

**Levina Teerlinc: A Social Analysis of a Tudor Court Artist from 1546 -  
1576**

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## **Abstract**

Patronage can be hard to come by for any artist. It was especially difficult for women artists during the Renaissance. One such artist that was able to establish a successful career for herself was Levina Teerlinc, a Flemish born miniature portrait painter. Teerlinc painted at the English court for four consecutive Tudor monarchs from 1546 to her death in 1576. But how did she maintain her highly honorable position? How did she ensure her continued patronage from these high ranking patrons? These are questions I will address by analyzing the relationships and connections she formed during her time at court and the artwork she produced from them. The Tudor line from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I was fraught with political, social and religious controversy. It was up to courtiers to preserve or improve their standing by remaining in favor, regardless of who was in charge. My thesis will explore how Teerlinc enabled herself to do so through her adaptability, social prowess and artistic skill.

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## **Dedication**

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## Introduction

Patronage in sixteenth-century England was vital to every resident no matter their class, gender, occupation or who ruled them at the time. For those at court, patronage was a driving force in their lives. Patronage granted courtiers privilege, status, profit (financial and social) and favor for themselves and those closest to them. This system made the English court a social and political battleground. All competed for their place in society. It was important who their patron was, as who courtiers were connected to often determined how well they succeeded and how far they went. To receive patronage from the English sovereign was the highest honor. One such individual who was granted this honor by not one royal patron, but several, was Flemish miniature artist, Levina Teerlinc.

As an accomplished miniaturist, or limner, Teerlinc had been taught by her father Simon Benninck, a well renowned northern European miniaturist in his time.<sup>1</sup> Teerlinc became known for her limning talent through the work she did in his workshop, as well as a possible apprenticeship in Rome. She was invited to paint for Henry VIII's court in 1546. Teerlinc remained one of the highest paid court artists throughout the reigns of all three of his children.<sup>2</sup> This study focuses on her career at the English court, and how she utilized and

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<sup>1</sup> Erna Auerbach, *Tudor Artists: A Study of Painters in the Royal Service and of Portraiture on Illuminated Documents from the Accession of Henry VIII to the Death of Elizabeth I*. (London: The Athlone Press, 1954), 51. The art of limning is another term commonly used to describe miniature painting. Limners also illuminate manuscripts and documents in addition to portraits and other paintings done in miniature.

<sup>2</sup> "Henry VIII: November 1546, 21 – 30," in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 21 Part 2, pp. 475 (101), September 1546-January 1547*, ed. James Gairdner and R H Brodie (London, 1910), 203 – 248. British History Online, Accessed March 29, 2021. [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol21/no2/pp475\(101\)](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol21/no2/pp475(101)). Hereafter referred to as L&P 21, ii: 475 (101). She was granted annuity of £40 "from the Annunciation of our Lady last past" which was March of 1546. This suggests that she came to England then. She worked for the English court until her death in 1576.



maintained her own position, as well as those closest to her. I hope to explain how Teerlinc navigated her way through four different Tudor courts by developing important patron relationships and then helping her patrons navigate the social and political intricacies of court life. The social aspects of her work went hand in hand with her success as a master of her craft. Sixteenth-century England had developed an atmosphere that provided opportunities for women, but the artistic field was still dominated by men. Women such as Teerlinc capitalized on their social ability to prosper in patronage. The relationships that Teerlinc formed at court proved to be as crucial to her career as her artistic ability. Though she was invited to court by royalty, it was her responsibility to maintain and even strengthen her favor in order to stay there. Her close connections with high-ranking figures equally looking to maintain or raise their status resulted in opportunities growing out of mutual agreement. Teerlinc's understanding of court dynamics reflects her adaptability and strategic mindset. Her artistic ability blended with her social grace and opportunist attitude was the recipe needed to succeed in this atmosphere. Without this combination, Teerlinc could not have been one of the few artists to prosper in four consecutive Tudors courts, let alone end up as one of the highest paid artists in sixteenth-century England.

The 1970s renewal of the women's rights movement inspired scholars to re-evaluate women's importance in society. Historians aimed to revive previously marginalized women in history. Between the 1970s and mid 2000s, eminent scholars such as Elsa Honig Fine, Nancy G. Heller, Susan E. James, Catherine King and Whitney Chadwick began to explore female artists more closely. Their works are designed as collections that include several of these artists. Some of the artists, such as Sofonisba Anguissola and Artemesia Ghentilesci,

have been looked at more thoroughly than Teerlinc. This is due to the larger number of credible attributions given to the former, as well as the wider range of popularity they received during their time. While each of these historians do their part to bring female Renaissance artists out of the shadows, their sections about Teerlinc are much smaller in comparison. Teerlinc, with a far less distinguishable oeuvre and smaller circle of patronage, was only given a couple pages at most in their collections.<sup>3</sup> At times, she is only mentioned in passing as a court artist, with Anguissola, or another more popular artist, as the star of the study. Many female artists are even the singular focus for a study, but there is yet to be a biography solely dedicated to Teerlinc.

As historical research concentrating on women expands, specified analyses grow. A more recent, and individualized study focusing on Teerlinc is the article, "Levina Teerlinc, Illuminator at the Tudor Court" by Louisa Woodville.<sup>4</sup> Woodville, an art historian specializing in medieval and early modern art, describes the state of current research on Teerlinc and analyzes several pieces attributed to her. She argues that Teerlinc's relatively large salary of £40 points to a larger oeuvre, despite evidence of a small output.<sup>5</sup> She focuses on the painter's artistic choices and how the art portrays the sitter to support her argument. Woodville asks important questions such as "Did a given artist use bold, confident strokes, or hesitant weak ones? Who were the patrons, what subjects were depicted, and what fashions

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<sup>3</sup> The majority of scholarship on Teerlinc is within collaborative pieces such as these. There are a few recent individualized studies; these are in the hope of establishing her oeuvre. Teerlinc did not sign her work and English records are quite sparse at times, which makes it hard to attribute work to her and study her time at the Tudor court.

<sup>4</sup> Louisa Woodville, "Levina Teerlinc, Illuminator at the Tudor Court," Artherstory, May 12, 2020. Accessed March 30, 2021. <https://artherstory.net/levina-teerlinc/>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

showcased? If they wrote treatises, what did they say? Who influenced them, and whom did they inspire?"<sup>6</sup> I have attempted to keep these questions in mind for this study.

I will focus much of my analysis on Teerlinc's art, but in a way that supports my argument toward a noticeable pattern in her work that exemplifies the era she lived in. Teerlinc's skill in portraiture, but specifically how she presented her sitters, was a pivotal key in attracting patronage. She used her artistry to promote herself and her patrons at court. Portraiture, in all sizes, was an exceptional way for English sixteenth-century royalty and aristocracy to share their image and aspirations to an appointed audience. Miniatures were a particular craft that allowed for a more intimate, but nonetheless effective, transaction. The Tudor historian Graham Reynolds argued that, "the portrait was no longer a sacred stylized icon, a representation of saint or king, with personal idiosyncrasies suppressed in favor of an ideal of divinity or royal power; it was the examination of a man's [or woman's] character as reflected by his external appearance."<sup>7</sup> This idea highlights a central aspect in Teerlinc's success – her capacity to accomplish this task for her patrons. Her skill benefited both sitter and artist because it promoted each. To be sure, portraits represented all involved, including who commissioned them, who painted them and who or what they were for. By strategically increasing her social network, adapting when needing to and producing images that enhanced the sitter's aims, Teerlinc secured vital patronage throughout her thirty years at court.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph Edwards and L.G.G. Ramsey, *The Connoisseur's Complete Period Guides to the Houses, Decoration, Furnishings and Chattels of the Classic Periods: The Tudor Period: 1500-1603* (London: Connoisseur, 1968), 127.

My thesis analyzes the political, social, and cultural intricacies that went into Teerlinc's progressive career. My first chapter sets up my argument because I demonstrate how Teerlinc utilized her art in a way that promoted her patrons and herself. My analysis of several of her attributed works offers an in-depth look into why her patrons presented themselves certain ways in their portraits and why they ultimately chose Teerlinc to fulfill their image preferences. This chapter is crucial to my study, as it highlights what went into one's determination to maintain or improve one's position, with a specific emphasis on imagery. I will show how this idea applied to Teerlinc, but this information also allows for further interpretation of the time frame that her career was in, which will also be addressed in chapter three. My second chapter details relationships Teerlinc formed within each reign. The artist's social skills were a prominent factor in her continuance at court. This will include circumstances that went into her initial employment as well as how she maintained her position in later reigns. Teerlinc's knack for creating lasting bonds proved to be useful to her in the ever-changing Tudor court. I also pay close attention to what was expected of her as a member of the court and how her position played into her survival. My third chapter is devoted to Katherine Parr's influence not only on Henry VIII and his daughters, but also, other important members in society that were significant patrons to Teerlinc. Katherine established a pattern of utilizing portraiture for her benefit; a talent present in her step-daughters' reigns. This pattern was significant to Teerlinc's attributed work. Katherine's impact on art patronage helps explain, at least in part, why Teerlinc's artistry was coveted by the English court. I also argue that the cultural and social atmosphere that the Tudors

created was an essential part of Teerlinc's success. Their values of self advocacy, image perfection and social advancement are represented in her artwork.

Teerlinc was a favored artist and gentlewoman of the court, therefore the relationships she built and the art she produced for influential people is significant in studying this time period. She is a prime example for why women artists from this era merit further study because she, and other artists like her, can give perspectives that have not yet been fully considered. The social and cultural perspectives I am connecting to her artwork is substantial for studying this period and this artist because image was everything at the Tudor court. It mattered how well one could present themselves to their superiors and peers to ultimately prosper in society. I argue that as an artist for high ranking courtiers, she was responsible for promoting her patrons' images, but also her own, to remain in her central position. We must look at what her art and connections can tell us. What aspects of the Tudor court can be deciphered from these inquiries? What historical significance can be analyzed? I hope to present a fully developed Levina Teerlinc, court miniaturist in her own right; an artist who used her craft to benefit herself, her patrons and her family. I aim to show how she capitalized on her artistic ability, and position, to successfully weave herself through the tumultuous Tudor era. Teerlinc continued to work throughout four consecutive Tudor reigns. She thus serves as an effective example of the adaptability and drive one had to have to thrive in mid sixteenth century England.

## **Chapter One: An Artist who Promoted her Patrons and Herself**

This chapter explores why Teerlinc was an understated, yet pivotal figure sixteenth-century England, and how her patrons utilized her skill to display themselves in certain ways. First and foremost, it was women who supported Teerlinc's endeavors. More pointedly, her biggest patrons were all women close to or wearing the Crown: Katherine Parr, Katherine's sister Anne Herbert, Mary I, Elizabeth I, and Katherine Grey. These women's positions relied on their ability to maintain them. This was essential to Teerlinc's success because her art was one of the ways for these high-ranking women to do so. But this should not downplay her ability to develop and support her male patrons, such as Edward VI and members of the Seymour, Grey and Parr families.<sup>8</sup> Regardless, Teerlinc must be credited for how she depicted her sitters, as well as how that positively reflected on her.

It is important to remember that this analysis is not just about what her patrons wanted to promote about themselves through Teerlinc's work, but also how she as an artist was promoted. Unfortunately, the sixteenth century was a time when artists were just beginning to sign their pieces; it was far from a common practice, especially among court artists. A big reason why it has been so difficult ascertaining an oeuvre for Teerlinc is that she did not sign her work. Artists of the English court produced their work for the purposes of their patrons. They did not have a great amount of opportunity to seek patronage from

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<sup>8</sup>Department of Engraving, Illustration and Design and Department of Paintings, Accessions 1942, "Place of Origin," Victoria and Albert Museum, 1955, Accessed March 31, 2021. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O81991/portrait-miniature-of-an-unknown-portrait-miniature-anonymous/>. Teerlinc is attributed to a 1550 original miniature portrait of an unknown man. Roy Strong believes it is possibly Edward Seymour. This suggests a connection to families through her female patrons and her husband's patronage from William Parr.

outside the court. Though Teerlinc's artwork may have been shared among courtiers, a significant way she was noticed was through the favor bestowed upon her by her royal patrons. The recognition of Teerlinc's skill is seen in the progressive privileges she received throughout her long career at court. Still, a large part of her promotion must have been because of her artistic talent. She may have produced her art under the direction of her patrons, but how she displayed her sitters mattered greatly in creating more opportunity to showcase her talent. For what other reason would there be to continually label her position as 'paintrix' in the Royal accounts?

Some historians have questioned her impact on the Tudor court. Up until the late twentieth century, many early modern female artists like Teerlinc have been largely ignored or marginalized in scholarship. For example, the British artist Miles F. De Montmorency did not give the Flemish artist much thought in his book *A Short History of Painting in England*.<sup>9</sup> He wrote, "several minor Flemish painters were working in England in the early fifteenhundreds, and the names of Gerard, Luke and Susannah Hornebolte or Hornebaud, Johannes Corvus...,Lavinia Terlinck...are preserved, but none of these was an artist of outstanding importance."<sup>10</sup> Some of these artists, including Teerlinc, received closer attention after 1933. A significant reason for this past neglect of Teerlinc is that some of her work has been attributed to other artists or misattributed. This created an imperfect picture of her importance to the court.

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<sup>9</sup> Miles F. De Montmorency, *A Short History of Painting in England* (London: J.M Dent and Sons, 1933).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 40.

A historian who takes an insightful approach to Teerlinc is Erna Auerbach in her book about Tudor artists. Auerbach was a scholar who specialized in Tudor English art. She examined a combination of court records, art found on documents and artistic styles to show the evolution of Tudor art. Auerbach used these types of records to illuminate Teerlinc's presence at court, and to connect crucial information from them as evidence of the extent of Teerlinc's oeuvre. Her work significantly supports my thesis, in that it allowed me to look at Teerlinc's oeuvre more fully. By analyzing her art found on documents, in addition to her other portraits, I perceived a pattern in how she presents her subjects. Surprisingly early, Auerbach points out that Teerlinc, as well as other Tudor artists, may have been more significant than previously thought, asserting that the reputations of Hans Holbein and Nicholas Hilliard have overshadowed their contemporaries.<sup>11</sup> Studies that underestimate other Tudor artists followed their fame.<sup>12</sup> Early to mid twentieth century Tudor art historians have tended to view Teerlinc as a less important bridge between the male miniaturists that preceded and succeeded her. An example of early neglect of Teerlinc as a vital part of the English Renaissance is in James Lees-Milne's study *Tudor Renaissance*. Lees-Milne was an English writer and historian who specialized in the early modern European era. Although Lees-Milne briefly mentioned Teerlinc as a "close favorite" to Elizabeth I, he also refers to her as only a rival to the other well known woman artist at the

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<sup>11</sup> Holbein and Hilliard were some of the most renowned northern Renaissance artists to work for the Tudors. Holbein did a variety of artwork for Henry VIII and Hilliard was Elizabeth I's miniature artist from the 1570s until her death.

<sup>12</sup> Auerbach, 1. Auerbach also argues that the large amount of unsigned and undated Tudor art contributed to this issue because the undertaking of this research might have been "at once unrewarding and immense." The fact that Holbein and Hilliard signed much of their work supports the idea that artists who did not were harder to analyze.



Tudor court, Susannah Horenbout.<sup>13</sup> This example points to mid-century male historian lack of objectivity toward early modern women artists. They failed to look past Teerlinc's gender. Like her male contemporaries, Teerlinc received and kept her position because of her artistic talent and the fact that she was socially adept. I aim to prove this over the next two chapters by presenting how her artistic skills were used by the court and how she in turn used those and other skills to succeed.

Analyzing Teerlinc's career, paying particular attention to how she portrayed her sitters and what that meant to their audiences, is beneficial for understanding that her oeuvre was as central to the Tudors as Holbein and Hilliard's. My objective is therefore to reassess what is known about her and her art from 1545 to 1576, taking into account her position at court and with whom she was (or might have been) in contact with. Teerlinc, having been patroned by several high-standing figures at court, seemed to be a pivotal hand behind their visual propaganda. Her attributed work largely supports this theory, as well as shows the complicated inner workings of court connections and why those propaganda efforts were essential during this time. By considering who and what her paintings depicted, a further understanding of her significance during this time can be formed.

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<sup>13</sup> James Lees-Milne, *Tudor Renaissance*. British Art and Building Series (London, New York: Batsford, 1951), 67.

## Analysis of Teerlinc's Techniques

Teerlinc has been criticized for weak draughtsmanship. Many of her portraits do depict her female sitters with thin arms and a very small waist, which can be seen as disfigurement. Roy Strong's, one of twentieth century's prominent "experts on Tudor-Stuart art" was one of the leading historians to present this assessment. Strong attempted to solidify a body of Teerlinc's work in his study, *Artists of the Tudor Court: The Portrait Miniature Rediscovered 1520-1620*.<sup>14</sup> Some of his critiques are still credited in art institutions that preserve Teerlinc's attributions, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum.<sup>15</sup> Though some of his attributions have been re-attributed to other artists, he viewed her artistry as "weak in draughtsmanship, with poor paint and ill-defined brushstrokes."<sup>16</sup> The art historian was quick to assign any miniature with an "emaciated figure" and thin arms as Teerlinc's signature artistry based off of a painting that was only tentatively attributed to her.<sup>17</sup> Not only did Strong fail to take Teerlinc's prestigious position at the English court into account, he continuously disparages her in comparing her work to that of later miniaturist, Nicholas Hilliard. For example, Strong included a miniature painted by Teerlinc's father in order to prove a comparison between his style and hers. However, he followed with "his daughter

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<sup>14</sup> Roy Strong and V.J. Murrell, *Artists of the Tudor Court: The Portrait Miniature Rediscovered 1520-1620* (London: The Victorian and Albert Museum, 1983).

<sup>15</sup> "Biographical References" for *Portrait of Mary Dudley, Lady Sidney*. Victoria and Albert Museum, 2008. Accessed November 24, 2020. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O174799/portrait-of-mary-dudley-lady-miniature-levina-teerlinc/>. It should be noted that Strong was the Director of the museum from 1974-1987.

<sup>16</sup> Strong, 52.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. This painting is *An Elizabethan Maundy* and has since been debated whether or not it is aligned with the Flemish style that Teerlinc learned from her father. Another is a miniature titled *Portrait of a Young Lady* now attributed to Lucas Horenbout. It is part of the Yale Center for British Art Collection. <https://collections.britishart.yale.edu/catalog/tms:11611>.

never inherited her father's powers as a draughtsman, but she must be the vital link that binds Nicholas Hilliard in a line of descent from the Ghent-Bruges school."<sup>18</sup> Along with the exaggerated praise he gives Hilliard in much of his book, this statement suggests an unhealthy bias toward the later Elizabethan artist and an aversion to Teerlinc that has no basis. For if Teerlinc's artistic ability was as feeble as Strong pointed out, she would not have been invited to England by the monarchy, let alone continued to paint for the Tudors.

Strong's opinions of Teerlinc are present in David Loades' *The Tudor Court*.<sup>19</sup> Loades, a British art historian who focuses on the Tudor era, bases his verdict by exploring the dynamics of court life under the Tudors.<sup>20</sup> Like Strong, Loades regarded Teerlinc as an artist who was "not very distinguished by comparison with either Horenbout or Holbein," and had "poor quality" in her paintings.<sup>21</sup> He places significant emphasis on her position as a Gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber to the three queens she worked for. He suggests that this was the reason she was paid so highly and that she was favored by her royal patrons. While she was favored, her payments are clearly made out to "paintrix," not gentlewoman.<sup>22</sup> He does say that she is an "important link in the history of court painting," but only as a connection to the Flemish style she passed to Hilliard.<sup>23</sup> Strong, and consequently, Loades discount the effective presence Teerlinc and her work had on the court. These historians are

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>19</sup> David Loades, *The Tudor Court* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1986). Loades cites Strong several times in his book. He directly acknowledges and builds on Strong's arguments about Teerlinc.

<sup>20</sup> "David Loades," Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, University of Wales Press, 2021. Accessed March 30, 2021. <https://uwp.co.uk/author/1933/>.

<sup>21</sup> Loades, 130.

<sup>22</sup> Auerbach, 77

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. The connection between Teerlinc and Hilliard is presented more clearly in Strong's *The Renaissance Miniature*, pages 66-69. Loades, 230.

thinking too linearly about the timeline of art and pay far too much attention to the ones they consider "greater" than others. Personal opinions of her work must be cast aside to truly examine her career.

It is possible that these features were intentionally emphasized, which adds to Teerlinc's appeal. Many sixteenth-century aristocratic women wore gowns that were synched at the waist to accentuate their hips as a sign of healthy fertility. However, when Mary married Philip, he brought Spanish fashion influences with him to England. One of these trends was a looser piece placed over the bodice called a *ropa*. Aristocratic women had the choice between these two types of dresses, both of which have been depicted by Teerlinc.<sup>24</sup> An example of the difference can be seen in two portraits of Elizabeth from the Royal Collection. In Figure 1.1, Elizabeth's dress has a black *ropa*, open to reveal the gold gown underneath. Though it is a looser gown, Elizabeth's waist is still emphasized, which arguably can be attributed to Teerlinc's thinning of her arms. Figure 1.2 displays the tight waist fashion, which is further accentuated by the space between her arms. The idea that Elizabeth would need to show off this feature aligns with the dating of the two portraits because early in her reign she was still seeking to produce an heir.

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<sup>24</sup> History of Art Department, "Fashion History Timeline: 1550-1559," Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York, Accessed June 21, 2021. <https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/1550-1559>.



Figure 1.1. Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, *Elizabeth I*, c. 1560-5. Watercolor on Vellum laid on card, 5.2 cm. Copyright: The Royal Collection.



Figure 1.2. Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, *Elizabeth I*, c. 1565. Watercolor on Vellum laid on playing card, 4.5 cm. Copyright: The Royal Collection.

Additionally, both figures portray noticeably enlarged shoulder pads, another trend brought over by Philip.<sup>25</sup> The intention behind the thin arms might be to further play up the puffed shoulders. Perhaps this was to symbolize strength, while also adhering to female delicacy. In contrast, her 1550 miniature of Edward VI presents the young king with even larger sleeves and massive chest that overpowers his small head.<sup>26</sup> This must have been requested by the king. His frame fits the whole portrait, which suggests that he was a bigger man than he really was. The painting promotes his power as king as well as reminisces his father's figure. It is clear that Teerlinc's choices were appreciated and possibly requested by her patrons. Her continued work for the court, as well as her accurate illustration of current and changing fashion trends point toward this theory. This aspect of her skill parallels other features that helped promote her patrons, which I will argue further with these and other portraits in this chapter.

Other distinguishable features Teerlinc used help with the continued effort in determining an oeuvre for her. Her technique for painting lips is also displayed in these portraits, but can also be compared to other illuminations and portraits I will discuss in this chapter. As one can see in Figure 1.1 and 1.2, the queen's lips are painted relatively pursed and rosy which is a common detail in Teerlinc's work.<sup>27</sup> Also, the queen's eyes have a distinct thinner upper lid, another characteristic regularly found on Teerlinc's figures. This is

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Philip Mould and Company, "Pioneers: Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, *King Edward VI*," Philip Mould and Company, Accessed June 29, 2021. <https://philipmould/news/105-pioneers-attributed-to-levina-teerlinc-king-edward-vi-lan-early-female-artist-working-at-the-tudor/>. Image unable to be copied.

<sup>27</sup> The Victoria and Albert Museum, Accessed June 29, 2021. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O174799/portrait-of-mary-dudley-lady-miniature-levina-teerlinc/>.

supported by the art historians associated with the Royal Collection, who in their description of these two portraits, further stipulate that “the costumes had been painted using similar pigments and techniques such as the curled strokes visible in the ruffs.”<sup>28</sup> These similarities, along with those previously mentioned, have been applied to other analyses attempting to form Teerlinc’s collection. I have kept them in mind in my next section, for they help connect the works attributed to her, but also other pieces that align with the same techniques, time period and skill set as these works. In many ways, the following section is apex of my thesis. My analysis of her work, particularly the manner in which she depicts her sitters, provides insight into why she was an artist of exceptional fortune and patronage.

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<sup>28</sup> Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, *Elizabeth I*, c. 1565?, 420987, Royal Collection Trust, Accessed March 25, 2021. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/10/collection/420987/elizabeth-i-1553-1603>.

## Analysis of Teerlinc's Oeuvre

Miniatures became a socially lucrative accessory in the sixteenth century. If done well, these portraits closely resembled their subjects. They were a useful way for the sitters to share their appearance and propaganda efforts with others.<sup>29</sup> Henry VII brought the art of limning to England by patronizing printers and illuminators from the Low Countries. Henry VIII continued his father's love for illumination and brought the Horenbout family to England for this purpose.<sup>30</sup> With the death of Hans Holbein in 1543 and Lucas Horenbout in 1544, there was a vacancy in the position of court miniaturist.<sup>31</sup> Once word of Teerlinc's skill reached England, she was summoned to court, accompanied by her husband George. This is an aspect of her career that has yet to be fully understood. One particular puzzling factor has to do with her father. Simon Benninck worked on an illuminated manuscript with Gerard Horenbout in 1519.<sup>32</sup> Rumors of Teerlinc's talent might have been passed on later to Henry through that connection. But there is also evidence that Katherine Parr paid commissions to the Horenbout's workshop as well.<sup>33</sup> Until more tangible evidence can be found, how word of Teerlinc's prowess as a limner came to England will remain a mystery.

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<sup>29</sup> Auerbach, 49.

<sup>30</sup> Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel, *Patronage in the Renaissance*. Princeton Legacy Library (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), 140-45. The Horenbouts had members who were professional illuminators. Gerard, Lucas (and possibly his wife) and Susanna worked and were commissioned by Tudor aristocrats starting in 1525. The Horenbout workshop remained active until the 1550s.

<sup>31</sup> Holbein was a portraitist for Henry VIII, but also known to produce miniatures. Horenbout was also a portrait and miniature painter for Henry. Auerbach, 49-51.

<sup>32</sup> Auerbach, 44. Gerard was Lucas and Susanna Horenbout's father.

<sup>33</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr, The Making of a Queen*, (Aldershot, Hants; Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1999), 159. Hereafter referred to as *Kateryn Parr*.



Although Teerlinc was brought to the English court to be a court painter, she was also given the status of gentlewoman.<sup>34</sup> More importantly, she had access to prominent connections when she was provided a post as gentlewoman to Katherine's Privy Chamber. There was a clear distinction between the gentry of the general court versus those allowed access to the royal private quarters. Evidence of her place in this exclusive group, as well as her husband's status, can be found in a court lawsuit from 1595. In this document, Teerlinc's grandson stated that "...And the said George Teerlynck was a pencioner sworne to the said kinge (Henry VIII) and the said Levina was sworne one of the privye chamber to the Quenes Ma<sup>^</sup>tie."<sup>35</sup> Not only was Teerlinc granted favor by Katherine Parr, but her husband George was generously given a position in the Gentlemen Pensioners of the Royal Household. This elevated their social standing at court as well as provided opportunities for furthering their success. Equally important, this document demonstrates that she enjoyed this patronage not just as George's spouse, but in her own right.

Katherine Parr, though only queen for a short time, asserted herself as an important patron of the arts. She significantly strengthened, as well as established, the careers of notable artists such as, Holbein, Lucas Horenbout, and possibly his sister Susanna Horenbout.<sup>36</sup> In addition to the number of artists she supported was the variety of artists and artisans she patronized as well. She was known for her patronage of portrait artists, but she also distributed her attention to locksmiths, embroiderers, book illuminators, tapestry

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<sup>34</sup> Frances Borzello, *A World of Our Own: Women as Artists Since the Renaissance* (New York, N.Y.: Watson-Guption Publications, 2000), 32.

<sup>35</sup> Auerbach, 104. Access to the actual lawsuit held in The National Archives is limited at this time.

<sup>36</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 159-163. .

artists, and of course, miniaturists. Susan E. James, a gender studies historian who wrote a biography on Katherine discusses her extensive patronage in her study. She further explains that in 1545, Rome tried to cut off their supply of artists to the English court. The royal ambassador stationed in Rome was told to “send over no more strangers.”<sup>37</sup> What this suggests is that not only did Katherine support many forms of art, but that she understood the impact art could have on culture and society. What James’ statement also suggests, however, is the increased strain England had with Rome.

Katherine's ascension to queen was just ten years after Henry's infamous break with the Catholic church. The pressure of distancing themselves from anything tainted by Catholicism shaped what England could and could not represent in art. This limited which artists the English, in particular their leaders, could employ. According to Sara N. James, an art historian, the Reformation shifted the focus away from religious art to secular art. She contends that the royal family led in “patronage and inspiring innovative ideas in art and architecture.”<sup>38</sup> This led to the patronage of Protestant artists, many of whom were from the Low Countries. The shift from religious to secular also changed what the art portrayed, forcing an emphasis on portraiture. James added “The iconography and symbolism that had once permeated art now shifted to portraits, especially those for royalty.”<sup>39</sup> Portraiture seemed to be another way for English art patrons to further separate themselves from

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<sup>37</sup> Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art, 1485-1603: Women as Consumers, Patrons and Painters* (Farnham, England, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009). 86-90. Hereafter referred as *Feminine Dynamic*.

<sup>38</sup> Sara N. James, *Art in England: The Saxons to the Tudors 600-1600* (Havertown: Oxbow Books, 2016), 231.

<sup>39</sup> Sara N. James, 254.

Rome, as the focus was on the self, rather than religion. The result of this was an increased awareness in how art can be used to benefit those wanting to elevate themselves and their interests. Katherine Parr was an impressive promoter of her own image, a skill she passed on to her step-daughters.<sup>40</sup> It can be argued that Teerlinc was, in part, brought to the English court to support Katherine's efforts. But her continued position suggests she was also adept at accomplishing her other patrons' visual agendas.

Teerlinc's work under Katherine may not have survived or has yet to be identified as hers. To be sure, it is clear Katherine valued Teerlinc for her mastery in portraiture, but the Flemish artist also illuminated manuscripts.<sup>41</sup> Katherine must have known this and kept Teerlinc close for the multiple skills she provided. In addition to portraiture, Katherine used the craft of illumination and print to promote her interests. She specifically wanted to push her Protestant agenda. By gifting and fashioning books centered toward her faith, she influenced courtiers in values she held dear. For example, in her personal chamber accounts, she commissioned George Haydon to limn for one of her own books she had printed.<sup>42</sup> Though this is an example of another artist's work, it helps us understand why Teerlinc's illumination skill might be useful to the queen. Unlike Haydon, Teerlinc's commissions were not listed because she had an annual salary as a court artist. Most likely, the limning Haydon did for the queen was before Teerlinc came to court, as the latest Katherine published was June of 1545.<sup>43</sup> However, when Katherine died, among her possessions were illuminated

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<sup>40</sup> An argument I will go into detail about in chapter three.

<sup>41</sup> Auerbach, index 24 -27.

<sup>42</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 161.

<sup>43</sup> Joan Pong Linton, "The Literary Voices of Katherine Parr and Anne Askew". In *A Companion to Tudor Literature* (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 295-298.

books and miniature books that were fashioned as jewelry during that time.<sup>44</sup> Teerlinc remained on Katherine's payroll until the former queen's death; perhaps she illuminated one of these items. Another possibility is that one of them could have been commissioned by Anne Herbert or another close to Katherine, as these objects were often given as gifts. This part of her career is important to highlight because it was a key contribution to her attributed works; her illuminations provide proof of her hand in court promotional practices.

Although Teerlinc's output under Edward's reign is limited, her limning ability can point to evidence of her ability to promote the king. Beginning in the reign of Henry VI, a practice to include miniature portraits of the reigning monarch(s) for each Plea Roll recorded per year. The roll begins with the phrase *Placita cora[m] d[omi]no rege*. The "P" is sometimes used to depict an illumination, with most of them portraying the active ruler. According to Auerbach, "the proceedings of the Court of the King's Bench took place theoretically in the presence of the sovereign," which is why the figures have distinctive features relating to each ruler.<sup>45</sup> These portraits were used to nurture the image of the monarch to the court and realm. Teerlinc's attribution to a 1553 Michaelmas Roll for Mary I suggests that she had done others, therefore an argument can be made to support other attributions to her in this area of expertise.

There were many of these depictions among the plea rolls from Edward VI, including figures of the young king on Hilary 1546-7, Easter 1547, a patented letter to Gerard

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<sup>44</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 85.

<sup>45</sup> Auerbach, 18.

Harmond in July of 1547, Easter 1549, Easter 1551, and Michaelmas 1552.<sup>46</sup> There are several factors that point to Teerlinc being the illuminator of these works. For one, all of the illuminations of Edward seem to be similar in draughtsmanship, and draw similarities to Mary's 1553 Michaelmas Roll. What the rolls also reveal is a pattern in Teerlinc's use to the court at this time. These illuminations overall signify the presence of power the king holds over matters of state. Additionally, each one presents pointed messages to the court and country. For example, Hilary 1546-7, Easter 1547, Easter 1551 and Michaelmas 1552 all depict overly large crowns atop the letter "P." Auerbach suggests that this symbolizes the immense responsibility that Edward overtook as a child-king. She also notes that the paneled wall behind the king is meant to mirror the last pea roll in which his father appeared.<sup>47</sup> It is worth mentioning that the 1552 Michaelmas Roll shows two cherub-like figures hovering the crown over the P instead of the crown being drawn on the "P." There is also an Old French phrase in a banner above the crown that reads: "Dieu Et Mon Droyt," the motto of English monarch that translates to "God and my right."<sup>48</sup> This might symbolize the recent change in both the king's age and in his Lord Protector. Edward turned 14 in 1552, and by tradition began to take a more active role as head of the realm.<sup>49</sup> The crown being placed over his head could symbolize a coming of age, when he finally began to take up the crown in his own right, rather than answer to his elder councilors. Auerbach describes these rolls as "still based on medieval iconic tradition," but that "some attempts are made to break with the

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid, Index 24-27. Many of these rolls cannot be accessed via The National Archives at this time.

<sup>47</sup> Auerbach, 81.

<sup>48</sup> Auerbach, 85.

<sup>49</sup> Stephan Alford, *Kingship and the Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 159-165.

conventional manner.”<sup>50</sup> It is reasonable to propose that Teerlinc took these artistic liberties to reflect Edward as he was in that moment.

There are other examples of these illuminations that suggest that the Flemish artist went beyond the standard illumination. The 1547 Letter of Patent to Gerard Harmond presents a particularly interesting scene. The letter is a confirmation of an earlier grant to Harmond for property in Essex. The illumination represents the story of that land, the ending being a transference of power from Master Lawrence Gospeller to Edward. Gospeller and his brethren are kneeling at right presenting a cartulary to the king.<sup>51</sup> This can be seen as Protestant propaganda. Edward's high position above the brotherhood shows the king's place as the head of the Church of England. On the other hand, the figures to the right are clear likenesses to Privy Council members such as the duke of Somerset, Sir Richard Rich and the earl of Warwick. They are leering over the king, reflecting their belief that the king is still too young to rule by himself. Auerbach argues that this type of group portrait became popular during the last year of Henry VIII's reign and that the Italo-Flemish Mannerism “points to a first class Netherlandish miniature painter.”<sup>52</sup> Since Teerlinc was actively working in England during that time, it is reasonable to say that Teerlinc embarked on this fashion. Also in her favor is the fact that she might have apprenticed with Guilio Clovio in Rome.<sup>53</sup> This indeed explains why there is Italian influence, as well as Flemish in this illumination.

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<sup>50</sup> Auerbach, 89

<sup>51</sup> Auerbach, 85-86. This image is unavailable to download. Harmond was a goldsmith and overseer of King Henry's mines and went on to serve Edward.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 86.

<sup>53</sup> Woodville, “Levina Teerlinc: Illuminator at the Tudor Court.”

The 1549 Easter Roll also demonstrates Teerlinc's ability to capture a purposeful message. The king is painted between two men, one who is holding William Tusser's shield of arms that also includes his wife's family crest (Figure 1.3).<sup>54</sup> Tusser was related to Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset by marriage, giving him access to the most powerful family in 1549 England.<sup>55</sup> From this piece one can see how beneficial court connections were to the aristocracy, for not everyone could say they had been painted with the king (and for that matter been the one painting him). It is clear that this was a significant statement, though it is unclear why. But if Teerlinc did in fact illuminate these manuscripts, it is proof of her proficiency in delivering clear assertions for her patrons. Teerlinc may not have had as close of a connection to Edward as some of her other patrons, but this series speaks to the value she held as a court artist. She illuminated figures in an valuable way that was singular to each monarch, essentially including what they wanted their decrees to represent.

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<sup>54</sup> Illuminated Plea Roll, "Coram Rege Rolls initial detail Edward VI, Easter," KB 27/1150/2, The National Archives, Accessed July 18, 2021. <https://images.nationalarchives.gov.uk/assetbank-nationalarchives/action/viewasset?id=36933&index=2&total=12&view=viewSearchItem>. See page below for image.

<sup>55</sup> Auerbach, 82-83. Auerbach suggests that he and his son Thomas, a court poet, are the two figures on each side of Edward. Her evidence that Thomas is the other figure stipulates that the poem included on the painting could be his.



Figure 1.3. Unknown Artist. *Coram Rege Rolls initial detail Edward VI, Easter, c. 1549*. Illuminated initial membrane with portrait of the monarch, 1696 x 2769 pixels. Copyright: The National Archives, London, UK.



One of the most significant portraits she designed for both the Plea Rolls, and for Mary was the 1553 Michaelmas illumination.<sup>56</sup> This picture marks the beginning of the known work under Mary I. Though Mary was declared the victor over Jane Grey in July of 1553, the new queen sought to maintain her power with careful strategy. Mary used the Michaelmas Roll to capitalize on her victory. In Teerlinc's illumination, Mary is seated on the English throne with angels placed on either side of her, touching her arms. This symbolizes Mary's holy anointment by God as the true queen of England. The background depicts the aftermath of the battle for the throne, with the four main opposing leaders holding up a banner of surrender. This shows their acceptance of Mary's win.

Though Mary proved that she could use art for political gain, the art Teerlinc subsequently produced for the queen reveals a shift in Mary's attention from politics to religion. Now religion took a more prominent role in Mary's agenda. The manuscript illuminations attributed to Teerlinc that depict Mary show the queen performing Catholic ceremonies. These include *Certain Prayers to be Used by the Quenes Heignes in the Consecration of the Cramps Rynges* and *Mary Touching for the King's Evil*.<sup>57</sup> The illuminations are from the same manuscript that contains the combined coat of arms of Mary I and Philip II of Spain, which dates it to be after their marriage in 1554.<sup>58</sup> The illuminations suggest that

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<sup>56</sup> Auerbach, index 28. "Mary I," The National Archives, Accessed July, 18 2021. <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/significant-people-collection/mary-i/>. The National Archives stores this record, but it cannot be accessed at this time. The illumination can be viewed online via this web address.

<sup>57</sup> Strong, 53-54. These ceremonies both deal with the sovereign performing a blessing ritual towards the healing of their subjects with certain ailments.

<sup>58</sup> Melanie V. Taylor, "The Good Friday Ceremony of the Blessing of Cramp Rings and the Curing of the King's Evil," Melanie V. Taylor, Accessed March 22, 2021. <https://www.melaniev.taylor.co.uk./2020/04/09/the-good-friday-ceremony-of-the-blessing-of-cramp-rings-and-the-curing-of-the-kings-evil/>.

Mary sought to promote herself as a defender of the Catholic faith and to restore it as the true religion of England. This shows that at this point, Teerlinc was still being utilized by the queen, and therefore still in Mary's favor. However, in the coming years, her favor can be disputed. By 1554, examples of Teerlinc's work for the queen ceased; we do not know why.

Now that Mary seemed to have less use for Teerlinc, the artist may have needed to turn to other patrons. One of the most likely ways for her to gain patronage was through the bonds formed in the queen's Privy Chamber. Evidence of Teerlinc's connection to the notorious Grey family is demonstrated in several ways during this time, but one portrait in particular directly correlates a relationship with Lady Katherine Grey, younger sister to the 'Nine Days Queen,' Jane Grey. Katherine's family had fallen, but the queen and her advisors preferred Katherine's succession over Elizabeth should Mary be childless. Katherine's submissive nature had them believe they could convert her to Catholicism.<sup>59</sup> Mary granted Katherine a place in her chamber and regarded her as a "princess of the blood."<sup>60</sup> Regardless of how she was able to rejoin the exclusive fold, Teerlinc seemed to take advantage of their shared presence to re-ignite her own career.

Teerlinc produced at least one known portrait of Katherine during this time. A miniature of Katherine's likeness has been preserved by the Victoria and Albert Museum. It dates from 1555-1560, but experts place the painting in the reign of Mary based off of the

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<sup>59</sup> Hester W. Chapman, *Two Tudor Portraits: Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey and Lady Katherine Grey* (London: J. Cape, 1960), 169-175. Supposedly she claimed to have converted in Mary's reign, but when Elizabeth came to the throne she denied it.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

sitter's age and clothing (Figure 1.4).<sup>61</sup> The painting itself shows Katherine in dress fit for her royal station, possibly to promote the idea of her as an heir to the English throne. Further evidence of that intention is found on the box in which the portrait is encased in. Figure 1.5 shows that the portrait was preserved in an ivory box decoratively carved into a rose. The rose strongly indicates that whoever commissioned the piece wanted others to be reminded of her Tudor connection, as the Tudor rose was the symbol of that bloodline.<sup>62</sup> Though Teerlinc most likely did not make the box herself, she may well have designed it as that was a common practice for a limner.<sup>63</sup> If so, it shows a joint effort by patron and artist to produce a specific result; the box needed to fit the portrait and the person it represented.



Figure 1.4. Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, *Portrait Miniature of Katherine Grey, Countess of Hertford*, c. 1555-1560, watercolor on Vellum. Copyright: Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK

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<sup>61</sup> Levina Teerlinc, *Portrait Miniature of Katherine Grey, Countess of Hertford*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 2003, Accessed November 16, 2020. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/074851/portrait-miniature-of-katherine-grey-portrait-miniature-teerlinc/>.

<sup>62</sup> The Royal Collection Trust, “*Elizabeth I, c. 1560-5* Description.” The Royal Collection, Accessed November 16, 2020. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/420944/elizabeth-i-1533-1603#/referer/239535/subject>.

<sup>63</sup> Strong, 53.



Figure 1.5. Unknown Artist, c. 1555 – 1560, box of turned ivory. Copyright: Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK.

Mary may have wanted Katherine Grey to succeed her, but Elizabeth's claim was stronger, both in law, and to the people. Upon Mary's death in 1558, Elizabeth was made queen of England. Elizabeth, like her sister, had been clearly influenced by her step-mother. Elizabeth took even more stock in Katherine's ideas on propaganda and presentation. Elizabeth promoted her right to rule, and her will to do so without a man. She did this in ways she could control - most prominently, through her image. To her subjects, Elizabeth asserted that her coronation ring solemnly bound her "in marriage to the realm; and it will be quite sufficient for the memorial of my name and for my glory, if, when I die, an inscription be engraved on a marble tomb saying, 'Here lieth Elizabeth, which reigned a

virgin, and died a virgin.”<sup>64</sup> By portraying herself constantly in a manner that symbolized youth, beauty, piety, Englishness, and strength, she solidified her commitment to England. Portraiture projected this image effectively and conveniently. Teerlinc's close proximity to Elizabeth may have been useful to the queen, as it was an opportunity to capture her best likeness.

Many art historians stress the importance Hilliard had in creating Elizabeth's iconic image, but Hilliard did not enter Elizabeth's employ until the 1570s. Yet, Elizabeth utilized miniature portraits to promote her image before then. Whitney Chadwick mentioned in her female artist analysis that Teerlinc's role in the creation of Elizabethan iconography deserves further study. Also, she suggested that Teerlinc was probably the first artist that Elizabeth sat for.<sup>65</sup> It makes sense that Teerlinc was charged with the task in her early efforts to control how she as queen was portrayed, and that Hilliard built off of it. To begin with, the miniature of Elizabeth in her coronation outfit portrayed the queen as a virginal monarch (Figure 1.6). Elizabeth is painted with her hair down, a symbol of virginity. Other messages to the court are shown in her gown. This is the same gown Mary wore at her coronation.<sup>66</sup> It symbolizes that Elizabeth was the true heir to the Tudor line of succession. Though the following National Portrait Gallery owned piece was painted in 1600, it is stated by the

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<sup>64</sup> Frederick Chamberlin, *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head Ltd. New York: Todd, Mead and Company, 1923), 57. This was a response to her council in 1559 when they were insisting she wed.

<sup>65</sup> Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Rev. and Expanded. Ed. World of Art. (New York, N.Y.: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 116.

<sup>66</sup> Unknown Artist, *Queen Elizabeth I*, c. 1600, National Portrait Gallery, Accessed March 25, 2021. <https://npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw02070/Queen-Elizabeth-I/>.

museum's Chief Curator Tarnya Cooper, as a copy of a lost original by Teerlinc from 1559.<sup>67</sup> Other historians, such as James and Strong also believe the original was painted by Teerlinc. The slimness of Elizabeth's waist and the space between her arms are both staples of Teerlinc's style.<sup>68</sup> If Teerlinc did indeed paint the coronation miniature, the idea that she was Elizabeth's first artist to nurture her image as the Virgin Queen has more credibility.



Figure 1.6. Unknown English artist, *Queen Elizabeth I*, c. 1600, 50 1/8 in. x 39 1/4 in.  
Copyright: National Portrait Gallery, London, UK.

Among other miniatures of Elizabeth attributed to Teerlinc include an illumination from the 1559 charter granting 13 Windsor knights their retirement.<sup>69</sup> The illumination carries through the image found in the coronation miniature. Elizabeth's hair is still down,

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid. Charlotte Bolland and Tarnya Cooper, *The Real Tudors: Kings and Queens Rediscovered* (Accompanying the exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery from 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014 to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015), 141.

<sup>68</sup> Strong, 52.

<sup>69</sup> Illumination on *Indenture between the Queen [Elizabeth] and the Dean and Canons of St. George's Chapel*, E. 36/277, The National Archives, August 30, 1558, Accessed March 25, 2021. <https://discover.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C4248211>. The actual illumination cannot be seen at this time, but a description is recorded.

but her robes are red for Parliament.<sup>70</sup> Woodville pointed out that a fleur-de-lis is drawn on top of her scepter, as well as on a blue triangle paralleled to it. She claims “it refers to the English claim on French soil.”<sup>71</sup> What this shows is further evidence of Elizabeth using art to make clear statements; from the virgin-like appearance, to the French challenge.

Two other early portraits that I mentioned earlier in this chapter are attributed to Teerlinc. These miniatures, both in the Royal Collection, were examined in 2018 by a panel of specialists and found to be by the same hand. The specialists deduce that these portraits “share similarities with a number of works which have been associated with the artist Levina Teerlinc,” specifically the 1555-1560 miniature of lady Katherine Grey.<sup>72</sup> Figure 1.2 is dated from 1565 by modern specialists and is painted on a playing card. It depicts Elizabeth in dress representing her high rank. The painting originally was examined by Abraham van der Doort in Charles I’s reign.<sup>73</sup> He described it as “in a white Ivory Box without a Christall a Certaine Ladies Picture...Queen Elizabeth before she came to the Crowne.”<sup>74</sup> Several issues are present in both Doort's dating and that of the 2018 experts. A factor that supports the more recent dating is that Teerlinc was known to have given Queen Elizabeth more than one portrait on a playing card as a New Year's gift.<sup>75</sup> However, this does not rule out an earlier dating. If Doort is correct, this portrait might have been the present given to Edward VI in 1551, as both monarchs resided at White Hall during their reigns. The 2018 experts may

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<sup>70</sup> Strong, 56-57. A copy of the illumination is included.

<sup>71</sup> Woodville, “Levina Teerlinc, Illuminator at the Tudor Court.”

<sup>72</sup> Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, *Elizabeth I*, c. 1565?, 420987, Royal Collection Trust, Accessed March 25, 2021. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/10/collection/420987/elizabeth-i-1553-1603>. See page 14 to view a Teerlinc portrait of Elizabeth (Figure 1.1) and page 28 to view portrait of Katherine Grey (Figure 1.4).

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. The painting was found at White Hall Palace during this time.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Auerbach, 188 appendix 2(b). Strong, 54.

have based their dating on Elizabeth's high-ranking attire, but during Edward's reign she maintained her position as princess.<sup>76</sup> Either date accounts for her attire. Given the roundness of her face and cheeks that suggests adolescence, an argument can be made for Doort's date. Whether or not this portrait was painted before or during Elizabeth's reign, it shows that she trusted Teerlinc to depict her image.

The Royal Collection experts date the second image (Figure 1.1) between 1560 and 1565. It shows a thinner face of Elizabeth, perhaps having lost her baby fat by then. The Royal Collection describes her costume and jewelry in a similar manner as the previous image; of someone in high status.<sup>77</sup> However, the headdress she wears implies that she was queen in this portrait. The headdress includes a red and white rose, symbolizing Elizabeth's birthright as a Tudor. It makes sense that the queen wanted to emphasize that she was the true heir of Henry VIII early in her reign to dissuade those from opposing her rule. This shows Teerlinc's commitment to her queen and suggests a common goal to promote Elizabeth's sovereignty.

All of these miniatures demonstrate an early understanding of how the queen wanted herself to be portrayed. The portraits also show Teerlinc's ability to promote herself as the painter most suitable for this honor. This can be argued because of Elizabeth's insistence in keeping those close to her she most trusted, therefore it follows that the queen must have wanted her image to be depicted by those who showed her loyalty. Another way

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<sup>76</sup> Auerbach, 75.

<sup>77</sup> Attributed to Levina Teerlinc, *Elizabeth I*, c. 1560 – 1565, 420944, Royal Collection Trust, 1560-1565?, Accessed March 25, 2021. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/7/collection/420944/elizabeth-i-1533-1603>. See page 14 to view portrait.



Teerlinc might have been promoted is through Elizabeth's tendency to wear her own miniatures. The adornments could have opened a conversation about its painter, providing Teerlinc with more patronage at court.

Miniatures were especially fashionable in Elizabeth's reign, which made the English court a thriving atmosphere for Teerlinc's skill set. Her attributed work reflects both new connections, as well as old such as the Greys. One portrait in particular demonstrates Teerlinc's ability to endorse her patrons. It also speaks to her adaptability. She seemed to take advantage of the opportunities present in new situations. A portrait of Katherine Grey dating from 1562-63 demonstrates this. Teerlinc is attributed to the original piece, which was afterwards copied several times. This portrait is significant for several reasons. For one, it is the first known miniature that depicts a smaller miniature in it.<sup>78</sup> Hanging from Katherine's neck is a portrait of her husband, Edward Seymour, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Hertford.

Some back story is needed to clarify Seymour's, and the portrait's, importance. In the early years of Elizabeth's reign, a plot was hatched by Catholic supporters to abduct Katherine into Spain. The Spanish thought they could influence both her place on the throne and her decision to secure Catholicism in England once more. Elizabeth found out and squashed the plan. This event, coupled with Katherine's decision to marry Seymour without permission, led to Katherine's 1561 imprisonment in the Tower of London. She was pregnant at the time and gave birth to a son in September of 1562, who is also depicted in this

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<sup>78</sup> Martin Spies, *The Portrait of Lady Katherine Grey and her Son: Iconographic Medievalism as a Legitimation Strategy*, Brill, Accessed March 30, 2021. [https://brill.com/previewpdf/book/edcoll//9789004193598/Bej.9789004187665.i-472\\_009.xml](https://brill.com/previewpdf/book/edcoll//9789004193598/Bej.9789004187665.i-472_009.xml). This portrait is in the possession of the Bridgeman Art Library at the Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire, UK. It cannot be downloaded at this time, but can be viewed on the website above.

portrait.<sup>79</sup> The child's presence in the portrait, as well as the reminder of who his father is from the smaller miniature, becomes significant when tied to Elizabeth's death scare. In October of 1562, Elizabeth fell ill with smallpox. Worry over who would succeed spread through the court.<sup>80</sup> This painting demonstrates a call to Katherine's claim for the throne. In addition to the figures' fine clothing that symbolizes their high rank, the artist chose to include Katherine's son to promote the idea that the royal cousin already had an heir. This strengthened her claim, as that was an ever-present concern for the monarchy.

This portrait evinces similar features common in Teerlinc's work, such as the depiction of the eyes, lips and ruffles on the sitter's sleeves. I have also analyzed a connection to the Greys that is a reasonable explanation as to why Teerlinc painted the original. This portrait signifies Teerlinc's reaction to conflicts of power. What I will further show in later chapters is that she aligned herself with important people at court and took opportunity into her own hands. As we know, Elizabeth recovered and lived until 1603. There seems to be no interruption in Teerlinc's favor from the queen, which means that Elizabeth most likely never knew about this portrait. Since miniatures were used to symbolize loyalty, the portrait probably stayed in secret like-minded circles, or between those who knew their way around court politics. Teerlinc appears to be one to tip the scales to her most beneficial outcome. This was important in her world, as many sixteenth-century English courtiers attempted the same. Like them, Teerlinc needed to attain as much status as

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<sup>79</sup> Richard Davey, *The Sisters of Lady Jane Grey and their Wicked Grandfather Being the True Stories of the Strange Lives of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and the Ladies Katherine and Mary Grey, Sisters*, Project Gutenberg (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd., 1911), 151-181.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 184.

she could for herself and members of her family, which makes her success all the more impressive.

Overall, the miniatures analyzed in this chapter display the underlying messages that were used to persuade the minds of the English court and those that were connected to its members. These portraits testify to Teerlinc's ability to depict those statements. They also reveal a pattern of her survival at court, as each sitter not only reflects who she was linked to at court, but also who she helped to promote. Her adaptability, especially her involvement in Tudor power struggles, demonstrates the lengths one will go to maintain or increase good favor.

## **Chapter Two: Teerlinc's Relationships with Her Patrons**

By the sixteenth century, the English aristocracy had developed a pattern of patronizing artists outside the kingdom's borders. Several factors encouraged members of the English court to turn to continental artists. These included: the character of the current rulers, popular trends, and political and religious stances. My focus will remain in the sixteenth century, when the English were drawn to the style of foreign, specifically Flemish, portraiture. The need for English rulers to remain competitive in Renaissance ideals that many European powers were subject to was also prominent. That Teerlinc was invited to work for the English court parallels with set traditions, but her status was relatively rare for a female artist at that time. Since most studies about Teerlinc are included in biographical collaborative work, scholars have only recently asked more narrowed questions about her such as who promoted her and why? I argue that the court's cultural and social climate and who the queen was at the time were significant factors leading to her hire, factors that also contributed to why she remained at court.

Though Teerlinc's presence in these studies is minimal, her inclusion becomes useful when considering the extent of research that was attempted in bringing these women's careers to light. However, a pattern that developed in collective studies was to present a biography of what was known about the artist and list off their attributed works. The analysis focuses more on certain aspects about the Renaissance and how it pertained to women artists as a whole, and less on their individual lives. Elsa Honig Fine's *Women and Art: A History of Women Painters and Sculptors from the Renaissance to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

exemplifies this process. Fine does mention that Queen Elizabeth “greatly admired” her New Year's gifts from Teerlinc, however, she does not offer any more analysis about their relationship. There is one point that Fine examines which is significant to heed when evaluating female Renaissance artists. Fine builds off of Roland Bainton's argument that the Reformation impacted family life more than political and economic facets. She said, “the home became the place where the Christian virtues of ‘love, tenderness, sharing of goods, self-effacement, humility, reconciliation, compassion, and the bearing of one another's burdens’ were exemplified.”<sup>81</sup> Fine meant this to apply to many women in the Renaissance as a way to explain why female artists were able to thrive during this time. This idea can also be narrowed further in this study, especially speaking to Teerlinc's social circles, as her inclusion in the Privy Chamber can be interpreted as a home or community in a sense.

A clear shift can be seen in female artist studies toward the last decade of the twentieth century. This shift is especially notable in Whitney Chadwick's *Women, Art and Society*. Chadwick's 1991 study moves beyond gender toward “structuralism, psychoanalysis, semiology, and cultural studies.”<sup>82</sup> The historian's aim was to examine the social aspects of these artists lives and how they navigated through them. Her study functions as the point of convergence with my own; however, as we shall see, there are noticeable differences. Much of Chadwick's analysis is devoted to how the work of these artists demonstrates ideals and trends of the period they are made in. She, like Fine, also focuses on how the Reformation allowed for more patronage for women. Chadwick tiptoes around how the artists built upon

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<sup>81</sup> Elsa Honig Fine, *Women and Art: A History of Women Painters and Sculptors from the Renaissance to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Montclair, N.J.: Allanheld & Schram/Prior, 1978), 24-25.

<sup>82</sup> Chadwick, 11.

patronage. She does ascertain that their social and professional lives intertwined, but does not offer any further information about that aspect. Similarly, Frances Borzello, the author of *A World of Our Own: Women Artists Since the Renaissance*, offers that “court positions involved more than painting.” Her analysis of Sofonisba Anguissola as a “royal companion” to the queen of Spain emphasizes this idea.<sup>83</sup> While this example is focused on Anguissola, it is suggested that Teerlinc had a similar experience at her court. It is my hope to flesh out this concept, for Teerlinc's position offers a look into how essential maintaining good relationships with patrons was at the English court. She is especially worthy of study in this line of thought because of her ability to stay not only afloat, but much of the time prosperous, during an era of political, social, and religious turmoil. This chapter will delve into who Teerlinc made an impression on, which patrons seemed to make the most impact on her career, the expectations the court had for its members, how Teerlinc adhered to them and the rewards she reaped from doing so. Whose notice she attracted through what she could offer, as both an artist and courtier, is a key aspect to her fortunate outcome.

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<sup>83</sup> Borzello, 32.

## The Parr Family

Though Teerlinc arrived at the English court during Henry VIII's reign, there is evidence that Katherine Parr and her family were more involved in her life than was the king. A matter up for debate is who initially invited Teerlinc to court; an imperative factor for establishing why Teerlinc was granted such prestigious access. Previous scholars have argued that Henry VIII invited Teerlinc to his court. Carole Levin, a Medieval and Renaissance historian, was adamant that "the invitation to Teerlinc was part of Henry's attempt to bring in artists and musicians from abroad who would add to the glamour and splendor at court."<sup>84</sup> While Teerlinc certainly added glamour via her work, this statement suggests that not only was Henry the one to first recognize the female artist's talent, but that it was a new concept to bring in foreign artists. One document that supports the claim that Henry at least had the last word in bringing her to England is in a letter from him to Katherine. He wrote "where she asks his pleasure as to accepting certain ladies into her chamber in lieu of some that are sick, he remits their acceptance to her own choice."<sup>85</sup> The 1544 letter involved another member of Katherine's Privy Chamber, but it shows that Katherine checked with the king first before inviting someone into the chamber. On the other hand, because he granted her permission to choose for herself, she may have taken this into account for later entrees. Her accounts also prove that she commissioned art herself, apart from Henry.<sup>86</sup> These two

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<sup>84</sup> Carole Levin, *Extraordinary Women of the Medieval and Renaissance World: A Biographical Dictionary* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2000), 278.

<sup>85</sup> 'Henry VIII: September 1544, 8'," in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 19 Part 2, August-December 1544*, ed. James Gairdner and R H Brodie (London, 1905), pp.103-114: 201. British History Online. Accessed March 7, 2021. <http://british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol19/no2/pp103-114>.

<sup>86</sup> Susan E. James, *Katherine Parr*, 159-60.

aspects give weight to the idea that Katherine had a strong voice in bringing Teerlinc to court, though they do not rule out Henry's prerogative in this matter.

Recent scholars, such as James and Woodville, have also suggested that it was Katherine who had acquired Teerlinc. James went one step further by suggesting that Katherine might have been influenced by her sister Anne Herbert, Countess of Pembroke. Furthermore, James contends that Teerlinc may well have painted for Katherine, but she firmly argues that Anne was Teerlinc's patron.<sup>87</sup> Her evidence comes from a court document concerning Teerlinc's first official salary in the Spring of 1546.<sup>88</sup> It states, "Mrs. Levyna Terling, paintrix, to have a fee of 40£ a year from the Annunciation of Our Lady last past during your Majesty's pleasure. Preferred by my lady Harbert."<sup>89</sup> From this we can see that James was correct in suggesting Anne's interest in Teerlinc. But the document clearly states that she was "preferred" by the queen's sister, not that she actually was her patron. James depicts a false concept of Teerlinc's career at court by implying that Anne alone was responsible for Teerlinc's patronage. If Anne happened to be Teerlinc's patron, it was most likely due to a relationship Teerlinc had built in Katherine's Privy Chamber. Teerlinc was brought to court by the Crown and paid by them, not Anne. There is evidence of at least one piece attributed to Teerlinc that came from the preserved Pembroke collection.<sup>90</sup> Anne's

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<sup>87</sup> Susan E. James, *The Feminine Dynamic in English Art*, 322-32.

<sup>88</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr: The Making of a Queen*. (Aldershot, Hants; Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1999), 159.

<sup>89</sup> L&P, Vol. 21: ii, 475 (101).

<sup>90</sup> Levina Teerlinc, *Portrait of Mary Dudley, Lady Sidney*, c. 1575. Victoria and Albert Museum, 1988. Accessed November 24, 2020. <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/0174799/portrait-of-mary-dudley-lady-miniature-levina-teerlinc/>. This portrait is from 1575, two decades after Anne's death, so it suggests that Teerlinc maintained her connection with Anne through her husband, William Herbert, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Pembroke and his family since they were still active at court after Anne's death. Lady Sidney was mother to Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke who was married to Anne and William's son.



concrete interest in the Flemish artist is revealed in the records. While it supports James and Woodville's statements that Herbert had a hand in Teerlinc's success, it could also be the culmination of court connections and the resultant improvement in status. Teerlinc's annuity was based on the condition of his majesty's pleasure, but also on the preference Anne-and most likely Katherine- had for her work.

Katherine's partiality toward Teerlinc cannot be overlooked. Katherine showed her approval of Teerlinc's work by paying her £20 out of her own expenses in addition to her £40 annuity. This continued even after Katherine became a widow.<sup>91</sup> This position was not given lightly, nor the salary she received, so for Teerlinc to obtain it demonstrates the high honor given to her. This is evident in other artists salaries at court. For example, Hans Holbein was an artist of many talents, yet he only received an annuity of £34, as compared with Teerlinc's £40.<sup>92</sup> This difference, though hard to decipher, at least reveals her worth to her patrons. Katherine's private payments towards her suggests that Katherine wanted to emphasize the value she placed on Teerlinc's work, possibly in the aim to have more control over her patronage, and therefore, output.

This theory parallels studies that have re-evaluated the process of court policies and decisions during this time. For example, James Daybell, a historian who studies early modern English politics, maintained that both men and women had a hand in politics. He said: "goals and aspirations ...extended beyond mere influence over state and government policy, to include...accumulation of land and wealth, maintenance of status and reputation, and

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 290-2.

<sup>92</sup> Auerbach, 50.

advancement...in terms of careers and marriage.”<sup>93</sup> In relation to this paper, the focus is on how the strides taken to maintain that advancement were used to influence English court politics through art, which is highlighted in art patronage.

Patronage was a primary way for courtiers to influence and maintain their position in society. Daybell argues that the key to this was the maintenance of interpersonal relationships, a skill that court women excelled at. It would make sense then, that Anne used her connection to the queen to improve her status. And in turn, why Katherine would make sure Teerlinc was brought to England and included in her Privy Chamber. Both the queen, and her sister, might have perceived that Teerlinc would enhance the court’s status by producing quality art celebrating England, but more importantly, themselves. This relationship proved beneficial for Teerlinc as well. Close proximity to the royal court expanded the opportunity for patronage.

It seems that all three of the Parr siblings, having high status at court, furthered Teerlinc's career. William Parr, the Marquess of Northampton was patron to George Teerlinc.<sup>94</sup> Parr, as a member of the esteemed gentlemen pensioners, recommended George a place in their ranks. This elevated the couple in English society as well as court. As we have seen, any connections to the Crown were sought by courtiers, so for George to land such a prestigious position was essential to the Teerlincs’ favor at court. The couple's positions allowed them to have double the access, and therefore more opportunity, to create

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<sup>93</sup> James Daybell, *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450-1700*. 1<sup>ST</sup> ed. (London, [England]; Florence: Routledge, 2004), 3.

<sup>94</sup> Susan E. James *Feminine Dynamic*, 291.

connections. His position would prove to be almost, if not equally as useful, to Teerlinc's longevity at court. This is especially noticeable in Edward and Mary's reigns, for Protestant connections were important in both eras. In the former, of course, they held power. In the latter reign, close ties could help one survive the Catholic revival, a theory I will analyze further later in this chapter that involves the Teerlincs.

Katherine was queen for only another year after Teerlinc was hired. However, that she continued to privately pay the artist after stepping down shows how invested she was in Teerlinc. There is also evidence that Teerlinc may have lived in Katherine's household after Katherine left the court. When Henry VIII died in 1547, Katherine married her former suitor Thomas Seymour, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Seymour of Sudeley. This happened just four months after burying her late husband.<sup>95</sup> Their union created controversy at court, which led to Katherine's decision to move into Seymour's estate. A letter from Seymour (then the Lord Admiral under Edward VI) to the Marquess of Dorset provides evidence of Teerlinc presence when he wrote, "my Household, where shall remayne not oonelye the Gentlewoman of the Quene's Hiegnes Privy Chamber, but allso the maids which wayted at larg, and other Women about her Grace in her lief Tyme, with a hundred and twenty Gentlemen and Yeomen, contynualle abeyding in House together..."<sup>96</sup> This suggests that both Teerlinc and her husband may have resided with the Seymours. Since Edward VI had no place for gentlewomen in his chamber, it makes sense that Teerlinc remained with the person who

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<sup>95</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 303.

<sup>96</sup> Thomas Seymour, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Seymour of Sudeley, Samuel Haynes, ed. *Letter from Thomas Seymour, Lord Admiral to Edward Seymour, 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Somerset, Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: Printed by William Bower, 1740), 77-78.

arguably brought her to England. Though Teerlinc and her husband still had duties at court, it seems that her work was limited during this time. Living with someone who granted her more wage and patronage can be seen as beneficial for Teerlinc under Edward's reign.

Other connections can be made that support Teerlinc's continued station under Katherine. It has been proven that both Jane Grey and Elizabeth stayed with the former queen.<sup>97</sup> Teerlinc may have been acquainted with the royal cousins previously in Katherine's Privy Chamber, but prolonged exposure explains her close ties with each of them that continued throughout her career. This shows Teerlinc's aptitude for strategy, as the move to build off already well-established patronage provides more opportunity to flourish. Though Teerlinc could not have known the fate of the royal line of succession, choosing to stay in a household with prominent members of English society is a fruitful way to maintain status.

After Katherine died in the fall of 1548, it seems that Teerlinc continued to stay in the Lord Admiral's household. The letter mentioned before was a response by Seymour to his wife's death to explain what will happen to their household. He wrote, "Certaine of the Mayds and Gentlemen have defyred to have Lisence for a Moneth, or such a thing, to see theyr Friends, and then immedyately return higher againe."<sup>98</sup> From this it can be deduced that the Teerlincs returned to the Lord Admiral's residence, at least for a while.

The Parr family members were powerful friends and patrons for the Teerlinc family, but there were other factors that contributed to Teerlinc's longevity at court. One of these

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<sup>97</sup> Richard Davey, *The Nine Days' Queen, Lady Jane Grey and her Times*, Project Gutenberg, 2015, pg. 140, Accessed March 3, 2021. [www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/50427](http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/50427).

<sup>98</sup> Haynes, 78.

factors was Teerlinc's ability to cultivate strong relationships in Katherine's Privy Chamber. Another was both George and Levina's adaptability and strategic loyalty at court. Katherine had formed tight bonds with her step-daughters, and because of this, Mary and Elizabeth most likely spent a large amount of time at court in Katherine's chambers. It would not be a far stretch to suggest that the princesses encountered, and perhaps, befriended Teerlinc during their stays. At the very least the future queens might have noticed the benefits of having an artist at their disposal who could capture their likeness in ways that male artists could not. Seeing as Teerlinc was part of both of their Privy Chambers, created entirely of women they trusted, I argue that their relationship with Teerlinc was more than just a professional one. I believe they recognized how valuable Teerlinc was to their stepmother and how the bond between patron and artist could develop into something that benefited both parties. It makes sense that the more familiar a painter is with his or her subject, the more acute the expression of their subject will be. The Tudor queens were perceptive women; it does not go against their character to suggest they kept Teerlinc close partly for this reason. This can also be seen in Teerlinc's connection to the Greys. Although there is no evidence that Teerlinc ever painted Jane, her work for Jane's younger sister shows the intricacy of court relationships. In any regard, as a patron, one wants an artist who reflects the respect they had for their employer in their work. In return, an artist wants a patron who shows the same respect through how they took care of their employee. In the case of Teerlinc, this care would prove to go beyond currency.

## Edward VI

Teerlinc's relationship with Edward VI was very limited. For the majority of his reign, the young king's Privy Council made decisions regarding patronage of the arts. Any pieces commissioned from her were ordered by the council. Edward VI inherited the English throne at the age of nine. Because he was a minor for his whole reign, his court was never really his own. English law stated that if the monarchy was passed to a minor, decisions concerning both foreign and domestic affairs would fall to the Privy Council. The Lord protectors who ruled in his stead comprised, at this point, of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and after his fall from favor, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland.<sup>99</sup> This arrangement made the Privy Council the center of court influence, rather than the Privy Chamber as it had been in Henry's reign. The Protestant Reformation caused factionalism, and therefore tension and inconsistencies in political affairs.<sup>100</sup> Though this would have further amped up their competitive drive, the courtier's tensions did not perpetuate into lasting noble and gentry feuds in or beyond the court. Part of this was due to a continuation of several positions in the council and policies in law and order, foreign affairs and war.<sup>101</sup> Among the figures still in favor from Henry's Privy Chamber was William Herbert, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Pembroke, brother-in-law to Katherine Parr.<sup>102</sup> William Parr, her brother, was also still active at court.<sup>103</sup> This is significant because although Katherine herself had since fallen out of favor, parts of her

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<sup>99</sup> Jennifer Loach, ed. George Bernard and Penry Williams, *Edward VI* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) 182-83. This had to do with the fact that Henry VIII stated many of these continued positions in his will so that his legacy would live on in his son's reign.

<sup>100</sup> Mears, 707-08.

<sup>101</sup> Loach, 183-84.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 140.

<sup>103</sup> H.F.M. Prescott, *Mary Tudor*. Rev.]. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 90.

family remained, which meant continued patronage opportunities for Teerlinc. These opportunities may have relied more on her husband for connections at this time, since he was stationed closer to the council. However, my theory about her continued stay with Katherine provides an alternate way for Teerlinc to remain close to important connections at court.

What is known about Teerlinc's career under Edward is that a record of her annuity exists. In the 1547 Midsummer household accounts, Teerlinc is listed with three other artists that Edward inherited from his father. The quarterly account states: "Item to Anthony Totto Painter, 6£. 5s., Item to Barthilmewe Penne Painter, 6£ 5s. Item to Misteris Levyn Terling Paintrix, 10£, Item to Nicholas de Modeno, 105s."<sup>104</sup> What is startling is not that she continued to be paid, but rather that the amount she received was almost twice the amount of others.<sup>105</sup> This gives credence to the idea that she was an important artist for Edward. Even if her output from this time seems small, it could be due to improper or unattainable attribution, or simply to the ravages of time.

Teerlinc's work also decreased in Edward's reign because of her time abroad.<sup>106</sup> From a 1595 Chancery suit involving Teerlinc's grandson, we learn that the couple were granted permission to travel. The document also reveals that they had to stop in Calais in order that

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<sup>104</sup> John Payne Collier, *Trevelyan Papers: Prior to A.D. 1558*, Camden Society, 1857, pg. lxxvii, Accessed March 29, 2021. [https://books.google.com/books/about/Trevelyan\\_Papers.html](https://books.google.com/books/about/Trevelyan_Papers.html).

<sup>105</sup> Auerbach, 77. The exception is Guilliam Scrots. The payment of 62£ 10s to 'Gillam Scrottes Dutchman the King's Painter' was present as well. Auerbach also suggests that he was often absent from the country and would receive his allowance for two years, leaving the matter of who was paid more up for debate.

<sup>106</sup> Susan E. James, *Feminine Dynamic*, 292-3. It is unknown when and for how long the Teerlincs were away. James suggests that they were visiting Levina's father in Flanders and possibly considering moving back, but then decided to go back to England because of the birth of their son.

Teerlinc give birth.<sup>107</sup> The suit does not include dates, but it offers one explanation as to why there were fewer attributions found during Edward's reign. Furthermore, the illuminations I presented in chapter one provide evidence of Teerlinc's specific duties during Edward's reign. I argue that the gaps between when the illuminated figures appear on the plea rolls coincide with Teerlinc's absence from court. For example, there is a significant gap between Easter 1549 and Easter 1551, years in which Teerlinc seems to have been abroad. Even a missing illumination from 1548 can be explained because Katherine Parr died the same month that a Michaelmas Plea Roll was issued. From the Lord Admiral's letter we know that her household took leave for a month, which explains why Teerlinc may not have illuminated one for that time, though it does not explain the absence of one for the other rolls. Perhaps their absence can be explained by the fact that not all of the Plea Rolls depicted royal figures. One fact remains; the significance of Teerlinc's absence becomes clear in that there were no illuminations of Edward done while she was away. This suggests that she was the only court artist qualified to do so at the time.

One commission for the young king does allude to Teerlinc's prolonged relationship with Elizabeth. In 1551, a warrant was paid to "George Tarling, in way of the Kinges rewarde, being sent with his wyfe to the Lady Elizabeth's Grace to drawe owt her picture, ten poundes."<sup>108</sup> Scholars, such as Auerbach and James, argue that this commission was to fulfill Edward's wishes for a portrait of his sister. It might also have been the council's aim to

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<sup>107</sup> Auerbach, 76. This part of the information in the Public Records Office is closed to viewers at this time due to Covid-19.

<sup>108</sup> "Page 376," in *Acts of the Privy Council of England Volume 3, 1550-1552*, ed. John Roche Dasent, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1891, pg. 376, British History Online, Accessed March 21 2021, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/acts-privy-council/vol3/pp376>.



capture the princess's likeness for a marriage proposal.<sup>109</sup> Regardless, that Teerlinc was chosen for this task speaks to the council's belief that she was the best artist for it. James suggests that it was William Parr's position on the council that influenced their decision, as it created a commission for his beneficiary's wife. However, I think her relationship with Elizabeth, rather than her husband's to the council was more of a factor in that decision. Since Elizabeth was already familiar with Teerlinc from their shared time in Katherine's household, the council might have seen the need to send a well-known female artist to Elizabeth's private home. Moreover, it is clear that Teerlinc was considered to be of higher status than her husband. The whole reason the Teerlincs were brought to court was because of her artistry. The idea that Teerlinc was commissioned for art because of her husband's influence seems like a stretch.

Because Edward did not have a queen, Teerlinc's duties at court did not include those in the Privy Chamber. She did not have private access to the king, so her role was more focused on her art, rather than how she could increase her favor. However limited her time was with the king, she appears in each year's household accounts during his reign and has been attributed to artwork within this specific time frame.<sup>110</sup> This suggests that she continued to please the king and his court, at least maintaining her favor.

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<sup>109</sup> Aurbach, 75-6. A letter from Elizabeth to Edward survived about this agreement, but there was also a plan to betroth Elizabeth in August of 1551 to the duke of Ferrara or the duke of Florence.

<sup>110</sup> Auerbach, 75-77. She gives evidence for a 1551 commission to Teerlinc. J. Payne Collier, ed., *Trevelyan Papers I*, (Camden Society, lxvii, 1857). There are at least two other works from this time, one of them is of Edward VI that is now in the Philip Mould Gallery (Accessed March 31, 2021, <https://philipmould.com/content/feature/251/detail/artworks5532/>). The other is a 1550 portrait of an unknown man that is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Accessed March 31, 2021, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O81991/portrait-miniature-of-an-unknown-portrait-miniature-anonymous/>).

## Mary I

Teerlinc's relationship with Mary was more definable than that of her brother's, yet controversial. Factions formed in the wake of Edward's death, each one vying to take advantage of the situation for their own ambitious gain. The duke of Northumberland contended the claim for Lady Jane Grey's legitimacy to the throne. However, Mary had many more political allies who sought to secure her claim. The Gentlemen Pensioners found themselves split, with twenty one on Northumberland's side and twenty nine fighting for the future queen. George Teerlinc found himself on the side of Jane and the duke.<sup>111</sup> This is no surprise. George's patron William Parr was counted among the duke's ranks. George was also a Protestant.<sup>112</sup> Mary, in the aftermath, could not afford to jeopardize her newly won position. She was advised by her councilor, Simon Regard, to pardon most of those who stood against her, among them, Parr and Pembroke. She only punished Northumberland, Sir John Gates (Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners) and Sir Thomas Palmer. Events later proved that she never trusted them again, but in 1553, Teerlinc and her husband were granted leniency. Teerlinc was again chosen to serve as a gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber. This reposting could have been due to Teerlinc's agreement to illuminate the 1553 Michaelmas Roll, only a few months later.<sup>113</sup> In her decision to create this illumination, Teerlinc was also acknowledging Mary's claim. It is not known if Teerlinc shared her

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<sup>111</sup> William J. Tighe "The Gentlemen Pensioners, the Duke of Northumberland, and the Attempted Coup of July 1553." *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* Vol. 19, No. 1 (Spring, 1987), 5.

<sup>112</sup> This is stated in his will when he donated some of his earnings to the church he belonged to. George Teerlinc, "Will of Georgie Teerlinck, Gentleman of Stephney, Middlesex," The National Archives, 1578, Accessed March 21, 2021. <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/checkout/download/D963171/reference11/60/281>.

<sup>113</sup> This is significant when considering their difference in religious practices.

husband's position as Jane's supporter, but her actions after Mary's victory speak to her adaptability and strategic mind. Promoting Mary as queen maintained her position at court as both her artist and close companion. This suggests that Teerlinc may have recognized the importance of staying in Mary's good graces. This commission is also significant because it conveys a clear message that Teerlinc had (at least on the surface) turned away from her connection with Jane in favor of aligning with the winner.

Mary's art patronage, while adequate in the beginning of her reign, diminished considerably after her marriage to Philip II in 1554. This must have impacted Teerlinc's life in some way, given that one of her positions was not utilized by the queen past a certain point. Loades states, "beyond a general benevolence to those of a conservative religious persuasion, and moderate generosity to a few middle-ranking courtiers, it is hard to discern a deliberate policy in Mary's patronage."<sup>114</sup> This does not mean that Mary was completely ignorant of patronage, but she may have relied markedly less on it. I would argue, however, that her patronage could have been limited on purpose, given the religious turmoil that surrounded her reign. Teerlinc's favor from Mary seemed to waiver throughout Mary's reign, suggesting that her place at court was not as secure as in other reigns.

One area where Mary's favoritism in patronage can be seen is in the creation of her Privy Chamber. Mary came to the throne with members of her household who had been with her through the years.<sup>115</sup> This, and the fact that there had not been a queen's chamber since Katherine Parr, made it so that she was able to secure women that she trusted. That

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<sup>114</sup> Loades, 143.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, 55.

Teerlinc was repositioned there shows that Mary counted her among those she believed loyal to her, at least at that time.

Once secure on the throne, Mary's court became increasingly influenced by Catholic practices. The queen focused on her mission to stamp out heresy, which only strengthened after her marriage.<sup>116</sup> The realm was required to practice the Catholic faith overtly. Courtiers who were Protestant had to now pretend otherwise in order to survive at court.<sup>117</sup>

Protestants were forced to convert and were under close scrutiny to observe the re-instated religion.<sup>118</sup> This suggests that only those who were trusted Catholics received patronage. It was of the utmost importance to remain in favor, a feat not easy for Teerlinc. Her decreased output for the queen meant she had to resort to her social abilities, or curry patronage elsewhere at court. These changes certainly offer an explanation as to why there are no known attributions to Teerlinc depicting Mary after 1555.<sup>119</sup> Teerlinc or her husband may have demonstrated a lack of compliance in some way. However, this may have to do with the fact that by 1556, Mary and her council had finished with their propaganda efforts (which Teerlinc helped with) to move onto efforts involving reform, re-creating Catholic institutions, and rounding up heretics.<sup>120</sup> Regardless, the rebellion of 1556 left Mary

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<sup>116</sup> Auerbach, 101.

<sup>117</sup> Prescott, 197-8. This included George Teerlinc, who was Protestant according to his will, which also suggests his wife was as well. George Teerlinc, *Will of Georgy Teerlinck, Gentleman of Stepney, Middlesex*, PROB 11/60/281, The National Archives, May 16, 1578. Accessed March 21, 2021. <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/checkout/download/D963171/reference11/60/281>.

<sup>118</sup> Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England Under Mary Tudor*. 1<sup>st</sup>. Pbk. Ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 31. Duffy further explained that refusal to follow Catholic practices could be seen as anything from "refusal of those with good voices to sing in the choir at Mass, to the failure of those whom were unable to read to carry rosary beads."

<sup>119</sup> These include two book illuminations which I will further analyze in chapter five.

<sup>120</sup> Duffy, 75.

paranoid. She only trusted five women to sleep in her chamber. None of these ladies were Teerlinc, which further decreased her opportunity for favor from Mary. The French Ambassador, Antoine de Noailles wrote to the Constable that “she (the queen) is utterly confounded by the faithfulness of those whom she most trusted, seeing that the greater part of these miserable creatures are kith and kin or favored servants of the greater men in the kingdom, even of the lords of the council...she says in private that she now trusts none but Lord Montague and her Grand Esquire.”<sup>121</sup> It seems that this event renewed her wariness toward those at court who had supported Jane, or had been associated with them, including Teerlinc's husband and their patrons.

Evidence of Mary's decreasing approval of Teerlinc , in addition to the lack of work she was doing for the queen, lies in the residency the Teerlincs acquired. In 1556, a lease in Stepney, Middlesex was granted to George Teerlinc by Lord Thomas Wentworth, 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Wentworth.<sup>122</sup> Wentworth was one of Mary's advisors, but was also secretly Protestant.<sup>123</sup> This suggests that he was showing favor to a fellow Protestant looking to distance himself from court. The Teerlincs may have been motivated by the rise in suspicion from Mary, or they noticed their decline in reward in other ways.

Mary's financial struggles caused her to cease payments to many of her courtiers, including the Teerlincs.<sup>124</sup> Whether payments to Teerlinc were stopped in 1556 by

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 353.

<sup>122</sup> *Teerlynck v. Spiering*, C.2-Eliz. T. 4/60, The National Archives, 1595, Accessed July 4, 2021. <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C5708879>. This is from the same legal suit that Teerlinc's grandson attended in 1595.

<sup>123</sup> Prescott, 366.

<sup>124</sup> “Michaelmas, 5 and 6 Phillip and Mary to Easter, I Elizabeth,” E. 405/124, September 1557 – April 1558, Accessed March 21, 2021. <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C2747368>. Hereafter

coincidence, or were meant as a sign of fall from favor, cannot yet be determined. Teerlinc needed to look for patronage elsewhere. She found it in her other court connections. Though her former patrons of the Parr family, as well as families associated with the Parrs such as the Greys, Dudleys, and (to some extent) Herberts had fallen from grace since the events of 1553, their members were still present at court. Teerlinc's position as gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber was also still upheld, which proved useful to her.

Another member of the Privy Chamber was Katherine Grey, the late Jane Grey's sister. Teerlinc may have seen this as an opportunity to fortify her connection to the Greys further. That she painted Katherine sometime soon after Mary supposedly ceased both art commissions and payment to her adds weight to that scenario. This portrait also states a relationship; it is promoting a connection between sitter and artist. It is significant because it suggests that Teerlinc's allegiances lay in who she thought she could benefit from most. It reflects her skill in proving herself faithful, while not giving away where her loyalties really lied. Perhaps Teerlinc saw the benefit of remaining close to those who had a claim to the throne. The bond between her and Katherine Grey proved to be notable to Teerlinc later in Elizabeth's reign.

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referred to as E. 405/124. Prescott, 354 - 55. Mary had surrendered the Crown's share of the looted Catholic institutions acquired during the Reformation to Cardinal Reginald Pole. Duffy, 41.

## Elizabeth I

Elizabeth I's reign was long, spanning forty-five years. The Virgin Queen's strong influence over her court provided a niche in which Teerlinc's artistry could flourish. Since Teerlinc died in 1576, I will only focus on the beginning and middle of Elizabeth's court climate, but this will still give a well rounded idea of what she experienced. Like Edward VI and Mary I, the Virgin Queen relied on her Privy Council for political affairs. The Privy Chamber of which Teerlinc was a part, had little to no political influence. The queen did not want political debate in her chamber, limiting its personnel to women she was closest to.<sup>125</sup> Instead, the chamber acted as a haven for Elizabeth, a place for support, gossip, patronage and a "free market for favors."<sup>126</sup> The Privy Chamber included about sixteen women, six of them married ladies such as Teerlinc. Controlling who had direct access to her increased her majesty's authority; a precedent set by the Tudor rulers before her.<sup>127</sup> Arguably, prestige was more prudent for Elizabeth to uphold, given that she was an unmarried monarch. To add to her prestige, the women she kept close to her were also "models for female excellence."<sup>128</sup> Teerlinc served this purpose as an artist and long-serving gentlewoman at court. Like Katherine Parr, Elizabeth surrounded herself with like-minded women to put forth a strong image of her sovereignty.

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<sup>125</sup> Thomas Bettenridge and Anna Riehl, *Tudor Court Culture* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2010), 96. This was in the hope to avoid factional strife in her personal quarters.

<sup>126</sup> <sup>126</sup> Natalie Mears, "Courts, Courtiers, and Culture in Tudor England," *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 3 (2003), 708.

<sup>127</sup> Bettenridge, Riehl, 95.

<sup>128</sup> Elizabeth Burton, *The Pageant of Elizabethan England* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 35.

Elizabeth's reign seemed the most beneficial to Teerlinc, with the possible exception of the time spent with Katherine Parr. Early into Elizabeth's succession, Teerlinc was granted a life annuity of 40£. This is significant because it shows Elizabeth's approval of Teerlinc as a permanent court artist, rather than a yearly contractual one. In addition to the life annuity, Elizabeth repaid Teerlinc for the years Mary failed, for a total of 150£, as listed in the 1558-59 Teller Roll,<sup>129</sup> which states "and further from our gracious words and from total certainty and our true knowledge we give and concede...to the said Levinia Terlinge as much sum or mony...of the said annuity of £40 as being outstanding and due from our Treasury...from our gift without account of any other provided to our heirs or successors returning paying."<sup>130</sup> This was a promise to Mary that Elizabeth made in a letter to the dying queen. It said, "She seems to require nothing more than what is just, and I will take care that they shall be paid as far as may lie in my power."<sup>131</sup> Though Mary acknowledged her lack of payment toward her courtiers, that Elizabeth took it upon herself to not only pay Teerlinc back, but also make sure she never had to return the money, speaks to her fondness for Teerlinc. Elizabeth also continued Teerlinc's post in the Privy Chamber, showing further trust in her.

Elizabeth granted other generous gifts to Teerlinc throughout her remaining years at the English court. With a life annuity, the Teerlincs pursued their English citizenship. In 1566, George, Levina and (son) Marcus received official denization from the queen;<sup>132</sup> an example of the continual favor that Teerlinc and her family enjoyed. A more conspicuous grant of

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<sup>129</sup> E. 405/124.

<sup>130</sup> Melanie V. Taylor, "Is this Levina Teerlinc?" Melanie V. Taylor, October 18, 2017, Accessed March 25, 2021. <https://www.google.com/amp/s/melaniev.taylor.co.uk/2017/10/18/is-this-levina-teerlinc/amp/>.

<sup>131</sup> Chamberlain, 151.

<sup>132</sup> Auerbach, 188.



affection by the queen highlighted in a document shortly after Teerlinc's death in 1576. The decree states, “whereas wee...in the firste yere of our Reigne did geve and grannte unto Levyne Terlinge latelie deceased and late wyffe unto George Terlinge...one Annuytie of fortie powndes by yere duringe her Liefte. ..the saide Levyne dyed the xxiith of June laste paste one onlie day before the tene powndes parcell of the same annuytie shoulde haue bene due unto her wee aswell in respecte of the former service donne unto us by the saide Levyne Terlinge, as of the presente service of our said Servaunte George Terlinge are pleased that the saide George shall haue payment of the saide Ten poundes...as of our gift...Geaven under our Privie seale...”<sup>133</sup> This record underlines the deep appreciation the queen had for Teerlinc. That she was granted her annuity after her death, especially pointedly by Elizabeth, indicates that she found true compatibility with her last monarch. Teerlinc may have been an adaptable player in the court arena, but she seemed to please Elizabeth as much as, if not more than Katherine Parr. These two queens bookended Teerlinc's time at court perfectly. Her success affirms the importance of a bond between patron and artist.

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 105. Her life annuity was given in quarterly installments, just like in previous reigns.

## Expectations at Court

Landing her position at court was an accomplishment for Teerlinc, but maintaining that status was a more complicated task. Not only did she have to consistently produce quality work, but she also had to compete in the same game to which other courtiers had long grown accustomed. To thrive among the English aristocracy, one had to form lasting connections and meet the high social expectations that came with court life. Given that Teerlinc held her position for four consecutive monarchs and died with favorable status, one could assume she was successful at playing the game. This becomes meaningful when considering the different social and political climate of each monarch. What I am to show in this section is the social duties that were expected of Teerlinc as a courtier, as well as how she navigated them. By upholding court practices and relationships, Teerlinc ensured that her patronage never waivered.

There was a certain etiquette expected of all courtiers at the Tudor court. These social regulations developed from humanist ideas and writings centered toward a balance of mental and physical strength which circulated among other Renaissance courts and shared by their visitors. Education became a more common priority for upper- and middle-class men and women as a result. One book that was particularly influential is Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*. Castiglione presents a detailed model of what a courtier should strive to emulate, or at least appear to do so. Some of the key adjectives he uses to describe the perfect courtier are discreet, well-mannered, religious, full of goodness,

ready wit, prudence, noble courtesy, sharp, pleasing, honorable and virtuous.<sup>134</sup> He also stipulates that “All hours of the day [should be] divided among honorable and pleasant exercises both of the body and the mind.”<sup>135</sup> This last statement shows how much education and self-improvement was valued and why this book was read by many English courtiers, including in all probability because of her career, Teerlinc.

These objectives outlined by Castiglione and other humanist minds significantly impacted the lives of women, especially aristocratic women. Castiglione describes the perfect court lady as an almost parallel figure to the Courtier, but with a few differences – mainly having to do with appearance, chastity, temperament (soft and delicate) and household duties. However, the main portrait is listed as a woman with “virtues of mind the same as men...to be of noble birth; to avoid affectation; to be naturally graceful in all her actions; to be well-mannered; witty; prudent, but not arrogant, envious, slanderous, vain, contentious, or inept; to know how to gain and build the favor of her mistress and all others...more circumspect and more careful [than even the male courtier] not to give anyone the opportunity to speak ill of her, and conduct herself so that not only may she avoid being sullied by guilt, but also by even the suspicion of it.”<sup>136</sup> The last few points are important to note because Teerlinc presents as a great example of how these qualities were executed by women at the English court. It also gives more weight to the idea that she did read this book and adhered to its principles.

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<sup>134</sup> Julia Conway Bondanella and Mark Musa, ed., *The Italian Renaissance Reader* (New York: Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 1987), 197 – 200.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, 204.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, 235.

These guidelines were important for court women to follow, but each ruler – and patron – had their own preferences for company and sponsorship. For example, Katherine Parr favored those who shared her interests in education, religious reform, and the arts. The humanist movement allowed for more aristocratic women, like Teerlinc and Katherine, to pursue education and advancement. Katherine wanted to further her progress and the progress of others by the “patronage of those involved in those pursuits [education and arts] and those who fervor the artistic matrix of the rapidly maturing English Renaissance.”<sup>137</sup> The individuals who the queen invited to her chamber were central to her life; they formed a supportive community for her, while also promoting the image that she wanted to portray to the public. This was yet another reason why Teerlinc found herself among the gentlewomen of Katherine's household.

Katherine was able to create this center of humanist endorsement because under Henry VIII's rule, the Privy Chamber had become a more public sphere.<sup>138</sup> The Privy Chamber was a body of nobles, gentry and servants who attended to the king and queen and shared their company. To gain access, one or one's family had to be connected to the Crown, or be invited by their leaders. This practice originated under Henry VII to enhance the authority of the crown. The Eltham Ordinances of 1526 were passed under his son's rule to further restrictions on who could be in the chamber, as they were only allowed admittance by the king.<sup>139</sup> This duality of carefully selected public access made the court in Early Modern

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<sup>137</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 155-56. In regards to education, women were allowed advancements due to the Protestant ideals of participating fully in the faith by reading scripture.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid*, 119.

<sup>139</sup> Bettenridge and Riehl, 95.

England a competitive minefield in which its “members attempted in a myriad of ways...to raise both themselves and the family...into a higher sphere of property and influence than the one to which they had been born.”<sup>140</sup> Daybell explained that “nothing was more important, therefore, to members of the aristocracy than maintaining and strengthening the networks of kin, clients, neighbors and servants.”<sup>141</sup> Courtiers were able to do this because the sovereigns were able to benefit from them as well. Due to Henry's lack of finances, he was unable to support a royal army or bureaucracy, so he and his queen offered patronage in exchange for unpaid service to the crown.<sup>142</sup> It has been debated if the Tudors created this competitive climate to make the courtiers financially dependent on their sovereigns.<sup>143</sup> The Privy Chamber, the closest access to the king and queen, was an essential goal for those competing for favor.

What this information tells us is that everyone at court continuously jockeyed for favor and power. The pressure to one up their peers and opponents was ever present in the minds of the courtiers. For Teerlinc, a foreigner, it was even more imperative that she develop and maintain ways to impress her patrons. This constant struggle for prestige continued in Henry's successors reigns and was mirrored in Teerlinc's association with them.

Honorable though their posts were, it was their responsibility as courtiers to maintain them. For Teerlinc, this meant a careful tending to her relationships with her patrons. Teerlinc's role as a gentlewoman was important to nurture, just like her role as

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<sup>140</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 1.

<sup>141</sup> Daybell, 23.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>143</sup> Mears, 720. Historian Norbert Elias thought this because it would effectively limit the threat the nobility could create if they were financially independent and therefore weaken their chances to rebel.

court painter.<sup>144</sup> She was expected to have a presence at court that exemplified the decorum and attitude that was set by the ruling class. As a gentlewoman, Teerlinc was required to wear the colors and fabrics that matched her station.<sup>145</sup> How courtiers were seen by others and how they acted went a long way in the matter of how much favor they could obtain. Equally, their social abilities were just as important. Daybell noted that “upper class women achieved influence through social position, relationships and powerful contacts.”<sup>146</sup> Teerlinc was in a perfect position to develop patron relations, but remaining in favor was a constant concern.

Evidence of Teerlinc’s success in this task, can be found in examples of courtiers who were not. Hans Eworth, a significant artist in Mary's court, was let go once Elizabeth ascended the throne. Both Loades and Strong agree that he seems to have lost favor, though it is uncertain why.<sup>147</sup> This is significant when compared to Teerlinc, who not only upheld her position as court artist and gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber, but was also granted a life annuity by Elizabeth.<sup>148</sup> Women in the Privy Chamber could also be outcast or demoted. A letter written by Elizabeth during her reign states that Lady Mary Howard, one of her personal attendants, had offended her. She wrote, “I will no more show her any countenance but out with all such ungracious flouting wenches!...I have made her my servant and she will now make herself my mistress!”<sup>149</sup> It is not clear when this letter was

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<sup>144</sup> Chadwick, 116.

<sup>145</sup> Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450-1550* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 228.

<sup>146</sup> Daybell, 4.

<sup>147</sup> Strong, 54. Loades, 131.

<sup>148</sup> Auerbach, 104.

<sup>149</sup> Chamberlin, 171.

written, but Elizabeth's intention is clear. Even other courtiers closest to her such as Robert Dudley, Earl of Leycester were vulnerable if they did not please her. In a 1566 report from the Venetian Ambassador the queen was heard saying “if by favor you have become insolent, you will soon reform; I shall pull you down just as I raised you in the beginning.”<sup>150</sup> These examples show that no one was safe from being stripped of their privilege. Teerlinc remained privileged in her posts until her death. She seemed to maintain, at times increasing, her favor for the majority of her career, indicating dedication to her position.

A look into the daily ritual of the Privy Chamber allows for a better understanding of what that part of Teerlinc's life entailed. Gentlewomen were to present themselves to the queen at 8:00 am. What followed was time spent variously in gossip, food and music. As seen in Katherine's chamber, members reveled in matters of education, art and religious reform. In Mary's, it seems like the women indulged the queen with more domestic conventions. For Elizabeth, perhaps a combination of both was practiced. A common aspect in all of these chambers is the amount of time spent planning wardrobe of, and dressing the queen.<sup>151</sup> The individuals permitted to share residence and a table with royalty were “the most important or the most cherished of the lords and ladies that served at court.”<sup>152</sup> As a member of the inner circle, as well as a distinguished artist of the court, Teerlinc was part of these daily proceedings, as well as present at the more glamorous events.

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid, 201-202. This is a translation from Giacomo Surian, the Venetian Ambassador, who wrote it in Italian.

<sup>151</sup> Harris, 228.

<sup>152</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 121.

It is hard to determine how Teerlinc demonstrated commitment to her court duties, but the amount she was annually paid shows the level of high respect her patrons had for her. According to the Exchequer of the Treasurer of the Chamber, Teerlinc was paid forty pounds annually from 1546 to her death in 1576. This amount was generous, but it was also considerably higher than most artists in England at that time. She was, in fact, being paid more than many male artists, both before and during her time at court. Teerlinc “was paid more for her tiny paintings than Hans Holbein for his court portraits...Teerlinc was (paid) £40 and Holbein £34.”<sup>153</sup> More pointedly, her successor, Hilliard, did not match her until 1599.<sup>154</sup> This is significant because even though Hilliard was known to have supposedly surpassed Teerlinc in fame, it took him almost thirty years to do so, at least financially. Chadwick was wary of this difference in pay stating that “comparisons such as these can be misleading, as court painters were customarily paid with gifts as well as money.”<sup>155</sup> However there is evidence that Teerlinc was also given gifts in addition to her wages. For example, in 1563, Elizabeth I gave Teerlinc two gilt spoons. This would have been seen as a generous present because of their value.<sup>156</sup>

There is further evidence that she was valued by three of her royal patrons. In 1567, Lodovico Gucciardini wrote, “Laevina, the daughter of Mr. Simon Bruges, who, like her father, is excellent in miniature; so that Henry VIII also invited her to his court, with high rewards...and continued in high favour with Mary, and is now in equal esteem with

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<sup>153</sup> Fine, 28.

<sup>154</sup> Chadwick, 115-116. Hilliard started working for Elizabeth in the 1570s.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Levin, 279.



Elizabeth.”<sup>157</sup> While it might seem like this answers the question of who brought Teerlinc to court, it must be remembered that it was written twenty plus years after she first came England. The same logic can be applied to the comment he wrote about Mary. Also, the favor he mentions might be a reference to her position in the Privy Chamber. Regardless, it is clear that she was revered by contemporary minds as an asset to the English court and continued to be so for the rest of her career.

Teerlinc started her career at the English court as a member of Queen Katherine's Privy Chamber. Her close proximity to the queen suggests that Katherine saw the benefit of keeping artists close; the artist Susanna Horenbout was a member of her chamber as well.<sup>158</sup> Given Katherine's strategy to promote herself through art, it would make sense that she would want an artist close by to be able to catch her likeness more efficiently. Teerlinc's dual position allowed her not only access to the queen and her sister Anne, but also the reinstated princesses as well. The fact that Teerlinc was kept as court artist and gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber for Mary, then to further develop as the queen's painter for Elizabeth, shows her importance to her royal patrons, as well as the loyalty she demonstrated. To be dedicated to both queens, whose chambers were made almost completely anew upon each succession, also establishes Teerlinc's perseverance and adaptability at court.

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<sup>157</sup> Lodovico Guicciardini. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: Printed for I. Herbert, 1795), 20-21.

<sup>158</sup> Susan E. James, *Feminine Dynamic*, 25. Horenbout was also a gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber. This suggests that she set a precedent for female artists at the English court, given that she was the first to be employed by them. She has also been linked to commissions ordered by Katherine Parr, though it is unclear what portraits these commissions are referring to.

The ambitious and competitive drive to outdo one another visually, socially, and politically allowed a cohesive setting for artists to flourish at the Tudor courts. The closer one was to the royal family, and what they had to offer them, were factors in how many opportunities and patronage they would receive. Though Teerlinc's intimate presence wavered depending on which monarch was in place during her service, she managed to remain in commission and in favor for thirty years, a feat that not all courtiers could accomplish.

### Chapter Three: Katherine Parr's Influence

Teerlinc seemed attentive at building relationships and producing quality art for her patrons, but other factors that attributed to her success must also be considered. As I have shown, Teerlinc was patroned by the Parr family, especially Katherine. What I aim to show in this chapter is how Katherine organized and changed the English court in a way that allowed Teerlinc to thrive, even beyond Katherine's own time. Not only did she help re-instate Mary and Elizabeth to the line of succession, but she also did so in a way that effected how the future queens continued to advocate for their positions. The last queen of Henry VIII was able to do this through the influence she held over her husband, their subjects, and her step-children. Katherine took full advantage of her influence to promote and protect herself and her interests such as education, reformed religion, and patronage of the arts. One of the most prominent ways she developed her patronage was through portraiture, specifically portraits of herself. She was known to have several variably sized portraits made for herself, by an assortment of different artists. According to James, “after Elizabeth I, Parr commissioned more individual portraits of herself than any other noblewomen of the sixteenth century.”<sup>159</sup> Katherine's will to control her image, much like her male peers, set a standard for queens and other women at court to follow her lead.

Katherine's agenda is made clear through Stephen Greenblatt's theory of self fashioning. His scholarship on the subject explains how figures during the Renaissance

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<sup>159</sup> Susan E. James *Kateryn Parr*, 142-163.

emerged as influential individuals because of the temperament of the age they lived in. Greenblatt argued that there was a “perception of change in the intellectual, social, psychological and aesthetic structures that govern the generation of identities in the early modern period...increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulative, artful process...” developed within the English court.<sup>160</sup> Greenblatt presents this phenomenon as someone successfully putting on a show or image they want others to believe.<sup>161</sup> It is apparent that some individuals, such as Katherine, were more adept at self fashioning than others. However, the court in general had an atmosphere that allowed for these influential figures to postulate their image in the fashion that worked towards their goals.

This chapter will show how Katherine accomplished this, but also how there is evidence of her guiding others to succeed in this performance. My first chapter gives evidence of this through the paintings and illuminations Teerlinc did of those whom Katherine fashioned herself as a role model to. One could say Katherine was a master of influence, as she used the arts to indoctrinate herself as a permanent queen, a strategy she tried to pass onto her step-children. Katherine's interest in Teerlinc drove the way her work was used, not only in Katherine's reign, but reigns beyond hers. That Teerlinc was a significant portraitist close to the Crown allowed her to be an important part, and even active participant, of this female propaganda.

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<sup>160</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 1-2.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid*, 29.

## Tudor Self-Fashioning and Court Culture

A theater production is the perfect way to describe the sixteenth century English court. The courts of the Tudor dynasty from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I overflowed with excess, splendor and competition. To be sure, England prospered under Henry VII, but his tight-fistedness was legendary. Not so his son. By the end of his reign, Henry VIII had drained almost all of his father's savings and was near bankruptcy.<sup>162</sup> He took every opportunity to show off his lavish taste with exotic dining, expensive clothing and accessories, supplemented by an abundance of visual and aural arts. All three of his heirs modelled their courts similarly after their father's extravagance, using it to their advantage at home and abroad. Essentially, this created a formidable atmosphere, but more prominently, a competitive one.

Along with the glamour came the determination of the courtiers to maintain their position in the eyes of their rulers. By representing agreeable appearances, manners and various skill sets to their sovereigns, nobles and gentry hoped to establish or maintain their political and social influence at court. I have shown in the previous two chapters how Teerlinc's aspirations were no different. In turn, the royals were able to use their court attendants for their own advancements. This mutual relationship, where gains could be made for both parties, shaped and formed Tudor court life.

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<sup>162</sup> J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 455.

By 1545, Henry VIII's health was rapidly declining. He had constant headaches, poor digestion, depression, leg ulcers, corpulence, and high blood pressure.<sup>163</sup> However, none of these ills were enough to slay his determination in promoting his kingly prowess, presence, and power. Scarisbrick emphasized that "never before had England felt power of the state so widely and deeply as in the 1530s and 40s."<sup>164</sup> Part of that image lay in displaying his wealth. An accumulation of richly goods from over the years in addition to a disregard for his economic shortcomings allowed Henry VIII to keep face. In the same year, Parliament also granted him all the chantries, hospitals and free chapels of the realm which he liquidated for his own pleasures.<sup>165</sup> This shows the lengths Henry went to in order to remain an impressive ruler in Europe.

Henry VIII was not the only member of court to have expensive taste. Katherine shared a similar vanity for the luxurious fabrics, jewels, art, and music with which she surrounded herself. This aligns with the presence of Renaissance ideals of self promotion and appreciation of beauty that were enjoyed by both men and women at court. The king and queen exercised influence in this way. Katherine, with her interest in the arts, showcased her queenly manner through it. As Henry's sixth queen, it was crucial for her especially to maintain her position.

Henry and Katherine's models of marketing themselves and their court continued into the later Tudor reigns. Edward VI "inherited a lavish and well-established court and

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<sup>163</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 112.

<sup>164</sup> Scarisbrick, 499

<sup>165</sup> A.F. Pollard, *Henry VIII*. Illustrated Ed.]ed. (London, New York: Longmans, Green, 1951), 335.

played an enthusiastic role in its activities.”<sup>166</sup> It’s been pointed out that Edward took pride in his personal display, both physically and through portraiture. Mary's court, while still impressive, differed from her father’s and siblings’ courts because of what she wanted to accomplish. She strove to produce an heir to secure her Catholic line of succession and to return her court to the same faith. Some historians, such as Loades, view her interests as limited to “people, clothes and babies,” in addition to her religious devotion.<sup>167</sup> Other historians believe that Philip was the one in control, that he ordered splendid displays in order to both one-up the French and impress Rome.<sup>168</sup> It seems that past opinions of Mary conclude that she did not have a knack for embellishing her sovereignty, unlike her father and siblings. However, more recent studies and evidence support a different conclusion. For one, the marriage treaty with Spain stated that Mary had the full rights of a king, and that Parliament would answer to her, not Philip. In fact, at their wedding, Mary stood on the right to symbolize her higher status. The contract also stated that if Mary died childless, Philip could not inherit the English Crown.<sup>169</sup> This shows that she did know how to promote and protect her royal authority. For the matter of how she ran her court, there were fineries and festivities implemented. According to Leandra de Lisle, a British historical writer that focuses on the Tudors, “Mary had never lived surrounded solely by pious Catholics, as is sometimes claimed.”<sup>170</sup> She must have understood the importance of displaying herself and her court so as to maintain set standards already embedded in the courtiers and others abroad. At the

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<sup>166</sup> Loach, 135.

<sup>167</sup> Prescott, 184-86.

<sup>168</sup> Loades, 8.

<sup>169</sup> Leandra de Lisle, *Tudor: Passion. Manipulation. Murder. The Story of England's Most Notorious Family* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2013), 291.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid*, 293.

same time, her effort to re-create a Catholic-based realm should not be forgotten, as I will demonstrate later in this chapter.

Court social practices under Elizabeth relied heavily on outward appearance. The 1560s showed an emphasis on fashion trends that called attention to the wearer and painted them in a certain light. The term 'pain is beauty' comes to mind as a central theme among courtiers, meaning styles became more exaggerated and stiffened with starch.<sup>171</sup> Although festivities started out much more modest than previous Tudor rulers, Elizabeth encouraged others to put on elaborate revelries as she travelled. However, she did on occasion host feasts and masquerades in outdoor banquet houses.<sup>172</sup> Attitudes of the court changed in addition to the new fashion trends and were just as flamboyant. For her to remain an unmarried monarch, Elizabeth had to assert the same absoluteness in her rule, in a sense be a 'god on Earth,' that her father put forth.<sup>173</sup> She upheld the Renaissance principals of self promotion, brilliance, accomplishment and magnificence. The court made every attempt to imitate these ideals, resulting in an aggressive and vain body. The queen encouraged this behavior, rather than quenching it, as she found it to her liking. Erickson explained that the "continuous display of costly adornment taught her gentlemen and ladies to crave fashion and ruin."<sup>174</sup> This environment, though vain and brutal, allowed Teerlinc to thrive. Although there is no evidence that the artist flaunted these fashions or behavior

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<sup>171</sup> Carolly Erickson, *The First Elizabeth*. First Edition. ed. (New York: Summit Books, 1983), 229. Starch was first imported to England in 1564.

<sup>172</sup> Erickson, 227-229

<sup>173</sup> Burton, 31-32.

<sup>174</sup> Erickson, 230-31.



herself, her craft adhered to the practices. Teerlinc's miniatures were used by members of the court (especially the queen) to display their image and aspirations to others.

Whether Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth's court and self displays were influenced directly by Henry, Katherine or a mix of both cannot be determined. But Katherine's prime presence in their early lives compared to Henry's is considerably notable. The time she spent with the princesses especially exemplifies her influence. She seemed to be someone they could look to for guidance, as it was initially she and not Henry who wanted them to have the tools they needed if they inherited the throne. The following sections will demonstrate this, as well as show how she was able to accomplish this feat.

## Influence Over Henry

Henry VIII may have had controversial, and sometimes unfortunate experiences with his first five wives, but for the most part Katherine Parr turned out to be a great consort for him in his last years. She was an “impressive and agreeable woman,” caring and engaging to the king and his court.<sup>175</sup> Katherine came from a respected family that had long been in favorable service to the crown. Her mother, Maud Parr, had been a lady-in-waiting to Queen Catherine of Aragon and Mary when she was a princess. The families must have been quite close, for Henry's first queen was the godmother of his last. Using this connection, Katherine rekindled her relationship with Mary in 1543, in the hope of gaining a valued position at court. Katherine's attentiveness to his estranged, yet still beloved daughter, as well as her kindness towards the wounded is what drew her to the king.<sup>176</sup> Katherine carried these devotional and ambitious characteristics with her throughout her time as queen. They helped her to hold influence over Henry, as well as many important people at court and abroad.

When Katherine became queen in 1543, only Edward was in the line of succession out of Henry's three children. Though tensions between Mary and her father lessened after 1536, she was still considered illegitimate in the king's eyes. Elizabeth was even further removed from court, having also been declared illegitimate, but additionally exiled after her mother's execution. Katherine changed that, inviting Elizabeth back to court and reunited

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<sup>175</sup> Scarisbrick, 456.

<sup>176</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 90, 113.

her with her father and siblings.<sup>177</sup> Not only did Katherine bring the royal family back together, but through her influence, she persuaded Henry VIII to re-establish his daughters to the line of succession after Edward.<sup>178</sup> Without Katherine, Teerlinc might not have had lasting patronage at court beyond Edward's reign. Indirectly then, Katherine, by bringing her step-children into contact with her courtiers, including Teerlinc, insured continued contact among the group after her death.

Enriching the line of succession showed Katherine's hold over Henry, but it was not her only achievement. Pollard asserted that "her task can have been no light one, but her tact overcame all difficulties."<sup>179</sup> Henry was not the easiest man to reason with, but because of her subtle advisement and generosity towards his needs, he allowed her to design her court the way she wanted. I have already discussed how she created her Privy Chamber, but she also re-organized and directed the royal nursery, modelling it after her own highly received education. The queen brought in tutors with enlightened curriculums such as John Cheke and Anthony Cooke. This provided not only the royal children, but also any other children in her court, with top notch education.<sup>180</sup> Katherine's own scholarly capabilities, along with her Protestant values, inspired her to believe that both boys and girls deserved to be educated. Furthermore, her encouragement and patronage of Mary and Elizabeth's artwork, as well as Teerlinc and Horenbout's, implies that she believed women to be just as

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<sup>177</sup> Pollard, 329.

<sup>178</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 131-5.

<sup>179</sup> Pollard, 329.

<sup>180</sup> Scarisbrick, 457. Cooke was the grandfather to Sir Francis Bacon, a court favorite of Elizabeth I.

capable as men at these skills. Katherine used her power as queen to promote their abilities, which was special in a time when women's opportunities were limited.

As Henry's sixth queen, Katherine knew better than to suppose that a person's position or reputation at court would always be secure. Considering that Henry was still obsessed with producing male heirs, Katherine's cause for worry was significant. While she was queen, Henry commissioned a portrait of the royal family to include not herself, but Jane Seymour, the mother of his only male heir (Figure 3.1).<sup>181</sup> Mary and Elizabeth were also included in the painting, but were shafted to the outer sides, instead of in the center like Henry, Jane and Edward. This symbolized their lower positions in the family.



Figure 3.1. Unknown Artist, *The Family of Henry VIII*, c. 1545, oil on canvas, 144.5 x 355.9 cm (support/canvas/panel/str external). Copyright: Hampton Court Palace, London, UK/ The Royal Collection

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<sup>181</sup> Unknown Artist, *The Family of Henry VIII*, c. 1545, Hampton Court Palace, London, Royal Collection Trust, Accessed April 14, 2021. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/405796/the-family-of-henry-viii>.

A way for Katherine to cope with the fact that Jane, though dead, had a higher place in Henry's heart, was to try to enhance her position through the same tactic: portraiture. Portraiture had been used by rulers across Europe to present certain attributes they wished to promote to others long before Tudor times. However, Katherine was the first English queen to grasp their usefulness as political game pieces and use them for herself. She commissioned multiple portraits of varying sizes, mediums and by different artists to silently but efficiently remind the king who the present queen was.<sup>182</sup> Figure 3.2 is an excellent example of this. Katherine is wearing fabrics strictly regulated for only her station such as the intricate silver 'cloth of tissue' design and the lynx fur on her sleeves. She is also adorning a crown-shaped brooch, known to have been listed under the queen's jewels.<sup>183</sup> Another feature that adds to this carefully chosen depiction of herself as queen is the inclusion of the Tudor rose in her hands. Through this portrait, Katherine is making a statement. She wants the court, and more pointedly, Henry to know that she is there to stay. By emphasizing her connection to the Tudors and the Crown, she is promoting her status and lawful placement. Of course, producing a male heir would have cast her in an even more favorable light. But in a way, Katherine made up for her lack of fertility when she persuaded Henry to re-legitimize the princesses. Her personalized propaganda showed understanding of a way to get one's point across in a delicate, but effective way. One could argue that her presence is still in the family portrait; although she was excluded, Mary and Elizabeth were not, as they might have been without Katherine's influence. Her tactic to instill her queenly

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<sup>182</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 160.

<sup>183</sup> Charlotte Bolland and Tarnya Cooper, "Tudor and Jacobean Portraits Database: Katherine Parr" (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2014).

image upon the court seems to have had a lasting impression on her step-daughters, and possibly others who surrounded her during her time as queen.



Figure 3.2. Attributed to Master John, *Katherine Parr*, c. 1545. Oil on panel, 71 in. x 37 in. Copyright: The National Portrait Gallery, London, UK.

## Influence Over Royal Children

Katherine's influence over Henry VIII was significant, but her legacy endured through the impressions she made on her step-children, in particular Mary and Elizabeth. Though the Tudor successors used what she instilled in them to varying degrees, her authority can significantly be traced through art. Katherine's values of self fulfillment, strong leadership and preservation of the royal family were present in the art she commissioned for herself and her stepchildren; art that was produced in part by Teerlinc.

Katherine promoted Mary and Elizabeth through portraiture as well. As part of her plan to restore them to Henry's good graces, she commissioned their first individual portraits as "visual reminders of their royal decent."<sup>184</sup> The portrait of Elizabeth displays her in an extravagantly patterned red and gold dress (Figure 3.3). The fabrics used to make the dress were restricted by law to only be worn by the king and his closest relatives.<sup>185</sup> Though Henry had renounced their mothers, Katherine showed that he could not deny their legitimacy. She must have been a voice of reason for Henry, tactfully suggesting that with his declining health, it was better to re-instate his already living children, than to rely on producing another heir. That way the Tudor name would not just fall to Edward to carry out.

The individual portraits, in addition to being visual reminders, also promoted other important qualities about the princesses. For example, Elizabeth is painted holding a book, while another is posed in the background. This goes back to Katherine's values in education.

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<sup>184</sup> Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr*, 143.

<sup>185</sup> O. Millar, "The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen" (London: The Royal Collection Trust, 1963).

Her endorsement of female education is particularly evident from this painting. It emphasizes the queen's influence in ensuring that all of Henry's heirs had the tools they needed to be able rulers. But more importantly to my point, it also demonstrates a way to visually ingrain that conceptualization to the court.



Figure 3.3: Attributed to William Scrots, *Elizabeth I when a Princess*, c. 1546. Oil on panel, 108.5 x 81.8 cm. Copyright: The Royal Collection Trust, London.

Returned to the line of succession, the princesses surely saw the wisdom their step-mother had in this accomplishment. Katherine's utilization of art to achieve or maintain roles and control iconography can be reflected in their later reigns. This proved to be significant for Teerlinc, as much of her attributed work was for this purpose. Initially, Mary did establish her image in the early years of her rule. This was in order to further promote herself as the



rightful Catholic queen appointed by God after the events of 1553.<sup>186</sup> The illumination on the 1553 Michaelmas Roll that is attributed to Teerlinc can attest to this. Mary's decision to display her image in a persuasive and triumphant way conveys evidence of Mary's recollection of her step-mother's teachings in how art can be used as a tool for political strategy. Though historians such as H. M. Prescott and David Loades have argued that she lacked judgement in matters of policy<sup>187</sup>, Teerlinc's piece enables Mary to promote herself as a legitimate and successful ruler. The use of a Plea Roll may seem subtle, but contemporary minds during this time would acknowledge this message clearly.

The 1554 portraits done by Antonio Mor and Hans Eworth also show Mary's capability of visual propaganda.<sup>188</sup> The portraits were made in the same year as marriage negotiations with Spain and the rebellion wanting to prevent it. These portraits were quite possibly a response to the people after these events, given what was included in them. For example, Eworth's portrait (Figure 3.4) depicts Mary similarly to Katherine's 1545 portrait. Like Katherine, Mary is wearing a jeweled piece that makes a statement, in Mary's case a large cross to promote her Catholic faith. Additionally, Mary is holding a Tudor rose in her hand.<sup>189</sup> What is especially interesting is that the rose has a smaller bud protruding from it. This could symbolize fertility and Mary's dedication to producing a Catholic Tudor heir. Both features also emphasize an effort in reminding the audience what Mary stands for and the power she holds as a victorious Tudor queen.

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<sup>186</sup> Refer to chapter one for this event.

<sup>187</sup> Prescott, 186. Loades, 143.

<sup>188</sup> Loades, 131. Auerbach, 90-101.

<sup>189</sup> Various Contributors, *National Portrait Gallery: A Portrait of Britain* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2014).



Figure 3.4. Hans Eworth, *Queen Mary I*, c. 1554. Oil on panel, 8 1/2 in. x 6 5/8 in.  
Copyright: National Portrait Gallery, London, UK.

After her marriage was secured, Mary possibly felt that she did not need to promote her sovereign image because of her alliance with Spain. This reason could point to why Teerlinc has no attributed pieces of Mary after that time. But what is clear is Mary's initiative to control the image she wanted her court to see, a sure sign of the impression Katherine left on her. The image she presented to her court was a woman ruling in her own right, but willing to give her followers and council what they wanted: A Catholic heir whose mother would lead the country back to the old faith. My first chapter demonstrated Teerlinc's part in that endeavor, but also the artist's adaptability in promoting each of her patrons. Teerlinc, despite her personal beliefs, helped her sitters get across their intentions, views and ambitions. Katherine, though influential in this process, had different aims than Mary. It was up to Teerlinc to please and personify her patron, no matter what they wanted to portray. This talent, along with her adaptability, allowed her to gain patronage. From this, a pattern emerges in how her artistry was used and how she was perceived at court.

Katherine's guidance and Teerlinc's aptitude for carrying out the intention behind it was also present in Elizabeth's reign. Like Katherine and Mary, Elizabeth accentuated upon her Tudor legacy in her portraits. This can be seen in Figure 1.2 with her rose adorned headdress. This painting is significant in that it was painted by Teerlinc early in the queen's reign, which suggests her need to emphasize her legitimacy as Mary's successor. This may have been a message for people at court, but since it is a miniature, it could quite possibly have been a tool for marriage contracts abroad. Regardless, it is reminiscent of what Katherine did to promote herself.

Elizabeth also showed evidence of following her step-mother's footsteps in her whole persona. When Elizabeth created her Virgin Queen image, she was intending for people to see her how she wanted to be seen, rather than who she actually was. This goes back to Greenblatt's theory of self-fashioning, which I have shown Katherine to be a master of. In her own way, Mary executed this in her own reign. But Mary's was more of a slightly exaggerated image of who she actually was, whereas we can never be sure if Elizabeth stayed a Virgin queen. What we can be sure of is the iconic image that was produced over and over again to make it seem as if she had. Katherine did the same when she continually commissioned portraits of herself to reinforce her royal status. These examples demonstrate Katherine's wisdom in the art of propaganda, and why those who she was close to emulated her endeavors.

Katherine's fondness for visual propaganda is an important factor in Teerlinc's success because it gave opportunity for Teerlinc to have the distinction as an artist skilled at painting her sitters in an influential way. As portraits became fashionable, artists with direct

access to their patron had the greatest opportunity not only in arranging for sittings, but also in the free publicity attending to the leader of fashion. Teerlinc's abilities, especially at the quality she possessed, were most likely sought after. Equally important, her continued output shows that she clearly made an impression on the queen in a way that set her apart from others vying for her honorable position. Why else would Katherine, and those influenced by her, maintain the artist's commission, let alone keep her close enough to expand her commissions?

Katherine was a role model for her step-daughters, Teerlinc and other women at court. She pointedly was one for Mary and Elizabeth. Her influence over other women such as Teerlinc is less clear, but perhaps it can be seen in the pattern of Teerlinc's attributed paintings. As I demonstrated in my first chapter, several of them were made with an effort to display the sitters as they wanted to be seen. Teerlinc's willingness to do so, regardless of her personal position, suggests that she hoped to repute herself as accomplished at the art of visual propaganda. What better way for her to establish herself as a permanent and successful member of the English court?

Additionally, Katherine's influence on Teerlinc is arguably present in the artist's stability at court. Katherine fought hard to maintain and raise her station her whole life. Becoming the queen of England was no easy task, let alone remaining so under Henry VIII. One must have to have been strong willed, adaptable, and able to perform favorably for those in power. I have demonstrated how both Katherine and Teerlinc enacted these qualities to accomplish their goals; from Katherine's success at redirecting her lack of conception to advocate for her step-daughters, to Teerlinc's careful maneuvering through

the inconsistent religious reform of the Tudor court. It was important for these women to keep their hard earned positions, and for the most part, both succeeded.

What also can be said of Katherine is that she used her time as queen wisely. She ensured that the Crown had a packed bench of successors, equalized the court and kingdom to the best of her ability and helped cultivate English culture through her patronage. These were all factors that worked to Teerlinc's favor. If Katherine had not been the queen she was, Teerlinc might not have been brought to court. Additionally, because of Katherine's emphasis on female power and promotion of the self, she was able to set Teerlinc's career through the influence she had over the people close to her and her court.

## Conclusion

Levina Teerlinc is a valuable sixteenth century northern artist to examine. To be sure, she was an artistic link between Holbein and Hilliard, but her career can also be used as an informative tool in studying this period. Additionally, her continued residence and employment at court during the turbulent Tudor years testify to an impressive amount of self preservation. The connections she was able to make reflects the social intricacies that went into protecting one's standing at court. These connections map out a network used by all courtiers, but especially women, whose power was mainly enriched by the bonds they were able to create. The relationships Teerlinc made impacted her career significantly. Yes, she was talented. Yes, she was a prime miniaturist of her time. But how did she maintain her favor? How did she ensure her work was noticed and coveted? Though several of her patrons were male, much of the way she was able to receive male patronage was through their wives, sisters, and other relations. This network shows that women were able to take matters into their own hands and determine outcomes for themselves and people they cherished.

Through her artistry, a pattern can be traced that reflects these relationships, but also how women were able to promote themselves through their image. Katherine Parr embedded her influence and knowledge of propaganda techniques in Mary, arguably Katherine Grey, Elizabeth and other women in English society. These lessons shaped an environment that appreciated Teerlinc's ability to portray these important figures as they wanted to be seen. In a time when image was everything, this went a long way and speaks to

the effectiveness Teerlinc's work had on her contemporaries. In turn, these portraits promoted her skill, as they were shared in intimacy throughout her career. Additionally, Teerlinc controlled her own image as a dependable artist willing to support those in her carefully constructed confidence. Through this mutually beneficial transaction, much can be learned about art, women and court dynamics in sixteenth century England.

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