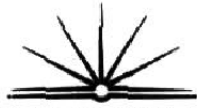


QUEEN ELIZABETH I

The statement / view of Chris Bickerton can be applied to the historical figure Queen Elizabeth I of England. The debates over interpretations ~~are~~ ^{is} her gender and identity ~~and political administrator~~. The historians who discuss this are Geoffrey Elton and Susan Bassnett.

The view of understanding the past as a means of 'tackling' interpretations head on is applicable to understanding Queen Elizabeth and her gender / identity. ~~the Queen~~
~~viewed~~ ~~was~~.

One of these interpretations was that of G.R. Elton. Noted British scholar, he remarks upon Elizabeth's identity through his histories. Throughout antiquity, women have been viewed as second to ~~the~~ man



the idea of male dominance and patriarchy.

Elton, like any other man [before the seventies] was no exception to this idea.

On her gender / Identity he states her womanly traits and differs those to her traits as a queen / ruler. He profoundly

notes that [in his history] 'that it is to be noticed of her traits as a ruler, compared to her obvious failings as a woman'. In the period that he wrote this history ^[1930's - 50's] women

were still playing second fiddle to the

men. The idea that women are the

home carers and creators of family whilst

the men are the breadwinners' ^{are reflected through his} ~~his~~ writings.

~~statements of her developing 'two old maidish~~

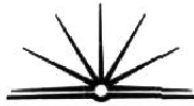
~~traits~~. Elton furthermore states the frustration

of the court 'through constant tearing of documents

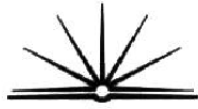
refusal to sign documents, and frequently fits of

rage'. ~~was~~ This was based on the aspects

that he noted in his time. 'Her constant



capriciousness and persistent dilatory' drove the courtiers mad. Elton reflects another comprehensive ~~of~~ historical writing of Elizabeth William Camden. Camden, a contemporary historian, wrote of her reign and published it, ~~to~~ only a few years after her death. In his history, her identity denotes the feminine characteristic of frequent rages. He states 'her mind was confused'. In accordance with his noting her masculinity of her speech at Tilbury in 1587, where he writes 'the Queen was overcome with a masculine spirit' inferring the influence of 'mighty' king Henry VIII, Elton states that in other areas, she was masculine. Elton furthermore states the role that Elizabeth took when her reign proceeded. 'she developed to old maidish traits; constant search for youthfulness and jealousy of women, younger than her who had already

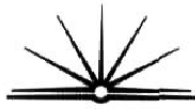


found husbands'. The insinuation that she was persistently striving for youth is reflected furthermore in films such as 'Queen Elizabeth' with Helen Mirren as Elizabeth displaying bounds of youthfulness with make-up and being chased around the palace by Lord Burghley. In a sense, Elton's influences came from his knowledge ~~about~~ [or lack thereof] of Elizabeth, only commenting on the masculine as being the leader, the woman as the capricious character and inferring her androgyny.

The other ^{side of the} debate is feminist sociologist Susan Bassnett. Acclaimed for her strong feminist ideology, she wrote a revision of Elizabeth from a feminist point of view

Bassnett, writing in a time where women were becoming accepted into the workforce, strove to prove that Elizabeth was not a capricious woman and that her acts were more than feminist traits. Bassnett curtails the idea of her frequent rages and document-shredding as not being feminine but to 'breakdown their [courtiers] confidence'. Her 'androgynous' nature implicated her differentiation between man: ruler and women: ruled. However, Bassnett intices thus to think opposite. Her character ~~is~~ ~~was~~ was 'shrewd and determined, whilst in parliament she would laugh and encourage conversation, some involving uncouth content ~~matter~~'. This was useful to Elizabeth as she was able to converse with men and connect with men.

Elton noted, 'as aforementioned, her



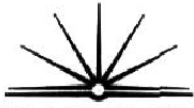
capriciousness and persistent dilatory'.

Bassnett refutes these ideas of femininity and states 'these were political ploys she used... to breakdown their confidence'.

Likewise with those who wanted her hand in marriage. In that period in time, she was the most sort-after woman in Europe and she used this to her advantage. Her 'toying' with the suitors gave them hope. She used the wealth given by them to restore England and broke off any alliance with suitors (foreign).

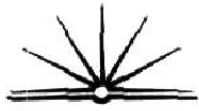
The knowledge of her reason to marry is reviewed ~~as~~ as if she married a French or Spanish, the religious ideas of England could be put under strain.

Instead of Elton stating her old-maidish traits, Bassnett's interpretation fails

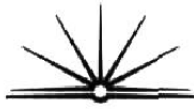


better to that. This is because she knew not only how to get her way but to remind those of who is really running the country. Like ~~various~~ interpretations of Elizabeth based on Elton, some ~~film~~ cinematographic interpretations reflect not only Bassnett, but feminine interpretations. The movie 'Queen Elizabeth' with Helen Mirren notes her strong-willed character. BBC ^{movie} released in 1970's; 'Elizabeth I' denotes her power as a strong-willed, smart character with such examples as low camera angle shots to more obvious voice-control and stance.

Her gender and identity come to climactic fashion at the much debated speech at Tilbury. The essence of her character described by Elton as predominantly male with William



Camden stating her masculinity, Bassnett refers to it as a reminder of who she was and that at that point gender did ~~not~~ matter. Historian John Warren also states her ploy at Tilbury. Described by all as wearing metal plate and suit of armour with a visor she states her ~~reason~~ reason for being at Tilbury. She is famously noted as saying 'I may ~~be~~ have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a lion'. Whilst Riton and Camden state that of her masculinity, Warren and Bassnett confirm her position as a means of not only being their leader but to show that she can rule a country and ~~to~~ to remind those of who she descended from.



In conclusion, Bickerton's statement is evident in the debate over Elizabeth's gender with differing interpretations coming to light and finding the truth of her past. The historians included contemporary historian William Camden and main debatory historians Geoffrey Rudolph Elton and Susan Bassnett both writing from different perspectives as male ^{from pre-Women's Liberation era,} and feminist, remarking on the figure Queen Elizabeth during her reign in the sixteenth century.