

Univerzita Hradec Králové
Pedagogická fakulta

Bakalářská práce

2023

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Conflict of Two Queens in Historical Contexts

Konflikt dvou královen v historických souvislostech

Bakalářská práce

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Zadání bakalářské práce

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Studium: P20P0259

Studijní program: B0114A090004 Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání

Studijní obor: Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání, Historie se zaměřením na vzdělávání

Název bakalářské práce: **Konflikt dvou královen v historických souvislostech**

Název bakalářské práce Conflict of Two Queens in Historical Contexts
AJ:

Cíl, metody, literatura, předpoklady:

Práce se bude zabývat střetnutím anglické královny Alžběty I. a Marie Skotské jako výrazem širšího konfliktu v historických souvislostech Evropy šestnáctého století. S využitím zadané sekundární literatury probere v teoretické části situaci dynastie Tudorovců a Stuartovců spolu s politickým a náboženským prostředím v Anglii a Skotsku. Praktická část se soustředí na odraz těchto širších souvislostí do vztahu a osudu obou královen a jejich nároku na anglický trůn.

DORAN, Susan. The Myth of Elizabeth. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

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Zadávací pracoviště: Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury,
Pedagogická fakulta

Vedoucí práce: prof. PhDr. Bohuslav Mánek, CSc.

Oponent: Mgr. Helena Polehlová, Ph.D.

Datum zadání závěrečné práce: 13.12.2021

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou závěrečnou práci Konflikt dvou královen v historických souvislostech vypracovala pod vedením vedoucího závěrečné práce samostatně a uvedla jsem všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

V Hradci Králové dne 2. 5. 2023

Kateřina Styblíková

Anotace

STYBLÍKOVÁ, Kateřina. *Konflikt dvou královen v historických souvislostech*. Hradec Králové: Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Hradec Králové, 2023. 65 s. Bakalářská práce.

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá historickým konfliktem mezi dvěma královnami, anglickou královnou Alžbětou I. a Marií Stuartovnou, královnou skotskou. Práce se zabývá politickými a kulturními důvody, které přispěly ke sporu mezi těmito dvěma prominentními ženami, stejně jako důsledky tohoto konfliktu pro společnost jako celek. S využitím primární a sekundární literatury práce poskytuje důkladnou analýzu historických událostí a okolností vedoucích ke konfliktu, včetně historického náboženského a politického napětí, jakož i osobní rivality a ambicí obou královen. Práce se také zaměřuje na různé strategie a taktiky používané oběma královnami k dosažení výhody, včetně propagandy, diplomacie a vojenské síly. Kromě toho práce poskytuje důležitý vhled do toho, jak důležitou roli hrál gender a jeho propojení s mocí v Evropě šestnáctého století.

Klíčová slova: Alžběta I., Marie Stuartovna, Anglie, Skotsko, Tudorovci, Stuartovci, reformace, protestanství, katolicismus,

Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá konfliktem dvou významných historických postav – Marie Stuartovny a Alžběty I. Práce se zaměřuje na jejich vzájemný vztah, který byl charakterizován nejen rivalitou, ale také dobovými politickými a náboženskými rozpory. Hlavním cílem této práce je pomocí primární a sekundární literatury prozkoumat různé faktory které ovlivnily vývoj vztahu mezi královnami a vytvořily základ pro vývoj budoucího konfliktu. Záměr je kladen na analýzu těchto faktorů. Práce se zabývá jejich politickými ambicemi, náboženskými rozdíly, bojem o moc a legitimitu a také osobními rivalitami. Důraz je kladen na jejich diplomatické manévry, pokusy o spojenectví i vzájemné intriky.

Práce začíná uvedením historického kontextu, který je nezbytný pro pochopení celkového sporu. Obě panovnice vládly v 16. století, v období, které bylo poznamenáno celoevropskými náboženskými konflikty a politickými intrikami. Zmíněn je historický vývoj zemí, které hrály ve vztahu mezi královnami významnou roli. Těmito zeměmi jsou Anglie, Skotsko, Francie a Španělsko. Zrod konfliktu mezi Marií Stuartovnou a Alžbětou I. můžeme sledovat již na konci 15 století. V tuto dobu skončila stoletá válka, která rozdělila orientaci evropských mocností. V Anglii proběhly krvavé války růží a k moci se dostal rod Tudorovců. Legitimita a dědictví trůnu byly od této doby zpochybňovány při každé příležitosti. Vítězná Francie se dostala na vrchol a hledala spojence, jedním z nich bylo Skotsko. Díky této spolupráci je později rozhodnuto o osudu malé Marie Stuartovny, která bude velkou část svého života vychovávána na francouzském dvoře a pochyty spousty francouzských návyků, včetně náboženství. Španělsko, jakožto katolický stát, bude později hrát velkou roli v životě královny Alžběty.

Následně se práce detailněji věnuje vládě Tudorovců. Do tohoto rodu spadá mnoho zásadních panovníků Anglie. Jindřich VII., který získal anglický trůn, Jindřich VIII. a jeho potomci Edvard VI. a Marie I. Tito panovníci utvořili prostředí pro budoucí anglickou královnu Alžbětu I. Její otec Jindřich VIII. byl důvodem, proč musela tato královna vytrpět otázky ohledně její legitimacy a nároku na trůn. Jindřich VIII. Vytvořil anglikánskou církev a z panovníka učinil hlavu církve, tímto krokem se odloučil od Říma a mnoho katolických mocností tento akt odsoudilo. Práce se poté orientuje na Skotsko a protestantskou reformaci. Tyto události vytvářejí prostředí pro vládu mladé Marie Stuartovny, která to ve své vlastní vlasti nebude mít po příjezdu z Francie jednoduché.

Na konci kapitoly týkající se historického kontextu je zmíněna definice a zrod reformace, jelikož tento moment je klíčový jak pro Evropu, tak pro život dvou královen. Druhý důležitý pojem, který ovlivňuje celou práci je definice vládce. Král nebo královna jsou zvoleni z boží vůle a díky krevní linii, kdykoli nastanou nějaké nejasnosti, bývá legitimita vládce zpochybněna. S tímto problémem bojuje anglická královna po celý život, jelikož spousta mocností ji neuznává jako právoplatnou dědičku trůnu, kdežto Marie Stuartovna má nezpochybnitelný nárok.

Druhá část práce se zaměřuje na samotný konflikt mezi Marií Stuartovnou a Alžbětou I. Jsou zde analyzovány hlavní události, které vedly k jejich rivalitě. Nejprve je popsán život obou královen, který formoval jejich postoje a názory. Marie Stuartovna byla vychována ve Francii a provdána za francouzského dauphina. Tato doba vytvořila její identitu, byla vychována v katolickém vyznání, které ji provázelo celý život. Během této doby nemusela čelit potížím a žila si život na královském dvoře obklopena významnými lidmi. Alžběta na druhou stranu prožila méně šťastné dětství a dospívání. Během této doby byla svědkem několika tragédií, například poprava vlastní matky, zpochybnění legitimacy, nástupnická krize po smrti Jindřicha VIII, nebo doba vlády její sestry Marie, kdy se Alžběta musela obávat o svůj život. Tyto tragické události utvořily její osobnost a v mnoha věcech budoucí královnu zocelily.

Následně se kapitola posouvá do doby, kdy Alžběta byla královnou Anglie a Marie Stuartovna se vrátila zpět do Skotska, jako královna cizinka a vdova. V této části se jejich osudy začínají stále více proplétat a konflikt se pomalu zhoršuje. Marie Stuartovna se pokusila ve Skotsku nastolit řád, nicméně vrátila se do země, kterou neznala a kde převládala cizí víra. Marie musela toto cizí náboženství tolerovat. V Anglii na druhou stranu vládlo protestanství a Alžběta se jako hlava církve snažila podporovat protestantismus i ve Skotsku. Královny si v tomto období vyměnily stále více dopisů, ve kterých se chovali přátelsky, nicméně podezření a nedůvěra byla cítit na míle daleko. Každá královna tedy zastává jinou víru, a to ovlivňuje i zahraniční spojení. Katolické státy podporovaly právo Marie Stuartovny na anglický trůn, jelikož podle nich byla královna Alžběta nelegitimním potomkem. Tento spor o nárok na anglický trůn hraje hlavní roli v tomto konfliktu. Marie Stuartovna nebyla ochotna odstoupit od svého nároku a vytvářela nátlak na Alžbětu, aby ji jmenovala svým nástupcem. S tímto řešením ovšem nesouhlasila anglická královně, která odmítla jmenovat svého nástupce, jelikož věřila, že by vznikla vzpoura a ona by o svou korunu přišla.

Následnictví trůnu je pro vládce zásadní věcí, proto je klíčovým prvkem mít dědice. Obě královny si toto byly vědomé. Marie Stuartovna zastávala svou roli ženy-královny a snažila se

provdát a zplodit potomka, kdežto Alžběta sňatkovou politikou využívala pouze pro vytváření aliancí, ale ke skutečnému sňatku nikdy nedošlo. Druhý sňatek Marie Stuartovny s lordem Darnleym zapříčinil pád této královny. Marie Stuartovna dala přednost srdci před rozumem, a i přes nesouhlas veřejnosti se provdala. Později sama zjistila, že tento sňatek byl chybou. Její manžel byl následně zavražděn a skotská královna se stala terčem obvinění. Po tomto incidentu se Marie Stuartovna provdala potřetí, a to za lorda Bothwella, tento muž byl hlavním podezřelým ve vraždě lorda Darnleyho. Za tento čin byla Marie Stuartovna morálně odsouzena, uvězněna a musela se vzdát skotské koruny ve prospěch svého syna. Po nějakém čase ve vězení královna uprchla do Anglie, což dopředu rozhodlo o jejím osudu.

Anglická královna v této době bedlivě sledovala dění ve Skotsku a stále finančně podporovala skotské protestanty. Se sňatkem mezi Marií Stuartovnou a lordem Darnleym nesouhlasila, neboť oba tímto spojením získaly větší nárok na anglický trůn. Nicméně královna do dění nezasahovala, jelikož měla starosti se Španělskem, což byl v tento moment velký nepřítel Anglie. Po uvěznění Marie Stuartovny Alžběta nesouhlasila s tímto zacházením a projevila k Marii sympatii. Tento moment zřejmě ovlivnil Mariino rozhodnutí uprchnout do Anglie, jelikož doufala, že se jí tam dostane pomoci.

Poslední období konfliktu sleduje uvěznění Marie Stuartovny v Anglii. Chytrá anglická královna si byla jistá, že musí mít krásnou Marii pod dohledem. Mezi těmito vládkyněmi panovala nedůvěra, Alžběta věřila, že Marie střeží plány, jak získat anglický trůn. Alžběta se své rivalky nechtěla zbavit násilnou cestou, avšak rádci, které kolem sebe královna měla, byli toho názoru, že Marie je největší hrozbou pro Anglii a mělo by o ní být navždy postaráno. V tento moment se konflikt dostal na nejvyšší stupeň. Anglická královna vyčkávala a Marie se stala centrem a záminkou mnoha spiknutí s cíle sesadit Alžbětu a na trůn dosadit Marii Stuartovnu. Nicméně Alžběta I stále byla rozhodnuta. Konflikt vyvrcholil až díky léčce, do které se Marie Stuartovna dostala. Pomocí sítě informátorů bylo odhaleno největší Babingtonovo spiknutí a díky nevyvratitelným důkazům byla prokázána spoluúčast Marie Stuartovny.

V tento moment byla bývalá skotská královna postavena před anglický soud a následně odsouzena. V únoru 1587 byla Marie Stuartovna popravena a konflikt došel konce. Alžběta byla zbavena své největší rivalky a mohla se v klidu nadechnout. Ironií osudu byl Alžbětiným nástupcem jmenován syn Marie Stuartovny, který se roku 1603 stal anglickým králem a vládl jako Jakub I. Takto se dostala dynastie Stuartovců na anglický trůn.

Annotation

STYBLÍKOVÁ, Kateřina. *The Conflict of Two Queens in Historical Context*. Hradec Králové: Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové, 2023. 65 pp. Bachelor Degree Thesis.

This bachelor thesis deals with the historical conflict between two queens, Queen Elizabeth I of England and Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots. The thesis delves into the political and cultural reasons that contributed to the dispute between these two prominent women, as well as the consequences of that conflict for society as a whole. By using primary and secondary literature, the thesis provides a thorough analysis of the historical events and circumstances leading to the conflict, including the historical religious and political tensions, as well as the personal rivalry and ambitions of the two queens. The thesis also examines the various strategies and tactics used by each queen to achieve an advantage, including propaganda, diplomacy, and military power. Additionally, this work provides important insights into how gender and power connected in sixteenth-century Europe.

Keywords: Elisabeth I, Mary Stuart, England, Scotland, the Tudors, the Stuarts, Protestantism, Catholicism, Reformation

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank prof. PhDr. Bohuslav Mánek, CSc. for his supervision and comments on the content of this bachelor thesis. Furthermore, I would like to thank my family for their support throughout my studies.

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1. Introduction

Conflict between powerful rulers has always interested historians, scholars, and ordinary people alike, as it provides insight into the complicated webs of political, religious, and personal rivalry that shaped history. During the 16th century, one such legendary conflict broke out between two formidable queens: Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, and Elizabeth I, Queen of England. The intense rivalry and intricate relationship between these two remarkable women have left a profound mark on history.

This bachelor thesis attempts to give a comprehensive understanding of the conflict between the two queens by deeply investigating their historical background and analysing secondary literary sources and scholarly research. This study seeks to provide insight on the significance of their conflict and its influence on European, particularly British, history by studying the political, religious, and personal issues that shaped their turbulent relationship.

The thesis is divided into two parts. The first part presents the historical context, which is crucial for understanding the origin of the conflict and the relationship between queens. The crucial moments that played a significant role in creating the prelude to future disagreements, intrigues, and hereditary claims are described. The thesis's second part focuses on the conflict itself, by exploring the events, reasons, and outcomes of the disputes between Mary Stuart and Elizabeth. It seeks to unravel the details of their relationships through analysing their political moves, personal antipathies, and strategic alliances.

Together, these two parts provide a complete examination of the conflict between Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I, giving essential insights into the larger historical story and the roles both queens played in creating it.

2. Historical context

2.1 Western Europe after the Hundred Years' War

The first chapter of my bachelor thesis focuses on Western Europe after the conflict called the Hundred Years' War. This conflict fundamentally influenced events in France and especially in England. Nevertheless, even countries such as Scotland and Spain, which were not so affected by the Hundred Years' War, will be mentioned in this chapter. The history of these countries plays an important role in the future formation of alliances and the foreign policy of two powerful queens in the 16th century. Both the political and religious situation were a major stumbling block in the conflict between Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart. To understand the whole context, it is necessary to start with this period.

In this period England went through the Wars of the Roses and the Tudor dynasty came to the English throne. It is thanks to the first king of the House of Tudor that a dispute will later arise over the claim to the English throne. In France, after winning the war, relations with Scotland continued to be maintained, and England remained the enemy, which later affected France's position regarding the claim to the throne of Mary Stuart. Scotland did not participate in the century-long conflict, but it had been on French side since ancient times. England was a great threat to this country, and Scotland always wanted to be independent. During this period, the Scottish throne was ruled by the Stuart dynasty, which eventually ascended the English throne. The last-mentioned country in the historical context is Spain. Spain was a great power in both the 15th and 16th centuries. Catholicism prevailed in the country, which would also affect future political relations with other powers, especially England.

2.1.1 England, War of the Roses

The Tudor era, especially the reign of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, is referred to as the Golden Age of England, but England was not always at the top, it had experienced many painful moments through history. The Hundred Years' War was a disgrace to the English. The decisive battle that ended the Hundred Years' War was the Battle of Castillon in 1453, where England was definitively defeated. Neillands (1994) claims this defeat was the last straw, relations in England were very tense and another conflict was rising (pp. 9-10). Nevertheless, it is important to note that losing the war was not the only cause of a civil war, later known as the War of the Roses. This conflict had been brewing for a long time. The War of the Roses was a major conflict between the House of York and the House of Lancaster. Both families had a claim to the English throne, as they were all descendants of the King Edward III. According to the

information from the family tree mentioned in the book by Jiřík Kovařík (2003), it follows that the genealogy of these two houses is very complicated.

Edward III was the king who started the conflict called the Hundred Years' War. He ruled from 1327 to 1377. He had many children, five of his sons survived to adulthood. These sons are important figures for the civil war conflict because their bloodlines will circulate in many important family houses, and many people would have a claim to the throne because of it. His first son was Edward of Woodstock, the Black Prince, who was the father of Richard II. Edward's second son was Lionel of Antwerp, 1st Duke of Clarence. Third son was named John of Gaunt, 1st Duke of Lancaster. From the name it is obvious that the House of Lancaster begins here. John of Gaunt and his first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, had a son, Henry, who would become King Henry IV. This line also includes Henry V and Henry VI. It is important to mention that John of Gaunt married more than once. His third wife was Catherine Swynford. From this line comes the claim to the throne of Henry VII, the first of the House of Tudors. The fourth son of Edward III, whose line played a key role in the Wars of the Roses, was Edmund of Langley, 1st Duke of York. He was the founder of the House of York. His son was Richard of Konisburg, but a more important figure is his grandson Richard Plantagenet, 3rd Duke of York, who led the conflict with King Henry VI. Richard himself never became king, but his two sons, Edward IV, and Richard III, did. The youngest son was Thomas of Woodstock. According to the development from the ancestors, everyone was in the right for the English throne. (Kovařík, 2003, p. 13)

The cause of the conflict dates back to 1399, when Henry Bolingbroke of the House of Lancaster overthrew his cousin King Richard II and usurped the throne as the new King of England Henry IV. He claimed the throne through his father, John of Gant. He was the first king from the House of Lancaster (Neillands, 1994, p. 12). This event was one of the key events for the Wars of the Roses. For another years, Henry IV remained the king, then his son Henry V became the king, and after Henry's V death, his young son Henry, the future King Henry VI, who reigned in the years when England lost the Hundred Years' War, became an heir to the throne.

When King Henry V died, his son was only eight months old. Instead of the underage Henry VI, the country was ruled by a regency government. The young king's tutor was Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. Henry was crowned at Westminster Abbey at the age of eight, in November 1429, but he was still too young to rule independently (Neillands, 1994, p. 23). When he was old enough to rule on his own, it soon became clear that he was not much of a

leader. The wife of the king was Margaret of Anjou, who was very ambitious. In later years, she would play the leading figure of the Lancastrians (Neillands, 1994, p. 34). As the king Henry VI grew older, his reign declined. The achievements of his predecessors on the battlefield were lost. The Hundred Years' War was coming to an end, and England was leaving in a state of grace. Failure in the war was not the only problem the king had to deal with. At home, in England, a dispute between the nobles grew, so relations were very strained. The end of the war was the Battle of Castillon, after which England lost its territories in Calais (Morgan, 2008, pp. 184-185). When the king heard the news, he was devastated. It is claimed that after this news he went mad and remained insane for a year and a half. The king did not become a violent fool, but withdrew from social life, ceased to communicate, and did not attend to his royal duties. After the king went mad, Parliament convened in February 1454 and the king's cousin Richard, Duke of York, was appointed as protector of the kingdom until the King's recovery (Morgan, 2008, p.185-186).

Richard, Duke of York was a great rival of the king, as he had a greater claim to the throne than the House of Lancaster. He was the son of Richard of Konisburg, Earl of Cambridge, and Anne Mortimer. On his father's side, he was the great-grandson of King Edward III and the grandson of the founder of House York, Edmund of Langley. His mother, Anne was the great-granddaughter and heiress of Lionel of Antwerp, the second-born son of King Edward III (Kovařík, 2004, p. 13). The king did not like Richard and tried to limit his position. However, as already mentioned, at the time of the king's incompetence it was Richard who became the most powerful man in England. In 1455, the king began to return to his sanity. He and Richard were unable to see eye to eye on who was to continue ruling England. Duke of York had to leave London in 1455 however he wanted his power back, in the same year the first battle between the Lancaster and the York took place at St. Albans. On Richard's side was fighting Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, later known as the Kingmaker (Neillands, 1994, p. 60, 64). Victory in this battle and further madness of the king meant for York to return to the post of protector, but he met with strong resistance from Queen Margaret of Anjou, who was determined to win the throne back for her husband. She had many followers who helped her raise an army of her own (Davies, Mason and Wheatley, 2013, p. 58). Several battles ensued between the Queen and Richard. In 1459, the Duke of York was forced to flee the country. Frustrated and single-minded, Richard returned with an army in 1560 and laid claim to the throne. The fate of the Duke of York ended in December 1460, when he was killed at the Battle

of Wakefield (Morgan, 2008, p. 186). Nevertheless, this event did not end the Wars of the Roses.

In 1561, Richard's son Edward entered the scene. He was able to assert his claim, he defeated the Lancastrians in 1461 and he crowned himself the King of England as Edward IV. The Earl of Warwick was great help to him in obtaining the crown (Morgan, 2008, p. 186). That is how he got his nickname "the Kingmaker". During his reign, dynastic struggles for the English throne broke out. Edward faced several disadvantages, Margaret of Anjou and her son, the heir to the throne after Henry VI, were alive and free. Many people sympathized with them, and they together planned plots against the king. Moreover, Henry VI himself was imprisoned in the Tower of London, but he was alive. Another possible nail in Edward's coffin in the late 60s was his feud with Earl of Warwick, who disagreed with the marriage between the King and Elizabeth Woodville and did not like Edward's growing independence. As is often the case in the family, his brother, George, Duke of Clarence, also opposed the king, and together with Warwick they planned a rebellion against the king. These rebels allied themselves with Margaret of Anjou, and Edward IV was forced to flee the country to his ally, the Duke of Burgundy. Imprisoned former king, Henry VI was restored to the English throne. However, Edward did not give up his hopes. He gathered troops and returned to England in 1471. He first defeated and killed Warwick at the Battle of Barnet, then at Tewkesbury he defeated Margaret and her son, who had fallen in battle. Edward returned triumphantly to London, where it was confirmed that Henry VI had died in the Tower of London (Morgan, 2008, p.187). The 1470s of the reign of King Edward IV were peaceful; Edward tried to stabilize England and wanted to establish new contacts abroad. Everything looked promising, but in 1483 the king died and the heir to the throne was his underaged son (Morgan, 2008, p. 188).

Neillands (1994) argues in his book that the history of England could have developed differently if Edward IV had lived a few years longer, until his son would be old enough to rule (p. 152). However, fate wanted it otherwise. Edward IV's son, Edward V, first in line of succession to the English throne, was only twelve years old when he was to become the King. At this time, it was quite common for a king to rule from the age of 15 or 16. His father had chosen his loyal brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to act as the King's protector until Edward would be old enough. This decision was met with opposition from the Queen Mother, who asked to be regent. However, this request was rejected (Neillands, 1994, p. 152-154). Richard did not want to lose his position, as he was very ambitious and wanted to gain more power. He could not afford to be threatened by anyone. Edward V was never crowned and later at the

behest of Richard, he was locked up in the Tower of London, first for security, where he was joined by his brother Richard, Duke of York, but then they were held there by force (Morgan, 2008, p. 189). No one knows if the Princes of the Tower were murdered on the orders of Richard, his guilt has never been proven. Richard needed to get rid of possible rivals for the throne. The princes were put in Tower on June 16 and never came out alive. 200 years later research revealed that two children's bodies were found in the White Tower (Neillands, 1994, p. 172). In June 1483 he declared that Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville's marriage was invalid because he had previously been married to a woman named Eleanor Butler, and so his sons Edward and Richard had been declared illegitimate heirs. Based on this claim, he took over the throne and was crowned as Richard III on July 6 (Neillands, 1994, pp. 160-162).

After ascending the throne King Richard III began to get rid of enemies, his reign was not popular. Many Richards' former allies and nobles began to oppose him. Eventually, his greatest enemy was a certain Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, who declared that he had a claim to the English throne. The Yorkists and Lancastrians wanted to depose Richard, they sided with Henry Tudor, and an alliance was negotiated. Henry Tudor was to marry Edward IV's daughter, Elizabeth of York. He raised an army against Richard and eventually landed at Milford Haven in South Wales in 1485 (Neillands, 1994, p. 177-178). On August 22, the battle of Bosworth began, and Henry faced Richard at the battlefield. King Richard III himself died in the battle (Davies, Mason & Wheatley, 2013, p. 61). Henry had a clear path to the throne. The Battle of Bosworth ended the Wars of the Roses, and the House of Plantagenet was forever deposed. The new ruling house was the House of Tudor.

2.1.2 Scotland

From 1488 Scotland was ruled by King James IV of the House of Stuart. He inherited the throne at the age of fifteen on the death of his father, James III. England was ruled by Henry VIII at the time, and to strengthen foreign policy, he married his sister Margaret to King James IV of Scotland. Thanks to the Treaty of Perpetual Peace in 1502 and James's marriage to Margaret Tudor in 1503, relations with England were improved. Henry VIII thought that this marriage will bring England advantage such as security of the northern border and possible claims to annex the Scotland to England. James IV, however, wanted the same, but for the benefit of the Stuarts (Wormald, 2007, pp. 87-88). James IV proved to be a capable ruler who was able to ensure the growth of the family wealth and royal authority. He invested mainly in the modernization of the army. His great ally was King Louis XII of France, who financially supported the growth of Scottish military power. As early as 1295, there was an agreement

between France and Scotland that in the event of an English attack on French territory, the Scottish army would begin to threaten the northern English border. Over the years, it had been used several times, for example in the Hundred Years' War, when Scotland sided with France (Wormald, 2007, p. 90). In 1513, despite the new affinity with the Tudor dynasty, James chose to stand with France when Henry VIII of England invaded France as part of the Holy League. He chose the Auld Alliance over the Perpetual Peace with the English and answered France's call for assistance by leading a large army across the border into England. James and many of his nobles were killed at the Battle of Flodden on 9 September 1513. He was the last monarch in Great Britain to be killed in battle. Due to the death of the king, the crown went to his one-year-old son James V (Wormald, 2007, p. 91).

During James's childhood Scotland was governed by regents, firstly by his mother Margaret Tudor and when she remarried, the regent became his second cousin, John, Duke of Albany. James's personal rule began in 1528. The young King of Scotland had only one goal, and that was to restore royal authority in all respects. Advisor of James V Stuart remained throughout his reign his mentor Gavin Dunbar, Archbishop from Glasgow (Wormald, 2007, p. 93-94). James V married twice, his second wife became Marie de Guise-Lorraine in 1538, further strengthening the ties between France and Scotland. Scotland was a Catholic country and maintained good relations with France and Rome. Nevertheless, James V's reign witnessed the beginnings of Protestantism in Scotland, and there were beliefs in the country that wanted to follow Henry VIII's example. James tried to solve the situation shrewdly. He was placed in a powerful bargaining position with the papacy, allowing James to exploit the situation to increase his control over the church. Throughout his reign he balanced between two currents and thus left room for some Protestant-minded courtiers, and at the same time he could count on the support of Catholic France and the Pope (Wormald, 2007, pp. 94-95). The King of Scotland refused to break away from the Catholic Church, as his uncle King Henry VIII had urged, therefore relations between England and Scotland were at the breaking point. In the end, there were several battles that Scotland lost (Fraser, 1999, pp. 18-19). The religious tensions increased after James's death in 1542. He was succeeded by his only surviving legitimate child, Mary Stuart, who was only six days old.

2.1.3 France, the Aftermath of the War

France became the winner in the bloody Hundred Years' War and was becoming a world power. Nevertheless, the war ravaged the country and weakened the king's position. King Charles VII of the Valois dynasty had to restore order and reorganize the army and finances

(Maurois, 1994, p. 81). In 1461, Charles VII's son, Louis XI, became King of France. In the same year, Edward IV ascended the English throne. After the recent war, relations between the two countries were tense. King Louis XI was a clever ruler who tolerated and promised anything to his enemies to avoid danger. However, when he was not threatened, he changed his stance and the promises he made as if they had never been spoken (Maurois, 1994, p. 84). The main goal of the king was to unite France, which, despite strong initial resistance, he eventually succeeded, and France became a modern centralized state. Louis died in 1483 and was succeeded by his thirteen-year-old son Charles VIII. Nevertheless, his elder sister Anne acted as regent until 1491 when the young king turned 21 years of age (Maurois, 1994, p. 85). Charles died in 1498 and as he had no male heir, the new king became his cousin and brother-in-law at the time, Louis of Orléans.

Louis of Orléans ruled in France as Louis XII from 1498 to 1515. After his succession, he asked the Pope to annul his first marriage to the late king's sister so that he could marry Anne of Brittany, through which he would gain Brittany (Maurois, 1994, p. 107). Louis was married three times. After the death of his second wife, he married Mary Tudor, the seventeen-year-old sister of King Henry VIII of England, on 9 October 1514. The king died three months after his last marriage on 1 January 1515 (Dufresne, 2002, p. 25-26). Not having adult male descendants Louis XII was succeeded by Francis I the son of Charles, Count of Angouleme, and Louise of Savoy.

This member of the Valois dynasty was typical Renaissance monarch in France. The period of his reign is known for the rapid development of culture and art. His court is full of art, fashion and new ideas (Maurois, 1994, p. 118). Many Italian artists visited his court, including Leonardo da Vinci, who brought the Mona Lisa with him (Dufresne, 2002, pp. 43-46). However, his reign was not without conflicts such as the wars in Italy and conflicts with the Empire. He was a contemporary of King Henry VIII. The English Roman Emperor Charles V (his great political rivals) and Sultan Suleiman I. Francis died on 31 March 1547, and he was succeeded by his son, Henry II (Ferro, 2006, pp. 113-118).

King Henry II continued in the spirit of his father's reign in matters of art, war, and religion. Trying to keep his perfect Renaissance French court, he was supported and assisted by his wife Catherine de Medici, who received the influence of Italian artists and other important scholars at the court (Maurois, 1994, p. 120). King Henry wanted to achieve his goals and make France a great power. His main goal was to focus on the northeast. Henry did not avoid military conflicts as he persevered in the Italian Wars against the Habsburgs and as a Catholic king,

Henry tried to suppress the Reformation, even as the Huguenot numbers were increasing drastically in France during his reign (Maurois, 1994, pp. 115, 127). On the other hand, his foreign policy and new strong allies were secured through marriage policy. He married his eldest son, Francis, to the young and beautiful Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots (Maurois, 1994, p. 115). Henry died in 1559 after being injured in a tournament. He was succeeded by his fifteen-year-old son, Francis II.

2.1.4 Spain

In 1469 an important event for Spain took place the marriage of Isabella of Castile, heiress of Castile, to Ferdinand II, heir to Aragon happened (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 206). This marriage was decisive for Spain, marking the beginning of political, religious, and economic unification. In 1479 they ascended the throne and united the Crowns of Aragon and Castile (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 198). Both rulers were Catholics and tried to promote this religion throughout Spain. During their reign, Granada was conquered, thus completing the centuries-long Reconquista of Spain by the Muslim Moors (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 221).

As is the case with all great powers, Spain had its enemies. As for England, so for Spain the greatest threat and rival was France. Especially at the beginning of the 16th century when the Spaniards and the French clashed on a common border and in disputed Italian territories. Logically, Spain tried to find allies who shared the same bitterness towards France. Therefore, through dynastic marriages, alliances were formed between Spain and England, through the marriage of the younger daughter of the royal couple, Catherine of Aragon and the son of King Henry VII of England, Arthur, and after his death with Henry VIII. Tudor, and between Spain and the Habsburg Empire through the marriage of the elder daughter Joan I of Castile and Philip I the Fair, son of Emperor Maximilian I (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 222-223).

After the death of Isabella of Castile in 1504, her daughter Joan became queen of Castile and Philip I, as her husband, became king, thus beginning a new era in the country's history – the rule of the Habsburgs. The ruler of Aragon was still Joan's father Ferdinand II. The next ruler became Charles I, son of Joan and Philip, who first ruled Castile and after the death of his grandfather became the ruler of Aragon and there was a permanent union of these two territories (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 212-113). In 1519 he was elected Holy Roman Emperor as Charles V, becoming the most powerful ruler (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 233).

During the reign of Charles V, Protestantism began to spread in his countries and Charles, as a devoted Catholic, wanted to resolve this conflict (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 233-

234). In terms of foreign policy, Spain constantly had a conflict with France, and to this was added a conflict with the Ottoman Empire (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 269-270). Spain and England had good relations with each other, the common enemy was always France. Ferdinand II had the support of his son-in-law Henry VIII. However, at the end of the 1520s, when Charles V was on the Spanish throne, relations deteriorated. In England, Henry VIII attempted to divorce his wife Catherine of Aragon, who was Charles V's aunt. There is no doubt that Charles V was opposed to the annulment of the marriage (Woolf, 2017, p. 60). However, despite these disagreements, the country remained allies against France. Moreover, Charles's son and heir to the throne, Philip II, married the Catholic Queen Mary Tudor, thus strengthening relations between Spain and England (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 273).

Charles V of Habsburg abdicated in 1556. The Habsburg Empire fell to his brother Ferdinand, and his son Philip II received the Spanish crown, colonies and territories in Italy and the Netherlands (Ubieta Arteta, 2007, p. 273-274).

2.2 England before Elisabeth Ascended the Throne – The Tudor Dynasty

This chapter deals with the problems before Elizabeth's reign in England. Beginning of the Tudor reign is important because it shows how this house got to the throne and how they kept their power. Moments in this period play significant role in shaping Elizabeth's reign. They demonstrate the important events that affected England and later culminated in the conflict over the acknowledgement of her accession to the English throne.

The House of Tudor was a royal house which got the English throne after The War of Roses. The beginning of their reign signalled the end of the Middle Ages. *“The old feudal ways of life had largely disappeared, and a new aristocracy drawn from the ranks of the growing middle classes was emerging”* (Tudors and Stuarts, 2007, p. 1). It was also during this period that the Renaissance came to England. During the Tudor reign there were many changes, not only in England but also throughout Europe. In many countries, there have been religious wars that have changed the minds of many people and caused several problems.

The Tudor dynasty ruled for 118 years from 1485 to 1603. Henry VII restored stability and royal authority.

2.2.1 Henry VII

First King of the Tudor dynasty was Henry VII. Young heir to the throne Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, defeated his rival, the Yorkist king Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field in August 1485. *“The bloody dog is dead”* (Shakespeare, Richard III, 1592 Act 5, Scene 7). (Shakespeare, 2007, 5.5.2). After the battle he seized the throne and became King Henry VII of England. His Lancastrian claim to the English throne was derived from his mother Lady Margaret Beaufort, who was the great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt, the third son of Edward III, and his then-mistress Katherine Swynford. John of Gaunt eventually married Katherine as his third wife, and their children were legitimized in 1397 by Richard II. However, in 1406 Henry VI, son of John of Gaunt and his first wife Blanche of Lancaster, excluded his siblings from the succession (Clarke, 2017, p. 7). Although his claim was tenuous, Henry was crown as king on 30 October 1485 at Westminster Abbey.

To solidify his claim to the English throne, he married Elizabeth of York, the eldest daughter of Edward IV and niece of Richard III. This union was made thanks to Margaret Beaufort and Elizabeth Woodville (Erickson, 1999, p. 29). By this act Henry tried to secure the loyalty of the Yorkists, he also boosted the legitimacy of the Tudor dynasty (Clarke, 2017, p. 14). This union connected the two rival houses, the House of Lancaster, and the House of York.

The Tudor Rose as the new symbol for the Tudor dynasty was represented by the union of a red and white rose. The red rose being the House of Lancaster and the white the House of York (Woolf, 2017, pp. 13-14).

Henry's marriage with Elisabeth of York soon brought a male heir to the English throne, Arthur, Prince of Wales, was born in September 1486. Moreover, the royal couple had three other children who survived infancy. Princess Margaret was born in November 1489 second son Prince Henry was born in June 1491 and another daughter Princess Mary born in March 1496. The succession of the House of Tudor seemed more than secure (Clarke, 2017, p. 15).

Marriage alliances played an important role in Henry's policy. *“He arranged strategic marriages for his children to bolster the new Tudor dynasty by linking it into a network of European royalty”* (Clarke, 2017, p. 26). In 1489 the Treaty of Medina del Campo with Spain was signed. This treaty ensured the marriage between Prince Arthur and Spanish Princess Catherine. Although later, after Prince Arthur's death, the alliance is completed by the marriage of Henry VIII and Catherine. Margaret, the eldest daughter, married King James IV of Scotland in 1503 under the Treaty of Perpetual Peace from 1502 and she became the Queen of Scots. This union meant long-awaited peace between England and Scotland. And furthermore, the alliance between Scotland and France, known as the “Auld Alliance” was cut across (McGurk, 1999. Pp. 26-27). Even Henry VII's youngest daughter Princess Mary did not avoid a political marriage. Although, this marriage took place during the reign of Henry VIII. England and France were sworn enemies, and at the beginning of Henry's reign they were fighting with each other. To make peace, Henry VIII married his sister Mary to the King of France (Woolf, 2017, pp. 42-43).

The reign of the king Henry VII Tudor was a period of rebuilding the country after years of warfare. Henry remained on the English throne for 24 peaceful years. His death marked the beginning of the reign of his second-born son, Henry VIII Tudor, who is known to be one of the most important rulers of England.

2.2.2 Henry VIII

King Henry VIII was on the English throne from 1509 to 1549. He is mostly known for having six wives, his break with the Church of Rome and establishing the Church of England. King Henry VIII was a very ambitious ruler. During his reign *“The English court achieved the splendour, social significance and culture of the royal courts of Europe”* (Hilský, 2020, p. 21).

King Henry was the third child of king Henry VII and Elisabeth of York. He was not an heir to the English throne as his older brother Arthur was. Arthur was the embodiment of Lancaster and York families (Erickson, 1999, p. 34). Henry lived his early youth in the shadow of his elder brother. Future king Arthur was to get married to the Spanish princess Catherine of Aragon. The marriage was a mean of creating an alliance between England and Spain. The wedding took place at Old St Paul's Cathedral on 14th November 1501 (Clarke, 2017, p. 33). Nevertheless, the young heir to the throne fell ill with an unknown disease and in April 1502, after less than five months of marriage, Arthur died. In this moment, prince Henry, Duke of York, became an heir to the English throne and his life turned upside down. Even though Henry was an heir it took ten months to proclaimed him as the Prince of Wales. It was necessary to prove whether Catherine was or was not pregnant. Moments after Arthur's death, both sides, England and Spain, began to negotiate a wedding between Catherine and Henry. To have a legitimate union two things were necessary a papal dispensation and a prove that the first marriage had not been consummated (Erickson, 1999, pp. 36-37). After the death of king Henry VII in April 1509, Henry, Prince of Wales, became the king Henry VIII and ascended the English throne without major problems. On 11 June 1509 he married Catherine of Aragon therefore relations between England and Spain were maintained (Woolf, 2017, p. 36-37).

The successes of Henry's first years of rule were largely due to the king's chief minister Thomas Wolsey. Except for the king, Wolsey held most of the power. He was named Lord Chancellor, the king's chief adviser. Moreover, he aspired to become the pope and was said to be the richest man of his time. Wolsey was a capable diplomat and was mainly interested in foreign policy, he secured several alliances and supported the king in the war against France (McGurk, 1999, pp. 34-36). During his reign, Henry was eager to conquer territory. He allied with Spain which competed with France for power in Europe. It was France, which was a thorn in Henry's side. He had claim to the title of the King of France (Elton, 1978, p. 28). In 1511, Pope Julius II declared an alliance against France, which included Spain, the Holy Roman Empire and England. Meanwhile, France re-established an alliance with Scotland to distract England. The alliance between Scotland and England sealed by the marriage of Henry's sister Margaret and Scottish King James IV collapsed. The Scots were defeated at the Battle of Flodden on 9 September 1513 and the Scottish king was killed. The Kingdom of Scotland was greatly weakened in power (Elton, 1978, pp. 36-40). After the leaving of Ferdinand of Aragon and Emperor Maximilian of Habsburg from the French battlefields in 1513, Henry VIII decided for a change in his foreign policy. In 1514 Henry VIII and French King Louis XII signed a

treaty. One of the conditions was a dynastic marriage between Louis XII and Henry's sister Mary (Clarke, 2017, pp. 58-59).

2.2.2.1 The King's "Great Matter"

King Henry VIII needed an heir to secure the throne. He feared that if he did not have a male heir, succession disputes could erupt after his death. Henry's wife Catherine of Aragon was pregnant many times, nevertheless, she was not able to give him a boy who would survive the infancy, only daughter Mary lived to adulthood. Henry was disappointed that he did not have the son he longed for. After some time, he began to question his marriage to Catherine and in 1527 he turned to the Vatican to seek a papal annulment from Pope Clement VII. Catherine's inability to give birth to a male child was one reason. Another reason for the annulment was Henry's desire for a woman named Anne Boleyn. Anne was a clever and ambitious girl who did not want to be only the king's mistress, she resisted all attempts by the king to seduce her. The timing of Anne and Henry's meeting was perfect, as the king was already doubting his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. All he needed was the approval of the Pope, after which he could marry his new love, Anne Boleyn (Bingham, 2012, pp. 120-124). Henry needed the help of Cardinal Wolsey, who was the Pope's chief representative in England. King believed that *"he and Katherine had offended against the law of God by their incestuous marriage and, because of this, God, in His wrath, had denied them sons"* (Weir, 1992, p. 137).

Henry thought that the Pope would be on his side, and everything would go smoothly. Nevertheless, at the same time Catherine's nephew, Emperor Charles V, stood in the way because he sacked Rome and had the pope under imperial sway. Emperor Charles V was very powerful, and the Pope did not dare to oppose him. Henry had to find another solution so again he turned to his trusted adviser, Cardinal Wolsey (Clarke, 2017, pp. 70-71). Negotiations between Vatican and Cardinal took over several years, but Wolsey still could not produce a result pleasing to the King. Henry VIII was angry and frustrated; therefore, he turned against Cardinal Wolsey and made him the scapegoat. Wolsey was accused that the Pope and faith were more important to him than the King. As a result, King had him deposed from the office of Lord Chancellor and later arrested. In 1530 was Cardinal Wolsey charged for treason, but he died while awaiting trial, which saved him from humiliation and execution (Clarke, 2017, pp. 74-75).

2.2.2.2 English Reformation

At the beginning of Henry's rule, England was regarded by the Pope as a country devoted to Catholicism. In 1521 the king wrote a treatise called *The Defence of the Seven Sacraments* against the teaching of Martin Luther and thanks to that he got the title Defender of the Faith (Clarke, 2017, p. 78). Yet, few years later Henry turned his back on Rome. The fall of Cardinal Wolsey and his failure to negotiate the annulment of king's first marriage with the Pope can be seen as the beginning of the English Reformation (McGurk, 1999, p. 37). This Reformation differs from the Reformation in Europe in that the initiator was the royal power, which in England was the king or later the queen, not the theologians, as in the Lutheran Reformation (Hilský, 2020, p. 24).

In 1529 Thomas More, lawyer, scholar and king's trusted friend, was appointed Lord Chancellor. However, as Henry began to question the Pope's authority, More, a devoted Catholic, could not support the idea of divorce, which contradicted Church doctrine. (Woolf 2017, pp. 65-66). The king needed capable people in his government whom he could trust. A truly effective divorce policy is thus associated with the political rise of new Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell, another Henry VIII's adviser, who advised the King to make no concessions to the Church but to subjugate it and they proposed removing the Pope from power over the Church of England (Maurois, 1994, pp. 188-190). Henry VIII liked the idea of a sovereign leader as it would mean that he would not have to submit to anyone. Thomas More could not support the king's sovereignty over the pope, so he resigned in 1532. In 1533 Archbishop Cranmer proclaimed that the union between Catherine and Henry was null and void moreover, he confirmed the legality of King's secret marriage with Anne Boleyn which happened in January 1533. Now there was no obstacle and in June 1533 Anne Boleyn was crowned the Queen of England and was pregnant with the king's child (Bingham, 2012, p. 127, 129).

The Pope still refused to approve the marriage between Henry and Anne. The gap between England and Rome was getting deeper and wider. Eventually, all relations with Rome were severed, and several new laws were issued. In 1534 the King became the Supreme Head of the Anglican Church with the help of emergency measures of Parliament and the Act of Supremacy (Clarke, 2017, p. 79). Opposition to Henry's ecclesiastical policies was quickly and brutally suppressed. Many of his critics, including Bishop John Fisher and Sir Thomas More, who refused to swear allegiance to the king as the highest representative of the Church, were executed (Maurois, 1994, p. 191). Henry's separation of the Church also enabled him to acquire

extensive ecclesiastical possessions, especially after the Act of Dissolution of the Monasteries (Clarke, 2017, pp. 90-91).

Anne Boleyn bore Henry a daughter, Elizabeth, the future Queen Elizabeth I. However, Henry was not satisfied as he needed a male heir. In 1534, the Parliament approved the First Act of Succession, in which the king established the order of succession to the English throne. The king's sons with Anne Boleyn ascended the throne first, then the daughter Elizabeth and the other daughters. Princess Mary was declared illegitimate and was to be addressed only as Lady Mary (Woolf, 2017, p. 70). To his misfortune he did not have any male successor in his second marriage, which marked the final fall of Anne Boleyn, who was convicted of adultery and witchcraft and executed at the Tower of London on 19 May 1536.

The eleven days after Anne's execution the 45-year-old king Henry married Jane Seymour, who had been one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting (Woolf, 2017, pp. 83-84). This was followed in 1536 by the Second Act of Succession. In the same way as Mary, Elisabeth was declared illegitimate and excluded from claims to the throne. First in the line for succession were the sons of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, and second were his eventual daughters with Jane Seymour. His third wife gave him the longed-for son, who briefly reigned as Edward VI. Sadly, Jane Seymour died in childbirth (Woolf, 2017, p. 84). After that, the king was married three more times to Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard and Catherine Parr, who outlived Henry by a year and eight months. She was influential in Henry VIII's passing of the Third Succession Act in 1543 that restored his daughters Mary and Elizabeth to the line of succession to the throne. Therefore, according to law, both were legitimate heirs (Jones, 2010, p. 36). Henry VIII died on 28th January 1547, leaving three possible successors. According to his will, they were supposed to ascend to the English throne in the order of Edward, Mary and Elisabeth (Weir, 2001, p. 11).

2.2.3 Edward VI

Prince Edward was crowned as Edward VI King of England and Ireland on 20 February 1547 when he was only nine years old. As a minor, he was represented by the Regency Council, headed by his uncle Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and after the fall of Edward Seymour, by John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland. This reign was full of economic problems, military attacks from Scotland, and social unrest, which resulted in riots and rebellion between 1548 and 1550 (Morgan, 2008, p. 233).

During the reign of Henry VIII, England and Scotland had very tense relations with each other. Henry wanted to unite the two countries by marrying his son Edward and a daughter of James V, Mary Stuart. However, Scotland decided to orient itself towards an old friend, France, which Henry did not take well and there were several attacks and battles. After Henry's death, Lord Protector, Duke of Somerset, continued the conflict. England and Scotland were constantly fighting each other, and it all culminated when Mary Stuart was smuggled from Scotland to France. In addition, the French King Henry II declared war on England. This crisis caused the end and fall of the Duke of Somerset. His successor became the Earl of Warwick, made Duke of Northumberland (Morgan, 2008, pp. 232-233). Warwick restored peace and order in England. The most important thing for him was to end the war with Scotland and France, which he succeeded (Morgan, 2008, pp. 234). England was not at war, but the problem of the Reformation still hung in the air.

Edward's England had slowly moved away from Catholicism and towards the Protestant religion. The Church of England was transformed into a Protestant organization as Edward was brought up in the Protestant faith, which he professed throughout his short life. This movement is later known in Europe as Reformation. Edward's father, Henry VIII, had severed the link between the Church and Rome, but still supported the beliefs and customs of the Roman Catholic faith and he also still maintained his reputation as a defender of the Catholic faith. It was during Edward's reign that Protestantism was established for the first time in England (Hilský, 2020, pp. 30-31). Thomas Cranmer was the leading person of English Protestantism, and it was he who introduced a series of reforms that changed the Church of England, which although rejected papal supremacy but still remained Catholic, into institutionally Protestant. These reforms included the abolition of clerical celibacy and masses, and the introduction of a tax on church ceremonies. Also, a Book of Common Prayer, that is still valid today, was published (Maurois, 1994, pp. 195-196).

When his reign was nearing its end, Edward was very ill. Lord Northumberland and other nobles, who surrounded him, were scared, and disturbed by the possibility of the king's death and the succession of his Catholic sister Mary. Since that would mean stopping the Reformation (Woolf, 2017, p. 105). Nevertheless, Northumberland had a plan. As the young king lay on his deathbed, Northumberland made him sign a document changing the succession determined by Henry VIII. He excluded both of his two half-sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, and appointed Northumberland's daughter-in-law, Jane Grey as his heir and thus future queen. The king Edward VI died in 1553. After his death power struggle erupted. Jane Grey was put on the

throne for only nine days. She was then deposed, and the rightful Queen of England became Mary I Tudor, who despite her religious beliefs, she secured the support of the public and was welcomed by the people (Maurois, 1994, p. 198).

2.2.4 Mary I Tudor

Mary I Tudor became queen in 1553 and ruled until her death in 1558. At this time, the Reformation was spreading all over the Europe, and Catholics wanted to do something about it. Queen Mary was a Catholic herself and she was determined to prevent the Reformation in England at all costs. The worst nightmare of the English Protestants came true. Mary Tudor decided to reverse the Reformation and restore Catholicism in England, recognizing the Pope as the supreme head of the Church (Hilský, 2020, o. 32). In her restoration period to Roman Catholicism, she had almost 300 religious rebels executed, which earned her the nickname “Bloody Mary” and many rich Protestants went into exile (Hilský, 2020, pp. 32, 36).

Despite all the infamous moments, Mary was a capable queen who managed to achieve financial reform and a plan for a new currency was drawn up (Morgan 2008, p. 238). Nevertheless, she made some fundamental mistakes during her reign. One of them, according to Morgan Kenneth (2008), was her marriage to Philip, son of Emperor Charles V. The Queen wanted to establish relations with Spain. Moreover, Spain was a Catholic country, which was ideal for Mary as the marriage would have secured an heir and her Protestant sister would not have ascended the throne (Woolf, 2017, p. 112). She married the Spanish prince and later King Philip II on 25 July 1554 in Winchester Cathedral. This foreign policy move, however, did not go very well for Mary. The people of England did not accept this marriage in a good way, seeing in it the tightening of pro-Catholic conditions and adherence to a foreign power as the wars led by Spain were also financed from English treasury. This problem was immediately taken advantage of by some English nobility, who, led by Thomas Wyatt, unleashed a rebellion against the Queen in 1554 (Morgan, 2008, pp. 238-239). The rebels defended themselves on behalf of her younger sister Elizabeth, whom they wanted to install to the English throne. Nevertheless, Wyatt and other rebels were executed, and Elizabeth had been questioned and imprisoned for two months in the Tower. The history of England could have taken a completely different direction, as young Elizabeth was threatened with execution, but no evidence was found, and Elizabeth was cleared (Williamson, 1963, pp. 228-229).

Mary I Tudor died in November 1558 but before her death, she recognised Elizabeth as her successor (Hilský, 2020, p. 39). The people of England welcomed the new Queen of

England, the young Protestant Elizabeth. Already at this moment, Elizabeth was very popular among the English. They hoped that she would change England for the better.

2.3 Scotland and the Protestant Reformation

Relations between England and Scotland had always been tensed. After the death of the powerful King James V, his young daughter Mary Stuart became queen. The regent of Scotland was at first Earl of Arran (Fraser, 1999, p. 22, 25) and after him Mary's mother, Marie de Guise, who faced many problems. After the death of King Henry VIII of England, relations between the two countries did not calm, and the conflict continued under King Edward IV of England. In 1548, for security and policy, the young Queen Mary was sent to France (Fraser, 1999, pp. 35-39). Eventually, in 1549 thanks to the Duke of Northumberland, relations between England and Scotland calmed down (Morgan, 2008, p. 234). However, problems on Scottish home soil have begun to escalate.

During Mary's life in France, Scotland was in the hands of Marie de Guise. Mary became regent on 12 April 1554 and continued to rule until her death in 1560. She was trusted because of her well-known antagonism towards England. On the other hand, Mary cooperated with France, with whom she had a strong bond, and Scotland was under French protection (Wormald, 2007, p. 97).

During the Mary's regency, Scotland was a country in turmoil. Marie de Guise had to contend with several problems. On the one hand there were problems with England, when after the accession of Mary I. Tudor on the English throne, Marie de Guise had to focus to fortify the border with England (Wormald, 2007, p. 98). And on the other hand, there were major problems at home, the religious problems. In the 16th century, Scotland vacillated between Catholicism and Protestantism, but King James V managed to keep the problems in check. Nevertheless, after the death of the king, the problems escalated (Wormald, 2007, pp. 94-95). The growing influence of Protestantism, particularly among the nobility, threatened the power of the Catholic Church. The country was torn apart by religious conflict and political instability, with powerful nobles vying for control of the government and the Catholic Church struggling to maintain its influence in the face of growing Protestantism (Wormald, 2007, pp.98-100).

Marie de Guise was a French Catholic, and her regency was marked by her attempts to maintain Catholicism as the dominant religion in Scotland. Many Scottish nobles were suspicious of Mary's French background and accused her of favouring French interests over Scottish ones. Nevertheless, to an extent Mary had tolerated the growing number of Protestant preachers (Wormald, 2007, p. 98-99).

As already mentioned, many people turned away from the Catholic Church and joined the New Reformed Church, whose main spokesman became John Knox. Knox was one of the most important figures of the Scottish Reformation. He preached not only in Scotland, but also in Germany and England. It was his duty to spread Protestantism. John Knox was a vocal opponent of Mary de Guise's efforts to maintain Catholic power in Scotland and was a key figure in the establishment of the Scottish Reformed Church. Knox's opposition to Mary de Guise and the Catholic Church led to several conflicts. During the Reformation in 1559-1560, John Knox allied himself with Mary Stuart's half-brother, James Stuart, Lord of Moray. Together they advocated the Reformation and wanted changes to be made in Scotland (Whyte, 1995, pp. 96-98; Wormald, 2007, p. 98).

Neighbouring England had a great influence on the development of religion in Scotland. At the time Mary de Guise became regent, England was ruled by a Catholic-oriented Mary Tudor, but in 1558 the strongly Protestant-oriented Elizabeth ascended the throne. The accession of the Protestant Elizabeth in England in 1558 stirred the hopes and fears of Scottish Protestants. Queen Elizabeth initially did not want to support John Knox and rebellion against the monarch, even though it was her rival, Mary Stuart. Eventually, however, she was persuaded by her adviser Cecil and supported the Protestants financially and militarily (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 213).

The situation was still not calming down as tensions escalated. As Mary de Guise maintained good relations with France, she brought in French troops to support the Catholic cause. In 1559, a group of Protestant lords, known as the Lords of the Congregation, formed an alliance to challenge the regent's authority. Mary de Guise responded by raising an army of her own, but the conflict continued to escalate. In early 1560, the Protestant Lords invited English troops into Scotland in an attempt to secure Protestantism. Nonetheless a Huguenot uprising in France made it impossible for the French to send further support (Fraser, 1999, p. 103). Mary de Guise died in Edinburgh in 1560, shortly after the Siege of Leith, leaving the regency in the hands of Protestant nobles who would go on to establish a Protestant Church in Scotland (Fraser, 1999, p. 105).

Later, in 1560, the Treaty of Edinburgh was signed. Under the terms of the Treaty of Edinburgh, signed by Mary's representatives on 6 July 1560, France and England undertook to withdraw troops from Scotland. France recognised Elizabeth's right to rule England, but the seventeen-year-old Mary Stuart, still in France and grieving for her mother, refused to ratify the treaty (Fraser, 1999, p. 103-104). This treaty ended the fighting and established

Protestantism as the official religion of Scotland. From now on, Scottish Protestants will turn to England rather than France for requests (Fraser, 1999, p. 104).

2.4 Conflicts in the 16th Century Europe

The 16th century was a period of significant conflict and upheaval in Europe, with wars, religious turmoil, and political struggles tearing apart the fabric of the continent. This was a time of great change, as the Renaissance brought new ideas and a renewed interest in learning and culture, while the Reformation challenged the established authority of the Catholic Church and led to religious division and conflict. One of the most significant conflicts was the Protestant Reformation, which began in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. Germany became the epicentre of the Reformation, and Martin Luther's speech became crucial to the launch of the Reformation process and movement (Müller, 2004, pp, 88-90). This led to a split in the Christian Church and years of religious wars between Catholics and Protestants. Other important centres were Switzerland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and the United States. There was also a Reformation in England, but here the Reformation had more political overtones (Hilský, 2020, p. 24). During the Reformation many countries experienced a significant change in religious beliefs and practices and after forty years since Martin Luther nailed his theses, half of Europe was Protestant.

In France there were the so-called French Wars of Religion. A series of conflicts between Catholics and Huguenots that lasted from 1562 to 1598. These wars had a great influence on England, showing how much the disputes between Catholics and Protestants could become more acute. In the 16th century, French society was divided between Catholics, and Protestants, who hated each other. The conflict escalated into a series of battles and massacres that devastated the country. The most famous encounter was the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in Paris in August 1572, plotted by Catherine de Medici and carried out by Roman Catholic nobles. It was against the Protestant Huguenots where thousands of them were killed in the violence, which lasted for several weeks (Hilský, 2020, pp. 44-45)

Thus, the 16th century can be characterised by religious problems. The gap between Catholicism and Protestantism widened throughout Europe. These religious conflicts had a profound impact on European society, politics, and culture.

2.4.1 The Meaning of the Reformation

The Oxford English Dictionary (2021), defines the Reformation as: *"The religious movement in the 16th century which had for its object the reform of the doctrines, discipline, and practice of the Church of Rome, and which led to the establishment of the Protestant Churches."*

As already mentioned, the Reformation in England was different. Martin Hilský, in his book *Shakespeareova Anglie* ([Shakespeare's England], 2020), characterizes the English Reformation as:

“The transformation of the English medieval kingdom into an early modern Protestant state, which was not only a change of liturgy or a change of government, but a radical transformation of religious and feeling, everyday life of ordinary people and, last but not least, a transformation of the political regime” (p. 24, translation KS).

The English Reformation is one of the greatest and most important achievements of Tudor rule and is about as characteristic of the English Renaissance as the name William Shakespeare. (Hilský, 2020, p. 24).

2.4.2 The Definition of Ruler

There are many definitions of how to define a king or queen. This concept has been studied by wise philosophers, historians, and even ordinary people. We each have our own definition of what the word king means to us. One possible definition of a king/queen can be found in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

“A person who holds supreme power and authority over a specific territory or realm. Typically, a king inherits his position through hereditary succession or ascends to the throne through conquest or election. As the ruler, a king exercises political control, enacts laws, and represents the highest authority within the kingdom. The role of a king varies across different historical periods and cultures, but generally, a king is expected to provide leadership, maintain order, and protect the interests and welfare of his subjects” (“King,” n.d.).

This definition emphasizes the idea that the ruler should act in the interests of the people. It also suggests that a monarch should have both the ability and the authority to rule effectively, which is often seen as a key advantage of monarchy over other forms of government.

During the 16 century the definition of a king or queen was also often closely tied to the concept of the divine right of kings, which meant that monarchs were chosen by God to rule and that their authority was absolute and unquestionable. Another determining factor was blood. Only the legitimate descendants of the previous ruler could be a king or queen, and once legitimacy was questioned, the claim to the throne was also questioned.

3. The Conflict of Two Queens

The historical context that played an essential role in the struggle between Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart was discussed in previous chapters. There were mentioned the factors that influenced and shaped the lives of both queens. From this knowledge, it is clear that the queens were destined to be rivals, as they were born and raised on opposing sides.

Sixteenth century England experienced a period sometimes referred to as the Age of Queens thus the power of the country was placed in women's hands. In the upcoming chapters, we delve into a fascinating and turbulent period of history in which two queens, Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I, stand at the centre of a thrilling conflict. Their paths cross, driven by ambition, power, and the difficulties of their responsibilities as rulers. The confrontation between Mary Stuart, the intriguing Queen of Scotland, and Elizabeth I, the forceful Queen of England, takes centre stage as we examine their intricate dynamic, a collision of personalities and political forces that would influence the path of nations and leave an indelible impact on history.

3.1 The Initial Period of Their Reign

The feud between Elizabeth I, Queen of England, and Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, is a well-known and long-lasting conflict that spanned several decades. This feud was the result of a variety of factors, including religious differences, the legitimacy to the throne, political rivalries, personal grievances, and dynastic ambitions. These are the problems that became the cornerstone of the relationship of two young queens, Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart, who could do great things together, but each stood on opposite sides. It all resulted in a huge conflict which resulted in the death of one of them.

In this chapter the focus will be on the early years of the lives and reigns of both queens. These years shaped their personalities and fundamentally affected their relationships and the orientation of their thinking. Furthermore, these years were crucial for the formation of political relations of Europe in the 16th century. The conflict between Elisabeth I and Mary Stuart began at the moment of their birth, as both were descendants of Henry VII, the first Tudor king.

3.1.1 Mary Stuart

Mary Stuart was born on 8 December 1542 at Linlithgow Palace in Scotland (Fraser, 1999, p. 20). She was the daughter of James V of Scotland and Mary de Guise. Her grandmother Margaret Tudor was the daughter of Henry VII Tudor. Mary Stuart was therefore related to the first Tudor king and thus entitled to the English throne. Since Mary was born in an

unquestionable marriage, there were no doubts about her legitimacy. She was declared the Queen of Scotland after the death of her father, which happened six days after her birth. Right before the king died, he declared on his deathbed that the reign had begun with a woman, and it will also end with a woman. The Stuart dynasty came to the throne thanks to the daughter of Robert the Bruce (Fraser, 1999, p. 20). Jenny Wormald states in her book (2007) that “*the arrival of an underage heiress provoked a long-term crisis that threatened both the Stuart monarchy and the independent Scottish kingdom*” (p. 95). The king's words were eventually fulfilled, but the reign did not end with his daughter Mary, but with his great-great-great-granddaughter Anne, who was Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland and the last monarch of the House of Stuart.

Mary was born in a poor country full of confusion. Scotland had just lost its king, and no one believed that a weak girl who was still a baby could rule. Mary's mother, Marie de Guise, did not know what to do. Because of the minority of her daughter, Scotland was ruled by regents until she became an adult (Fraser, 1999, p. 22-24). Following James V's death in 1542, the government of Scotland was first entrusted to James Hamilton, 2nd Earl of Arran, as regent, as he was next in line to the throne. He took over the government and began to promote the ideas of the Reformation in Scotland, seeking a relationship with England (Wormald, 2007, p. 96).

Mary's early childhood was marked by political instability and conflict, as various factions vied for power in Scotland. There were riots, murders, the English attacks, and the girl was in constant danger. The great threat to Scotland was England, Henry VIII claimed the land and wanted a marriage between the young Mary and his son Edward. Regent Arran signed the Treaty of Greenwich with Henry VIII, and the young Infanta was promised heir to the English throne (Wormald, 2007, p. 96). Everything seemed to be on track, even Marie de Guise agreed, she believed it was the best solution for her daughter. However, Arran's popularity and influence did not last very long, he could not withstand the pressure of the English king, and his own people turned against him, they did not like the growing influence of England on Scotland. In the summer of 1543 the Scottish mood changed, most nobles no longer resonated with Protestantism and England and began to turn more towards Catholic France (Fraser, 1999, p. 24-27). This was effectively used by Marie de Guise, the queen mother, and Cardinal Beaton. Arran eventually switched sides and sided with Marie de Guise and Cardinal Beaton. The Parliament did not pass the deal with England and Scotland once again renewed the old alliance with France. In Scotland Reformation receded into the background and was replaced with the period of patriotism which was strangely connected with Catholicism (Wormald, 2007, 96).

This change of mind angered Henry VIII greatly, it invoked conflict between Scotland and England. Henry VIII committed series of devastating raids, which came down in history as “the rough wooing” (Fraser, 1999, p. 31). After the death of the King of England, the young Edward Tudor ascended the English throne. For Scotland, however, this did not mean peace at all, as Scotland was again attacked by the Earl of Somerset. In 1548, after the Scottish defeat at the Battle of Pinkie, when Mary was just six years old, she was betrothed to dauphin Francis II, the son of French King Henry II, which solidified the Auld Alliance between Scotland and France. Immediately afterwards, she was sent to France to be raised at the French court (Wormald, 2007, p. 97).

3.1.1.1 Life in France

Mary lived in France for a significant portion of her life, spending there thirteen years of her life. She lived as a part of the French royal family, as she was supposed to marry Francis II and become Queen of France. Mary received an excellent education, becoming fluent in French and developing a love for the arts. Mary Stuart's stay in France was very important because she made many important political connections, she became close friends with several influential figures at the French court, including Catherine de Medici, the queen mother, and her brothers Francis, Duke of Anjou, and Henry, Duke of Anjou. These political alliances would prove to be useful in later years. Mary was brought up according to the strictest rules of the Catholic Church which later influenced her reign. The alliance between France and Scotland was fulfilled in 1558 when Mary Stuart married Francis II (Fraser, 1999, p. 82-86).

In the same year, an event occurred that upended Mary's life and altered her future. Mary Tudor, Queen of England, died, and since she had no heir, the throne was succeeded by her younger half-sister Elizabeth, who started her reign as Elisabeth I (Fraser, 1999, p. 89). However, according to ancestors, as great-granddaughter of King Henry VII, Mary Stuart also had a claim to the throne. King Henry II of France had high ambitions and advocated Mary's claim to the English throne, as this would have meant extending the influence of France itself. Henry II proclaimed his eldest son and daughter-in-law as king and queen of England. In France the royal arms of England were joined with those of Francis and Mary (Fraser, 1999, 89). Also, the Catholic church favoured Mary because they relied on the view that Elizabeth was an illegitimate child of Henry VIII, since the marriage to Anne Boleyn was never recognized and accepted, and therefore she could not claim the English throne (Fraser, 1999, p. 89). Many of those who were not happy with Elizabeth being on the English throne started to claim that the rightful Queen of England was Mary Stuart.

In 1559 King Henry II died. He was accidentally injured during a tournament. Francis and Mary became the new King and Queen of France. Nevertheless, the real power was held by Mary's uncles of the House of Guise, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine (Fraser, 1999, 94).

Nevertheless, Mary's life at the French court was not just a fairy tale and was not without its challenges, she experienced great personal tragedy during her time in France. In 1560, her mother, Marie de Guise, died, leaving Mary without the support and guidance of her closest family member (Fraser, 1999, p. 105, 107). Mary also suffered the loss of several close friends and allies during her time in France. In December 1560 Mary experienced another significant loss. It was the death of her husband, Francis II. Mary and Francis had been a close and loving couple, and his sudden death at the age of just 16 was a devastating blow for Mary. Francis's death had important political implications, as Mary lost her position as queen consort of France (Fraser, 1999, p. 113-114).

After the death of her husband, Mary returned to Scotland to assume the throne, but her time in France greatly influenced her reign. Her French upbringing made her more tolerant of Catholicism and contributed to tensions with Protestant factions in Scotland (Fraser, 1999, pp. 130-131). Overall, Mary Stuart's experience in France was formative in her life and had an important effect on her reign as Queen of Scotland. Furthermore, Mary's ties to France were crucial in her ongoing struggles with England, as she sought French support for her claim to the English throne.

3.1.2 Elisabeth I

Elizabeth was born at Greenwich Palace on 7 September 1533 and was named after her grandmothers, Elizabeth of York and Lady Elizabeth Howard. She was the second child of King Henry VIII of England and his second wife Anne Boleyn. At birth, Elizabeth became the heir to the throne, as her older half-sister Mary Tudor had lost her position as a legitimate heir when Henry annulled his marriage to Mary's mother, Catherine of Aragon (Woolf, 2017, pp. 69-70). Henry's intention was clear, he wanted to marry Anne Boleyn, with the intent to sire a male heir and ensure the Tudor succession. The king was looking forward to having a son and the birth of another daughter was a big disappointment for him (Dunn, 2005, p. 66). After the birth of Elisabeth Henry's relationship with his wife changed. However, the fate of Elizabeth's mother has been already described in the preceding chapter. On 19 May 1536, when little Elizabeth was only two years and eight months old, her mother was beheaded. For the future of the little

Elisabeth, this meant several unpleasant changes. Most important was the fact that Elisabeth was declared illegitimate and deprived of her place in the royal succession. Moreover, she lost her title of a Princess, and people had to address her as Lady Elizabeth (Woolf, 2017, pp. 83-84).

After the death of her mother Elisabeth was treated as if she was just an ordinary person. Additionally, people started to question whether she truly was Henry's daughter because of the love affairs of which her mother was accused. She was believed to be a child of one of her mother's alleged lovers (Dunn, 2005. pp. 63, 76). The accusations and speculations about her origin were something Elizabeth had to deal with almost her entire life. Elizabeth was seen as illegitimate heir to the throne also from the point of view of the Catholic Church because of her mother's relationship with Henry VIII. The church believed that the marriage was not valid (Fraser, 1999, p. 89).

After the birth of her brother Edward, Elizabeth fell into even greater oblivion, and no one cared about her life. Her biggest support in that time was her governess Katherine Champernowne, later known as Kat Ashley, who became one of her closest and dearest friends. Kat had a huge impact on Elizabeth's education. She taught Elizabeth everything from mathematics and geography to history and astronomy, and also many languages, such as French, Spanish, or Italian (Weir, 2001, p. 19). Elisabeth was very gifted and a quick learner.

Henry's relationship with his children, especially with his daughters changed during his marriage with his last wife Katherine Parr. Katherine established friendly relationships with all of his children. She was very close to Elizabeth, whom she loved as if she was her own daughter. In July 1543, the Parliament passed the Third Succession Act in which Henry established new succession and returned both Mary and Elizabeth to the line of succession. The Act stated that in case of a passing of his son Edward firstly Mary and then Elizabeth would have the right to the English throne (Dunn, 2005, pp. 85, 92).

King Henry VIII died in 1547 and his only legitimate son, Edward, ascended the throne. During his reign, young Elisabeth settled with Katherine Parr in Chelsea. During this stay, Elizabeth met Katherine Parr's new husband Thomas Seymour, with whom she had a very special relationship, who initially seemed innocent. However, after that, the relationship began to escalate. As Jurewitz-Freischmidt (2012) claims in her book, Thomas Seymour was entering Elizabeth's bedroom in his nightgown, tickling her, and slapping her on the buttocks. Elizabeth surrounded herself with maids to avoid his unwelcome morning visits. Parr joined her husband

and twice she accompanied him in tickling Elizabeth, and once held her while he cut her black gown (pp. 122-123). However, when everything passed its limits, Elizabeth was sent away. Once Elizabeth left Katherine Parr's, she realized how big of an influence Thomas Seymour had on her. She was so attracted to him, nevertheless, after some time she realised that he never truly cared about her. It can be said that this affair affected her decision to never marry. Elizabeth realized that her feelings could be easily misused, as she was a woman. Therefore, she decided to use her head instead of heart when making important decisions and convinced herself never to show her true emotions in public (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 127-128).

King Edward died in 1553 and Elizabeth's half-sister Mary was crowned as the new queen. At the beginning of her reign, it seemed that Mary would finally overcome all the prejudices she had for Elizabeth as the daughter of Anne Boleyn. Nevertheless, she only saw Elizabeth as someone who could steal her crown. Mary, a devout Catholic, was determined to crush the Protestant faith in which Elizabeth had been educated, she had to outwardly conform. (Weir, 2001, pp. 246-248, 262-264). During Mary's reign, Elizabeth had to worry about her life almost every day. In 1554 Wyatt's rebellion broke out and Elizabeth was accused of conspiracy against the Queen. She was brought to court and interrogated regarding her role, and later she was imprisoned in the Tower of London for two months. Elizabeth fervently claimed that she was innocent. In the end, Elizabeth was acquitted for lack of evidence (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 159-161). As Mary's reign was coming to a close, the queen tried to think of a way how to not give the throne to her stepsister Elisabeth. However, the queen was very ill and too tired to argue with her advisors and eventually agreed that Elizabeth would become her successor. Queen Mary died in 1558 and for Elizabeth, it meant a sense of relief, she could finally breathe properly and freely (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 183-185).

This moment was crucial in the development of the rivalry between Elizabeth and Mary Stuart. Once Elizabeth was proclaimed Queen of England, in France, King Henry II proclaimed his son Francis and his wife Mary Stuart King and Queen of England, as the Catholic world does not recognize the marriage of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2017, p. 185).

3.1.2.1 Queen of England

November 1558 was an important moment for England. Twenty-five-year-old Elizabeth ascended the throne, and a new era later called "Elizabethan England" begun. Elizabeth was seen as a liberator from Mary's tyranny and even before she ascended the throne, she was

welcomed wholeheartedly by the citizens (Maurois, 1994, p. 203). Her coronation was held on the 15th of January 1559 in Westminster Abbey. It was a big day for the whole England as people travelled to London from all over the country just to catch at least a glimpse of their new queen. The new queen cared deeply about what people thought of her and she loved to be loved (Woolf, 2017, pp. 122-123).

As Jane Woolf (2017) argues, the early years of Elizabeth's reign were not easy. When Elizabeth ascended the throne, she had to deal with many problems that arose during her sister's reign but had already taken root during her father's reign. As queen, Elizabeth faced many challenges, including threats from foreign powers and religious conflicts within England. At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, England was a very unstable country, which was in debt, had almost no foreign trade, and was religiously divided (p. 124).

During the reign of Mary Tudor, Christianity was reintroduced as the main religion and Protestants were persecuted. After the accession of Elizabeth, however, there was a change, as Elisabeth was brought up in the Protestant faith. Catholics were now afraid of what would happen to them, and the Protestants expected a wonderful time to come for them. Against all odds, however, the Protestant Queen Elizabeth Tudor was very tolerant of Catholics. She did not directly side with anyone and did not persecute anyone who professed different faith than her (Maurois, 1994, p. 207). Nevertheless, the queen would not tolerate the Puritans, who were pushing for far-reaching reforms. Elizabeth had to show her Protestant supporters that she was on their side. The Parliament renewed the Act of Supremacy, which again abolished the sovereignty of the pope and placed the queen as head of the church (Maurois, 1994, p. 207). Nonetheless, there was one difference, Elizabeth did not receive the title of Supreme Head, which was used by her father and brother, but she got the title of Supreme Governor. She agreed to this as some people could not stand that a woman should be the head of the church (Woolf, 2017, p.125). The queen also abolished requiem masses and had the inadaptable bishops replaced by Protestants. England became a Protestant country again, but people who professed other faiths were not persecuted (Hilský, 2020, p. 40-41).

After initial successes in the field of faith, she had to secure her throne. There were problems with her legitimacy as the daughter of Henry VIII and with the fact that she was a woman. The queen had many enemies from all sides who sought her throne. In many eyes, Elizabeth was still seen as King Henry's bastard. The Catholic Church could not recognize her claim, so the Catholic Mary Stuart was a much more suitable candidate (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 186-188). This view was also supported by France, led by Henry II, who saw an

opportunity to strengthen his country (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 203). The Queen's advisors and Parliament tried to solve this succession problem, and marriage was the solution.

3.1.2.2 Foreign Affairs

Queen Elizabeth not only dealt with conflicts in her own country, but also had to face threats from neighbouring countries. Her closest advisor, William Cecil, was in charge of this unstable foreign policy (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 189). The greatest dangers to England were France and Spain. In 1559, a peace treaty was signed, which ended the dispute between these countries (Morgan, 2008, p. 243). Nonetheless, there was still a constant tension and great rivalry between England and France. Scotland was also embroiled in this dispute, as Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, was the daughter-in-law of the King of France and later even Queen of France. England faced a huge threat, because if France supported Mary Stuart's claim to the English throne, it would be quite possible that Queen Elizabeth would not be able defend herself. France supported Mary Stuart's claim, but there was also religious unrest in the country. France thus had neither the time nor the strength to create a new conflict (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 203-204, 215-218).

By concentrating on domestic problems, France could not properly support Scotland. The smart Queen of England took advantage of this and began to financially support the Scottish Protestants led by John Knox. She sought to weaken Scotland's position. However, on the opposite side of Elizabeth stood Marie de Guise, who had good relations with France, so she managed to gain French support and she was able to resist the Protestant rebels. John Knox turned to William Cecil, and with his help, Elizabeth was convinced. England also offered military aid to the Scottish Protestants. In return, the Scots promised to help England if there were a French attack (Wormald, 2007, pp. 103-104; Fraser, 1999, p. 103). It was a long fight that ended with the death of Marie de Guise. The Treaty of Edinburgh was signed, and both French and English troops withdrew from Scotland. This treaty also included the annulment of Mary Stuart's and her husband's claims to the English throne. However, Mary Stuart, who was in France at the time, never signed the treaty (Fraser, 1999, pp. 103-104).

3.2 The Deterioration of the Relations between Mary Stuart and Elisabeth I

The relationship underwent a major shift from 1561 to 1567. Their relationship, which began with cautious diplomacy and the appearance of friendship, would progressively deteriorate, giving way to suspicion and rivalry. This chapter focuses on the intricate web of events and circumstances that contributed to the breakdown of Mary Stuart's relationship with

Elizabeth I. During this time, Mary was queen of Scotland and Elizabeth was queen of England, they were both powered by the desire to keep their positions and power, and their ambition drove them forward. Specific factors and moments that influenced the dispute itself, which did not end well for one of the queens, will be mentioned.

3.2.1 Mary Queen of Scots, Return to Scotland

Returning to Scotland was to be a new beginning for Mary Stuart. She wanted to take care of her country and make it a great power. During her return and while living in Scotland, she began exchanging letters with Elizabeth, hoping that a new friendship would form. However, after returning to Scotland and after several bad decisions the relationship with the Queen of England worsened.

In August 1561, nine months after the death of her husband and the death of her mother Marie de Guise, Mary Queen of Scots returned to Scotland and took over as the ruler of the country. Having lived in France since the age of five, Mary Stuart had little direct experience of the dangerous and complex political situation in her own country (Dunn, 2005, p. 188). The young queen was not welcomed as she was a Catholic, she was regarded with suspicion by many of her subjects, as well as by the Queen of England. The young queen came to the country, which was not well-disposed towards her, she faced continued opposition from Protestant nobles who sought to limit her power. Mary's powers as Queen of Scots were limited by the Scottish Parliament and the Treaty of Edinburgh, and her return to her native country became a bitter disappointment (Weir, 2005, pp. 24-35). Mary's illegitimate half-brother, James Stewart, the Earl of Moray, was a leader of the Protestants and he ruled together with the young queen.

Mary was determined to assert her authority as queen of Scotland. One of the first tasks that Mary undertook upon her return was to establish a court. She brought with her a retinue of French advisers and courtiers, which raised concerns among the Scottish nobles who feared that Mary would favour her French allies over them. Nonetheless, to the surprise and dismay of the Catholic party, Mary tolerated the newly established Protestant ascendancy. Young Queen worked to include Scottish nobles in her court and to establish a sense of unity among them. She sought to establish good relationships with key figures in Scottish politics. She surrounded herself with a group of loyal advisers, including her half-brother, James Stewart, who served as her chief advisor, and David Rizzio, an Italian musician who quickly became one of her closest

confidants. In the end, her privy council of 16 men was dominated by the Protestant leaders and only four of the councillors were Catholic (Wormald, 1991, pp. 113-115).

Mary Stuart attempted to ease religious tensions by promoting religious tolerance and appointing both Catholic and Protestant advisers. Nevertheless, despite her efforts to establish a policy of religious tolerance and telling the powers to leave the religious situation in Scotland, her efforts did not yield positive results. Her actions provoked venomous resentment among many extreme Protestants, especially the Calvinist preacher John Knox and his followers. According to him, Mary Stuart professed a false faith (Fraser, 1999, pp. 157-161).

3.2.2 Relationship between Scotland and England

The two queens were now on the same island, separated only by borders. At first it seemed that they could work together, they exchanged several letters in which they expressed themselves in a friendly way, but the intrigue and hostile undertones were felt. Several meetings were arranged throughout these years for the queens to face each other and clarify the uncertainties between them, but the meetings never took place, and the queens did not meet. Elizabeth always found a way to avoid participating (Fraser, 1999, pp.170-172).

Mary Stuart never really let go of the idea of having the English throne. Since Elizabeth was not married and had no heirs, Mary constantly sent several diplomats to the English court to negotiate the succession with the Queen. The Scottish diplomats tried to persuade Elizabeth that a treaty with Mary would be beneficial for her, but Elizabeth never wanted to appoint her successor while she was still alive. The most important ambassador was William Maitland, who announced to the Queen of England that the Queen of Scotland would no longer oppose her cousin if her hereditary claims in the event of Elizabeth's death were recognized. Elizabeth, however, believed that Mary Stuart should first sign the Treaty of Edinburgh. After that, they can start to deal with some requests (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 238-241).

In 1562, the Queen of England contracted smallpox, and many feared that the disease would overwhelm the Queen. Parliament demanded that a successor should be appointed soon to avoid potential conflicts such as the Wars of the Roses in the past. The Queen of Scots immediately resumed negotiations with England regarding the succession. However, two possible options were considered, Lady Jane Grey and Mary Stuart. Parliament, of course, wanted to avoid the Catholic Queen, but Elizabeth disagreed with Jane Grey. She assured the diplomats that if she died with no heir, Mary would become the only rightful heiress. However,

no treaty was ever signed, and the queens were unable to reach an agreement (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 240).

3.2.3 The Marriage Conundrum

Marriage policy was one of the most important policies in the 16th century. The young and widowed Queen of Scotland was also Elizabeth Tudor's rival in marriage politics. The question of which of the queens would get a more suitable husband was another subject for competition (Dunn, 2005, p. 189). While Elizabeth rejected any potential marriage and acted as a free woman, Mary Stuart and her advisors sought an appropriate suitor. A marriage of convenience was very important to both queens. A suitable husband could conceive a suitable alliance with a foreign power.

3.2.3.1 Elizabeth I's Dilemma on Marriage

Throughout her reign, Elisabeth had to prove that she was capable enough to be the queen. Both many of her advisors and many of her opponents did not believe that a woman could rule, and Elizabeth was constantly reminded that the main duty she had to fulfil was to provide an heir to the throne. From the start of Elizabeth's reign, it was expected that she would marry, and the question arose to whom. Elizabeth I was considered to be a highly desired match, and there was no lack of suitable suitors (Woolf, 2017, pp. 131-132). Elizabeth, however, did not have much desire to marry, and she also had to be very careful, as a poor choice of husband could affect her entire reign. The queen waited and kept in check a whole host of important suitors from the domestic and foreign nobility.

Many prominent men were interested in Elizabeth's hand. The most important was the Spanish King Philip II. Habsburg, who was the widower of Elizabeth's sister Mary Tudor. He wanted to restore relations between England and Spain. Other suitors included the sons of Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand I, Ferdinand and Charles, and the future Swedish king Eric XIV. Elisabeth could also choose from her home soil. For example, Earl Arundel or William Pickering were considered (Maurois, 1994, p. 205). However, the queen did not choose anyone, as she had feelings for Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Unfortunately, Robert Dudley was not seen as a suitable suitor for the Queen (Woolf, 2017, p. 133). Queen Elizabeth finally chose to stay unmarried. Her decision led to the creation of her famous nickname, the "Virgin Queen", which should have shown her purity (Woolf, 2017, p. 136).

There are several possible reasons and theories why the Queen never married. One reason for Elisabeth's unwillingness to marry according to Woolf (2017), was her fear of losing

power. As an unmarried queen, she was able to maintain full control over her country and make decisions without having to answer to a husband. Marriage would have inevitably meant sharing power with her husband, potentially putting her in a weaker position (pp. 131-132). Alison Weir (2001) touches upon Elizabeth's family history and how her traumatic experiences with marriage may have influenced her decision not to marry. Her father, King Henry VIII, famously had six wives and executed two of them. Elisabeth's own mother, Anne Boleyn, was executed by her father when Elisabeth was just two years old, because in the eyes of Henry VIII she did not do well as a wife. Finally, the affair with Thomas Seymour may have influenced Elizabeth's view of marriage (104). It's important to note that Elizabeth's decision not to marry was likely influenced by a combination of factors.

Nevertheless, the fact that Queen Elizabeth never married was also a good strategy as she brought up the question of marriage every time it was useful for her. Whenever England needed powerful allies, the only thing she had to do was to offer her hand (Woolf, 2017, p. 134). On the other hand, Elizabeth's marriage problem opened possibilities for other aspirants to the English throne, as the Queen was unable to provide an heir.

3.2.3.2 Mary Stuart's Marriages and the Road to Her Downfall

Since childhood, Mary Stuart had been pledged to Francis II, but following his death, she found herself alone. The young queen's most appropriate course to follow was to remarry. Mary also needed to secure her throne; she thought about a marriage because she knew that every ruler needs a successor. Mary Stuart was very young and already after the death of her first husband, she became one of the most desirable women in Europe. Nevertheless, she had to choose her partner carefully, because if she married a Catholic, she would upset the faith of her people, and marrying a Protestant could affect her good relations with some Catholic countries. The Queen of Scots was under constant pressure from her uncles and other family members like her stepbrother. There were many possible choices, for example from Denmark, Sweden, Spain, France, and also a suitor from Austria. Another option was to marry a man from a royal environment, like her English cousin Henry Darnley (Fraser, 1999, p.p. 205-206).

Even the English Queen Elizabeth was interested in Mary's future partner. She herself suggested that she marry the English nobleman of the Count of Leicester, Robert Dudley. Elizabeth's intentions were not pure, as it was rumoured that the Queen herself had a relationship with Dudley. For Mary, this would mean that the Queen of England would have

power over Mary's husband and would know everything that was going on around Mary (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 140).

Finally, Mary decided to marry her half-cousin Lord Darnley. According to Fraser (1999), Mary's decision to marry Darnley was influenced by a number of factors, including her desire for a strong Catholic ally and her attraction to Darnley's good looks. Mary was also drawn to Darnley's claim to the English throne, which he made through his descent from King Henry VII as his grandmother was Margaret Tudor (pp. 221-223). The idea of the marriage was controversial, as it threatened to upset the delicate balance of power between Catholics and Protestants. Queen Elizabeth of England had previously pushed for Darnley to become Mary Stuart's bridegroom, but when the Queen of Scots decided to marry Lord Darnley, Elizabeth changed her mind. She realized that this marriage would further strengthen Mary's claim to the English throne, and she also realised that she was losing control of her cousin and what was happening in Scotland. (Fraser, 1999, pp. 224-229). Nevertheless, in Scotland, it was still believed that the Queen of England wanted to cast Mary into this average marriage and to hurt her. In the end, Elisabeth could do nothing, and the couple was wed in 1565, and in June 1566, they had a son, James.

Although Mary was blinded by love at first, their marriage was short-lived and marked by personal tragedy. Shortly after the ceremony, the marriage became a source of tension and conflict. Darnley was widely viewed as arrogant and unreliable, and he quickly made enemies among the Scottish nobles. Furthermore, his Catholicism was seen as a potential threat to the growing Protestant movement in Scotland (Fraser, 1999, pp. 236-237). No one liked that the Scottish throne was ruled by two Catholics. Mary and Darnley's marriage was marked by tension and suspicion. Mary was increasingly frustrated with Darnley's lack of political acumen and his unwillingness to work with her in governing Scotland. Darnley did not like Mary's close relationship with her adviser, David Rizzio. Furthermore, Lord Darnley is said to have been jealous of their friendship because of rumours that Rizzio had impregnated Mary, and he joined in a conspiracy of Protestant nobles to murder him. It was a shock to Mary, and her resentment and hatred for her husband so deepened in her (Woolf, 2017, p. 141).

At this time, Queen Elizabeth of England supported Scottish Protestants and rebels who opposed the marriage such as James Stuart (Dunn, 2005, p. 261). This tactic paid off for Elizabeth, she was patient and waited to see what this marriage would bring. In the end, it turned out that Elizabeth did not have to take any action against her rival, as the situation had escalated itself. Mary's decision to marry greatly upset Elizabeth and their relations weakened. The

opinion has shifted on queens. Previously, most high-ranking nobles thought of Elizabeth as impulsive and unreasonable, yet Mary was seen to be flawless, sensible, and more subservient. The decision to marry Darnley, on the other hand, changed everything. The world did not understand why the Queen of Scots preferred emotions above reason, and instead admired the Queen of England for her ability to set her feelings aside and do everything for the good of her kingdom (Dunn, 2005, p. 253).

The situation came to a head in February 1567, when Darnley was murdered in a plot that was widely believed to have involved members of Mary's court. The identity of the conspirators is still a subject of debate among historians, but many believe that James Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell, was involved in the murder. Bothwell, who had previously been a close ally of Mary's, became a key figure in the aftermath of Darnley's death (Fraser, 1999, pp. 295-305). Despite the controversy surrounding Bothwell's role in Darnley's murder, Mary continued to associate with him and to rely on him for support in her efforts to regain power in Scotland (Fraser, 1999, p. 310).

In April 1567, two months after Darnley's murder, Mary was kidnapped by Bothwell and taken to his castle in Dunbar. There she was reportedly forced to marry him against her will. Albeit it is still uncertain what was the relationship between Mary Stuart and Lord Bothwell. There are two possible versions. One is that Mary was the victim of Bothwell, as he wanted to get power. He raped her in the castle and forced her to marry him (Fraser, 1999, pp. 315-317). Nevertheless, according to later discovered documents, there is a version that the Queen was willingly with Bothwell. They had been lovers for a while, and Darnley's killing had been arranged. (Abbott, 2011, p. 114). Nevertheless, just two months after the death of her second husband, Mary married for the third time and whatever powers Mary had as the queen, she lost all of it by marrying Bothwell. Mary Stuart committed the greatest political mistake of her life, because by marrying her husband's alleged murderer, she gave a pretext to several political opponents to depose her from the throne.

The marriage was widely condemned by both Protestant and Catholic leaders in Scotland and abroad. According to Fraser (1999), Mary's decision to marry Bothwell damaged her reputation and made it difficult for her to regain power in Scotland. The queen was now considered an adulteress and a murderer. Many people wanted to kill her. Both Protestants and Catholics were shocked that Mary would marry the man accused of murdering her husband. (pp. 327-334).

In June 1567, the situation deteriorated. The Confederate Lords, a group of twenty-six Scottish peers, rebelled against Mary and Bothwell and created their own army. The opposing sides met at Carberry Hill, but it did not go as planned for the Queen's side. Eventually, Bothwell was exiled, and Mary captured. On 16 June the decision to imprison Mary was signed. Mary was detained in several different castles before being sent to Loch Leven Castle on an island in the middle of Loch Leven. Mary's captors hoped that the isolation of the castle would make it more difficult for her to communicate with her supporters and launch a rebellion. On July 24, the Queen of Scots abdicated the crown in favour of her son James, and her half-brother James Stuart became regent. On July 29, little James was crowned King of Scotland (Woolf, 2017, p. 142).

The situation in Scotland did not improve after Mary's abdication. Europe was made aware of what was happening in Scotland. Most of the European powers were curious about Lord Darnley's murder and wanted an explanation. Mary Stuart was questioned by England, France, and even the Pope, who also wanted clarification (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 335, 336). Mary had done herself great harm and was in danger of being turned on by allies she could previously count on. The Queen of England was taken aback by the development of Scottish events, due to which the Queen, ruling by God's will, was imprisoned. She believed that only God could appoint and punish a ruler. Elisabeth demanded a thorough investigation and better treatment for her cousin. Nevertheless, she then tried to find positives that suited England. Elizabeth was very interested in participating in the upbringing of the Scottish heir. She imagined that little James would be raised in England, but France had the same ambitions, and James eventually remained in Scotland, where he was raised and represented by regents until he reached the appropriate age (Fraser, 1999, pp. 341-342).

Despite the difficult conditions of her imprisonment, Mary was able to maintain her spirit and her determination to regain her throne. The Queen tried to escape twice. She did not manage to escape at first, however, for the second time, she succeeded.

3.2.4 Seeking Refuge, Mary Stuart's Escape to Elizabeth's England

On 2nd May 1568, Mary escaped from Loch Leven Castle with the help of George Douglas, brother of Sir William Douglas, the castle's owner. The queen managed to raise an army against her half-brother. She met James Stuart's smaller forces at the Battle of Langside on 13th May. Even though the number of soldiers fighting in her name was higher than those of her opponents, she lost the battle and had to flee south to save her life (Woolf, 2017, p. 142).

Mary Stuart had an important decision in front of her. She had to choose where to go in order to be safe. One of her options was to stay in Scotland where she would have to fight with her enemies for her throne. She could also choose France, where she had part of the de Guise family and part of the Francis family. Another possibility was travelling to Spain where she was still in a little contact with her Catholic supporters, or she could choose England where she had her cousin Elizabeth with whom she exchanged many letters. Mary eventually chose England (Abbott, 2011, p. 133). She wrote a letter to Elizabeth with hope that Elizabeth would help her. On 16th May, Mary crossed the Solway Firth into England by fishing boat. She landed at Workington in Cumberland in the north of England. On 18 May, local officials took her into protective custody at Carlisle Castle. At first, the Queen of England considered helping her cousin, however, Elizabeth's advisors argued that having Mary in England could be dangerous and that it would be easier for Elizabeth's enemies to divest her and put Mary on the throne. Elizabeth decided that it would be safest if Mary had been detained and kept on different castles in England until the murder of Lord Darnley was properly investigated and the situation in Scotland was calmed down. (Fraser, 1999, p. 371-375).

To this day, it is still unclear why Mary Stuart chose England. Perhaps because of the correspondence exchanged between the queens. She probably believed that Elizabeth would give her a warm welcome and help her regain power in Scotland, as she had been friendly in her letters and congratulated her on her regained freedom after Mary had escaped from prison (Fraser, 1999, pp. 369-370; Dunn, 2005, pp. 314-316). However, neither could have predicted how the situation would play out. If Mary had known her fate, she would have taken a different path.

3.3 Last Years of the Conflict, Conflict Resolution

3.3.1 Mary Stuart's Imprisonment and Elizabeth's Calculations

Mary Stuart's life turned 180 degrees. She was no longer Queen of Scotland, as she had been forced to abdicate and was threatened with severing relations with friendly powers such as France. Mary suddenly found herself alone in hostile England and did not know what to do.

After Mary Stuart arrived in England, she had only one purpose, to meet her cousin, Queen Elizabeth. At this point, it is likely that Mary did not seek the English throne, she only wanted to survive. But Elizabeth's adviser, William Cecil, stepped in and reminded the Queen that Mary was still a great threat and could still secretly seek the English throne. Elizabeth had a difficult decision to make, she had to decide about the fate of Mary Stuart. There were several

options, Mary could have been sent back to Scotland, where she would probably face death, or she could have been sent to France, however, the Queen of England did not like this option as she wanted to sever relations between Scotland and France. Eventually, a decision was made with the help of Cecil. Mary Stuart was to be placed under house arrest for unauthorized entry to English soil (Fraser, 1999, pp. 373-375).

The last option was the most suitable for the Queen of England. In this way, Elisabeth gains the supervision of her rival, and she also gains time to investigate all the accusations made against Mary Stuart. Elisabeth demanded an investigation into the behaviour of the confederate lords as well as the question of whether Mary was responsible for Darnley's murder. Between October 1568 and January 1569, a commission of inquiry met in York and later in Westminster. As an anointed queen, Mary refused to recognize any court's authority to try her (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 363). She refused to attend the investigation in York in person, instead sending representatives. In any case, queen prohibited her presence. Elizabeth did not treat the accused Mary well, the Queen of England herself was accused of participating in a conspiracy a few years ago, and she remembers the anguish she went through, but she was now denying her cousin the same rights as she had once been denied (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 363-365).

The Queen of England played two sides, promising Mary Stuart that if her name was cleared, she would be sent back to Scotland, but promising the Scottish regent Moray that Mary would not return to Scotland (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 365). It is likely that after clearing the name, Queen Elizabeth would have sent Mary back to Scotland, but that did not play into the hands of the new regent. James Stewart did not want his half-sister back in the country, as he did not want to lose his power.

3.3.2 Casket Letters and Tangled Web of Intrigues

The regent James Stewart solved this problem by presenting so-called casket letters to convince Mary of Darnley's murder. Casket letters were 8 letters from Mary to Bothwell, two marriage contracts, and a love sonnets. They were said to have been found in a silver-gilt casket decorated with the monogram of King Francis II. These letters were supposed to prove Mary's affair with Bothwell and her involvement in the murder of Lord Darnley. Mary never saw the letters so she could not defend herself. She denied writing them and insisted they were forgeries, arguing that her handwriting was not difficult to imitate. During the York conference, the letters were used as evidence against Mary Stuart. Moray wanted to destroy Mary's reputation and turn

all of Europe against her. Most of the commissioners accepted the casket letters as genuine after examining them. However, some still claimed that they were fake. Elizabeth, as she wished, concluded the investigation by saying that nothing had been proven. Neither side presented enough damning evidence. Nevertheless, Mary Stuart's reputation was tarnished. Thanks to this conference, the Queen of England gained a reason to justify keeping Mary in custody. The former Queen of Scots had to renounce her claim to the English throne and reconcile herself to her fate (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 366-368). According to Fraser (1999), it was one of the oddest trials in legal history, concluding with no finding of guilt against either side, with one allowed to return to Scotland while the other remained in detention (pp. 394-395).

Throughout her imprisonment, Mary moved around a lot. She changed many castles where she started sewing to shorten her time and entertain herself. Even during her imprisonment, Mary Stuart gained many supporters, including Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. The two met during the investigation into Mary's participation in her husband's death. With the support of the Scottish ambassador Maitland, the Duke had a plan to advance his ambitions. His goal was to marry Mary Stuart. The marriage should have been the resolution of the Duke of Norfolk's goal to merge the two crowns into one (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 373-375; Fraser, 1999, pp. 405-410). However, this union never took place. In 1569, a Catholic opposition in the north was formed against Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Norfolk was involved in it. The aim of this revolt was to free Mary Stuart as she was their best hope as the new queen. It was demanded that the Queen of Scots be released, and that William Cecil resign from his position (Abbott, 2011, p. 140). Exactly what Elizabeth feared had happened, which is why she had left Mary Stuart in prison because she wanted to prevent these events. If Elizabeth had given in to the pressure, a marriage between Norfolk and Stuart would have happened, and civil war would have begun in England. However, Elizabeth had already been informed of the plans of Mary Stuart and Thomas Howard through the Scottish regent and thank to that the plot was exposed, stopped and Norfolk was arrested (Fraser, 1999, pp. 410-411).

Meanwhile, the problems in England influenced events in Scotland. The situation in Scotland was turbulent, with Mary Stuart's supporters on one side and those who would like to see her dead on the other. The situation escalates in January 1570 when the regent James Stewart, Earl of Moray was shot and killed. After that, the civil war brought up (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, pp. 379-380).

After two years, Norfolk was released from Tower. However, he did not learn from his mistakes and again tried to organize a conspiracy with the help of Roberto Ridolfi, the aim of

which was not only to marry Mary Stuart but to depose Elizabeth and place Mary on the English throne. However, the conspiracy was again revealed and suppressed, and the Duke of Norfolk was executed for treason (Fraser, 1999, pp. 415-420). Mary Stuart's life changed greatly, the former Queen of Scots stopped being optimistic and felt abandoned and misunderstood. Everyone saw her as a foreigner who wanted to steal the English throne. Relations between Elizabeth and Mary were at a low ebb. From this time on, Elizabeth never again considered restoring Mary to the Scottish throne. She did not want to release her cousin from prison, being afraid of further rebellions. However, she was not about to permanently remove her rival. She did not dare to have the queen, who ruled by God's will, executed. Mary's involvement in the revolt, as well as her alleged involvement in several conspiracies against Elizabeth I of England, raised questions about her loyalty and intentions. Eventually, Mary Stuart was spared despite opinions most of the Queen's advisers, since no incriminating evidence had been found. Nevertheless, she was watched carefully with the aid of spies placed in her household (Fraser, 1999, pp. 420-422). It is possible that Elizabeth did not take any serious action against Mary because she was able to empathize with the situation in which the former Queen of Scots found herself. A few years ago, Elizabeth herself was accused of conspiracy and threatened with execution. She, therefore, demanded irrefutable evidence to confirm Mary's complicity in the rebellion. It is true that during the trial in York, she did not pay much attention to the accuracy of the evidence, but the trial in York was intended to help Elizabeth with Mary's imprisonment and not with her execution.

Mary's only chance of release was her son James who grew up during Mary's imprisonment. However, this heir to the Scottish throne was brought up by people who were often enemies of Mary Stuart and raised James in the Protestant faith. James had no relationship with his mother, which was the opposite to what Mary had hoped for (Fraser, 1999, pp. 443-446). A few years later, Mary was surrounded by more spies, and her health worsened as the conditions of her captivity deteriorated. She had no one and trusted no one, and her interactions with the rest of the world were almost impossible.

3.3.3 Elisabeth's Challenges and Obstacles

The Queen of England faced many problems. On the one hand, Mary Stuart, then problems in the Netherlands with Spain, and in 1570 she was excommunicated by Pope Pius V for issuing the bull *Regnans in Excelsis*. Pope Pius V largely criticized the Queen of England for her accession to the throne, despite the fact that she was not entitled to it under Catholic law. Because she supported the Church of England, which was never recognized by the Pope,

Elizabeth was deemed a heretic. This excommunication released her Catholic subjects from their allegiance to her and encouraged Catholic plots against the queen. The Pope resorted to this step only when the Queen of England was not supported by King Philip II of Spain and relations between Spain and England were tensed (Clarke, 2017, p. 185). The situation was also influenced by the St. Bartholomew's Night in France in 1572 and the uprising in the Netherlands. The English were determined to protect their religion at all costs. Enemy number one was Spain (Morgan, 2008, p. 244).

The Queen of England tried to prevent any rebellion and for that reason a sophisticated network of informants and secret police was established in England. Sir Francis Walsingham was put in charge. Elizabeth's intelligence network was crucial in acquiring evidence about any Catholic plots or foreign invasions. She relied on a varied group of people as trustworthy spies, including aristocrats, ambassadors, clergy, and commoners. Sir Francis Walsingham was essential in creating and managing the activities of this covert network. Elizabeth's spies recruited double agents to deceive her enemies. These agents frequently pretended to be Catholic sympathizers in order to earn the trust of conspirators and gather important intelligence. They kept their cover and avoided suspicion by playing a double game and providing essential information to the crown. This technique allowed Elizabeth to stay one step ahead of her opponents (Dunn, 2005, pp. 347-350; Hilský, 2020, pp. 48-50).

In 1583, Francis Walsingham successfully uncovered the planned conspiracy against the queen. This conspiracy is known as the Throckmorton Conspiracy thanks to its masterminds. Like all the previous ones, this uprising aimed at the removal of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth Tudor, liberation, and the coronation of the Catholic Mary Stuart and the subsequent recatholization of England. The main figures of the Catholic coup were the brothers Francis and Thomas Throckmorton, nephews of the famous diplomat Sir Nicholas Throckmorton. Both brothers supported Catholicism and wanted change in England. However, the secret police, thanks to their network of informants, uncovered the conspiracy in time and Francis Throckmorton was imprisoned and tortured. He eventually confessed and most of his accomplices were caught and subsequently executed (Woolf, 2017, p. 146).

Queen Elizabeth and all her advisors and supporters feared for her life, knowing that plots and attacks would increase. As a result, the Bond Association was formed to unite all loyal followers of Elizabeth Tudor. By signing this document, everyone signed to follow and protect the queen. It also aimed to eliminate the queen's enemies and potential assassins. Important part of the document was that anyone who participated in the conspiracy, or the conspiracy was

carried out in his name, would be executed. Mary Stuart herself was forced to sign the document (Woolf, 2017, p. 147).

3.3.4 Scotland's Struggles and Elizabeth's Diplomacy

Chaos reigned in Scotland at that time. After Queen Mary Stuart fled the country for England, her son James VI was appointed as the new king. As James was a minor, Mary's half-brother James Stewart became regent of Scotland (Wormald, 2007, pp. 107-108). The regency of James Stewart, Earl of Moray, signalled the start of a series of regents who would rule Scotland in the name of the young monarch. James' regency sought to stabilize Scotland while also protecting Protestant interests. His rule, however, was not without difficulties. The Queen's Party, made up of Mary Stuart followers and Catholic nobles, attacked Moray's authority and sought to re-establish Mary Stuart to the throne. This dispute resulted in the Marian Civil War, which erupted in 1568 and lasted to 1573 (Wormald, 2007, p. 108).

Earl of Moray was murdered by Mary Stuart's supporters in 1570, underlining Scotland's ongoing political instability (Wormald, 2007, p. 108). This resulted in a series of regents, each aiming to gain control and preserve their own interests. Among the notable regents were the Earls of Lennox, Mar, and Morton. During the regency of the Earl of Morton, the situation calmed down and Scotland became dependent on England. However, not everyone agreed with Morton's reign, in 1578 the young king was declared fit and refused to take power. Nonetheless, Morton returned to power within a few months. There was unrest again in Scotland. Young king James was proclaimed an adult ruler in October 1579 (Wormald, 2007, p. 109).

During this time, the relationship between Scotland and England was complicated. Queen Elizabeth I of England kept an eye on events in Scotland because she had a vested interest in preserving Protestant authority and averting any threat to her own reign. Scotland sought to assure England that it had no part in the conspiracies against Queen Elizabeth Tudor. On July 5, 1586, the Treaty of Berwick was signed, which formed a defensive alliance between England and Scotland for military support in the event of an attack by a third country (Dunn, 2005, pp. 367-368), (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 429).

3.3.5 A Treacherous Betrayal

Mary Stuart never stopped being a threat to Elizabeth. Many spies and informants had been placed around her, as previously stated. Mary's opponents sought any evidence that the former Queen of Scots was scheming against the Queen of England. The head of Elizabeth's secret police, Francis Walsingham, believed that Mary was the greatest threat to the Queen of

England and had to be removed, so he tried his best to find anything that would help him convict Mary (Woolf, 2017, pp. 147-148). In 1586, 18 years had passed since Mary Stuart had been placed under house arrest. During that time, she had been accused of several conspiracies, however, direct evidence had never been obtained. Over the years, the former queen was able to establish her own secret network through which she could communicate with the outside world. After the Throckmorton Conspiracy, Mary was cut off from any outside communication. This decision did not play into hands of Francis Walsingham. He developed a plan to spy on Mary and restore her contact, believing that by doing so, he would acquire the required evidence to convict the former Queen of Scots (Woolf, 2017, pp. 147-148).

Mary Stuart had many Catholic supporters who wanted to free the queen at any cost. All attempts failed. Nevertheless, in 1586 another plot was planned under the leadership of Anthony Babington. Babington was a young Catholic who believed he could restore England to the Catholic faith and free the Queen of Scots. Over the years, he made contact with agents of Mary Stuart, and was soon joined by other Catholics. The Spanish ambassador Mendoza, who represented the interests of Philip II of Habsburg, also expressed his support for the whole conspiracy. The whole plot had to be planned very precisely, because there was a network of spies all around. Francis Walsingham, thanks to his spies, knew that something was coming. He managed to infiltrate the conspirators and then waited, needing more evidence to convict Mary Stuart of active participation in the rebellion. Meanwhile, there was a secret correspondence between Babington and Mary Stuart in which Mary's liberation and seizure of power was discussed. All messages were transmitted and hidden in beer barrels. To Mary's misfortune, Elizabeth's spymaster revealed everything. The encrypted messages first came to Walsingham and only then to Mary Stuart (Jurewitz-Freischmidt, 2012, p. 427-430). Thanks to this move, Francis Walsingham knew everything about what was happening. Now all he had to do was wait for the right moment.

In one of his letters, Babington wrote to Mary about his plans to her liberation, deposition and assassination of Elizabeth Tudor, and the restoration of Catholicism. Mary never wanted to kill Elizabeth, but when she found out that her son had made an alliance with the Queen of England, she felt betrayed and could not believe that James was working with her enemy instead of helping his mother. This might be one of the reasons why she agreed to remove Elizabeth (Abbott, 2011, pp. 142 – 144). Mary Stuart expressed her support for Babington and approved his plans. This was the moment Walsingham had been waiting for. In August 1586, many insurgents were arrested, including Babington. In September, Anthony

Babington and thirteen other men were charged with conspiracy against the Queen and sentenced to death. During the trial, Mary Stuart's secretaries were also questioned and confirmed her correspondence with Babington. Mary Stuart was moved to the castle in Fotheringhay and accused of participating in the Babington conspiracy (Fraser, 1999, pp. 479-483, 485-491).

3.3.6 The Fall of One Queen

Mary Stuart must have known how risky it would be for her to be involved in the conspiracy, because in the previously mentioned agreement, the Bond Association, was mentioned that even the person whom the rebels were trying to place on the throne or on whose behalf they were shielding, should be punished for rebellion against the Queen. Neither Elizabeth nor Mary knew what to do, both were frightened. Elizabeth feared for her life, and Mary did not want to die in oblivion if she were condemned (Fraser, 1999, pp. 490-492). In October 1586 Mary faced trial for treason before a court of 36 noblemen. Mary Stuart was deposed of all hereditary claims to the English crown first. Following that, judicial actions began in order to interrogate witnesses and present proof of Mary Stuart's guilt. Despite this, Mary denied the charges. Still, the evidence was damning, and she was found guilty (Abbott, 2011, 143 – 149). The fate of Mary Stuart had already been decided, only the Queen of England could have reversed the irreversible fate. Elizabeth faced a difficult decision while deciding on whether to sign Mary's execution warrant. Despite their rivalry, Elizabeth was hesitant to execute a fellow queen in a foreign country. However, increasing pressure from her advisors, the knowledge of Mary's complicity in the Babington Plot, and fears of Catholic uprisings all influenced Elizabeth's decision. She followed the advice of her advisors and signed the order to carry out the execution (Fraser, 1999, pp. 503-517).

In February 1587, Mary Stuart was executed at Fotheringhay Castle. The ceremony was held with great solemnity, and Mary faced her fate with dignity and peace. She was dressed in red since red was the colour of blood and martyrdom. Many people came to see the execution. Mary began to pray, and when she finished, the executioner asked her for forgiveness. The execution did not succeed at the first time, it is possible that the executioner was so nervous that he was unable to make an accurate cut. Mary must have experienced unimaginable pain. She was executed on the third attempt (Fraser, 1999, pp. 532-537). Mary Stuart breathed her last on February 8, 1587. When Elizabeth learned of Mary Stuart's death, she was furious, claiming that she had never wanted the execution to take place. She had her secretary arrested because he had used the queen's execution order, which, according to Elizabeth, should

not have been carried out. In the end, the queen reconciled herself to the execution (Fraser, 1999, p. 539). The death of Mary Stuart outraged Catholic rulers and weakened relations between England and Catholic Europe. Mary Stuart became a mourned martyr at the Catholic courts, fighting for the recatholization of the British Isles (Fraser, 1999, pp. 541-543).

Thus, the fatal conflict between the two queens ended. The intrigues and attempts to assert hereditary rights were the path to Mary Stuart's doom. Despite over thirty years of rivalry and fight for the throne, Elisabeth's biggest rival's death did not signal the beginning of calmer times for her and England. Nevertheless, the Queen could finally breathe properly as she now faced a new era without Mary Stuart, her greatest threat. Despite the rivalry and disagreements between the two queens, the Queen of England finally decided that Mary Stuart's son James VI would succeed her to the English throne. He became the king in 1603 and began the reign of the Stuarts in England as James I.

4. Conclusion

Mary Stuart and Elisabeth I, cousins, rivals, queens, these are some of the terms that could describe them. These rulers had a lot of things in common – they both came from the Tudor dynasty, they both were queens, and they both had the right to the English throne. Nevertheless, each was raised in a different environment that shaped their personality. Each had a different view of reign, and most importantly, each held a different religion. Using secondary literature, this thesis has shed light on the various aspects of their dispute by exploring the historical factors that shaped their competition as well as an assessment of their individual lives and intertwined fates. These factors created a volatile environment in which both queens were forced to navigate treacherous political waters, often pitting them against each other.

The question of faith was one of the most fundamental and important problems facing the whole of Europe. The ruling powers had to contend with this problem, and each took different sides. It was the same with the two queens as Elizabeth was a Protestant while Mary was a devout Catholic. This religious difference created a deep divide between the two queens. Both queens faced a serious problem that linked their fates. At the time, England was undergoing a process of religious reformation, and Elizabeth was determined to establish the Church of England as the official religion of the realm. The queen solved the problem of religious unrest by issuing religious laws in 1561–1567. For the time being, England was at peace. Mary, on the other hand, was committed to preserving Catholicism in Scotland, which put her at odds with Elizabeth's policies. Nevertheless, she ruled as a diplomat and respected both Catholics and Protestants. Nonetheless, the problem of religion was not confined to problems in England and Scotland. The fact that each queen stood on opposite sides meant that each supported different power. Therefore, through religious orientation, the foreign politics developed. On one side, there were Catholic supporters, and on the other Protestants.

Another mentioned reason for contention among the queens was the marriage policy. Both Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart were among the most desirable women in Europe at this time. Thus, the same suitors were interested in both. Any women who "fight" for the same suitor are rivals and envy each other. These two were no exception. As mentioned in the preceding chapters, marriage played a huge role in forming alliances. While Queen Elizabeth never married and produced a child, Mary Stuart was married three times. Unlike Elizabeth, Mary Stuart was able to secure an heir to Scotland, built a power base for herself secured the

continuation of her line. But this short-lived "victory" in marriage politics ultimately cost her the Scottish crown.

Hereditary claims to the English throne probably played the biggest role in the dispute between Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart. The rivalry between the two queens arose from their opposing claims of legitimacy as rightful heirs to the English throne. Mary Stuart, a direct descendant of Henry VII, believed that her bloodline made her a legitimate heir to the crown. Elizabeth, on the other hand, faced legitimacy problems as the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn because of the controversial marriage which had never been accepted by many Catholic countries. Nevertheless, the queens had always respected each other as a sovereign ruler. The relationship underwent a fundamental change as a result of the writing of the so-called Treaty of Edinburgh, through which the Queen of Scots was to renounce her right to rule England. Disagreements over the signing of the treaty dragged on between the queens for the rest of their lives. Elizabeth was unwilling to consider Mary as her successor after her death, and Mary was unwilling to sign a treaty that would mean giving up her claim to the English crown. In this way, two powerful queens reached an impasse, and no one was able to find a solution.

Mary Stuart and Elisabeth I's rivalry was more than just a personal dispute. It reflected deeper political, religious, and gendered issues. Their conflict symbolized the struggle for legitimacy, power, and control in a world ruled by patriarchal standards and changing allegiances. The two queens' conflict was worsened by their opposing approaches to government and religious faith. The exchange of letters, diplomatic negotiations, and secret intrigues highlighted Mary and Elisabeth's efforts to defend their personal interests and to maintain their power. These actions, however, frequently had unintended consequences, leading to a cycle of mistrust, fear, and violence. Ultimately, contrasting loyalties, opposing claims to the English throne, and the threat posed by Mary's Catholicism all had a significant influence in forming the course of their relationship. The decision about who was in right and who had the greater right to the English throne is very difficult. Both queens had a strong claim to the throne, and had it not been for the few situations that contributed to Elizabeth's victory, the history of England might have been quite different. However, there is no "If" in history. Mary Stuart made several bad decisions during her life and was often driven by her emotions, which eventually cost her both her crown and her head. Queen Elizabeth was surrounded by clever advisors whom she could trust, and she was able to choose reason over the heart. It is possible that the experience and appropriate surrounding of counsellors helped her maintain her power and face the challenges that life had prepared for her. Mary Stuart's relationship with

Elisabeth I illustrates the complex interaction of human dynamics, political factors, and historical circumstances. It points out the complexities and obstacles that women in positions of power encountered during a turbulent time in history.

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