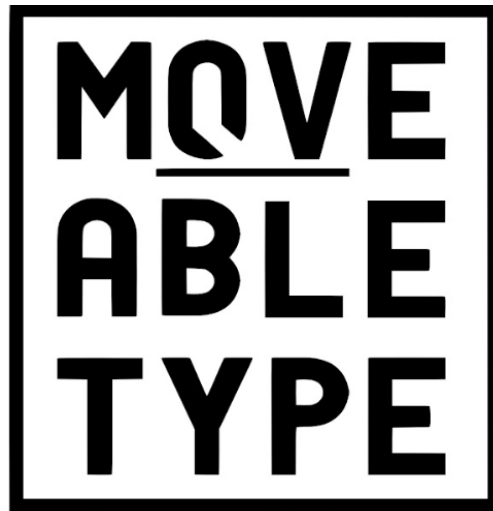




Article: 'Promise and *Kairos*: A Study of Queen Elizabeth I 's Promise to Parliament'

Author: Nabanita Chakraborty

Source: *Moveable Type*, Vol. 16, 'Promise' (2025-26)

DOI: 10.14324/111.444.1755-4527.2313

Moveable Type is a Graduate, Peer-Reviewed Journal based in the Department of English at UCL.

© 2026 Nabanita Chakraborty. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY) 4.0

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.



Promise and *Kairos*: A Study of Queen Elizabeth I's Promise to Parliament

NABANITA CHAKRABORTY

The speech act of promise is a verbal commitment made to an audience in a particular context. A pragmatic individual would wait for the right timing and right circumstances before making a promise. This concept of suitable time associated with an action is termed as *kairos*. This article examines the relationship between *kairos* and the illocutionary speech act of promise. It argues that promise depends on the trope of *kairos* and follows the principles of correct time, place, and audience. To illustrate this relationship between *kairos* and promise, I draw upon Queen Elizabeth I's speech to her Parliament (November 5, 1566) on the issue of her marriage and succession. Queen Elizabeth's counsellors persuade her to marry and name an heir, but she is aware of the exigencies and does not wish to commit. A close reading of the speech has been undertaken to analyse critically how her promise is a political strategy to evade the moral responsibility of keeping the promise.

Keywords: *Kairos*; Promise; Queen Elizabeth I; Political Rhetoric

A promise is a verbal commitment, a speech act carrying an illocutionary force. In *How to Do Things with Words*, J. L. Austin formulates a theory of speech acts in which he defines three kinds of utterances: the locutionary as actual utterance consisting of semantic and syntactic meaning; the illocutionary, a performative utterance carrying an intended meaning such as a promise or a caution; the perlocutionary, the actual effect of the speech act whether intended or not. Theorists of pragmatics have distinguished different kinds of illocutionary acts such as constatives, directives and commissives. Constatives convey information or knowledge, while directives are orders and requests. However, a binding force is implied in the commissives, whereby a person is committed to act as per his/her speech, as in the case of an oath or promise. As such, the action is predicated upon the speech act. In other words, the illocutionary speech act is performative or is associated with quasi-action since it is almost equivalent to undertaking the activity. Austin underlines this when he asks, "Can saying make it so?" (7). Moreover, commissive speech acts, like promises or vows, must be uttered within a particular context and in the presence of an intended audience. A performative utterance would be hollow or void if uttered by an actor on the stage or if introduced in a poem or spoken in a soliloquy.¹ A promise requires the speaker to have intentions, placing them under an obligation.² The imperative nature of a performative speech act makes it a matter of caution: the speaker must be aware of the contingencies that may lead to a breach of the promise. A pragmatic individual would wait for the right timing and right circumstances before making a promise. The concept of a suitable time associated with an action or quasi-action is termed *kairos*.³ My article examines the relationship between *kairos* and an illocutionary speech act of promise. I argue that promise depends on the trope of *kairos* and follows the same principles of correct time, place, and

¹ John L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p 22.

² John R. Searle, *Speech Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

³ *Kairos* in classical rhetorical theory means the right time to act or speak.

audience. To illustrate this relationship between *kairos* and promise, I draw on Queen Elizabeth I's (1558-1603) speech to Parliament on the issue of her marriage and succession.⁴ A prince's promise is always regarded with utmost solemnity by the subjects, but Elizabeth makes a promise which does not become binding. This article seeks to understand the conditions and clauses which make a promise more indissoluble and trustworthy.

The English queen singlehandedly ruled the country for more than four decades. The first half of Elizabeth's reign marked a period of intense debate and discussion on the issue of marriage and succession. The issue of her marriage had become a grave concern for the Church and her parliamentary counsellors. As the nation waited impatiently for her to marry and have a Tudor successor to the throne, she had to encourage various suitors and engage in elaborate games of courtship. She promised to take marriage vows, but did not wish to make the promise binding. I argue that it was a rhetorical trope of *kairos*, or waiting for the opportune moment to take a marriage vow. Meanwhile, prolonged courtships promised short-term strategic and diplomatic gains without a serious commitment to marriage. She feared that any marriage alliance with continental neighbouring countries might prove hazardous for England's destiny. She was trapped between the patriarchal ideology of marriage and succession, and her prime political responsibility of safeguarding her nation from foreign powers. Marriage was both politically desirable and prudent for a young, female monarch who had been raised to be a consort to a male monarch. I examine how Queen Elizabeth manipulates the illocutionary force of a promise. However, the relationship between *kairos* and promise must be discussed first.

As Renaissance men became more conscious of temporality in action ('*chronos*') with advancements in clock-making, humanists raised awareness of prudent deliberation and right timing in effective rhetorical practice through the classical Greek concept of *kairos*.⁵ The notion of *kairos* is typically understood as the 'timing' or the opportune moment of articulation. Gorgias observes the necessity of adapting one's discourse to rhetorical circumstances and exigencies, including the orientation of both the speaker and the listeners, the moment, and the place. In his formal discourse of rhetorical *paideia*, Isocrates, a Sophist from Athens and a rival of Plato, further develops the concept of *kairos*.⁶ He conjoins *phronesis*, practical wisdom, and pragmatic ethics within the situational and temporal grids. Isocrates develops the idea that opportunity is based on an awareness of occasion, audience, and situation rather than chronological time. Cicero places "a high value on a sense of *opportunita (kairos)*" and "a grasp of the relationship of choice to circumstance";⁷ he associates *kairos* with *prepon* (propriety or fitness).⁸ In his *De Inventione*, Cicero distinguished *occasio* (a period of time offering a convenient opportunity for doing or not doing an action) from *tempus* (time).

Following Cicero, modern scholars have focused on situational rhetoric. *Kairos* in the modern sense has been explained as the 'decorum' or 'propriety' of any given moment of a rhetorical

⁴ A few versions of the speech are available in *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* ed. Leah S. Marcus et al (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 94-98. The version I cite from is taken from The Syndics of Cambridge University Library, MS Gg.III. 34 fols. 208-12. This copy is based on a memorial account of one of the members of the parliament. The other version is available in *State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth 12/41/5*, fol.8.

⁵ Philip Sipiora and James S. Bauman eds, *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), p. 140.

⁶ The term *rhetorical paideia* merges concepts of both curriculum and way of life.

⁷ Nancy S. Struener, *The Language of History in the Renaissance Rhetoric and Historical Consciousness in Florentine Humanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 116.

⁸ James L. Kinneavy, 'Kairos in Classical and Modern Rhetorical Theory', in *Rhetoric and Kairos*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 58-76.

speech act.⁹ It has also been understood as the opportune moment, a spontaneous or timely act. Here we can draw on the distinction between *kairos* (practical/opportune/moment/qualitative/subjective time) and *chronos* (chronological/objective/measurable/sequential time) developed by John E. Smith.¹⁰ He develops three distinct concepts of *kairos*: it is primarily understood as 'right time' rather than clock time, but it is also a time of tension and conflict, a time of crisis that calls for a decision at that moment. Thirdly, the concept of *kairos* means that the problem or crisis brings with it a time of opportunity to accomplish a purpose that could not be carried out at another time. Aaron Hess conceptualises *kairos* as 'the consideration of the decorum of a situation along with the inventive goal of creative deliberation'.¹¹ The speaker also decides the propriety of *kairos* in any given situation based on the kind of audience. Thus, *kairos* is related to rhetorical performance. Lloyd Bitzer's article 'The Rhetorical Situation' argues that rhetorical discourse is responsive to a particular situation governed by three elements: an audience, an exigency, and constraints. After judging these facets, the rhetor prepares the appropriate rhetorical response.

J. R. Searle's theory of promise rests primarily on the speaker's intentions to keep the promise. The hearer's role in drawing inferences from the speech act to discover the speaker's intentions is also important to Searle. A successful speech act does not depend on the subject's intent but rather on the communicative intent only, that is, the intent that the promisee has understood.¹² The promisee's or audience's role is equally important in the speech act of promise. The audience expects the subject to keep his/her promise. I argue that the act of promise is similar to, and also relies on, *kairos* since it is based on the notion of an appropriate time for the utterance. Like *kairos*, a promise has to be uttered in the presence of an intended audience. The speaker must be aware of the constraints and the exigencies which might prevent the fulfilment of a promise. The act of making a promise and its resonance for the principle of *kairos* is central to my argument in this paper.

Critical interest in recent years has focused on this important phase of Elizabethan history; her refusal to commit herself to any marriage alliance has been the subject of speculation. Recent scholars in rhetorical studies have examined Elizabeth's speeches but have focused only on her gendered language.¹³ Feminist critics have posited that Elizabeth's decision to remain unwed was a deliberate response to consolidate her authority. Sixteenth-century patriarchal English society showed scepticism about female governance and insisted on Queen Elizabeth's marriage and the production of heirs. In an act of defiance, Queen Elizabeth refused to marry as she did not wish to share her power over her kingdom with her husband and be relegated to a secondary status. This contention is reinforced by the fact that the Scottish ambassador had commented:

⁹ Victoria Ann Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence and Skepticism in the Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 34.

¹⁰ John E. Smith, 'Time and Qualitative Time', in *Rhetoric and Kairos*, pp. 46-57.

¹¹ Aaron Hess, *Rhetorical Ethnography: Engaging the Politics of Advocacy*, dissertation (Arizona State University, 2008), p. 31.

¹² Maarten Henket, 'Contracts, Promises and Meaning: The Question of Intent', *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* (1989), 129-158 (p. 140).

¹³ Samantha A Morga Curtis "Prudence even beyond other women: The rhetorical maneuvers of Queen Elizabeth I" (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Tennessee, 2002); Daniel Ellis, "Free from Any Other Meaning: Truth and Politics in the Rhetoric of Queen Elizabeth I" (unpublished doctoral thesis, Temple University, 2009); Danelle L. Clair, p "Speaking her self: Ethos in the rhetoric of Aspasia of Miletus, Queen Elizabeth I and Ida B. Wells" (unpublished MA thesis, University of Alaska, 2001).

Madam, I know your stately stomach: ye think if ye were married, ye would be but Queen of England, and now ye are King and Queen both; ye may not suffer a commander.¹⁴

The feminist contention does not hold ground since a marriage agreement was drawn up during the alliance with the French Duke of Alençon, stipulating that Queen Elizabeth would continue to rule the country as she had in the past. Scholars have overstated issues of gendered role-playing in discussing Queen Elizabeth, which though vital, is not necessarily the only point of entry into Elizabethan scholarship.

The New Historicists emphasise the myth created around the iconic figure of the Virgin Queen; they have focused on the ideological attempt to identify Elizabeth with the Virgin Mary and the heavenly intermediary of God to invoke her divine right and power.¹⁵ However, Queen Elizabeth engaged in several marriage negotiations and had never vowed celibacy until she was past her prime. In fact, Elizabeth's speeches reflect that she had never ruled out the prospect of marriage. Susan Frye observes:

By engaging in her own construction through language and action, by declaring herself to be a woman at the same time that she acted outside defined female roles, by politicizing the language of virginity... Queen Elizabeth constituted a challenge to the essentialist patriarchal sign system that presents gender identity as natural and immutable (Frye, 6)

Frye's argument underlines a fundamental idea about Elizabeth's self-conscious linguistic performativity.

I argue that political power is neither present in Elizabeth's 'virginity' nor in the perceived 'language of virginity'; rather, it is in her ambiguous 'language' only. Often, scholars view discourse as essentialist — as constituting gender rather than reflecting it. I would like to approach the subject of rhetoric without giving prominence to the gendered inflexion of language. I intend to read a speech regarding the issue of her marriage. Susan Doran reminds us that historians and biographers of Queen Elizabeth had dismissed the queen's courtships as 'empty charades', 'political dalliance', or 'diplomatic games'.¹⁶ While marriage negotiations were diplomatic measures adopted by Queen Elizabeth to maintain the political stability of her reign, my study aims to underscore how her insincere promise, laced with conditionals, is designed to evade the obligation to marry. This prudent approach is the rhetoric of *kairos*.

Queen Elizabeth replied to a petition forwarded by the Lords and Commons on the issue of her marriage and succession on November 5, 1566.¹⁷ Robert Bell of King's Lynn was one

¹⁴ John E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Cape, 1934).

¹⁵ Louis Montrose, Roy Strong, Michael Dobson, Philippa Berry are some of the New Historicist scholars on Queen Elizabeth I.

¹⁶ Susan Doran *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Routledge, 1996), p 1.

¹⁷ The speech is compiled in Leah S Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Eds. *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 94-98. The source is The Syndics of Cambridge University Library, MS Gg. III.34. fols. 208-212. Elizabeth's speeches have been put together in collaboration or after consultation with her parliamentarians. Most of these have been written down by her audience rather than by her. So there is no single authentic text but many versions of the same speech. Moreover, the editors of this collection have modernised the spellings and punctuation in this volume to make it accessible to readers. For original spelling version, see *Elizabeth I: Autograph Compositions and Foreign Language Originals*, ed. by Janel Mueller and Leah S Marches (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

member of Parliament who negotiated with the Lords' committee over a joint written petition to the queen to ask her to name a successor. The members of Parliament want her to promise to marry and also name an heir to the throne. She is aggrieved and indignant that her subjects have not trusted her act of promise. Elizabeth is incensed that the issue of succession is being discussed in the House of Commons, which goes against the order and decorum of the Parliament. She blames the lords for being seduced by Robert Bell and his accomplices into agreeing to write such a petition on this matter. She also accuses two bishops, the Archbishop of York and Bishop of London, of having persuaded the lords of the upper house to put pressure upon her to name her successor:

But there, two bishops with their long orations sought to persuade you also with solemn matter, as though you, my lords, had not known that when my breath did fail me I had been dead unto you and that then, dying without issue, what a danger it were to the whole state. Which you had not known before they told it to you (Marcus et al, 95)

From the beginning of her speech, she creates a rift between the lords of the upper house, the commons and the religious heads. The strategy is to divide the audience by their position and social order, so that any joint delegation can be prevented. She then proceeds to make a vow to marry:

I did send them answer by my Council I would marry, although of mine own disposition. I was not inclined thereunto. But that was not accepted nor credited, although spoken by their prince. And yet I used so many words that I could say no more. And were it not now I had spoken these words, I would never speak to them again. I will never break the word of a prince spoken in public place for my honour's sake. (Marcus et al, 95).

Queen Elizabeth makes it clear that marriage is not her intention, but that she is committing to it because her subjects want it, thus placing the onus of her promise upon her subjects. She further elaborates that she had already agreed to marry when a previous petition was presented to her. However, her subjects do not trust her reply. This raises an important question: how should a verbal promise be enunciated to be taken seriously and accepted by others? Is agreement different from a promise? In this case, the person agreeing to marry is a queen whose utterances become laws or royal commandments for the people in early modern England.

Christian theology has always maintained the primacy of the 'Word' or 'Logos': 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'.¹⁸ 'Word' became a controversial term in the Elizabethan age; both religious groups, Papists and Reformers, claimed to have true knowledge of God's Word. To resolve the matter of the state religion, the state was to equate the word of the ruling monarch with God's true religion. Thus, the Queen's religion was truth, while any aberrant practices were considered falsehoods. With Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne, a religious settlement was enacted that established moderate Protestantism, a middle ground between the Catholic Papacy and Puritanism. Given the sacred nature of the Queen's word in all matters, it is surprising that her promise to marry is not taken seriously by the subjects. She expresses her discontent and decides to answer the plea once more. She reiterates that as a prince, she has an ethical responsibility to honour her

¹⁸ Hymn to the Word, Gospel of St John, *New Testament*, verses 1-18.

commitment. But the reason why her loyal subjects do not believe her is implied in the rest of her speech. She proceeds to assure her audience that she will marry and name an heir, but her speech is laced with conditionals:

And therefore I say again I will marry as soon as I can conveniently, if God take not him away with whom I mind to marry, or myself, or else some other great let happen. I can say no more except the party were present. And I hope to have children; otherwise I would never marry, (Marcus et al, 95)

She utters a performative speech act 'I will marry' but does not provide any specific time, place or person with which the action can be associated. J.L. Austin mentions that a vow of marriage saying 'I do' is a solemn promise of marriage since it is in the first person, simple present, indicative and active voice, carrying a binding force. The vow of marriage, taken with a partner in a church at a specified hour, in the presence of the priest and guests, becomes indissoluble and irrevocable. However, Elizabeth's promise to marry is in the future tense, with no time, person, or place mentioned. It, therefore, loses its sanctity or force of a promise. However, in this case, a prince making a promise carries an inviolate force even if it sounds more like an announcement than a promise. If the queen simply enunciates her intention to marry, it carries the force of a promise or an injunction. Yet she complicates an act of promise by conjoining it with conditionals. She will marry if the intended suitor stays alive, or if she does not die soon, or if some great catastrophe does not take place. A promise of marriage presupposes that the actants remain alive to fulfil the act. So the queen need not mention the conditions since they are already and always present in the act of promise. The necessary condition that grounds any promise is the temporality of the action. The queen does not specify a time for fulfilling the promise and instead leaves it open-ended, referring to hindrances and obstacles such as death or catastrophes that may prevent her from fulfilling it.

The next part of the speech is as follows:

A strange order of petitioners that will make a request and cannot be otherwise ascertained but by the prince's word, and yet will not believe it when it is spoken! But they, I think, that moveth the same will be as ready to mislike him with whom I shall marry as they are now to move it, and then it will appear they nothing meant it...there hath been some that have, ere this, said unto me they never required more than that they might once hear me say I would marry. Well, there was never so great a treason but might be covered under as fair a pretence, (Marcus et al, 95)

Elizabeth points out that her counsellors want her to marry, but when she promises to do so, they are not ready to believe it, even though it is uttered by an honourable prince. This accusation holds that the promisee or audience is equally responsible for trusting the speaker. Jay Conison emphasises how promise has functions for both speakers and hearers.¹⁹ The audience's perception of the speaker's intent is more important than the speaker's intent. Clearly, the responsibility of the audience to trust the speaker is emphasised here, even though the queen fails to make a proper commitment to marriage. The fact that she promises to marry without naming the person leaves out a major clause of the promise. Elizabeth blames the petitioners for

¹⁹ Jay Conison, 'The Pragmatics of Promise', *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence* 10.2 (1997), 273-322 (p. 275).

distrusting her and thereby committing treason. On the issue of naming her successor, she argues that it will invite danger to her and her subjects. She makes another conditional promise:

But as soon as there may be a convenient time and that it may be done with least peril unto you, although never without great danger unto me. I will deal therein for your safety and offer it unto you as your prince and head, without request (Marcus et al, 98)

Her promise rests on a 'convenient time' (*kairos*) which might never arrive. The queen's ambiguity in her response and delay in committing herself are political strategies to preserve order in England and prevent military attacks from powerful foreign powers. She is also wary of naming an heir and successor, fearing she will be displaced from the throne. She therefore employs caution, and *kairos* while making a promise.

David Hume raises the question 'What are promises? And why are they binding?'.²⁰ Hume's focus is on the ethical and moral responsibility of the promisor. Scholars of language and pragmatics like J.L. Austin and J. R. Searle are interested in understanding the promise behind a speech act. My focus in this paper has been to examine how the speech act of promising depends on the appropriate time, place, and person. Queen Elizabeth's counsellors persuade her to marry and name an heir, but she is aware of the exigencies and does not wish to commit. She responds with an effective strategy to make a conditional promise without specifying time, place or person. She is prudent and tactful in her approach and knows how to evade the moral responsibility of keeping the promise. On being compelled to make a promise to marry, the communication of her intent becomes more important than her real intentions. A promise in her speech is therefore a rhetorical act of *kairos*, which requires awareness of the audience's expectations *and* an opportune moment. A promisor must be prudent and pragmatic to avoid any obligation under a promise. Queen Elizabeth's speech to Parliament exemplifies her proficiency in putting caveats or conditions while making a promise. Her promise to marry does not specify any time or person. A promise is a performative act, and so the temporality of the action is of immense importance for it to be binding. Elizabeth charges her subjects with treason for not believing her word. The onus of trust lies with the listener rather than the speaker. This rhetorical strategy conceals her real intentions before the Parliament and keeps her subjects suspended between hope and fear.

²⁰ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, book III, part 2, sec 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000).

Works Cited

Primary Sources

- David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000)
- John Langshaw Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).
- John Searle, *Speech Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969)
- Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose, eds., *Elizabeth I: Collected Works* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002)

Secondary Criticism

- Aaron R. Hess, *Rhetorical Ethnography: Engaging the Politics of Advocacy* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University, 2008)
- Cynthia Miecznikowski Sheard, 'Kairos and Kenneth Burke's Psychology of Political and Social Communication', *College English*, 55.3 (1993), 291-310
- Danelle L. Claire, 'Speaking Her Self: Ethos in the Rhetoric of Aspasia of Miletus, Queen Elizabeth I, and Ida B. Wells' (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alaska, 2001)
- Daniel Ellis, 'Free from Any Other Meaning: Truth and Politics in the Rhetoric of Queen Elizabeth I' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Temple University, 2009)
- Frye, Susan, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
- James S. Baumlin, 'Ciceronian Decorum and the Temporalities of Renaissance', in *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis*, ed. by Philip Sipiora and James S. Baumlin (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002)
- James L. Kinneavy, 'Kairos in Classical and Modern Rhetorical Theory', in *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis*, ed. by Philip Sipiora and James S. Baumlin (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002)
- Jay Conison, 'The Pragmatics of Promise', *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence*, 10.2 (1997), 273-322
- John E. Neale, *Elizabeth I* (London: Penguin, 1990)
- John E. Smith, 'Time and Qualitative Time', in *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis*, ed. by Philip Sipiora and James S. Baumlin (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002)
- Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature and Method* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966)
- Laissa J. Taylor-Smith, 'Queen Elizabeth I: A Psychological Profile', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 15 (1984), 47-72
- Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Inventione*, vol. 2, trans. by Harry Mortimer Hubbell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949)
- Maarten Henket, 'Contracts, Promises and Meaning: The Question of Intent', *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law*, 2.5 (1989), 129-158
- Michael Dobson and Nichola Watson, *England's Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Mikhail, Kissine, *From Utterances to Speech Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

- Nancy S. Streuver, *The Language of History in the Renaissance: Rhetoric and Historical Consciousness in Florentine Humanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970)
- Philippa, Berry, *Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen* (London: Routledge, 1989)
- Philip Sipiora and James S. Baumlin, eds., *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002)
- Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987)
- Samantha A. Curtis, Morgan, 'Prudence Even Beyond Other Women: The Rhetorical Manoeuvres of Queen Elizabeth I' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Tennessee, 2002)
- Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Routledge, 1996)
- Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition of Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)
- Susan Miller, *Trust in Texts: A Different History of Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), 153-182
- Victoria Ann Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence and Skepticism in the Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985)

* * * *

Nabanita Chakraborty is an Associate Professor of English at Hansraj College, University of Delhi. Her PhD was awarded in April 2018 by the University of Delhi with the title 'Rhetoric of Love and Politics of Power: Speeches and Writings of Queen Elizabeth I'. She was a Charles Wallace fellow from the British Council in 2013-2014. She has published in national and international books and journals. Her recent publications include: 'Culture as Commodity: Visual Rhetoric of Tea Advertisement in Colonial India', *Shodhkosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*. (June 2024) and 'Performative Rhetoric and Spatial Dynamics in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*: A Case Study of Pedagogical Practices in a Literature Classroom', *Fortell* 48, (Jan 2024) and 'Classroom as the "Third Theatre": Engaging with Badal Sircar's Theory and Praxis of Drama', *Artspraxis* (Dec 2025).