface" to Margaret More Roper's translation of Erasmus's "treatise upon the Paternoster . . .," p. 168.

> does the sowing. They both have the name human being whose mature reason differentiates from that of beasts; both, I say, are equally suited for the knowledge of learning by which reason is cultivated.[36]

More also expressed such a view in Utopia, his treatise on a well-ordered and "best commonwealth," where women as well as men engaged in learning activities and were suited for similar positions in such occupations as the priesthood and the military.[37] Juan Vives also expressed the view that the woman "even as man is a reasonable creature and hath flexible wit both to be good and evil, the which with use and counsel may be altered and turned."[38]

The image of the learned woman was natural for More and his colleagues. Lee Cullen Khanna notes that such images appear in More's Dialogue of Comfort and Richard III, besides Utopia. In the first of these works, More draws the image of a woman learned in medicine and able to give good advice to a suffering man. In Richard III, women are shown as eloquent and learned in the form of Elizabeth of Woodville, the queen of Edward IV. Here, Khanna notes, More openly challenges the medieval view of woman as chattel, with no rights or expectations of intelligence.

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[36]More, "Letter to William Gonell" (May 22, 1518).

[37]Thomas More, Utopia: "Yale University Edition," edited by Edward Surtz, S. J. See page 118 for women in military, and page 140 for women in priesthood.

[38]Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 235.

Elizabeth is given equal time to pose her arguments against her male antagonists and, in her orations, she is shown to be independent, quick-witted and in command of rhetorical skills.[39] Another example of the learned woman is seen in the aforementioned The Abbot and the Learned Lady, by Erasmus, whose "lady" challenges the medieval views of the Abbot. The Learned Lady exhibits her learning and quick-wittedness in confronting the Abbot. She comments that Latin allows her to converse daily with "authors so numerous, so eloquent, so learned, so wise . . ." and that learning for women is becoming common. She cites the example of "the More girls" in England, and warns the Abbot that if he is "not careful, the net result will be that we'll preside in the theological schools, preach in the churches and wear your miters."[40]

However much the English humanists challenged medieval notions against learning for women, and fictionally proposed their placement in the priesthood, they did accept the medieval view of women in other areas. For one thing, the English humanist accepted the view of women as subservient to their husbands. Even in Utopia, More wrote that women are to heed their husbands. Citing the general relations among citizens, More said: "The

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[39]Lee Cullen Khanna, op. cit., p. 42.

[40]Erasmus, The Abbot and the Learned Lady, p. 29-34.

oldest . . . rules the household," and "wives wait on husbands, children on their parents and generally the younger on their elders."[41] Additionally, in a letter to his daughter, Margaret, More wrote that "I am ever want to persuade you to yield in everything to your husband."[42]

Vives also spoke on the subservient role of women in regard to their relationship with men. In his "Instruction of a Christian Woman," Vives, in part, wrote on the subject of choosing a husband. In undertaking such a task, Vives notes:

> it becometh not a maid to talk, where her father and mother be in communication about her marriage, but to leave all that care and charge wholly unto them, which love her as well as herself doth.[43]

Vives saw the wife's role as being considerate in all things toward her husband. He cites the example of his own mother, who was always in agreement with her husband, and William Budé's "prudent and virtuous housewife," who diligently followed her husband's pleasure.[44]

A second area in which the English humanists were in agreement with medieval views was the ideal state of

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[41]More, Utopia, p. 77.

[42]More, "Letter to His Most Dearest Daughter Margaret," (1521) in Rogers, p. 149.

[43]Juan Luis Vives, "The Instruction of a Christian Woman" (Chapter XVI, Book One), in Watson, Vives and the Renascence Education of Women, p. 109.

[44]Ibid. (Chapter V, Book Two), p. 118.

women. In an epigram on marriage, How to Choose a Wife, More advocates that women should be "chaste, modest, neither garrulous nor boorishly taciturn."[45] For Vives, the important thing for a woman to maintain is "her honesty and chastity," for "no man will look for any other thing of a woman." A woman that has lost these things, in Vives view, is nothing.

> Take from a woman her beauty, . . . her kindred, her riches, her comelyness, eloquence, sharpness of wit, cunning in her craft; give her chastity, and you have given her all things.[46]

Chastity and medieval roles were important for the English humanists to maintain, but the humanists went beyond the usual depictions of medieval women and the medieval admonitions to be chaste and modest. Vives, for example, saw many good examples from classical antiquity, as well as his modern era, of learned women. From antiquity, Vives notes:

> Cornelia, the mother of Gracchus, which was an example of all goodness and chastity, and taught her children her own self. And Portia, the wife of Brutus, that took of her father's wisdom. And Cleobula, daughter of Cleobulus, one of the seven wise men, which Cleobula was so given to learning and philosophy, that she clearly despised all pleasure of the body, and lived perpetually a maid . . .
>
> And it is plainly known that no man in that time was more happy of his wife than was Calleno of

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[45]Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 216.

[46]Vives, "Instruction of a Christian Woman" (Chapter VII, Book One).

> Sulpitia. Hortensia, the daughter of Hortensius, the orator, did so resemble father's eloquence that she made an oration unto the judges of the city for the women, which oration the successors of that time did read, not only as a commendation and praise of woman's eloquence, but also to learn cunning of it, as well as of Cicero's or Demosthene's orations.[47]

From modern times, Vives cited the example of the four daughters of Isabella, and the daughters of Thomas More.

In their admonitions, consequently, the English humanists recommended that in addition to being chaste and modest, women should be learned. More included this view in How to Choose a Wife, saying that the wife should be "either educated or capable of being educated so that she may learn from the best of ancient works the principles which confer a blessing on life." For More, such an educated wife would be able to teach children to read at an early age, and will provide pleasant company for her husband through music and "pleasant and intelligent conversation."[48] Vives wrote in the Office and Duty of a Husband, that the "true husbands love the soul and virtue" of their wives, and that "the wise husband frequently loves his wife." The wife for her part is to be subservient to her husband, but there should be a division of authority. It was thus necessary to have an educated wife because

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[47]Ibid. (Chapter IV, Book One), p. 52-53.

[48]Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 216.

> a woman well raised is fruitful and profitable unto her husband, for so shall his house be wisely governed, his children virtuously instructed, the affections less insued and followed, so that they shall lie in tranquility and pleasure.[49]

Moreover, the educated wife should not be treated as a servant, "but as a most faithful secretary of thy cares and thoughts, and in doubtful matters a wise and hearty counselor," and in Erasmus's view, the instruction of women was advantageous in producing good minds and providing safety "for the custody of chastity." Thus, while accepting the medieval view of a woman being chaste and subject to her husband, the English humanists proposed that the best wife was an educated wife. The bonding of educated partners provided for a better relationship, and better care of children, who, in Erasmus's view, would grow up to be better servants to the commonwealth if raised in a good educational setting by loving and equally educated parents.[50]

To ensure that both the parents would be well educated, the English humanists had well-defined pedagogical ideas related to women. In his letter in 1518, More presents his educational views. The aim of education for women is

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[49]Ibid., pp. 235-236; and Foster Watson (ed.), Vives and the Renaiscence Education of Women, p. 200.

[50]Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 222.

> to avoid the precipices of pride and haughtiness and to walk in the pleasant meadows of modesty; not to be dazzled at the sight of gold; not to lament that they do not possess what they erroneously admire in others; not to think more of themselves for gaudy trappings, nor less for want of them; neither to deform the beauty nature has given them by neglect, nor to try to heighten it by artifice; to put virtue in the first place learning in the second; and in their studies to esteem most whatever may teach them piety towards God, charity to all, and Christian humility in themselves.[51]

Virtue in the first place, avoidance of pride, and development of humility were primary themes for More. In the same letter, More noted that he esteemed "learning joined to virtue more than all the treasures of kings, yet renown for learning, when it is not united with a good life, is no more than distinguished infamy."[52] A mind full of learning was for naught if concerned with that which is not virtuous in More's view and he impressed this upon his children and their tutors. In Vives' "Instruction of a Christian Woman," the theme of concern for good and virtuous ideas is repeated. Vives believed that

> The study of learning is such a thing, that it occupies one's mind completely, and lifts it up unto the knowledge of most goodly matters, and plucks from the remembrance such things that be foul . . . the mind, set upon learning and wisdom, shall . . . abhor from foul lust.[53]

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[51]More, "Letter to William Gonell."

[52]Ibid., p. 104-105.

[53]Juan Luis Vives, Instruction of a Christian Woman (Chapter IV, Book One), p. 53-54.

The aims thus became purity of thought and chastity for Vives.

In order to achieve the goal of the virtuous woman, who, as we saw above, would make the ideal woman, the English humanists offered many approaches. For More, the emphasis was on encouragement and praise of his daughters to work diligently. More, noting the traditional view that women were naturally uninclined to study, argued that

> . . . if the soil of a woman be naturally bad and apter to bear fern than grain, by which saying many keep women from study, I think on the contrary, that a woman's wit is the more diligently cultivated, so that nature's defect can be redressed by industry.[54]

Diligence, tempered by a disdaining from corporal punishment, as noted in Chapter Three, was the way to promote learning for women. Rather than punish the students, More preached praise. To Gonell, he notes that reading his children's letters delights him and praises the diligence of students in the household school. To his daughter, Margaret, More wrote that he was

> delighted to receive your letter, dearest Margaret, and should have been more delighted still if you had told me of the studies you . . . are engaged in, of your daily reading, your pleasant discussions, your essays.[55]

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[54]More, "Letter to William Gonell."

[55]E. M. G. Routh, Sir Thomas More and His Friends, 1477-1535 (London, England: Humphrey Milford, 1934), p. 122.

In his letter to Gonell, other correspondence, as well as in Utopia, More discusses his ideas on a program of study. Included in this program are the teachings of church fathers, who also served as support for More's ideas on education of women. More wrote that the rightness of education for women

> . . . was the opinion of the ancients, both the wisest and the most saintly. Not to speak of the rest, Jerome and Augustine not only exhorted excellent matrons and honorable virgins to study, but also, in order to assist them, diligently explained the abstruce meanings of the scripture, and wrote for tender girls letters replete with so much erudition that nowadays old men who call themselves doctors of sacred literature can scarcely read them correctly much less understand them . . .[56]

Consequently, Jerome, Augustine and other church fathers need to be studied, for they understood, among other things, the worthiness of educational ventures for women. Again, to Gonell, More exhorts him to

> . . . have the kindness to see that my daughters thoroughly learn these works of saintly men. From them they will learn in particular what goal they should set for their studies and the whole fruit of their endeavors should consist in the testimony of God and a good conscience.[57]

Additionally, More advises Gonell that

> your prudent love will so enforce as to teach virtue rather than reprove vice, and make them love good advice instead of hating it. To this purpose, nothing will more conduce than to read to them the lessons of the ancient fathers, who,

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[56]More, "Letter to William Gonell."

[57]Ibid.

> they know, cannot be angry with them; and, as they honor them for their sanctity they must needs be much moved by their authority.[58]

In addition to the ancient fathers, More calls for the study of such subjects as those listed in Chapter III.

Vives' regimen of study echoed More in his prescription for reading the classical and church fathers. Vives noted the merits of reading "the Gospels and the Acts and the Epistles of theApostles and the Old Testament, St. Jerome, St. Cyprian, Augustine, Ambrose, Hilary, Gregory, Plato, Cicero, Seneca and such others" in "The Instruction of a Christian Woman."[59] In his "Plan of Studies for Girls," Vives recommended that the female student should be versed in authors

> who, at the same time, cultivate right language and right living: those who help to inculcate not only knowledge, but living well. Of this kind are Cicero, Seneca, the works of Plutarch . . ., some dialogues of Plato - especially those which concern the government of the State. Then the epistles of Jerome, and some works of Ambrosius and Augustine, should be read. Further, the Institutiones Principes, the Enchiridion, the Paraphrases (of Erasmus), and . . . the Utopia of Thomas More. With no great trouble she can learn history from Justinus, Florus and Valerius Maximus.

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[58]Ibid.

[59]Vives, "The Instruction of a Christian Woman," p. 62.

In addition, Vives recommends the reading of the New Testament, Christian poets, and even "heathen poets," such as Lucan and Horace.[60]

The language of study for reading, writing and conversation was Latin. Richard Hyrde, who also recommended Greek, believed that women should study the classical languages because

> . . . in them be many holy doctors' writings, so devout and effectuous, that whosoever regardeth them must needs be either much better or evil.[61]

Vives prescribed techniques for the student to learn Latin in his "Plan of Studies for Girls." This included turning short speeches from English into Latin. At first, Vives noted, the speeches "should be easy; then by degrees, more difficult, in which there should occur all kinds and forms of words."[62] In terms of conversations in Latin, Vives wrote:

> Let the princess speak with her tutor and fellow-pupils in Latin, of fellow-pupils let her have three or four; for it is not good to be taught alone . . . Let her attempt to express (in Latin) what she has been reading in her authors, and in the same manner let her listen to others speaking of what they have been reading. To those whom she thinks to be learned, let her give most close

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[60]Juan Luis Vives, "Plan of Studies for Girls," in Foster Watson's (ed.) Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women, p. 147.

[61]Richard Hyrde, op. cit., p. 165.

[62]Vives, "Plan of Studies for Girls," p. 144.

> attention, and so let her herself speak; for this is imitation - a method of no small usefulness.[63]

Moreover, Vives calls for an English-Latin dictionary and a paper notebook--the first to help in translations and the second to keep records of lessons, phrases, and other helpful information.

The age for starting the female student's lessons is not prescribed by More, Vives or the other English humanists. However, in "The Instruction of a Christian Woman," Vives offered the view that parents should determine the appropriate age for beginning lessons. He wrote

> . . . I appoint no time to begin. Some reckon best to begin at the seventh year: in which opinion are Aristotles, Eratostheses, and Chrysippius. Quintillian would begin at the fourth or fifth year. But I put all the ordering of this matter in the discretion of the fathers and mothers, which may take advisement after the qualities and complexions of the child . . .[64]

Once it is ascertained that the child is able to learn, Vives recommends that she should be taught those things relating to the well-being of her soul. This view is similar to that expressed by Erasmus[65] in De Peuris

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[63]Ibid., p. 145-146.

[64]Vives, "The Instruction of a Christian Woman" (Chapter III, Book One), p. 43.

[65]Erasmus's treatises dealing directly with education were written before he became convinced through the evidence of More's daughters that education of women was viable and worthwhile. Consequently, he does not say anything about girls or women in his educational treatises. Nonetheless, he was in agreement with More,

Instituendis, where he wrote that as early as possible the child

> . . . should begin to learn the things which properly belong to his well being. Therefore, bestow special pains upon his tenderest years, as Vergil teaches. Handle the wax whilst it is soft, mould the clay whilst it is moist.[66]

The result of such care, in Vives view is to ensure the bringing up of a pure and chaste woman, and in Erasmus's view, a child that will bring honor and comfort to parents.[67]

Finally, it needs to be noted that Vives also recommended that early learning should include instruction in traditional arts of a housewife. This instruction should include working with "wool and flax, which are two crafts yet left of that old innocent world, both profitable and keepers of temperance," and cooking which is "sober and measurable, that she may learn to dress meat for her father and mother, . . . while she is a maid; and for

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Vives et al. on many points related to a child's upbringing. I do not think it is stretching the point to say that the view of paying early attention to the child would apply to girls as well as boys for Erasmus.

[66]Desiderius Erasmus, De Pueris Instituendo, translated in Desiderius Erasmus concerning the Aim and Method of Education by William Harrison Woodward, p. 187.

[67]For Vives, see "Instruction of a Christian Woman"; for Erasmus, De Pueris Instituendo.

her husband . . . when she is a wife."[68] By learning these crafts, a woman can better fulfill her duties as a daughter and as a wife, serving her family fully in both instances.

In total, the English humanist program encompassed a combination of traditional medieval and Renaissance humanist views. More, Vives and their contemporary humanist friends still viewed the woman as an individual who owed first allegiance to her parents, especially her father, and later to her husband. The education of the woman prepared her for the role of a wife by teaching values of chastity and modesty in the medieval tradition. However, the English humanists went beyond traditional educational admonitions, in promoting ideas for the classical learning of women. As noted, the wife educated in the humanist mode, with an emphasis on the classics, modern subjects, Latin and Greek, would be a better partner for her husband. Such a partnership resulted in better prospects for the commonwealth at large. Moreover, the humanist-trained woman would gain access to a better life for herself through the attainment of Christian virtue. By combining humanist learning with virtuous living, women could make contributions to improving their lives and their world. The humanist program for women was

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[68]Vives, "The Instruction of a Christian Woman" (Chapter III, Book One), pp. 45-48.

thus aimed at promoting the attainment of virtue, development and maintenance of chaste, modest habits of living, the development of learned women and better partners in marriage, a better commonwealth and, finally, an improved world. In sum, the procedures and aims of the humanist perspectives for educating women were beyond medieval viewpoints and practices, and implemented the English humanist educational program as a whole, which sought to develop a better world composed of learned, Christian, noble individuals. The ideal of the humanist educated woman was a direct corollary of the ideal of the humanist educated man for More, Vives and their English humanist associates. Moreover, in promoting their ideas for the education of women, the English humanists took steps to implement their ideas. As such, special schools were developed which had the result of educating such women as the More daughters, Princess Mary and others in humanist fashion. Primary examples of the humanist practical programs and some of the women involved will be the focus of the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER V

ENGLISH HUMANISM AND EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN PRACTICE

> Forbear too much t'extoll great Rome, from hence,
> They fame'd Hortensius' Daughter's Eloquence;
> These boasted names are now eclipsed by three
> More learned Nymphs, Great More's fair Progeny
> Who over-pas'd the Spinster's mean Employ,
> The purest Latin Authors were their Jury;
> They lived in Rome's political style to write.
> And with the choicest Eloquence indite . . .[1]

The ideas set forth by the English humanists on the education of women were not intended solely for the placement in letters and treatises. The humanist program called for action, thus the ideas were put into practice. The consequence of this implementation was the appearance in Tudor England of a group of notable women who, Stone notes, "were as expert as men in classical grammar and language," among other subjects.[2] Among these women were Margaret More Roper and her sisters--who were eulogized in the above poem by their contemporary, John Leland. Others included Princess Mary Tudor, daughter of Henry VIII and

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[1]Myra Reynolds, The Learned Lady in England, 1650-1760 (Glouchester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1964), p. 11.

[2]Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800, p. 142.

Catherine of Aragon, Catherine Parr, Henry VIII's sixth wife, and Lady Jane Grey, who briefly held the throne.

The methods by which these and other women of the upper classes received their humanistic training are disclosed for the most part in letters or treatises written by the women or their tutors. The picture that we see from putting bits and pieces together is a collage of educational programs patterned after the ideas of More and Vives. Lady Jane Grey, for instance, was taught by John Aylmer, who provided tempered instruction in the classics and other liberal subjects. Lady Jane wrote that she looked forward to her lessons with Aylmer as they provided a welcome respite from cruel and threatening treatment of her parents.[3] Another educational venture was conducted by Sir Anthony Cooke for his daughters. Sir Anthony, who tutored Prince Edward in addition to teaching his daughters, was of the belief that "sexes as well as souls are equal in capacity," and expected his daughters to be "complete women." To this end, Sir Anthony's daughters were trained in household arts, the classics, religion, and modesty, among other subjects.[4] Catherine Parr's educational program also included studies in the classics, as she was well-learned in Latin and

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[3]Hogrefe, Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 211; also Plowden, Tudor Women, Queens and Commoners.

[4]Hogrefe, supra, p. 212.

familiar with Greek. Additionally, her sister Anne informs us in a letter to Roger Ascham[5] that all the Parr children were educated following the example of Thomas More.[6]

It is "More's example," plus the Royal Court school established by Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII for Princess Mary, that are seen as the most notable examples of humanist educational programs for women. For one thing, we have more information about these programs, as the activities and plans for these programs can be examined in correspondence and written plans of studies which have survived. The letters of More to his "school," for example, plus letters by other humanists who visited the school provide us with a fairly clear picture of the daily activity of the school. Additionally, More's early biographers thought the school in More's house of sufficient importance to devote full passages

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[5]Roger Ascham, a middle sixteenth century humanist educator, followed the ideas of More, Erasmus and other English humanists of the pre-Reformation period. He wrote The Schoolmaster and Toxophilus, each of which was a treatise on humanist education. Additionally, he was a lecturer at Cambridge, a tutor for Princess Elizabeth (and a member of her court when she became queen), an educational advisor to Queen Mary, and a confidant of Lady Jane Grey, among other educated women.

[6]Reynolds, op. cit., p. 14; Hogrefe, Women of Action in Tudor England, p. 183.

to it in their works.[7] For information about the "Royal Court" school of Catherine and Henry VIII, scholars have been able to study Vives' "Plan of Studies for Girls" plus correspondence and written records of the Royal family. As in the case of More's household school, we can discern a relatively clear idea of educational activities in the Royal Court school.

Another reason for the distinction of these schools is the influential role they probably played in promoting implementation of educational programs for women. Hogrefe notes that More's position as a defender of education for women was well known by his humanist friends, and influenced many of them to share his views. Additionally, she comments, More's position as an influential member of the Royal Court provided him with a chance to affect the development of programs of education for women. He was a member of the court from October, 1517 through May, 1532, holding positions of increasing importance until his resignation as the Royal Chancellor. Many of the men who educated their daughters in a humanist fashion were members of the court during this period and had contacts with More, who through his daughters could offer evidence of

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[7]See Thomas Stapleton, The Life of Sir Thomas More, translated by Philip Hallett (London, England: Burns and Oates Limited, 1966), and Cresacre More, The Life of Sir Thomas More, edited by Joseph Hunter (London, England: William Pickering, 1828).

success in educational programs for women.[8] Additionally, More was a favorite of King Henry VIII, who supported More's ideas, and even consulted More on educational plans--at least for the instruction of Henry's illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, if not for Princess Mary.[9]

Henry's position of popularity among members of the court provided the king, himself, with an influential role as well in providing education for women. Not only did Henry VIII oversee a disputation in philosophy conducted by More's daughters before the court,[10] but he also joined his Queen, Catherine of Aragon, in providing an education for their daughter, Mary Tudor. In doing so he thus gave royal sanction to the humanistic education for women. In Tudor society where the crown had asserted itself as the central authority on all matters and the court's examples were seen as proper conduct for the partisans of the court, this royal example and sanction undoubtedly exerted much influence in promoting education for women.[11]

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[8]Hogrefe, Tudor Women, p. 100-101.

[9]Routh, Sir Thomas More and His Friends, p. 123-124.

[10]Hogrefe, Tudor Women, p. 101; Routh, op. cit., p. 134.

[11]Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, p. 143.

Given the distinctions of these two "humanistic schools" for women, I will discuss the available details of each of them in the ensuing sections of this chapter. Through this discussion, examples of the practical implementation of humanistic ideas will be portrayed. In addition, following consideration of the schools, I will briefly consider some of the women who were given humanist instruction, including Margaret More, Mary Tudor, Catherine Parr, and Lady Jane Grey.

The Household School of Sir Thomas More

The school established by Thomas More in his house for the education of his children is, perhaps, the most notable example of humanist educational programs for women. An early biographer of More noted that the school for his children "was famous over the whole world; for their [the children] wits were rare, their diligence extraordinary, and their masters most excellent men."[12] Erasmus, who was a frequent guest in More's home, commented:

> You would say that in that place was Plato's Academy. But I do the house injury in likening it to Plato's Academy . . . I should rather call it a school, or university of Christian religion. For there is none therein who does not study the branches of liberal education. Their special care is piety and virtue.[13]

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[12]Cresacre More, op. cit., p. 137-38.

[13]Desiderius Erasmus, "Letter to John Faber, n. d.," cited in Foster Watson, Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women, p. 175.

Moreover, Erasmus later noted that More's educational program presented the evidence that convinced him to support education for women. Writing to William Budé in 1521, Erasmus noted that:

> More does not adorn letters merely by his own learning or his partiality for learned men, for he has brought up his whole family in excellent studies - a new example, but one which is likely to be much imitated . . . Almost everyone thinks learning useless to the reputation and good name of women, but More repudiates this idea and considers idleness a greater snare to them than literature . . . A year ago it occurred to More to send me a specimen of their progress in study. He bade them all write to me, each one without help, neither the subject being suggested nor the language corrected . . . When they had done so, he closed the letters and sent them to me without changing a syllable. Believe me, my dear Budé, I was never more surprised; there was nothing whatever either silly or girlish in what was said, and the style was such that you could feel they were making daily progress.[14]

Erasmus, as noted above, was not alone in seeing the worthiness of More's venture.

More's school originally was developed for the education of his children, who included his three daughters Margaret, Elizabeth and Cecily, and his son, John. The school, however, also provided an education for More's niece - Frances Staverton, his step daughter - Alice Middleton, his foster daughter - Margaret Giggs, and children of his associates, including Margaret Barrow and Anne

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[14]Desiderius Erasmus, "Letter to William Budé: September, 1521" cited in Routh, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

Cresacre. From all available evidence, the school was a predominantly feminine academy.

The history of More's school seems to indicate that the school experienced two distinct periods. The first of these periods was initiated around 1510 when Margaret, the oldest child, was ready to begin formal study. This period continued until the family moved from Bucklersbury to Chelsea in 1521. It was characterized by formal study as opposed to programs of the second period, which Hogrefe refers to as "a period of independent study." This second period took place in the years following 1521 until the break-up of the More family.[15]

As Cresacre More, the great grandson of Thomas More, wrote, More was concerned with giving his children the best of teachers.[16] The women who studied in More's house were given an education by men for whom More held respect as humanist scholars and men of virtue. The first of the tutors, of whom we have knowledge, was John Clement. Clement was a Greek scholar, who after teaching at More's house, became a lecturer at Oxford. Additionally, Clement is mentioned by More in Utopia as being a member of his circle, and, in 1526, he married Margaret Giggs, a

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[15]Hogrefe, The Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 205.

[16]Cresacre More, op. cit., p. 138.

student at the school. A second tutor was William Gonell, who was a friend of Erasmus at Cambridge and came to More's house with his recommendation. At Cambridge, Gonell was involved in work for Erasmus, and upon leaving Cambridge chose the opportunity of teaching at More's house over another position near Cambridge. Another tutor was Master Drew, whom, E. E. Reynolds believed may have been Roger Drew, a fellow at All Souls College of Oxford University. A fourth tutor was Nicholas Kratzer, a German scholar whose specialization was the sciences. In 1519, Kratzer became the royal astronomer to Henry VIII. He was responsible for teaching sciences at the More school. The final tutor was Richard Hyrde, who, as noted in Chapter Four, was one of the leading advocates of education for women. Hyrde studied under More and at Oxford, where he became "learned in physics, Greek and Latin."[17] The selection of such men was consistent with humanist and classical ideas for choosing capable and virtuous individuals for teachers. Quintillian had recommended this, as did Erasmus and Vives in their respective treatises on education. The formal teaching was, moreover, complemented by opportunities to hear such individuals as Erasmus and Vives, who commented on the students' writings or even participated in the lessons.

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[17]Reynolds, The Field is Won, pp. 158-159.

Following the ideas of More, which were presented in the preceding chapter, students at the school worked hard, but encouragement to be diligent was tempered by praises and rewards. Evidence of this practice is seen in many of More's letters to the school, such as those written to his daughter, Margaret. In one letter More wrote:

> I was delighted to receive your letter, my dearest Margaret, informing me of Shaw's condition. Later letters will be even more delightful if they have told me of the studies you and brother are engaged in, of your daily reading, your pleasant discussions, your essays, of the swift passage of the days made joyous by literary pursuits. For although everything you write gives me pleasure, yet the most exquisite delight of all comes from reading what none but you and your brother could have written.[18]

Another letter provides insight into More's praise as well as the praise of others seeing the work of his daughters:

> I need not express the extreme pleasure your letter gave me, my darling daughter. You will be able to judge better how much it pleased your father when you learn what delight it caused to a stranger. I happened this evening to be in the company of the Reverend Father, John, Bishop of Exeter, a man of deep learning and of a wide reputation for holiness. Whilst we were talking I took out of my pocket a paper that bore on our business and by accident your letter appeared. He took it into his hand with pleasure and began to examine it. When he saw from the signature that it was the letter of a lady, his surprise led him to read it more eagerly. When he had finished, he said he would never believed it to be your work unless I assured him of the fact, and he began to praise it in the highest terms . . . for its pure Latinity,

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[18]Thomas More, "Letter to Margaret More: 1518" cited in Rogers, p. 109.

> its correctness, its erudition, and its expressions of tender affections.[19]

And a third letter comments on rewards:

> You are too bashful and timid in your request for money, from a father who wants to give it and when you have greeted me with a letter such that I would not only repay each line of it with a gold Philippeus (as Alexander did with Choerilos) but if my means were as great as my desire, I would reward each syllable with two ounces of gold.[20]

It is evident from these letters that praise and rewards played an important part in the educational program at More's school. Although he was not able to be physically present at all times, More always sent words of encouragement and praise, and exhorted his tutors to give the same. In this way, the students could more easily understand their lessons.

As for their lessons, the women, as well as men, of More's school followed a curriculum containing a variety of subjects. At the foundation for all study were the classical languages, in which students were to be able to write, read and speak. As noted in the letter mentioning praise of Margaret More's letter, the students were schooled in correct and erudite use of Latin. The method by which this was accomplished involved careful composition of the letter in the vernacular before turning

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[19]Thomas More, "Letter to Margaret More: 1522" cited in Robers, pp. 109-110.

[20]Thomas More, "Letter to Margaret More: 1518" cited in Rogers, pp. 109-110.

it into Latin, then to reread and recopy the completed work until no errors could be detected. More was adamant on this point, as indicated in the following exerpt from a letter to the school:

> . . . One thing, however, I admonish you, whether you write serious matters or the merest trifles, it is my wish that you write everything diligently and thoughtfully. It will do no harm if you first write the whole in English, for then you will have much less trouble and labor in turning it into Latin; not having to look for the matter, your mind will be intent only on the language . . . I strictly enjoin you that whatever you have composed you carefully examine before writing it out clean; and in this examination first scrutinize the whole sentence and then every part of it. Thus if any solecisms have escaped you, you will easily detect them. Correct these, write out the whole letter again, and even then do not grudge to examine it once more, for sometimes in rewriting, faults slip in again that one had expunged.[21]

It is not possible to determine if Greek was taught in a similar manner, but some students at the school did learn Greek as evidenced by the fact that Margaret More did translations from Greek. Perhaps this was done in an independent study fashion, although More's avowed appreciation of Greek would indicate his inclusion of it in a formal regimen of study.[22]

With the classical languages as a base, the students of More's school studied the teachings of the

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[21]Thomas More, "Letter to His Dearest Children and to Margaret Gigg, Whom He Numbers Among His Children: September 3, 1522," cited in Rogers, pp. 150-51.

[22]Cresacre More, op. cit., p. 158.

Church and classical fathers. As indicated in More's letter to William Gonell, Augustine and Jerome were among the recommended church writers, for they "explained the abstruse meanings of the Scriptures" and showed "in particular what goal [the students] should set for their studies."[23] Among the classical writers, More's students read Sallust, Boethius, and Quintillian. Vives informs us that on one occasion, Quintillian was the subject of a discourse by More to his children, in which More "lead them all by his eloquence the more easily to the study of wisdom."[24]

The writings of church and classical writers, alone, did not constitute the full regimen of study. As More had recommended in Utopia and elsewhere, his students also studied such subjects as astronomy, philosophy and medicine, among others. The study of astronomy received particular note in More's correspondence, where he playfully chided his students for their progress in astronomy, saying "I think you can have no longer any need of Mr. Nicholas (Kratzer), since you have learnt all that he knows about astronomy." On a more serious note, More encouraged his students in their studies and congratulated

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[23]Thomas More, "Letter to William Gonell: May 22, 1518" cited in Rogers, pp. 105-06.

[24]Foster Watson, Vives and the Renascence Education of Women.

them on the ability to take only a short time to learn thoroughly (the) sublime wonders of the Eternal Workman which so many men of illustrious and almost superhuman intellect have discovered only with hot toil and study, or rather with cold shiverings and nightly vigils . . . in the course of many ages."[25] It also seems likely that the students at the school engaged in the study of natural history, since More held a great interest for this subject, and "delighted to study with his children the forms and habits of different creatures."[26]

With praise, encouragement, and rewards for diligent study, the students of More's school undertook a humanist program of study. The regimen was based on a foundation of learning to read, write, and speak the classical languages in order to study the writings of church and classical writers, as well as a variety of liberal subjects. Usually reserved for men, More provided his humanist program equally for women and men. Putting his ideas of education for women into practice, More enabled his daughters, and their school mates, Margaret Barrow, Margaret Giggs, Anne Cresacre, et al., to obtain a truly humanist education. The women of his

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[25]Thomas More, "Letter to His Whole School Greeting: March 23, 1521" and "Letter to His Most Dear Daughter Margaret: 1521(?)" cited in Rogers, pp. 146-148.

[26]E. M. G. Routh, op. cit., p. 124.

schools, especially his daughters, became prime examples of the educability of women. Such was their repute, that two of his daughters presented a disputation in philosophy before the Royal Court in 1529, according to a letter by John Palsgrave, a court member, to More.[27] As noted, the school was commended by many, including More's humanist friends, Erasmus and Vives, who visited More's house on many occasions. Vives, moreover, shared many of More's ideas on educating women and he, too, had the opportunity to implement these ideas in the development with Catherine of Aragon of the court school for Princess Mary Tudor, which we will consider next.

The Royal Court School for Princess Mary

The Royal Court School[28] was probably established around 1523, when Juan Vives completed the "Plan of Studies for Girls" and "The Instruction of a Christian Woman" at the request of the Queen of England, Catherine of Aragon.[29]

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[27]Hogrefe, Tudor Women, p. 10.

[28]The term "Royal Court" does not refer to one specific location; rather the royal family had several royal courts to which they moved from time to time. The school for Mary was thus somewhat transient.

[29]See Chapter Four; also it should be noted that Henry VIII was involved in the education of his daughter, especially as he began to accept the possibility of Mary succeeding him; see Carrolly Erickson, Bloody Mary (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978), pp. 57-59, for Henry's reaction to his brushes with death in 1524. Also, Henry consulted Thomas More about education

This school was intended to provide a humanist education for Princess Mary Tudor and other maids of the Royal Court, similar to that education Catherine had been given. It should be noted that this school was not the first educational endeavor of humanist fashion developed by a Queen of England at her court. In the middle of the fifteenth century, perhaps as a result of the early humanist activity promoted by Sir Humphrey of Gloucester, Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI, attempted to develop a program "for the diffusion of classical culture among the wives, . . . daughters and sisters, of the numerous active students already being trained in the schools of humanism." However, this effort in early humanist activity for women failed due to the Wars of the Roses,[30] and humanist education for women at the court did not begin again until Catherine became queen.

In establishing her educational program, Catherine, like More, was concerned about the quality of teachers. Vives was enlisted to help prepare the program and suggest teachers, one of whom was Thomas Linacre, a former teacher

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of his illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, who received a humanist education similar to that offered at More's house; Henry undoubtedly expressed feelings about the upbringing of his only "legitimate" child while married to Catherine; see Routh, op. cit., p. 125 on the education of Fitzroy.

[30]Mary Agnes Cannon, Education of Women During the Renaissance, p. 97; for Wars of the Roses, see Chapter Two above.

of More and member of his humanist circle of scholars. It is unclear whether or not Vives himself served as a tutor, but Watson commented that the training of Princess Mary "was undoubtedly placed in the hands jointly of . . . Vives and . . . Linacre."[31] While Vives prepared the formal plan and a textbook called the Satellitium Sive Symbola for Mary, Linacre wrote the Rudimentae Grammatices, a Latin grammar book, to be used by the Princess and her classmates and did actual teaching. Vives is probably referring to Linacre when he says in his written introduction to the "Plan of Studies for Girls":

> You have ordered me to write a brief plan of study according to which thy daughter Mary may be educated by her teacher. Gladly I have obeyed thee, as I would in far greater matters, were I able. And since thou has chosen as her teacher, a man above all learned and honest, as was fit, I was content to point out details, as with a finger. He will explain the rest of the matters.[32]

Linacre and Vives were assisted by the Queen herself, who Cannon calls the "soul of the little school" and took an active interest in her daughter's education. After Linacre died in 1524, his place was taken by

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[31]Watson, op. cit., p. 14.

[32]Vives, "A Plan of Studies for Girls," translated in Watson, op. cit.

Richard Fetherston, who remained a tutor at the school for eight years.[33]

The regimen of study for the school's students, who we know included Frances Brandon, first cousin to Princess Mary, and Elizabeth Fitzgerald, daughter of the Earl of Kildare,[34] seemingly followed Vives plans of humanist study for women. The goal was to develop and maintain purity of mind and body, as well as the instruction of a moral, caring princess. For the reasons of developing purity of the soul and showing the way that truly noble leaders rule, Vives prepared his "Satellitium," which be begins by writing:

> It has been customary that a satellitium (escort, guard) should be attached to princes, to keep constant watch over the safety of their life and body. I think this is done rather from accepted custom than on account of its wisdom, since princes thereby give evidence of their fear. This fear is entirely born of their conscience, for there is no guard more sure or more faithful than innocence, and love of people; which . . . is called forth by love, trust, diligence, and by provision of benefits for the good of all . . . But, I for my part, often requested by your mother, an illustrious and most holy woman, will set around thy soul a guard, which will preserve thee more securely and safely than any spear

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[33]See John E. Paul, Catherine of Aragon and Her Friends, p. 54; Cannon, op. cit., p. 109; Cannon refers to a John Fetherstone, who must be the same person as Richard Fetherston, p. 111.

[34]Cannon, op. cit., p. 109; Frances Brandon was the daughter of Henry VIII's sister Mary; Elizabeth Fitzgerald was, according to Cannon, a "kinswoman of the subject of Leonardo da Vinci's 'La Gioconda' or 'Mona Lisa,'" both being descendants of the same family.

> can . . . this bodyguard of mine, once assimilated by thee in good faith, for thy safety, will block the way against all attacks and assaults on thy breast. For there is greater danger to the soul from the forces and cunning of vices, than to the body from either external or internal contests. And . . . each one's soul ought to be so much dearer to him than his body.[35]

The textbook then proceeds to offer various axioms of moral instruction, such as "nobility consists in moral excellence, not in descent," "the great body guard is love," and "a prince must consult the interests of many."[36] All of these verses were written in the classical language of Latin, which Vives, Linacre, Catherine and Fetherstone held to be the foundation for all studies.

The method for learning Latin included work in conversation, writing and reading. Following Vives' plan, the school's students were expected to pay close attention to every detail of phrases which they were studying. Pronunciation exercises began with the learning of sounds, the difference between consonants and vowels, which letters have mute sounds, and which letters were pronounced as they stood, so proper articulation could be developed. The students were also schooled in the eight parts of speech, Vives commenting in his plan that:

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[35]Juan Vives, Satellitium Sive Symbola, translated in Watson, op. cit., pp. 153-158.

[36]Ibid., pp. 156-157.

> In the declinable are those words which express that something is done. These words are inflected according to moods and tenses, and are called verbs . . . All these matters however roughly and crudely pointed out by us . . . are only, as it were, hinted at, rather than expounded by us with that exactitude which they need in actual teaching.[37]

On writing, Vives was more precise and exacting in his plan, and the students of the school were required to do daily writing exercises. In teaching writing, Catherine was involved, as noted in a letter to Mary, where she says:

> As for your writing in Latin, I am glad that ye shall change from me to Master Fetherston, for that shall do you much good to learn by him to write right. But yet sometimes, I would be glad when ye do write to Master Fetherston of your own inditing, when he hath read it, that I may see it. For it shall be a great comfort to me to see you keep your Latin and fair writing.[38]

The writing exercises also required keeping a notebook and turning verses into English and from English into Latin, as practiced at More's school. The verses were original compositions, as in letters, or from the writings of classical and church fathers. Among the stories to be used in practicing the writing, the women wrote

> of the life of the boy Papirus Praetextabus in Aulus Gellius, of Joseph in the Holy Books, of Lucretia in Livy, of Griselda and others, as found in Valerius, Sabelicus and other writers of the same kind - stories which tend to some

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[37]Vives, "A Plan of Studies for Girls" in Watson, op. cit., pp. 140.

[38]Paul, op. cit., p. 59; also Cannon, op. cit., p. 111.

> commendation of virtue, and detestation of vice . . .[39]

Additionally, students kept dictionaries in Latin and English for easy consultation.

Complementing the instruction in classical languages, the students were taught verses from the holy scriptures. Mary and the other students were expected to read passages from scripture every evening and morning, and frequently read the writings of church fathers and Christian poets.[40] From this instruction, Mary was later able to offer translations of the gospels of St. John as rendered by Erasmus.[41] This instruction also helped kindle in the students' minds the purity of thought that Vives believed was essential for women.

The education at the Royal Court School, however, was not limited to the serious study of languages and scriptures, as dictated by Vives. It also included activities of a recreational and worldly nature. For instance, we know that Mary was taught music and was a "skilled musician with ability to play the virginals, the lute and a portable organ known as the regal."[42] This involvement in music was probably influenced by

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[39]Vives, "A Plan of Studies for Girls, p. 144.

[40]Erickson, op. cit., p. 42.

[41]Watson, op. cit., p. 148.

[42]Waldman, op. cit., p. 34.

Henry VIII, who held a great love for music and introduced his daughter to it at an early age.[43] Music was considered by Catherine and Henry to be an important part of her total instruction which, in addition to study of languages, included recreational activities, such as

> . . . moderate exercise for taking the open air in gardens, sweet and wholesome places and walks which may confer upon her health, solace and comfort . . . And likewise to pass . . . time most seasons at her virginals or other instruments musical . . .[44]

Moreover, the education of the maids at the Royal Court included instruction in geography, mathematics and astronomy, a regimen similar to that found at More's school.

Following this program, the students of the Royal Court became prepared to participate in court society. Borrowing from the Spanish influence of Isabella, Catherine recreated Isabella's court school in her own court and borrowed from the ideas of the Spanish-born Vives to construct the program for Princess Mary and other maids at the court. The program as designed by Vives stressed purity for the women, but the program also stressed subjects to help the students become more worldly. For the Princess Mary, Catherine wanted a preparation for life as a regent, similar to Isabella's ambitions for her.

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[43]Ibid., p. 33.

[44]Paul, op. cit., p. 57.

The education consequently included learning designed to develop a pure and chaste woman, but also a woman familiar with the affairs of the world and the royal courts. Together with the educational program established at More's house, the Royal Court School provided a practical example of humanistic educational perspectives, and served as a model for members of the court society to follow. The result was that opportunities developed for aristocratic women to obtain humanistic educations in Tudor England. The remainder of this chapter will consider some of these women.

Humanist Women

The programs discussed above helped to promote educational programs for women, with one result being that humanist learning for women was seemingly common among aristocratic families of Tudor England. For many women, involvement in humanistic instruction in the classics and Greek and Latin was something which served, in William Wotten's words, as "ornaments of their closets."[45] But, for others, including Margaret More Roper, Mary Tudor, Catherine Parr and Lady Jane Grey, humanistic education served as a means of improving themselves and their

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[45]Hogrefe, Women of Action in Tudor England, p. ix; also Stone, op. cit., p. 143. Wotten, writing in the seventeenth century, was comparing modern learning to that of early periods.

understanding of the world. These women were good representatives of humanist education in Tudor England, and gained distinction for their intellectual prowess.

Margaret More Roper, the oldest of Thomas More's three daughters, held a degree of learning that, Routh comments, "was considered remarkable," due to her ability to write excellent verse in Greek and Latin.[46] When Margaret's letters were shown by More to others, they were always commended for her articulation and eloquence in use of Latin. For Margaret, humanist learning helped to make her a better wife and mother, providing the foundations for the education given to her own daughters.[47] However, Margaret did not limit use of her education to service for her family. Rather, she endeavored to make contributions to the understanding of her Catholicism, making translations of Erasmus's treatise on the Lords Prayer--"Precatio Dominius"--for which Richard Hyrde wrote an introduction praising educated women.[48] Additionally, she made suggestions to Erasmus and her father about their religious writings, suggestions which were put to good use. Erasmus noted Margaret's contributions by dedicating his one volume commentary on the poem Nux by Ovid to her,

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[46]Routh, op. cit., p. 132-33.

[47]Reynolds, op. cit., p. 11.

[48]Hogrefe, Tudor Women, p. 105; Routh, op. cit., p. 134.

saying in his closing comments, "A warm farewell to you who are not a lesser light of the age and of Britain."[49]

Like Margaret Roper, Mary Tudor also used her education to develop a better understanding of her religion and to promote education for others. A staunch Catholic, as evidenced by her activities as queen, Mary translated Erasmus's "Paraphrase of St. John's Gospel" with such skill that one contemporary wrote that England

> may never be able enough to praise her Grace for taking such study pain and travail in translating this paraphrase of Erasmus . . ., as a number of right learned men would have made courtesy at, and also would have brought to worse fame in the doing . . . O how greatly may we all glory in such a peerless flower . . . as her Grace is! who in the midst of courtly delights . . . doth now also confer unto (England) the inestimable benefit of furthering, both us and our posterity, in the knowledge of God's word, and to the more clear understanding of Christ's gospel.[50]

Additionally, like her mother, Mary established a court school, tutored by such scholars as Roger Ascham. Of the learning activity in Mary's court, Cannon comments that it was among the best fruit borne from the activities started by Catherine of Aragon and others.[51] Mary also put her learning to use as Queen when serving the affairs of state, being able to converse and correspond with diplomats in Latin.

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[49]Reynolds, op. cit., p. 174.

[50]Cannon, op. cit., p. 118.

[51]Ibid., p. 118.

Catherine Parr, Henry VIII's sixth and last wife, was educated, as noted earlier, in a fashion similar to Thomas More's daughters. Myra Reynolds notes that Catherine, who was accomplished in Latin and Greek, "was interested in all matters pertaining to learning and successfully used her influence with the King in behalf of the universities."[52] Furthermore, Catherine served as a tutor for Princess Elizabeth for two years, and published many works on religion. Among her publications were The Lamentation of a Sinner (1547) which went through several editions, a work called Prayers (1545), and many psalms. Roger Ascham referred to Catherine as "eruditissma regina"--the most learned queen--a title he would not have used if Catherine was not so deserving.[53] The education provided Catherine thus gained her a distinguished reputation, one based on her service to her commonwealth, her religion, and the advancement of learning.

Lady Jane Grey was another woman noted for her learning, who became Queen of England, although her hold on the throne was only brief. Lady Jane developed a proficiency for classical languages at an early age, and could read, write and speak both Greek and Latin, and was fairly well acquainted with Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic,

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[52]Reynolds, op. cit., p. 14.

[53]Hogrefe, Sir Thomas More Circle, p. 210.

French and Italian, according to a contemporary observer.[54] At the age of fourteen, Lady Jane was corresponding in Latin with religious leaders in Switzerland, seeking advice on her study of Hebrew so she read the Old Testament in the original.[55] Aschom was very impressed by Lady Jane's abilities and potential, and offered the following account of meeting her, while her parents were hunting in the park:

> I found her in her chamber, reading Phoedo Plutonis in Greek, and that with as much delight, as some gentleman would read a merry tale in Boccace. After salutation . . . I asked her why she would lose such pastime in the park? Smiling, she answered me; I wist, all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure I find in Plato.[56]

Lady Jane, in spite of her distinguished potential was unfortunately not able to put her learning to much use as she was executed in 1554 at the age of sixteen. Nonetheless, the reputation she developed in her youth makes her noteworthy as a humanist woman.

The aforementioned women, while deserving of noteworthy attention, were not however alone in their pursuit of learning or use of it to some beneficial purpose. Other women, such as Sir Anthony Cooke's daughters also gained

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[54]Reynolds, op. cit., p. 15.

[55]Plowden, op. cit., p. 128.

[56]Ascham, The School Master, in The Whole Works of Roger Ascham, edited by J. A. Giles (London, England: John Russell Smith, 1864), p. 118.

some measure of distinction. Mildred Cooke, for instance, became Lady Burghley and utilized her facility in Latin to greet leading diplomats to her home and aided her husband by making contributions to his political view point. Her sister, Anne, later Anne Bacon and mother of Sir Francis Bacon, also used her education, but for religious purposes. She wrote defenses for the Protestant movement, including a translation of an Apology in Defense of the Church of England. The daughters of Henry Fitzalan, Mary and Jane, gained some distinction through their translations of Greek works into Latin. The manuscripts they produced served as the foundation for the family library, which was handed down through several generations and thus contributed to further education. Other learned women included the daughters of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, who were noted for their abilities to work in Greek and Latin translations.[57] Undoubtedly, there were other women of note, whose obscurity is probably due to their failure to leave some distinguishing mark, or the inability of research to thus far uncover same.

As scholarly research continues, we will hopefully find additional proof of the humanist learning activities for women in Tudor England. However, given the documentation presently available, it is possible to

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[57]Hogrefe, Tudor Women.

ascertain that the humanist ideas of More, Vives and their colleagues were put into a variety of programs to provide education for women. Following the influential examples of More's household school and the Vives-oriented Royal Court School of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, many families in Tudor England provided their daughters with humanist learning. Given the tools of this learning, the humanist women of Tudor England seemingly were not satisfied to simply accept them as "ornaments for their closets." Rather, the record shows a multiplicity of cases in which the humanist women, such as Margaret More, Mary Tudor et al put their education to use to improve their understanding of religion, learning, or affairs of state. The record also shows that these women were, for the most part, loyal, caring daughters, wives and mothers. They consequently fulfilled their roles assigned by Tudor society as women at the same time as they made the best use of their education in being humanist women.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

> It is now no news in England to see young damsels in noble houses and courts of princes . . . to have continually in their hands either Psalms, homilies and other devout meditations, or else Paul's Epistles . . . and as familiarly both to read or reason thereof in Greek, Latin, French, or Italian as in English.[1]

This observation by Nicholas Udall summarizes some of the effects of English Humanist education for women in the sixteenth century. Based on the idea that women were as capable as men of learning, the humanist educational program provided educational opportunities for women of the upper classes. As discussed in the preceding chapters, humanist education for women was initiated by such humanist educators as Thomas More and Juan Vives and its development influenced by a variety of factors. This concluding chapter will present a summary of findings in regard to the historical context and causes of educational programs for women as well as the relationship of these programs to the total English educational scheme. After this summary, a discussion of further areas for study will be presented.

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[1]Hogrefe, Women of Action in Tudor England, p. 193.

Historical Influences and Perspectives

In Chapter Two, it was noted that the two centuries preceding the sixteenth century provided an unhealthy atmosphere for educational advancements. During this period, European and English society suffered the torment of the Black Plague, the Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses. Additionally, the core of medieval society--the Catholic Church--increasingly fell into a state of disrepute among its faithful. As the European populace experienced each of these developments, its perspective toward itself and its world changed. For some, such as the peasants, this caused a more violent attitude and brought peasant revolts and civil disturbances. For others, like the English citizenry at the end of the Wars of the Roses, the new perspective was characterized by a desire for peace and stability in their country. For scholars, the perspective was epitomized by a challenge to medieval views of man and traditional concepts of learning. Out of this last development humanism was born.[2]

Humanism, which began in fourteenth century Italy, was initiated by a re-examination of the writings of classical antiquity and developed into new philosophical ideas about man and approaches to educating men. While humanism was developing in Italy, war was being waged in

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[2]See Chapter Two, supra.

England and France. Consequently, humanist activity was slow in developing in England. However, English scholars traveled to Italy and returned to England with an appreciation for the new learning. By the beginning of the sixteenth century and the accession to the English throne of Henry VIII, humanism was beginning to flourish in England.[3] Shortly afterwards, humanist education for women similarly flourished.

The question to be considered here is: from this unhealthy atmosphere of social, political and religious turmoil and paralleling advancement of humanist learning, what influences of educational programs for women can be discerned? From a social-political stance, it is possible to say that such developments as the Black Plague indirectly played a role by creating a new attitude in man which led to Renaissance humanism and new educational developments. In Italy, these developments included the promotion of new pedagogical approaches by Vittorino da Feltre and Guarino da Verona, who believed that women should be educated in a similar fashion as men. The models developed by these and other Italian humanists were copied in Spain by Isabella, whose daughter Catherine was educated in humanist fashion and brought her learning and educational ideas to England.

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[3]See Chapter Three, supra.

Another social-political development having a more direct influence on developing educational programs for women in Tudor England was the Wars of the Roses. These wars had an initial effect of postponing humanistic education for women from the mid-fifteenth century to the sixteenth century.[4] This occurred when Margaret of Anjou was deterred from establishing a humanistic school for maids of the court by the onset of the civil war. These wars thus served as an influential factor in the timing of the development of educational programs for women.

The Wars of the Roses also played other roles by continuing the unhealthy and unstable atmosphere that plagued England since the days of the Black Plague and depleting the ranks of the nobility, the traditional advisers to the crown. The unhealthy and unstable atmosphere forced Henry VII to take strong actions to centralize authority and bring stability and domestic peace to England. His need to do this coincided with his need for recognition of his claim to the throne from outside powers. For this reason, he took diplomatic steps to arrange the marriage of his son Arthur to Catherine of Aragon. This arrangement helped give Henry VII's reign legitimacy and stability and brought to England a woman

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[4]See Chapter Five, supra.

who was influential in promoting educational programs for women.[5]

The depletion of the ranks of the nobility was seemingly one reason why Henry VII and, later, Henry VIII supported humanism, as the men they chose for advisers were involved in this movement. Additionally, the depletion of the nobility helped secure the Tudor hold on the crown and allow Henry VIII to follow his father in developing a strong central government.[6] The combination of humanist advisers, such as Thomas More, in the royal court, and strong royal direction gave education for women sanction from the throne, which set an example for others to follow.

The marriage of Catherine to Henry VIII, who was a supporter of humanist activities, also played an important role in promoting educational programs for women. While Catherine served as an example through her learning and arranged to have Vives prepare a plan for Princess Mary, Henry also took an interest in the education of his daughter and also hosted at least one disputation between humanist women.[7] Henry was also a close friend with Thomas More, whose house he frequented. It is

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[5]See Chapter Four, supra.

[6]See Chapter Three, supra.

[7]See Chapter Four, supra.

highly probable that Henry was witness to the example of More's school, and it was More's daughters who disputed before him in 1529. The favor shown toward More by Henry probably played an influential role in making More's school an example to follow.

More's activities, with or without Henry's favor, were noteworthy enough to influence other humanists such as Erasmus and Hyrde to favor education for women. It is difficult, of course, to say what More's views would have been if he had not fathered three daughters. But having done so and having educated them in a humanist fashion, More became a primary motivator of educational programs for women through his school, his writings, his position among humanists and favored status at the Royal Court.

In sum, the probable influences of the development and promotion of educational programs for women were many and varied. Indirectly, social developments such as the Black Plague influenced the movement by setting the tone and atmosphere for the beginnings of humanism. More directly, the Wars of the Roses, which continued the unhealthy atmosphere initiated by the Hundred Years' War and the Black Plague in England and led to the depletion of the nobility, caused Tudor efforts to strengthen the throne. These efforts led to the crown's support of humanist advisers and brought

Catherine of Aragon to England as part of a diplomatic alliance. The roles played by Catherine, along with Henry VIII, Thomas More, and Juan Vives among others were instrumental in developing ideas and promoting programs which set an example to follow. Medieval custom, too, played a role in the form of following Royal example, since many of the known programs for education of women were initiated by individuals with some ties to the Royal Court. Finally, chance developments have to be seen as playing an influential role in the sense that three of More's children were female, Henry and Catherine's one child was a girl, and Henry's concern for the proper education of his daughter was at least partially influenced by his two brushes with death.

These influences suggested here are by no means an exhaustive set, nor are all of them newly offered suggestions. Some of the aforementioned influences, such as the role of Catherine and More, and humanist activity in Italy, have been offered as possible explanations in previous scholarly works. The additional suggestions noted here are intended to provide a wider basis for considering possible influences and to suggest that more research and analysis of the period's developments are needed to not only discern further possible influences for women, but also causes of the decline of the English humanist program for women.

Summary of the Research: English Humanism and Education for Women

The research contained in this study has focused on the humanist educational programs for women, considering probable reasons for the promotion of such programs in Tudor England and the relationship of those programs to the total English humanist programs. The intentions have been to provide the historical context and possible causes for development of humanistic programs in sixteenth century England and to develop a better understanding of English Renaissance Humanism.

To the above intents, this study considered in Chapter Two and parts of succeeding chapters, various developments which provided the climate and offered possible influences for the development of English humanism and educational programs for women. In Chapter Three, the study focused on the development and evolution of Renaissance English humanist educational programs, considering the ideas of such leaders of English humanism as Thomas More, Desiderius Erasmus and Juan Vives. Chapters Four and Five considered the English humanist ideas and programs related to education for women, as well as the relationship of these ideas and programs to the total English humanist program.

In the present chapter, we have concluded our discussion of the humanist pedagogical program for women

by analyzing the influences of its promotion and development. The remainder of this chapter will include a consideration of the questions posed in Chapter One in regard to the relationship between humanistic educational programs for women and those for men, as well as suggestions for further research.

The questions posed in Chapter One included:

1) Were the aims of English humanist educational programs for women similar to the aims of English humanist education for men?

2) Was the curricular content and pedagogical method advocated by English humanists for the education of women similar to the curricula and methods advocated for the education of men?

3) Did the designers of humanist educational programs advocate similar educational opportunities for women as were available for men?

In regard to the first question, the English humanists developed educational plans based on the idea that women had the same learning capabilities as men. Their pedagogical plans for women emphasized that women who were given a humanist education would become virtuous human beings and be able to contribute to improving their commonwealth and their world. This aim--improving the world--paralleled the overall goal of the general English humanist educational program--to develop virtuous individuals who would rule and serve the commonwealth and

direct its service to the public good. In the English humanist scheme of things, this translated to improving a world which they saw befrought with many problems. As noted in Chapter Three, English humanists such as More and Erasmus saw a better world on the horizon, and shaped their educational plan to train people to develop this world. As More wrote in Utopia, and as he and others wrote in their educational treatises, women were to be given a humanist education to participate in the humanist refashioning of society.

The idea that women were as capable as men of learning did not mean that the English humanists saw men and women as equals. On the contrary, the English humanists still held the medieval notion that women were subservient to men. This, however, only served to emphasize the need for women to receive a humanist education similar to that received by men. In this way, the humanist woman could serve as a better partner to her husband in helping him and understand his problems and concerns as well as those of the world. The English humanist agenda thus stressed schooling for women in classical languages and writings, holy scriptures and church writings and modern subjects such as the sciences, in addition to the traditional training in household duties. This curriculum paralleled that offered to men, thus the curricular program for men and women emphasized primarily the same material.

However, while the aims and curricular content of English Humanist educational plans for women were similar to the aims and curricula advocated for men, educational opportunities differed. The programs advocated for men included developing such grammar school programs as Magdalen School and St. Paul's and colleges dedicated to humanist studies, e.g., St. John's College at Cambridge. Such programs were considered outside the realms of possibility for women by even the most ardent of supporters of humanist learning opportunities for women. Instead, such individuals as Thomas More, Juan Vives and Catherine of Aragon established household and court schools in which women received humanist training similar to that found in grammar schools and university colleges. The sum of the English humanist efforts to provide education for women thus was based on offering similar curricular content as that received by men, but in different types of institutional settings. Nonetheless, the aims were similar in education for men and women--being prepared to play a role in improving the world. For women, this role was that of a supportive and learned wife and mother who could contribute to the understanding of her world through education of her children, readings, writings, and even public service when necessary.

Given the integral role that education of women played in the English humanist plan, it seems plausible

to suggest that a broader definition of English Renaissance humanism be developed--one inclusive of the educational programs for women. Moreover, based on the research of this study, it seems that Renaissance humanism, at least in England, was much broader in context than simply classical training for men. Rather, English Renaissance humanism, as shaped by More, Erasmus and Vives was a broad based program stressing excellence in teaching, concern for the student, disdain of corporate punishment, schooling in classics and modern subjects, and educational opportunities for men and women, to enable them to develop a better world. To extend this finding to an expanded definition of Renaissance humanism will require additional reconsiderations of the humanist movement in other countries. Such research is but one area for possible additional research which may shed further light on humanist activity in regard to education of women. Other suggestions follow in the concluding section of this chapter.

Suggestions for Further Research

The reconsideration of Renaissance humanist educational programs for women in other countries beside England is but one area for suggested research. A second area is the in-depth search for additional evidence of educational activities during the period. While the period under consideration is nearly five centuries past,

it is not impossible that original manuscripts, correspondence or records have not fully been uncovered or reviewed for additional evidence of educational activity for women in Tudor England. Such a project would prove to be time consuming, but the discovery of additional materials will shed further light on a period and an activity which was important in the history of English humanism and education.

Another possible area for study is a consideration of the relationship between English Renaissance Humanism and the acceptance of the idea that women could accede to the throne in their own right. In the middle of the sixteenth century, England had two women, Mary I and Elizabeth I, reign successively. It seems that a relationship may exist between acceptance of their reigns and ideas promoted by humanists, since their reigns followed closely the flourishing of humanist activity in England. Moreover, Mary and Elizabeth, as well as many of their peers, were educated in the humanist fashion.

Finally, there is a continued need to examine the causes of the promotion as well as decline of the humanist educational program for women in Tudor England. In this study we have considered and analyzed a variety of possible influences for the development and promotion, with the result a base of influences broader than simply personal or ideational have been offered. Further study

along these lines in concert with other studies suggested here will expand our knowledge of the full history of the English humanist program for the education of women.

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