



Elizabeth I: A Feminist Perspective (Berg Women's Series)

Susan Bassnett

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Elizabeth I is probably the most famous English woman ever to have lived. She has been celebrated as a great stateswoman, during whose reign England acquired some degree of security in the troubled European arena and at the same time began to lay the foundations for its future empire. She presided over a country undergoing a cultural renaissance previously unimagined. By the time of her death at the age of seventy in 1603, she was being heralded as rival to the Virgin Mary, as a second Queen of Earth and Heaven, as a woman more than mortal women. She has provided subject-matter for innumerable books: seventy biographies have appeared since 1890 and it is impossible to list the enormous number of historical novels based on some part of her life.

However, among the many books written about Elizabeth I there is none like this one: Bassnett looks at the life and achievements of Elizabeth from a twentieth-century feminist perspective and considers her as writer, politician, scholar and woman. As a result she succeeds in presenting a more rounded portrait of a figure who has fascinated successive generations but whose private and public life has frequently been the subject of fantasy and speculation.



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