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Bakalářská práce

# Elizabeth I and England's Conflict with Spain

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## **PODĚKOVÁNÍ**

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## **ANOTACE**

Bakalářská práce se zabývá konfliktem mezi Anglií a Španělskem v době vlády královny Alžběty I. Práce popíše příčiny a průběh konfliktu, včetně jedné z nejznámějších bitev Alžbětiny vlády, bitvy u Gravelines (1588). Hlavní pozornost bude věnována postoji královny a její pozici ve vývoji anglické zahraniční politiky vůči Španělsku v tomto období. Součástí práce bude vlastní analýza a interpretace vybraných historických pramenů, zejména proslovu královny Alžběty u Tilbury a jejího portrétu z roku 1588 (Armada Portrait).

Klíčová slova: Alžběta I; Anglo-španělská válka; pirátství; španělská Armada; Filip II



## **ABSTRACT**

The bachelor's thesis focusses on the conflict between England and Spain during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. The thesis describes the causes and course of the conflict, including one of the most famous battles of Elizabeth's rule, the battle of Gravelines (1588). The primary focus is given to the attitude of the queen and her role in the development of English foreign policy towards Spain during this period of time. Part of the thesis is based on the author's own analysis and interpretation of selected historical sources, particularly Queen Elizabeth's speech at Tilbury and her portrait of 1588 (Armada Portrait).

Keywords: Elizabeth I; Anglo-Spanish War; privateering; Spanish Armada; Philip II

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## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between England and Spain deteriorated during the late Tudor era. Starting with Henry VIII's decision to break away from the Roman Catholic Church and the establishment of the Church of England in 1533, making England a Protestant country. The relationship between England and Spain intensified during Elizabeth I's reign, due to numerous factors that culminated with Philip II, King of Spain, attempting to invade England and restore Catholicism in 1588. The Anglo- Spanish war ended with the signing of a peace treaty in 1604 by Elizabeth's successor, James IV.

The primary focus of this thesis is to examine the conflict between England and Spain during the Anglo-Spanish war from 1585 to 1604 and the development of the relationship between Elizabeth I, Queen of England and Ireland (ruled 1558- 1603) and Philip II (ruled 1556-1598), and their impact on events in Europe, especially countries such as France, the Netherlands, and Scotland. In addition, I discuss the events that followed the battles in the English Channel.

The causes of the Anglo- Spanish war are described with a focus on significant people who had a great influence on the course of the war, starting with Sir Francis Drake and his raids in the New World. The Dutch revolt in the Netherlands is mentioned, where William the Silent, the main leader of the revolt, fought for the independence of his country with the help of England's queen. Finally, I explain the case of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, who was executed for treason in 1587.

I pay attention to a military preparation for the war and major engagements in the English Channel, examining and comparing the fleets in terms of their weapons and strategies employed by both sides in the battles. Next, I consider the results of the battles in the English Channel and the following events in the Atlantic Ocean. I also examine the ramifications of the conflict on the political events of England and Spain.

Ultimately, the bachelor thesis closes with two analyses. They focus on the ways in which the Battle of Gravelines and preparation for the attack were remembered and interpreted during Elizabeth I's life, or shortly after her death. The first analysis focusses on the so-called Armada portrait of Elizabeth I from 1588 and explains its symbolics in relation to her authority and the victory in the battle of Gravelines. The second analysis

examines the speech Elizabeth I allegedly gave her troops at Tilbury preparing for a possible invasion of England in 1588.

In general, the objective of this bachelor's thesis is to provide an overview of the long-running conflict between the two countries and its main aspects and implications.

The motivation behind my thesis was my interest in the difference between the tactics and strategies of the two countries during the battles in the English Channel, as well as the outcome of the Battle of Gravelines and the Armada's return to Spain around the British Islands.

# 1 MONARCHS BEFORE ELIZABETH I'S REIGN AND HER LIFE

Elizabeth I was born on 7 September 1533, at Greenwich Palace, one of the most dominant Tudor mansions, as the second daughter of Henry VIII. Her mother, Anne Boleyn, was the king's second wife. Henry was disappointed that Anne did not bear him a male heir to succeed him. Consequently, Anne was beheaded for treason when Elizabeth was two years old. After the execution of her mother, Princess Elizabeth was declared illegitimate. Only two weeks after Anne's death, Henry married his third wife, Jane Seymour, who finally gave birth to a boy named Edward.<sup>1</sup>

The king sent Elizabeth away, and she rarely saw him again during her childhood. However, she was fortunate to be looked after by her governess Catherine Ashley. Catherine provided companionship to Elizabeth for the next thirty years and became one of her closest friends.<sup>2</sup>

Elizabeth's private teacher, Roger Ascham, an English scholar, had a great influence on Elizabeth's life. He admired the intelligence of the young Princess, who could speak five different languages. In addition, she studied literature, history, astronomy, and geography. She also enjoyed various types of sports, such as riding a horse, dancing, and even hunting. She loved to share her passion for music by playing the lute or singing and writing music.<sup>3</sup>

Elizabeth spent most of her childhood at Hatfield House. The princess grew up without her mother, although she encountered more than one stepmother. They did not replace her mother's love until King Henry VIII married Catherine Parr. Catherine cared about Henry's children and showed them her love as a real mother. She welcomed all of them to the court with open arms.<sup>4</sup>

King Henry VIII died when Elizabeth was thirteen, and her younger brother Edward was only nine years old. Henry had reigned for almost forty years. Before his death, he made one of his final decisions by signing a will that specified how his country

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<sup>1</sup> Levin, C. (2002). *The Reign of Elizabeth I*. New York: Palgrave.

<sup>2</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>3</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>4</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

should be ruled after his death. The plan was evident. Henry would be succeeded by his only son, Edward.<sup>5</sup>

Only three days after King's Henry death, on 31 January 1547, Edward was named as the rightful heir. Despite his youth, he became the new king of England. Being underage, he was governed by a Council of the Regency. Edward Seymour, the brother of Jane Seymour, Henry VIII's third wife, was one of the most important people at the court and was proclaimed Lord Protector of England, making him, in fact, the ruler of the country.<sup>6</sup>

Edward held the same religious Protestant beliefs as his father, Henry, but with more determination. He faced some difficult obstacles, such as religious differences, which caused divisions in the kingdom. Moreover, there was a great deal of social instability among the people. Along with these issues, there was also the ongoing worry that the Catholic rulers of Europe may try to put his older sister Mary as the new monarch in place of the young Protestant king.<sup>7</sup>

When Edward was fourteen years old, he suffered from a serious illness. It became clear that he would not have survived long. John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, who later replaced Edward Seymour as Lord President of the Council, started to plot against Edward's siblings. His authority would be undermined if Mary or Elizabeth were to take the throne after their brother. He wanted to keep his hold on the throne and suggested Edward the possibility of another candidate to succeed him. Lady Jane Grey was a close relative of King Henry VIII and Edward's cousin. She was barely 15 years old and fully under the influence of John Dudley. Jane was listed as the fourth in line to the throne in Henry's will, behind Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth. Edward was easily convinced by Dudley and decided to change the succession line.<sup>8</sup>

Edward VI died at the age of fifteen, three years later after his accession to the throne. After his death, Dudley proclaimed Jane Grey queen. Many people in England protested against it. Mary, the first daughter of Henry VIII, was able to gather an army,

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<sup>5</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>6</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>7</sup> Bingham, J. (2012). *The Tudors: Kings & Queens of England's Golden Age*. London: Arcturus Publishing Limited.

<sup>8</sup> Bingham, *The Tudors*.

removed Jane from the throne, and announced herself as a rightful heir. Later, Jane and John Dudley were executed for treason. Mary, the first child of King Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, became the new queen of England in 1553.<sup>9</sup>

Queen Mary was devoted to the Catholic faith. She did not share the same religious beliefs as her dead brother, having been brought up as a devout Catholic by her mother Catherine. Mary always supported a little Roman Catholic community in her vicinity and depended on other catholic emperors in Europe, primarily on Charles V, King of Spain.<sup>10</sup>

One of her first changes, when she succeeded to the throne, was restoring the Catholic faith in England. She initiated the replacement of crucifixes and the restoration of altars. Priests began to hold typical Roman Catholic services. Mary was so devoted to her faith and Catholicism that nearly 300 people, including fifty women and four children, were burnt at the stake for their Protestant religious beliefs.<sup>11</sup> This ruthless persecution and punishment of Protestants earned her the nickname Bloody Mary.<sup>12</sup>

Queen Mary was an unmarried woman when she started to rule England. She had a good relationship with Emperor Charles V, who was also a Catholic ruler. Mary hoped for a marriage with his son Prince Philip of Spain, who was eleven years younger than Mary herself. On 8 November 1554 she declared her intention to marry him. The marriage was strongly disapproved by Parliament, whose members suggested Mary to marry an Englishman instead. Despite disagreement with her councillors, she married Philip in Winchester Cathedral one year later after her declaration.<sup>13</sup>

Mary also participated in a war with France alongside her husband Philip, who had inherited the title of King of Spain and wanted to interfere with France with English support and its forces. During this short conflict, England lost its last territories in France, including the port city of Calais.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>10</sup> Bingham, *The Tudors*.

<sup>11</sup> Kendall, P. (2022). *Queen Elizabeth I: Life and Legacy of the Virgin Queen*. Barnsley: Frontline Books.

<sup>12</sup> Abbott, J. (2015). *Queen Elizabeth*. Radford: Wilder Publications.

<sup>13</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>14</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

Queen Mary I died on the morning of 17 November 1558 without an heir. During her reign, England had already struggled with a weak economy and significant debts, and now the expenses of the French war had made matters worse.<sup>15</sup>

Elizabeth's rule began on 17 November 1558. The new queen of England started to form her Royal Council as soon as possible. Sir William Cecil was appointed as Principal Secretary. He became one of the most reliable men in England and stood by the queen's side until his death. Elizabeth was accompanied by a number of prominent figures in her court, notably Sir Francis Walsingham, who served as her Principal Secretary until 1590. Then Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor of England. Among them was Richard Ratcliffe, the Earl of Sussex. John Whitgift was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1583. Throughout Elizabeth's entire reign, Sir Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester was a prominent figure. Elizabeth had a very close relationship with Dudley, he was probably her lover, and also one of her suitors.<sup>16</sup> England's government was in Elizabeth's hands. She had a strong dominance and influence for a woman. She was careful to consider all options before making any decision.<sup>17</sup>

Elizabeth was devoted to restoring Protestantism in her country. At the same time, she tried to show respect toward Catholics. The use of crucifixes and clerical robes were two examples of old Catholic practises that the queen attempted to incorporate into the Church of England's rulebook.<sup>18</sup>

Elizabeth I ruled for about forty- five years, and nearly during this period, the Protestant and Catholic parties engaged in intense conflicts. Religious divisions affected not only Spain and England, but also other countries in Europe <sup>19</sup> The majority of England's population welcomed her intention to revive Protestantism, but there was also fear and confusion. It was not easy for her government to convince ordinary Catholics to overcome their fears and suppress radical Catholics to avoid further disobedience.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>16</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>17</sup> Guy, J. (2010) *The Tudors*. New York: Sterling Publishing Co.

<sup>18</sup> Captivating History. (2018). *The Tudors: A Captivating Guide to the History of England from Henry VII to Elizabeth I*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

<sup>19</sup> Abbott, *Queen*.

<sup>20</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.



After a period of instability prior to her accession, her rule finally brought stability to the nation. Elizabeth's rule lasted almost half a century. During her reign, she accomplished great achievements leading to overseas expansions.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Matusiak, J. (2020). *The Tudors and Europe*. Cheltenham: The History Press.

## 2 PHILIP II AND HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH ELIZABETH I

Philip II was born on 21 May 1527 as the eldest and the only legitimate heir of Charles V, King of Spain, and Isabella, daughter of King of Portugal. He displayed an aptitude for languages at a very young age, being able to read and write Latin, as well as speak French and Italian. Additionally, he had a passion for art, shooting, and dancing.<sup>22</sup>

At the age of thirteen, he was appointed the Duke of Milan, and a few years later he became Regent of Spain. Philip II was married four times. His first wife, Maria Manuela of Portugal, was the daughter of King of Portugal. They got married in 1543, however, Maria died a year later after their wedding because of childbirth. Philip became a widower at the age of eighteen. In 1555, Charles V abdicated as King of Spain, and Philip II became the new ruler.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, the new queen, Mary Tudor, started to rule in England. She was also a Catholic like Philip. The English did not like Mary's idea to marry a foreigner, especially a Catholic ruler from Spain. Philip saw marriage as a great opportunity to gain power over England. Whether Philip and Mary had a son, he would be an inheritor of England, as well as the Habsburg territories including Spain, the Netherlands, the Franche Comté, Naples, Sicily, Milan, the Indies, the Philippine Islands, and so on. All these territories would eventually be passed on to Don Carlos, Philip's first son.<sup>24</sup>

By 1555, Philip had realised that Mary's advanced age precluded her from having a child, and thus he began to take an interest in her younger sister Elizabeth. He began to visit her more frequently, and his attention toward Mary waned. Furthermore, Elizabeth and Philip were of a similar age, and despite their different religious beliefs, their relationship was amicable at that time.<sup>25</sup>

However, Philip II did not want to stay in England. Moreover, having no heir with Mary led to his departure for political reasons in Europe, leaving his wife behind.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Grierson, E. (1974). *King of two Worlds: Philip II of Spain*. New York: Putnam.

<sup>23</sup> Grierson, *King*.

<sup>24</sup> Grierson, *King*.

<sup>25</sup> Patterson, B. R. (2007). *With the Heart of a King*. New York: Saint Martin's Press.

<sup>26</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

Subsequently, Philip II sought Mary's assistance in his endeavour to wage war against France. Despite the objections of her advisors, she complied with his request and provided him with the necessary support. This conflict was part of Philip's intention to extend Spanish power in Europe, which culminated in the French defeat at the Battle of Gravelines in 1558. Mary died the same year, leaving Philip without an English heir. Therefore, Philip had to find another solution to have a close relationship with England.<sup>27</sup>

Elizabeth wrote to Philip after she became queen wishing to establish a better relationship than their predecessors had had. Philip also wanted to maintain a good relationship with England for various reasons, such as to be an ally and protect Spain against France, and to preserve Catholicism in England. Elizabeth was a Protestant, so it was expected of her to revert England to Protestantism.<sup>28</sup>

There was also the issue of marriage. Elizabeth was opposed to the idea of marrying, particularly to a Catholic like Philip. Philip sent an envoy, Count de Feria, to ask Elizabeth to marry him, but she was not pleased and sent Feria away, telling him she would consider the proposal. After a few days, she met with Feria again and argued against the notion of marriage to Philip claiming that she was a heretic. She did not like the idea that Philip had been her sister's husband. Additionally, Elizabeth's councillors were also not in favour of Elizabeth marrying a Catholic. Consequently, she rejected the proposal.<sup>29</sup>

Philip was not disheartened by the rejection. He sent a letter to Elizabeth expressing his regret that things had not gone as planned yet, assuring her that the two nations would remain amicable. At last, Philip wed Elisabeth of Valois, the daughter of Henry II of France, in 1559 in order to bring an end to the war between France and Spain.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>28</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>29</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>30</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

Elizabeth's rejection may have resulted in a tense relationship between the two nations. Nevertheless, it was likely due to other factors that caused the discord between Elizabeth I and Philip II.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

### 3 CAUSES OF THE ANGLO-SPANISH WAR

#### 3.1 Religion

In the 16th century, Protestantism began to be embraced in various parts of Europe, particularly in Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and England. In France, it was initially accepted, but it was eventually suppressed by the Catholic monarchy. In Spain, Protestantism was strictly prohibited, and those who practised it were harshly punished.<sup>32</sup>

Elizabeth I was a Protestant as were her brother and father. She tried to be tolerant to Catholics and create a religious balance in her country.<sup>33</sup> She also permitted some Catholic rituals, such as allowing priests to wear traditional vestments and perform traditional ceremonies. Elizabeth attempted to develop an awareness of national identity by increasing the use of English in church services. This led to supporting English literature and culture.<sup>34</sup>

The discord between Catholics and Protestants caused many people to be cautious. It was very difficult for the people of England to understand their beliefs due to changes that occurred in the past few decades. Elizabeth had to face a difficult task in attempting to abolish Catholicism due to her sister Mary's strong belief in it and her harsh conditions during her reign. However, Elizabeth's reign stabilised Protestantism in England, and at the end of her life, there was only about one to two percent of the Catholic population.<sup>35</sup>

In 1559, the English Parliament passed a series of statutes that established the Church of England as the official religion of the state and outlined its relation to the government. The Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity declared Queen Elizabeth I the Supreme Governor of the Church of England and mandated the Book of Common Prayer as its official liturgy. The liturgy was conducted in English rather than the Latin that was used during the reign of Mary I. In 1563, the assembly of clergy known as Convocations

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<sup>32</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>33</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>34</sup> Ackroyd, P. (2012). *Tudors: The History of England from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I*. London: Macmillan.

<sup>35</sup> Levin, *The reign*.

created the Thirty-Nine Articles, which served as the doctrinal foundation of the Elizabethan Church.<sup>36</sup>

In the 1560s, the Pope and the Catholic Church hierarchy employed a range of strategies to persuade Protestants to embrace Catholicism. Missionaries were sent to Protestant nations to spread the Catholic faith and attempt to convert people. However, despite the efforts of the Pope, it was not successful.<sup>37</sup>

The religious divide between Elizabeth I and Catholic Philip II of Spain was a major source of contention between the two rulers. Elizabeth was committed to preserving Protestantism in England and was aware of Philip's efforts to propagate Catholicism in Europe. On the contrary, Philip was determined to reinstate Catholicism in England and viewed Elizabeth as an obstacle to reach his ambitions.<sup>38</sup>

### **3.2 Elizabeth's privateers**

Despite Elizabeth's attempts to keep England out of foreign affairs, the country was still affected by the conflicts in Europe. The English were particularly concerned about Spanish involvement in the Netherlands and France, as well as the potential for foreign domination in Scotland and Ireland.<sup>39</sup>

Spain had become a major force in Europe when Philip of Spain seized control over Portugal in 1580. However, it was Francis Drake, an English explorer and privateer, and John Hawkins, a privateer, and a Vice-Admiral, who were causing problems to Philip. Since the 1570s, they were attacking Spanish ships and stealing their treasure, which was brought from America, Africa, and the East. Although the raids and stealing were acts of piracy, Elizabeth strongly supported them financially. In addition, it increased England's wealth and geographic knowledge about the world.<sup>40</sup>

Elizabeth supported Drake's expedition in order to warn Philip II about the influence of England on the New World and not only Spain's dominance in the world.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>37</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>38</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>39</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>40</sup> Levin, *The Reign*, Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>41</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

Drake set sail in 1577. He captured a treasure ship from Peru and <sup>42</sup> seized thirteen Spanish ships. Philip II was aware of the events, but he chose not to be involved in a war with England because of the seizing of Portugal, which was more important for him at that time. After raiding Spanish ships in America, Drake was hesitant to take the Atlantic route back to England due to the possibility of being attacked by Spain and being killed for the Piracy Act. He decided to sail in the opposite direction across the Indian Ocean.<sup>43</sup> Francis Drake sailed around the world, becoming the first person to circumnavigate the globe. He returned to Plymouth in 1580 and was knighted on the deck of his ship by Queen Elizabeth a year later.<sup>44</sup> Overall, 103 of the Drake crew's 164 men died during the voyage.<sup>45</sup> It enlightened England and provided geographical information, especially about the American Pacific shore.<sup>46</sup>

Walter Raleigh, an explorer, soldier, and writer, also contributed to explorations in the New World, especially in North America. In 1584, Queen Elizabeth granted him permission to explore and colonise the New World. He did not take part in the voyages, but he sent two equipped ships there. The expeditions were successful in bringing new commodities to England and colonising a new area in the New World, Roanoke Island, which was named Virginia in honour of Queen Elizabeth, who was known as the Virgin Queen. His actions earned him a knighthood.<sup>47</sup>

However, the expedition to North America was not the action that made him famous and attracted Queen Elizabeth's attention. Raleigh joined the Huguenots, the French Protestants, and fought in the religious wars in France in 1569. Moreover, Raleigh was among those who were at the forefront of the suppression of the Desmond Rebellion in Ireland between 1579 and 1583.<sup>48</sup>

### **3.3 Elizabeth's involvement in the Netherlands**

The Dutch rebellion in the Netherlands was one of the factors that contributed to the worsening of the relations between Protestant England and Catholic Spain. In

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<sup>42</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>43</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>44</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>45</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>46</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>47</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>48</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

1554, Charles V, King of Spain, transferred the power over the Netherlands to his son, Philip II. Charles relinquished his throne in 1556, thus allowing Philip to become King of Spain. The issue of religion in the Netherlands was highly complex. Regardless of the Netherlands being under the dominance of Catholic Spain, the Low Countries, today's Benelux, had been drawn to Calvinist Protestantism.<sup>49</sup>

In 1566, William of Orange, a wealthy nobleman, led a group of Dutch and Flemish noblemen against Spanish rule in the Netherlands, which eventually resulted in a conflict that dragged on for years. The outbreak was demonstrated in iconoclasm. It was a way for the Dutch to express their dissatisfaction with the Catholic Church, which was closely associated with Spanish rule. They were destroying religious images and other sacred objects to show their disagreement with Spain. The main events were held in Antwerp, an important harbour, that had strong business ties to the capital city of England, London.<sup>50</sup> England and the Netherlands had a long-standing trading relationship on which England relied. The two countries were especially dependent on trade with a cloth.<sup>51</sup>

In 1567, Philip of Spain sent Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, the Duke of Alva, with an army of 20 000 troops to maintain order. He succeeded in restoring Spanish authority with harsh methods of repression. The result of the suppression of the Dutch Revolt ended with the executions of Counts of Egmont and Hoorn in 1568. The execution resulted in the worsening relationship even more between the Dutch and the Spanish. William of Orange escaped abroad in order to avoid a similar fate, however, he then returned to lead other rebellions.<sup>52</sup>

Members of the English council in the 1570s, the Earl of Leicester, and Secretary Walsingham argued for England to support the Dutch rebels to encourage Protestantism against Philip II. However, William Cecil, Lord High Treasurer, was able to convince Queen Elizabeth that, due to a shortage of money and military means, England was not in a position to wage war against the most powerful nation in the world.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Bucholz, R., & Key, N. (2009). *Early Modern England 1485–1714*. Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

<sup>50</sup> Kendall, A. (1977). *Elizabeth*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

<sup>51</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>52</sup> Kendall, *Elizabeth*.

<sup>53</sup> Bucholz & Key, *Early Modern England*.



Queen Elizabeth ordered the Sea Beggars, Dutch rebels, to leave English ports in 1572 because they were a threat to English trade and security. The Sea Beggars had been raiding Spanish ships in the English Channel along with Francis Drake, and Elizabeth feared that their presence would lead to increase tensions between England and Spain. By this decision, Elizabeth made it clear to Spain that England was not in favour of piracy and wanted to maintain a positive relationship with the Spanish. The removal of the Sea Beggars also enabled England to benefit from trading with Spain, which was becoming increasingly important for the country's economic growth.<sup>54</sup> In the 1570s, Elizabeth was able to pay off her debts and revive commerce with the Low Countries, resulting in a period of economic growth.<sup>55</sup>

Elizabeth tried to appease Spain, but this resulted in the Beggars taking control of the Dutch cities of Brielle and Flushing. It sparked the Revolt of the Netherlands, which was backed by a French army and the promise of additional support from Coligny, who was a Huguenot leader from France.<sup>56</sup>

Elizabeth was asked to accept the crown of Holland and Zeeland in January 1575 by the Protestant leaders of the Netherlands. She was hesitant to accept the offer because Philip II had been appointed to rule the Netherlands. And it would cause more problems with Spain. Her reluctance caused an outcry among the Dutch.<sup>57</sup>

Elizabeth and Henry III, King of France, were able to reconcile their differences, and in April 1575, he asked for the Treaty of Blois to be renewed. They would form a joint military force to oppose Spain in the Spanish Netherlands.<sup>58</sup>

In 1576, Elizabeth refused to immediately answer Philip's envoy about whether she would provide aid to his Protestant rebels. She instead complained that Philip had not written to her, and she expressed her disapproval of Spain's attempt to establish absolute dominion in the Low Countries.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Kendall, *Elizabeth*.

<sup>55</sup> Weir, A. (2008). *The Life of Elizabeth I*. New York: Ballantine Books.

<sup>56</sup> Matusiak, *The Tudors*.

<sup>57</sup> Weir, *The Life*.

<sup>58</sup> Weir, *The Life*.

<sup>59</sup> Weir, *The Life*.

Philip was also dependent on trade in the Netherlands. So, instead of making a profit from the Netherlands, Philip had to provide money to his army there.<sup>60</sup> However, later he did not support his soldiers, so the troops started to terrorise Dutch more, and as a result, Dutch Catholics and Protestants united.<sup>61</sup>

Alexander Farnese, the Duke of Parma, was appointed Governor of the Netherlands in 1577 by Philip II of Spain, replacing the Duke of Alva. Parma was tasked with restoring Spanish control over rebellious Dutch provinces.<sup>62</sup> This appointment was meant to show that Philip was serious about putting down the rebellion and that he had a capable leader in charge of the situation.<sup>63</sup>

Elizabeth I of England had not been providing enough support to the Dutch Protestants, so the Catholic forces appealed to the Duke of Anjou for assistance. In August 1580, Anjou was invited to become King of the United Provinces, which displeased Elizabeth, as she was in the middle of marriage negotiations with him.<sup>64</sup>

In 1581, the Act of Abjuration was a major turning point in Dutch history, as it officially declared its independence from Spain.

In 1584, William of Orange was murdered by a Catholic fanatic. It was a turning point for Protestants in the Netherlands. The Spanish started to resurgent their dominance over the Dutch. The Duke of Parma, regent of the Netherlands from 1578 to 1592, succeeded in conquering Dutch towns. In response, Elizabeth made one of the most significant decisions during her rule and dispatched six to seven thousand soldiers to the Netherlands under the leadership of Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, to help Dutch Protestants against Spain. He landed with his troops there in 1585 and tried to fight for the Dutch.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>61</sup> Weir, *The Life*.

<sup>62</sup> Kendall, *Elizabeth*.

<sup>63</sup> Weir, *The Life*.

<sup>64</sup> Kendall, *Elizabeth*.

<sup>65</sup> Bucholz & Key, *Early Modern England*.

Elizabeth's involvement in the Dutch revolt was regarded by Philip as an act of war and a good pretext to prepare and launch one of the biggest invasions in English and Spanish history.<sup>66</sup>

### 3.4 Mary Queen of Scots

The centuries-long rivalry between Scotland and England escalated when King James V died in 1542. Mary, his infant daughter, succeeded him as queen. The English saw this as an excellent chance to gain power over Scotland by marrying Mary Stuart to Edward VI, the future King of England. However, at a very young age, Mary was sent to France. In 1558, Mary Stuart married the Dauphin of France, Francis, and became Queen of France. Mary's mother, the Regent Mary of Guise, held the position of a regent of Scotland from 1554 while her daughter Mary was living in France.<sup>67</sup> Mary of Guise came from France and was supported by the French court, allowing them to influence Scotland's politics. This led to the French having actual power over Scotland, despite Mary's regency.<sup>68</sup>

When Elizabeth I began to rule England in 1558, England was still at war with France and partly with Scotland, because of the French influence. The treaty between the countries was signed a year later. The French retained Calais, a seaport in northern France and the only port held by the English on the territory of France. Mary still claimed her right to the English throne as a legitimate heir, though France did not support it after the signed peace.<sup>69</sup>

However, Mary's husband Francis died in 1560 and Mary returned to Scotland the following year as a widow at the age of eighteen. In 1565, Mary married her second husband Lord Darnley, her cousin Henry Stuart, and had a son James with him in 1566. Her third marriage was to James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. It was believed that he killed Mary's second husband and that Mary was also involved in a plot of the murder. It led to a rebellion, and Mary was forced to abdicate.<sup>70</sup> James Stewart, Earl of Moray, Mary's stepbrother, was named regent and her infant son, James VI, was crowned king.

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<sup>66</sup> Bucholz & Key, *Early Modern England*.

<sup>67</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>68</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>69</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>70</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

Elizabeth was outraged by this turn of events and wanted to help her cousin Mary, but Sir William Cecil, the English chief advisor, convinced her to accept the situation and not to intervene in the affairs of Scotland.<sup>71</sup>

Mary Queen of Scots escaped to England in 1568, to find support from her cousin Queen Elizabeth. Considering that the Scots were able to execute Mary, Elizabeth declined to send Mary back to Scotland. If Elizabeth allowed her to go back to France or travel further to find help in Spain, there would be a possibility of returning Mary to Scotland with an army, and Protestant England could face possible repercussions of it. Eventually, Mary was held as a prisoner of England for 19 years.<sup>72</sup>

Elizabeth had to face the issue of succession from the start of her reign, with her Council and Parliament pressuring her to marry and have a son. This was made more difficult by the presence of Mary Stuart, whose claim to the English throne complicated the succession. Elizabeth I was Queen of England, but because of the law of primogeniture, her Catholic cousin Mary Queen of Scots was the next in line to the throne, and some people thought she was the legitimate monarch.<sup>73</sup>

Elizabeth had many suitors, among them was also Philip of Spain, who was eager to gain power over the English throne. However, Elizabeth rejected him as the rest of her potential husbands. The only possible and acceptable husband for Elizabeth was Sir Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. He was Elizabeth's favourite suitor and one of her closest friends throughout her life. He was a powerful figure and a great military leader. Despite his popularity, Elizabeth never married him.<sup>74</sup>

As Mary was held as a captive, many plots and one of the biggest rebellions was led against Elizabeth. Elizabeth was warned about possible rebellions by her Privy Council, and she was advised to execute Mary as a threat to England.<sup>75</sup> Mary's presence in England gave the Catholics hope, that there would be a possibility of restoring Catholicism by removing Elizabeth from the throne.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>72</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>73</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>74</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>75</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>76</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

In 1569, there was an unsuccessful attempt to place Mary as a Catholic queen on the throne. The rebellion was led by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, and it was called the Rising of the North. In 1570, Pope Pius V excommunicated Elizabeth from the Rome Catholic Church and deprived her of sovereignty in England.<sup>77</sup>

In 1571, Roberto Ridolfi, an Italian merchant living in London, came up with a plan to put Mary on the English throne and restore Catholicism in England. Tomas Howard, 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Norfolk, was also involved in the plot. In his house, letters written in code were found and possibly belonged to Mary and Ridolfi. They contained details of the plan. As a result, Norfolk was arrested and sentenced to death in 1572. Mary denied involvement in the plot. However, the letter, including her signature, concerned a plan of an invasion to England.<sup>78</sup> Mary was to be put on the throne after killing Elizabeth and Cecil with the help of the Duke of Alva, governor of the Netherlands.<sup>79</sup> After this event, Elizabeth knew that Mary posed a constant danger and should never be freed.<sup>80</sup>

Mary was involved in another plot against Queen of England in 1586 with Anthony Babington, an English Catholic conspirator. He sent her coded letters in a beer barrel, and she again agreed to depose Elizabeth and be put on the English throne as a Catholic monarch. However, Sir Francis Walsingham, former Secretary of State of the Kingdom of England, with his spies solved coded letters and found sufficient evidence to convince Elizabeth to have her cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, executed. Elizabeth was hesitant about executing the Scottish Queen due to a possible reaction of her son, the King of Scotland, as well as her apprehension of Catholic Spain and France. However, her Privy Council had the opposite opinion. They finally convinced Elizabeth, and she signed the death warrant in February 1587. After a long trial, Mary was found guilty and sentenced to death. Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded on 8 February 1587.<sup>81</sup>

The death of Mary Stuart contributed to Philip's conviction that he could finally invade England and restore Catholicism. Philip had been planning an invasion of England

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<sup>77</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>78</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>79</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>80</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>81</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

for some time, and the death of Mary Stuart gave him the confidence to move forward with his plans of invasion.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

## 4 PREPARING FOR THE INVASION

The war between the two monarchs broke out in 1585 and continued until 1604. When the conflict with Spain escalated in 1585 Elizabeth was already fifty- two years old and she had been ruling England for twenty- seven years. King Philip II ruled Spain at the time. Despite the fact that the Spaniards were skilled at commanding enormous fleets, the king was not thought to be a particularly knowledgeable expert in naval or military matters. Philip decided to build an enormous fleet of more than one hundred vessels to invade England. Help was also sent from other Catholic states, such as Naples, Portugal, and Castile.<sup>83</sup>

Suspicious of a possible invasion by the Armada reached England at the end of 1585. However, in 1577, the reports of potential invasion became a quite big threat.<sup>84</sup> Ships, troops, and supplies continued to assemble at Lisbon throughout the first months of 1587. A port such as Cadiz in Andalusia also served as a gathering place for ships in southern Spain.<sup>85</sup>

Elizabeth had attempted to protect the precarious peace by refraining from making any overt war preparations. But soon it became impossible to deny the fact about the approaching Armada.<sup>86</sup> As late as February 1587, Elizabeth tried to send her peace commissioners, led by the Earl of Derby, to attempt to negotiate peace with the Duke of Parma in the Netherlands. Parma, who served as the governor of the Spanish Netherlands, was assigned to provide a significant percentage of the invasion force that made up the Armada's military component. However, the mission to negotiate peace was unsuccessful.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Willis, S. (2018). *The Spanish Armada*. London: Penguin Random House UK.

<sup>84</sup> Freeman, R. (2019). *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles: The Armada, Trafalgar and Jutland*. Peterborough: Endeavour Media Ltd.

<sup>85</sup> Summerville. Ch. (2005). *Armada 1588: The Spanish Assault on England*. Bernsley: Pen & Sword Books Ltd.

<sup>86</sup> Dickie, I., Dougherty, M., Jestice, P., Jörgensen, Ch., & Rice, R. (2011). *Fighting Techniques of Naval Warfare: Strategy, Weapons, Commanders, and Ships: 1190- Present*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

<sup>87</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

In the autumn of 1587, Elizabeth had to prepare her country for the war and ensure the protection of England. People at Westminster were urged to return home while coastal inhabitants moved inland for their safety.<sup>88</sup>

In November of 1587, Elizabeth summoned a Council of War to prepare and plan the invasion of the Spanish Armada. She appointed her Lord High Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, commander. Charles Howard was not considered an experienced sailor but he was Elizabeth's cousin and he had been loyal and dedicated to the queen since her ascension to the throne.<sup>89</sup> To make sure that the English fleet was prepared to take on the Spanish invasion, a council was formed under the leadership of Lord Charles Howard, John Hawkins, Sir Francis Drake, and Martin Frobisher.<sup>90</sup> Howard also appointed to his side Lord Sheffield, who was his nephew and had joined the army in the Netherlands earlier. Along with Lord Sheffield, Lord Thomas Howard was appointed, although he also did not have much experience of the sea.<sup>91</sup>

Walsingham, the principal secretary to Queen Elizabeth, discovered that Philip II was enlarging his fleet and modernising his current warships at Spanish ports. Drake was allowed by Elizabeth to leave for Spain and delay Philip's plans. He commanded a fleet that stormed Cadiz in April 1587, pillaging the town and wrecking 24- 37 Spanish ships. He then proceeded to sail to the Azores, where he halted the carrack San Felipe, owned by Philip II. After this journey of raiding along the Spanish and Portuguese coasts, he returned to England. The attack prevented Spain from expanding its fleet, but it only temporarily stopped the invasion and gave Elizabeth more time to fortify England's defences.<sup>92</sup> There were also a few attempts of the English trying to destroy the Armada in Lisbon, but they were blown back by strong winds.<sup>93</sup>

The biggest chances for England were at sea. According to a compromise plan, a smaller squadron, commanded by Lord Henry Seymour, would stay in the Straits of Dover to cooperate with the Dutch, while most of the fleet, under the leadership of

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<sup>88</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>89</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>90</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>91</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>92</sup> Kendall, *Queen*; Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>93</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.



Howard and Drake, would be stationed at Plymouth.<sup>94</sup> The English were considerably less prepared on land. England did not have a strong standing army. The only palace guard and the militia were available for home defence.<sup>95</sup>

In 1587, Queen Elizabeth gave the order to prepare the English Navy for probable battles at sea with the Spanish fleet. The English Navy was prepared to depart by 28 December 1587, after work started on 1 November.<sup>96</sup>

Lord Admiral Charles Howard was in command, with Drake serving as his second in command. By 3 June 1588, Howard and Drake had gathered 34 warships that belonged to the queen and requisitioned 178 armed merchant ships. They wanted to prevent the Spanish Armada from allying with the troops of the Duke of Parma and accessing English shores.<sup>97</sup>

Just a few months prior to the Armada's departure, Santa Cruz, Philip's chief admiral, passed away at the age of 61. Philip appointed the Duke of Medina Sidonia, a man with no previous naval experience, in his place.<sup>98</sup>

Philip gave the Duke of Medina Sidonia an order to sail cross the English Channel to the French shore close to Gravelines.<sup>99</sup> The second part of the plan included a Spanish force under the command of the Duke of Parma. He was an excellent soldier, who also suppressed a Protestant Dutch rebellion against King Philip II. The Duke of Parma was going to join the rest of Armada at Dunkirk<sup>100</sup> and Nieuport in the middle of the English Channel with additional 17 000 men drawn from the Army of Flanders.<sup>101</sup> Parma's men would be transported to the Isle of Thanet, which is near to Margate, guarded by the Duke Medina Sidonia. The Spanish Army could then conduct a straight offensive along the Thames, seize Chatham Dockyard, and then attack London.<sup>102</sup> Supposing that English Catholics would have assisted them with the invasion plan.<sup>103</sup> Medina Sidonia intended

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<sup>94</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>95</sup> Bucholz & Key, *Early Modern England*.

<sup>96</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>97</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>98</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>99</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>100</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>101</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>102</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>103</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.

to exercise overall leadership once the two troops united until the expedition landed safely in England. After the landing in England, the invasion would have been taken over by the Duke of Parma, who would have led the land operations. The fleet would still remain under the command of Medina Sidonia.<sup>104</sup>

However, numerous problems occurred. Firstly, there were no suitable deep-water ports in the Channel where the Spanish fleet could safely wait for Parma. Furthermore, the Dutch had a fleet of their own which was warily positioned near Dunkirk. It would be very dangerous for Parma to sail his men by sea on his own. Secondly, the English fleet owned more warships than the Spanish. They were also faster and better manoeuvrable. Thirdly, the Spanish did not have enough supplies. There was not enough food for the men, and it rotted as well. Moreover, sailors became often sick, and they lacked experience at sea as well.<sup>105</sup> Besides, in the autumn before the war winds started to be strong and it delayed the Spaniards.<sup>106</sup> Lastly, there was not clear communication between King Philip and Parma in Brussels and Medina in Lisbon. Consequently, Philip II and his immediate advisers agreed to coordinate the strategy of the plan.<sup>107</sup>

The Armada was not still ready and prepared for the journey by early January 1588.<sup>108</sup> Eventually, the Spanish fleet set sail from Lisbon into the English Channel at the end of May that same year, with the Duke of Medina Sidonia in command. Most of the men were soldiers, and the rest of them were seamen and volunteers. In June, a strong storm near Cape Finisterre dispersed the fleet along the Galician coast, causing significant damage to the boats. As a result, the Spanish Armada had to dock at La Coruña, a port on Spain's northwest coast, to fix their battleships.<sup>109</sup> Following the event, nine of the ten senior officers, who were responsible for leading fleets, declared the Armada too weak to continue. However, Philip did not subordinate to their advice.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>105</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>106</sup> Ackroyd, *Tudors*.

<sup>107</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>108</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>109</sup> Kendall, *Queen*; Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>110</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.

Over 130 ships departed from La Coruña in July in 1588, in a three-mile-long protective crescent formation, carrying 29 453 men. The journey took ten days.<sup>111</sup> The different troops were made up of the Spanish, the Italians, and the Portuguese, with the Spanish being further split into squadrons of Gallicians, Andalusians, Catalans, and Castilians. Additionally, there were also 600 monks, who provided religious services to the troops.<sup>112</sup>

Most of the English Fleet departed Chatham Dockyard in March 1588 to gather in Plymouth in preparation for the Spanish invasion.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Kendall, *Queen*; Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>112</sup> Ackroyd, *Tudors*.

<sup>113</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

## 5 THE ARMADA IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL

The first encounter of fleets took place off Plymouth on 21 July 1588. Charles Howard, Lord High Admiral, began to sail towards the Armada on the morning of that day. So far, the English did not destroy or seriously damage the Armada's ships. However, one of the biggest triumphs of that day was the destruction of the San Salvador ship. As the ship ignited, her powder exploded,<sup>114</sup> destroying two decks and the sterncastle. Approximately half of the men died on board or were seriously injured by the fire of the explosion.<sup>115</sup> The English used up most of the ammunition without any greater achievement, and the Armada continued to sail east in an unbroken crescent shape toward the Duke of Parma.<sup>116</sup>

Due to the potential adverse weather and resupply needs, the Spanish fleet needed to anchor. The first unsuccessful destination to anchor was the English port of Plymouth. Then the closest rendezvous point for the Duke of Parma and the Duke of Medina Sidonia was the Solent, the strait of the English Channel. Medina Sidonia decided to sail in its direction.<sup>117</sup>

The second engagement of the fleets took place at Portland Bill on 23 July 1588. The battle lasted the whole day, with intermittent skirmishes. The combat proved to be disastrous for the English, as they were unable to sink any Spanish ships, despite the intense fire that prevented visibility beyond a few metres. All of England's ammunition was used up. The English had caused considerable destruction to some of the Spanish galleons, yet they were unable to disrupt the Armada's formation, and Sidonia carried on with his journey to meet with Parma.<sup>118</sup>

In order to launch an invasion at Margate in Kent, the Spanish fleets had to await across the English Channel to accompany barges with sailors led by the Duke of Parma. Then the Spanish Army would be able to advance to London.<sup>119</sup> Medina Sidonia was also

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<sup>114</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>115</sup> Colin, M., & Parker, G. (1999). *The Spanish Armada*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

<sup>116</sup> Williams, J. (1966). *The Spanish Armada*. New York: Harper & Row; Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>117</sup> Buehr, W. (1962). *The Spanish Armada*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

<sup>118</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*; Buehr, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>119</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

prohibited to engage in battles if it was not necessary, his main target was to meet with Parma.<sup>120</sup>

After no greater success of the English Navy, Howard convened a War Council. He divided his fleet into four squadrons, with Frobisher, Hawkyns, and himself commanding each squadron. This tactic proved to be more successful.<sup>121</sup>

After another two engagements near the Isle of Wight, Sidonia lost a few ships. The English still did not disrupt the Armada's formation of the Spanish fleet. However, they were successful in blocking the Armada from reaching the Solent, the last port before they could sail to Calais.<sup>122</sup>

The English were still close behind the Spanish. Sidonia sailed towards Calais, where he anchored on 27 July 1588. He was approximately 40 kilometres from Parma, who was in Dunkerque. He needed more ammunition and feared bad weather. He sent a request to the Duke of Parma, asking for his help and more supplies, but Parma was blocked by the ships of the Dutch, who allied with the English. Howard decided to take the risk of releasing eight fireships upon the Spanish Armada. Despite the darkness, the ships spread fire and explosions, partially destroying the Armada.<sup>123</sup>

Following, Sidonia anchored off Gravelines, where the final battle was fought on 29 July 1588. The English Navy had an advantage in the combat because the Armada's formation was finally broken. Moreover, the Spanish lost San Lorenzo, one of the most important ships, they had prepared for Parma's troops.<sup>124</sup>

While Sidonia's fleet was attempting to escape Francis Drake, an English vice-admiral, launched an attack, and other commanders followed him. Drake attacked the San Martin by manoeuvring his ship, Revenge, close to them. The Spanish were forced to use axes to disconnect their ships from persistent fire, which had tangled the Spanish vessels. The galleons, San Felipe and San Mateo, suffered significant damage, and the English Navy succeeded in sinking the Spanish ship, Maria Juan.<sup>125</sup> A few ships were

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<sup>120</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>121</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>122</sup> Buehr, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>123</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*; Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>124</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*; Buehr, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>125</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

captured by the English, and none of the English vessels had suffered any significant damage.<sup>126</sup> The Spanish ships were damaged and holed by the English broadsides fired from cannon. The soldiers were fighting for fourteen hours until the Spanish Armada was defeated.<sup>127</sup>

The remaining Spanish Armada galleons had to take a much longer journey home than planned. The fleets could not cross the English Channel back due to strong winds and tough currents. On top of that, they were followed by the English fleet. The Duke of Medina Sidonia ordered to sail north towards the Shetland Islands, then west through the Atlantic Ocean, and finally south towards La Coruña in Spain.

Due to low ammunition supplies, Howard's chase had to be stopped around the eastern England coastline, forcing him to return to Chatham Dockyard.<sup>128</sup>

When the Armada sailed around Scotland, the men on the Spanish ships were enduring the freezing weather and famine, because the food was rotten. Each day, five seamen would die from starvation. Many vessels were not suitable for long voyages. The ships were full of injured men. Horses were thrown overboard to spare drinking water supplies. As the Spanish Armada reached the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, excruciating storms hit them. Most of the Spanish galleons were blown aground on the Irish coastline.<sup>129</sup>

Later, Geoffrey Fenton, Principal Secretary of Ireland, informed William Cecil, the chief advisor of Queen Elizabeth, that he had counted over 1100 dead bodies on the Sligo coast in Ireland. The English government feared that if any Spanish survivor would still be alive on shore. They might have used Ireland as a base to invade England. Hence, the government ordered to execute anyone who would have helped them along with any Spaniards found alive on the shore.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Ackroyd, *Tudors*.

<sup>127</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>128</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>129</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*; Ackroyd, *Tudors*.

<sup>130</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

On 9 August 1588, Elizabeth delivered her speech to her soldiers at Tilbury Camp.<sup>131</sup> The English were not the only ones to revel in the victory, the Dutch also rejoiced.<sup>132</sup>

However, Elizabeth stopped providing food and help to the fleet. The sailors had to wait at the port for their pay. Without food or medical attention, they quickly fell ill and hundreds of them died of poisoning, typhus, and scurvy. Elizabeth refused to help Charles Howard, despite his pleas. Howard had to provide his own money to save his sailors.<sup>133</sup> Besides, Sir Hawkins, an English naval commander and administrator, assisted Drake in the establishment of a relief fund at Chatham Dockyard to provide medicines and food for crews.<sup>134</sup>

Approximately 63 vessels of the Armada returned to Spain. Despite Philip's continued efforts, the Armada's defeat was a major setback for Spain, and 1588 marked the last time a Spanish fleet made it to the English Channel.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>132</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>133</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*; Ackroyd, *Tudors*.

<sup>134</sup> Kendall, *Queen Elizabeth I*.

<sup>135</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

## 6 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SPANISH ARMADA AND THE ENGLISH NAVY

The English Navy had a significant advantage in the Battle of Gravelines due to knowledge of the Celtic Sea and the North Sea. This skill allowed them to use the winds and currents to their advantage, helping them to outmanoeuvre the Spanish Armada. Nevertheless, it was not only a matter of military tactics, strategic planning, commanders' decisions, and the types of vessels employed. The inclement weather was in favour of the English and played a pivotal role in their victory at Gravelines.<sup>136</sup>

One of the biggest differences between the Spanish Armada and the English Navy was in mobilising the fleets. It took the Armada three years to prepare and gather all the support for the invasion into the English Channel. On the other hand, the English Navy prepared for the conflict in just a much shorter period of time, leading to winning the war.<sup>137</sup>

The vessels for the English Navy were constructed at Chatham Dockyard. The shipyard was specially developed during the Elizabethan era. The first dry dock was commissioned in 1581 and people could repair old ships there.<sup>138</sup>

John Hawkins, an English naval commander, acquired a significant duty when he was named Treasurer of the English Navy in 1578. His main task was to construct new ships and improve old ones. As a shipwright, he promoted the design of faster ships that could travel great distances. One of the innovations Hawkins developed was a longer vessel with lowered forecastle and aftcastle to boost speed. He also installed removable topmasts that could be raised in nice weather but hidden away during tough meteorological conditions. John Hawkins achieved remarkable accomplishments during his tenure as a naval administrator. By 1587, he had increased the English navy to a total of twenty-five newly constructed vessels and eighteen smaller warships.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Bucholz & Key, *Early Modern England*.

<sup>137</sup> Willis, S. (2018). *The Spanish Armada*. London: Penguin Random House UK.

<sup>138</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>139</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.



The English fleet possessed a greater number of warships than the Spanish.<sup>140</sup> Despite the fact that the English vessels were smaller in size but equipped with larger guns, they were more agile and had higher speeds.<sup>141</sup>

Twenty-five combat galleons comprised the Elizabethan navy. However, the city of London and private citizens had to provide additional vessels to expand the fleet. To defeat the Armada, they had to own more vessels, so they also needed coasters. Although some of the ships were not considered to fight in navy battles, the overall number of warships reached 197 with 15 900 men on deck.<sup>142</sup>

The race-built galleons were the most successful and efficient ships in the English Navy. Most of them were completely rebuilt or newly constructed. In comparison to old galleons, they were less tall than before, and their lower decks were intentionally built to store heavy guns. Moreover, they had lower superstructures.<sup>143</sup>

The English fleet was initially split into two squadrons, later the fleet consisted of four squadrons under the command of Lord Charles Howard, Sir Francis Drake, and other commanders. They had several Queen's ships and many large merchantmen in each squadron. In addition, they were supported by a fleet of smaller ships, but not all of them would have been used for the entire war.<sup>144</sup>

The English Navy also had a distinct advantage in gunnery. This advantage was instrumental in the eventual defeat of the Spanish Armada. The English could boast of having demi-culverin cannons with the longest-ranged pieces on either side. They could destroy the opponent's ships at a distance of under 400 yards. English cannons could be hauled inboard for reloading because they were mounted on four-wheeled carriages that were held in place by ropes and pulleys. On the contrary, the English had more professional gunners, so the reloading and firing were faster than Armada's. The English Navy was able to fire approximately three or four shots per hour.<sup>145</sup> Nevertheless,

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<sup>140</sup> Willis, *The Spanish Armada*.

<sup>141</sup> Ackroyd, *Tudors*.

<sup>142</sup> Ackroyd, *Tudors*.

<sup>143</sup> Summerville. Ch. (2005) *Armada 1588: The Spanish Assault on England*. Bernsley: Pen & Sword Books Ltd.

<sup>144</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>145</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

Elizabeth would not supply her fleet with enough ammunition, making it difficult for sailors to set out for longer voyages and delay their victories.<sup>146</sup>

On the other hand, Spanish guns were attached to old two-wheeled gun carriages, which were additionally tied to the side of the vessel to absorb recoil. The soldiers found it difficult to reload the carriages inboard. So, they had to do it outboard. This complicated manoeuvre led to the soldiers being exposed and be more vulnerable to the enemy. Compared to English ships, Spanish ships carried fewer trained gunners. This lack of inexperience with weapons among the crew resulted in a slow rate of fire, only one shot from one gun was fired per hour.<sup>147</sup>

Neither the Duke of Medina Sidonia nor Howard had much naval experience as commanders. Both were chosen for their positions due to social factors. Even though, the English Navy could be proud of its experienced seamen Sir Francis Drake, Martin Frobisher,<sup>148</sup> and Captain Thomas Fenner, who was famous for his West Indies raids.<sup>149</sup> The Armada was also glad and grateful for great commanders such as Juan Martínez de Recalde, Martín de Bertendona.<sup>150</sup>

However, the English captains possessed another great advantage, which made the Spaniards weaker. The English had great knowledge of the waters in which the battles were fought, and ships were sailed. Spanish seamen knew the Atlantic route to the Indies and southern sea routes, but they lacked the English sailors' experience and knowledge of the North Atlantic and the waters around Britain.<sup>151</sup>

In the end, the Armada was an invasion force of 138 ships,<sup>152</sup> carrying approximately 29 453 men on decks of ships. Most of the men were soldiers, and the rest of them were seamen, volunteers, and auxiliaries.<sup>153</sup> The fleet included galleons and cannon-equipped requisitioned merchant ships.<sup>154</sup> The most magnificent vessels sailed

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<sup>146</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>147</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>148</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>149</sup> Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>150</sup> Summerville, *Armada*; Freeman, *Britain's Greatest Naval Battles*.

<sup>151</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>152</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

<sup>153</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>154</sup> Kendall, *Queen*.

under names of saints and members of the Holy Family such as Santa Ana, San Martín de Portugal, Nuestra Señora del Rosario.<sup>155</sup>

Ships of the Armada were not constructed with the purpose of fighting, even though they were first-line squadrons. We can only consider the four Neapolitan galleasses with the galleons of the Portuguese and from Castile as proper warships.<sup>156</sup>

The majority of the warships were usually naos type of ships. Their tall superstructures gave the impression that they were larger than other ships of comparable tonnage. As a result of their size, it made them less maneuverable and more vulnerable to being attacked by the English.<sup>157</sup>

In addition, galleasses got through some improvements, including the fact that they could start to sail without being towed.<sup>158</sup> The galleasses were a type of rowable ship with firepower. The ship's duty was to deploy powerful weapons in circumstances where regular sailing vessels could not manage them.<sup>159</sup>

Philip II of Spain also hoped that the galleys which had won the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 would be capable of defeating the English. However, it did not end in the way he expected.<sup>160</sup>

The original Spanish strategy was to get near their enemies before grappling. Then they would board and defeat the English with massive numbers of soldiers.<sup>161</sup>

However, due to the higher speed of the English ships, it was their decision whether they drew close to the Spanish or stood off and bombarded the Armada with cannon fire.<sup>162</sup>

The formation of the fleet itself proved to be Armada's additional issue. The fleet sailed in the shape of a crescent configuration. The naval ships were on the outside, and their duty involved protecting transports on the side. Hence, if the fleet intended to

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<sup>155</sup> Bucholz, R., & Key, N., *Early Modern England*.

<sup>156</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>157</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>158</sup> Dickie, Dougherty, Jestice, Jörgensen, & Rice, *Fighting Techniques*.

<sup>159</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>160</sup> Dickie, Dougherty, Jestice, Jörgensen, & Rice, *Fighting Techniques*.

<sup>161</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

<sup>162</sup> Summerville, *Armada*.

remain together, it could only travel at the painfully slow speed of the slowest merchant ship, approximately nine miles per hour. Medina-Sidonia attempted to make the Spanish king aware of these issues. Philip, though, was certain that they would not be significant.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Bucholz & Key, *Early Modern*.

## 7 THE END OF THE ANGLO-SPANISH WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

After the Spanish Armada left in 1588, Elizabeth I of England commissioned Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norris, an English soldier, to launch raids on Spanish ships in 1589 as part of a larger campaign to disrupt Spanish trade and weaken their naval power. In 1595, Elizabeth ordered additional assaults on Spanish ships and trade, and this was followed up in 1596 when Elizabeth I of England dispatched Charles Howard to Cádiz, Spain. The mission was successful, and the English captured several Spanish ships and their cargo. Sir Francis Drake died on 28 January 1596, when he was on his voyage. His death was a significant setback for the English forces.<sup>164</sup>

Philip II of Spain decided to build a new armada, even better than the one that had been defeated by the English in 1588. However, due to riots in the Netherlands and a new war with France, Philip could not afford to launch it sooner. Additionally, the Duke of Parma, who had been leading the Spanish forces in the Netherlands, died in 1592, further weakening the Spanish forces.<sup>165</sup>

In 1596, Philip attempted to launch a military campaign against England, however, a severe storm caused the destruction of approximately half of the fleets, thus preventing the Spanish from reaching their intended destination in Ireland.<sup>166</sup>

In the following year, Philip made a second attempt to send out his third armada, but the inclement weather caused the vessels to be dispersed.<sup>167</sup>

Philip had been engaged against Henry IV of France, who was fighting for Protestants. In 1596, Queen Elizabeth I of England signed the Treaty of Greenwich, which provided military support to France in its fight against Spain. Elizabeth sent troops to France to help the French forces in their struggle. After a few years of fighting, Philip eventually gave up, and in 1598, a peace was signed between France and Spain, known as the Treaty of Vervins.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Patterson, B. (2007). *With the Heart of a King*. New York: Saint Martin's Press.

<sup>165</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>166</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>167</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>168</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

Philip started to be more distant, and his health deteriorated, leading to his death in 1598. He died at the age of seventy-one in Madrid. He was succeeded by his son Philip III.<sup>169</sup>

Elizabeth's last 15 years were full of hardship. Her favourite Sir Robert Dudley died in 1588 and two years after him Francis Walsingham passed away, causing her great sorrow. The economy was strained due to the costly struggle in Ireland since the 1560s, as well as the support of the Netherlands. However, there was a cultural development, especially in literature, music, and architecture during Elizabeth's reign.<sup>170</sup>

Additionally, one of the final rebellions was plotted. The Earl of Essex, Robert Devereux, was a prominent figure in the court of Queen Elizabeth I. He had been a favourite of the queen, but his ambition led him to attempt to overthrow her. The rebellion was unsuccessful. In 1601, Essex was arrested and charged with treason. He was sentenced to death by beheading and executed in 1601.<sup>171</sup>

Towards the end of Elizabeth's life, she suffered from depression and became more isolated. She felt weaker, suffered from different illnesses, and lost her appetite. On 24 March 1603, Queen Elizabeth I of England passed away at Richmond Palace in London at the age of sixty-nine. She had been Queen of England since 1558 and her death marked the end of the Tudor dynasty. She was buried at Westminster Abbey, where she still lies today.<sup>172</sup>

The same day James Stuart, the son of Mary Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley, was officially proclaimed King of England and Scotland. James was the first monarch to rule both countries simultaneously. He was crowned King of England at Westminster Abbey on 25 July 1603.<sup>173</sup>

In 1604, one year after the passing of Queen Elizabeth I, her successor King James I concluded a peace with Spain, the Treaty of London. This agreement enabled English merchants to engage in unrestricted trade with Spain's possessions in Europe while

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<sup>169</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>170</sup> Levin, *The Reign*.

<sup>171</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>172</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>173</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

reserving the right to trade with the Dutch. It allowed England to expand its trading network and gain access to new markets.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Matusiak, *The Tudors*.

## 8 ANALYSIS

### 8.1 The Tilbury Speech 1588

On 8 August, Queen Elizabeth I sailed on the Thames to Tilbury, a port situated close to the estuary of the river. Elizabeth I was invited to give a speech by Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, to give a speech. Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, was a highly influential figure in the court in England. He had previously served in the Netherlands, where he had gained experience leading troops in battle. He was selected to command the English army that was stationed at Tilbury in Essex in 1588 to prevent the Duke of Parma's forces from advancing to London and invading England in case of successful landing.<sup>175</sup> Despite the concerns of Elizabeth's advisors about her safety, Dudley assured her that she would be safe to attend her troops.<sup>176</sup>

The queen herself wrote the speech. On the following morning, as Philip II's Armada sailed away from the coast of the Netherlands, Elizabeth I delivered a speech to her troops. She was dressed in a white velvet dress, with a silver breastplate fastened over it. In her hand she held a ceremonial truncheon, a sign of her high rank and authority. Elizabeth was determined to stay with her troops and show them that she was not afraid of the enemy. However, she had to return to London due to safety concerns.<sup>177</sup>

There are three different versions of her speech, which were taken down by her listeners at Tilbury. One of the witnesses was Lionel Sharp, an English churchman, who wrote the speech down in a letter.<sup>178</sup>

#### 8.1.1 Analysis of the Tilbury Speech 1588<sup>179</sup>

Elizabeth addressed her troops by saying. "My loving people"<sup>180</sup> She needed to be trusted by her soldiers and connect with them on an emotional level. She wanted to express her authority and gain respect due to her status as a female ruler in the sixteenth century, which was uncommon and challenging to attain authority in.

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<sup>175</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>176</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>177</sup> Patterson, *With the Heart*.

<sup>178</sup> May, S. W. (Ed.). (2004). *Queen Elizabeth I. Selected Works*. New York: Washington Square Press.

<sup>179</sup> The whole text of the Tilbury speech is attached in Appendix No. 2

<sup>180</sup> May, *Queen*.



She mentions a concern about her safety in a camp: “But I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people.”<sup>181</sup> Here she expresses her gratitude to her soldiers, who were standing in front of her, waiting for a battle. She further expresses her trust in her people, in order to gain their confidence and trust in return.

She expresses that she does not belong among tyrants and that she always behaved the way to deserve loyalty and trust: “Let tyrants fear; I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects.”<sup>182</sup>

She explains that she has come to support her troops and be with them before the fight: “I am come amongst you [...] to live and die amongst you all, to lay down, for my God and for my kingdom and my people, my honour and my blood even in the dust.”<sup>183</sup> She wants to show them that they are in this fight against the Spaniards together and she is firmly on their side.

In the middle of her speech, there is one of the most powerful and famous sentences, which is still frequently quoted: “I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too”<sup>184</sup> Elizabeth expresses her authority and bravery as a female ruler, emphasising that even though she has a body of a woman she can behave like a king, like a man. She acknowledges the gender difference but shows that women can also rule and lead the army.

She expresses resolution against foreign threats: “[I] think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm”<sup>185</sup> She indicates the power of her country and that no one could conquer England.

She pledges: “I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field.”<sup>186</sup> She declares her intention to be

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<sup>181</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>182</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>183</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>184</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>185</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>186</sup> May, *Queen*.

their leader and showed them her commitment to the country. By this sentence, she says that she will lead them to the battle. However, almost at the end of her speech she was saying something different.

“In the mean time my Lieutenant General shall be in my stead”<sup>187</sup> This statement reveals that Elizabeth relies on Dudley and his ability to lead the troops. She needed to motivate and inspire her troops to achieve victory. By this statement she took a step back. However, she also showed her trust in her troops to fight without her presence.

She promises reward to her troops: “I know already for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns, and we do assure you on a word of a prince they shall be duly paid.”<sup>188</sup>

She ends her speech by expressing her hatred for her enemies and emphasising that victory would come very soon. She did not doubt the victory of her troops and she needed them to be as convinced about winning as her, because if they doubted their abilities, it would make them weaker: “[We] shall shortly have a famous victory over these enemies of my God, of my kingdoms, and of my people”<sup>189</sup>

Elizabeth gave her speech with confidence and the great authority of a female ruler. She tried to remind her troops that she trusts them and supports them. The delivery of the speech was precise and easy to understand.

## **8.2 The Armada Portrait 1588**<sup>190</sup>

The Armada Portrait of Elizabeth I was painted in 1588 after England’s victory in the Battle of Gravelines against the Spanish Armada and the successful defence of the nation. It serves as a reminder of the power of the English navy and its ability to protect the country from foreign attacks.<sup>191</sup> Elizabeth represents the authority of her monarchy. In the sixteenth century, it was a difficult achievement for a woman to gain respect and

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<sup>187</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>188</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>189</sup> May, *Queen*.

<sup>190</sup> The copy of the portrait is attached in Appendix No. 2.

<sup>191</sup> Hearn, K. (Ed.). (1995). *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*. London: Tate Publishing.

be an influence and a leader of a country.<sup>192</sup> Elizabeth rarely posed for portraits. Once the monarchy authorised a portrait of hers, it was frequently replicated in different ways.<sup>193</sup> Portraits of Elizabeth were frequently requested as official presents for foreign rulers or her favourite courtiers.<sup>194</sup>

There are three versions of the Armada portrait that are almost similar.<sup>195</sup> Sir Francis Drake, a commander at the Battle of Gravelines, was the owner of one of the paintings.<sup>196</sup> Today, we can find a portrait at Queen's House, Greenwich. This portrait stands out among the other two due to its vivid colours, making it the most visually appealing.<sup>197</sup> The reason is that it was significantly overpainted in the second half of the seventeenth century. Another version of Armada's portrait is exhibited at the National Gallery. However, the length of the portrait has been reduced on both sides, including only Elizabeth without any objects beside her.<sup>198</sup> So, it leaves the last version displayed at Woburn Abbey.<sup>199</sup>

The authors of the paintings are unknown. However, it is very possible that George Gower, one of the most famous painters in the Elizabethan era, painted at least one of the versions.<sup>200</sup>

In the background of Elizabeth's portrait, two scenes of the sea are depicted behind her figure. On the left, the English Navy is sailing in tranquil waters. The second picture shows the Armada struggling in stormy weather. The Spanish fleet is trapped in big waves, trying to survive and get its way out. It features large cliffs on the side of the picture, symbolising the cliffs that scattered half of the Armada in Ireland on their way back to Spain.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Gent, L., & Llewellyn, N. (Eds.). (1990). *Renaissance Bodies. The Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540- 1660*. London: Reaktion Books.

<sup>193</sup> Royal Museums Greenwich. (2018) *Symbolism in portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/symbolism-portraits-queen-elizabeth-i>

<sup>194</sup> Strong, R. (1987). *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*. London: Thames and Hudson.

<sup>195</sup> Strong, *Gloriana*.

<sup>196</sup> Hearn, *Dynasties*.

<sup>197</sup> Royal Museums Greenwich. (2018). *Spot the difference*. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/why-are-there-three-versions-armada-portrait>

<sup>198</sup> Strong, *Gloriana*; Hearn, *Dynasties*.

<sup>199</sup> Hearn, *Dynasties*.

<sup>200</sup> Strong, *Gloriana*.

<sup>201</sup> Cf. Gent & Llewellyn, *Renaissance Bodies*.

Elizabeth is showing her naval authority by placing her hand on a globe beside her, with her fingers indicating North America, where her first established colony, Virginia, was located. After the victorious Battle at Gravelines, the English navy became one of the most powerful forces in the world, surpassing Spain in terms of naval strength and expansion.<sup>202</sup>

Her second hand holds an ostrich feather fan, the symbol of the Prince of Wales. She was trying to represent that she embodied both the qualities of a queen and a prince.<sup>203</sup>

On her side is a small carved mermaid that is part of a chair. Mermaids were often seen as a representation of mystery, femininity, and the power of the sea. It shows Elizabeth's power against the Spanish seamen.<sup>204</sup>

On the left side behind Elizabeth is a crown. The crown symbolises the power and authority of the monarchy, as well as the wealth of England.<sup>205</sup>

The queen herself is in the middle of the portrait. She looks powerful. Her body is covered in a voluminous dress, only her face and hands are visible. Her face is framed with a large ruff of white colour. Her skin is pale due to the fact that she wears too much makeup. She has a youthful look, although she is fifty-five years old. Her hair is a light colour, with no evidence of grey. She has dark eyes and her lips are painted in a bright red colour. Her head is tilted to the left side, and she is gazing directly ahead.<sup>206</sup>

Her dress is covered with many white pearls, symbolising her status as a virgin Queen, because she was never married. The fabric of the dress is mainly black and white.<sup>207</sup> These colours symbolise loyalty and innocence.<sup>208</sup> The dress is long and flowing, skimming her curves and emphasising her hourglass figure. The puffed sleeves

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<sup>202</sup> Cf. Gent & Llewellyn, *Renaissance Bodies*.

<sup>203</sup> Royal Museums Greenwich, (2018). *Symbolism in portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/symbolism-portraits-queen-elizabeth-i>

<sup>204</sup> Gent & Llewellyn, *Renaissance Bodies*.

<sup>205</sup> Gent & Llewellyn, *Renaissance Bodies*.

<sup>206</sup> Cf. Gent & Llewellyn, *Renaissance Bodies*.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. Gent & Llewellyn, *Renaissance Bodies*.

<sup>208</sup> Royal Museums Greenwich, (2018). *Symbolism in portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/symbolism-portraits-queen-elizabeth-i>

are large with golden patterns. Her dress is full of light pink bows with little diamonds in the middle.<sup>209</sup>

The queen is surrounded by rich red fabrics that decorate the furniture behind her, while the table in front of her with the globe is covered with a green cloth. Two paintings behind her are partially concealed by green curtains.

Besides every picture, there is one column. The columns may represent good and evil, or they may symbolise the stability of Elizabeth's reign.<sup>210</sup>

Armada Portrait presents Elizabeth as a confident and strong female leader, who led her country to win one of the most famous navy battles in history. It represents England as a powerful country that defeated the Spanish Armada, which was supposed to be invincible.

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<sup>209</sup> Cf. Gent & Llewellyn, *Renaissance Bodies*.

<sup>210</sup> Cirlot, J. E. (2002). *A Dictionary of Symbols*. New York: Philosophical Library.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I would like to summarise the aims that were set out at the beginning of the thesis. The primary objective of this bachelor's thesis was to provide an overview of the significant events, which caused the Anglo-Spanish war. I focused on giving an outline of major battles and ramifications after the battles in the English Channel, along with an analysis of the relationship between Elizabeth I and Philip II during their reigns. I tried to compare the fleets and highlight their strengths in the battles.

Despite Philip's initiation of the biggest naval battles, the escalation of the Anglo-Spanish conflict cannot be solely attributed to him, as he was provoked to launch the invasion to England. The disparity between Protestants and Catholics was most likely one of the primary causes of the Anglo-Spanish war. Religion played a significant role in the events of Elizabeth's reign, especially first three decades. Such as helping Protestants in the Dutch revolt in the Netherlands or executing the Catholic monarch, Mary Stuart in 1587. It caused a lot of tension between the two monarchs, and their relationship resulted in one of the greatest navy conflicts in history.

No matter how many ships and how much support Philip II had, he was unable to succeed in his mission to conquer England and restore Protestantism. After summarising the differences between the fleets, the English had a lot of advantages in terms of types of ships and weapons. The speed of the English vessels contributed to the victory as well. However, the main problem was not only with the number of ships or type of vessels, but also in planning the right strategies. I found during my research that the Spaniards were not well prepared, and it was a hasty decision to attack England in 1588.

Elizabeth wanted to commemorate her victory by having a portrait painted in 1588. The painting, known as the Armada portrait, is full of hidden meanings and it expresses women's power and respect. The portrait should also remind us of the importance of Elizabeth's reign and the strength of the new English Navy.

However, after analysing the Tilbury speech it is obvious that the speech meant to motivate the English soldiers. Elizabeth was talking about standing by their side in battle,

but she did not remain with the troops and retreated to London. The speech was most likely rhetoric. Elizabeth was aware of Parma's fleet across the English Channel and if he had succeeded in invading England, it would have been very difficult to defeat Parma's troops on land, so she needed devoted soldiers to fight for England's victory.

Moreover, it was not only Elizabeth I and Philip II who were involved in the conflict. Their bad relationship, which escalated to the war, concerned other monarchs of different nations. It resulted in the involvement of other countries such as in France, the Netherlands, Scotland, Ireland, and so on. Additionally, it had a great impact on the development of the future trading and naval authority of England in the world. The consequences of the conflict ended with England becoming one of the most powerful countries in the world.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix No. 1: A map of a route of the Spanish Armada and significant battles

Appendix No. 2: The Tilbury Speech 1588

Appendix No. 3: The Armada Portrait 1588

Appendix No. 1: A map of the route of the Spanish Armada and significant battles



Reference: Emerson Kent. (n.d.). *The Spanish Armada*. Retrieved from [http://www.emersonkent.com/map\\_archive/armada.htm](http://www.emersonkent.com/map_archive/armada.htm)

## Appendix No. 2: The Tilbury Speech 1588

My loving people, we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes for fear of treachery. But I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear; I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects. And therefore I am come amongst you as you see at this time not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live and die amongst you all, to lay down, for my God and for my kingdom and my people, my honour and my blood even in the dust.

I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm, to which rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns, and we do assure you on a word of a prince they shall be duly paid. In the mean time my Lieutenant General shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject. Not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over these enemies of my God, of my kingdoms, and of my people.

Reference: May, S. W. (Ed.). (2004). *Queen Elizabeth I. Selected Works*. New York: Washington Square Press.

Appendix No. 3: The Armada Portrait 1588



Reference: Elizabeth I (Armada Portrait). (2006, October 28). Retrieved from [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7b/Elizabeth I %28Armada Por trait%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7b/Elizabeth_I_%28Armada_Portrait%29.jpg)