

Queen, Government and Religion 1558-69

When Elizabeth became queen in 1558 she faced many problems including religious divisions; financial weaknesses; threats from abroad; questions around her legitimacy; and her gender. Her first task was to secure her position as queen; this included surrounding herself with a privy council she trusted; addressing the religious divisions in England and dealing with the problem of Mary Queen of Scots.

Key events

1532 Start of the English Reformation.

1556-58 Dutch Protestants Revolt against Spanish.

1558 Elizabeth succeeded her Catholic sister Mary I and re-established the Protestant, Anglican Church in England

1558 Elizabeth's favourites, Sir Robert Dudley and Sir William Cecil were appointed to the Privy Council. Catholic members of the privy council were replaced by Protestants.

1559 *Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis* – England returned Calais to France after the territory was lost during the reign of Mary I

1559 *Religious Settlement* was imposed and visitations commenced

1556 The pope issued an instruction against the Religious Settlement that English Catholics should not attend Church of England services.

1560 Elizabeth helped Scotland Protestant lords to defeat Mary of Guise. The *Treaty of Edinburgh* was signed which stated that Mary Queen of Scots would give up her claim to the English Throne. Mary Queen of Scots did not approve of the Treaty and wanted to be named as Elizabeth's heir.

1560 Mary Queen of Scots returned to Scotland from France following the death of her Husband, King Francis II. Although she was queen, the Protestant lords controlled the Scottish government

1563 Phillip II banned the import of English cloth to the Netherlands in order to prevent the spread of Protestantism

1568 Philip and the Duke of Alba defeated Dutch Protestants who had been rebelling against Spanish rule in the Netherlands

1568 *The Genoese Loan* - Elizabeth seized gold from Spanish ships docked in English ports. The gold belonged to Italian bankers and was on loan to Philip.

1567 Mary's second husband, Darnley was murdered and she remarried Bothwell who had been suspected of the murder. The scandal led to the Protestant Scottish lords rebelling. Mary was forced to abdicate and imprisoned in a castle.

1568 Mary Queen of Scots escaped her prison and raised an army in attempt to win back her throne. She was defeated and fled to England, seeking help from Elizabeth against the rebels

Key Concepts

Elizabethan Society relied upon a clear social structure in which everyone knew their place. Each social group owed their respect and obedience to those above them. The monarch was at the top followed by the nobility, gentry, yeomen, tenant farmers, labouring poor (peasants) then vagrants. About 90% of the population lived and worked in the countryside. In the towns, the social hierarchy was based on wealth and occupation; the wealthy merchants at the top followed by professionals, business owners. Skilled craftsmen unskilled craftsmen and vagrants.

Elizabethan Government centered on the monarch who ruled with 'divine right' (*by the grace of god*). This meant Elizabeth made government policy, making important decisions with the advice of her Privy Council. Parliament only met 11 times during Elizabeth's reign.

Elizabeth's accession caused controversy as her gender, legitimacy and religion were questioned. She was also faced with problems from the crown debt she inherited as well as threats from abroad.

Legitimacy Many Catholics refused to accept Elizabeth as the legitimate heir to the English throne because she was born in a second marriage through divorce. The pope did not approve of divorce, therefore Catholics did not see the marriage between Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn as valid.

Gender A queen who ruled in her own right was viewed as unnatural in Elizabethan society. The Christian religion taught that women should be under the authority of men; monarchs were expected to lead armies into battle and women were typically uneducated. Many believed Elizabeth should marry – both to help her rule the country and to secure an heir – however she refused to marry and wanted to rule independently.

Elizabeth's character Elizabeth was highly intelligent and well educated. She spoke Latin, Greek, French and Italian. She was confident and charismatic, able to make great speeches and win over her subjects. She was a careful thinker and took a long time to make important decisions – many saw this as indecisive and it frustrated her Privy Council

Protestant Reformation Religion was central to 16th century life. The Protestant Reformation began in Germany then spread throughout Europe. In 1532 Henry VIII broke from the Catholic Church and established the Church of England as the official religion of England.

Religious divisions Elizabeth was Protestant, however most of her subjects were Catholic. Before Elizabeth ascended the throne, the religion of England changed with every monarch before her. This resulted in a great deal of religious conflicts between Catholics and Protestants both within England and in foreign policy.

Puritans were strict Protestants who wanted to purify the Christian faith. They did believe the Monarch should be the head of the Church and they objected to parts of Elizabeth's religious settlement

The Papacy the power of the Pope – the head of the Catholic Church who lived in Rome. Catholics believed the Pope had authority over monarchs.

Key concept

Religious Settlement 1559 Elizabeth established her Religious Settlement in order to deal with religious tensions. She established a form of Protestantism that Catholics could accept and practice. Religious Settlement had three parts: The Act of Supremacy; the Act of Uniformity and the Royal Injunctions. Although there were some challenges and objections, most ordinary people attended church and most priests took the Oath of Loyalty.

Financial problems – When Elizabeth took the throne the Crown was £300,000 in debt. Elizabeth did not want to raise taxes. Instead she cut down the Crown's spending; sold Crown lands and raised money through trade and pirating of Spanish ships.

Foreign powers Spain and France were Catholic countries who opposed Protestantism and were both wealthier and more powerful than England in 1558. Mary Queen of Scots was a Catholic heir to the English throne and was a threat to Elizabeth; this threat was strengthened by Scotland's alliance with France

Mary Queen of Scots was Catholic and held a strong claim to the English Throne. In 1567 Mary was forced by Protestant Lords to abdicate the throne. In 1568 she fled to England where she was imprisoned by Elizabeth. Elizabeth saw Mary as a threat to her rule; however she was hesitant to execute an anointed monarch as this would jeopardise her own authority as queen. She was later involved in a series of plots against Elizabeth and finally executed in 1587

The French threat France was a threat to Elizabeth in 1558. They were catholic, wealthier and had a larger population. France was no longer at war with Spain. England had lost Calais, an important region of France for both trade and defence. The Auld Alliance between France and Scotland strengthened the threat of invasion

Anglo-Spanish relations Elizabeth objected to a marriage with Philip of Spain and throughout her reign, Anglo-Spanish relations deteriorated. Spain's colonisation of the New World meant it was the wealthiest and most powerful country in Europe.

Key Words

Nobility	A group of men who held the highest titles below the king or queen, such as duke, earl or viscount. There were between 40 and 60 men who held these titles. These groups helped the monarch to govern and saw themselves as natural friends of the king or queen.
Gentry	The gentry were landowners but they had less land than members of the nobility.
Yeomen	Successful farmers who tended to own their own land.
Tenant farmers	Farmed rented land usually owned by yeomen or gentry.
Labour poor	The majority of the population who farmed the land that belonged to the local landlord and earned a wage
Merchants	People who traded goods. Some became incredibly wealthy during the Elizabethan era
Artisans	Skilled craftsmen who often lived in towns or larger villages.
Extraordinary taxation	Occasional, additional taxation to pay for unexpected expenses, especially. Had to be approved by Parliament
Privy council	Advisors to Elizabeth; chosen by the monarch and met at least 3 times a week
Parliament	Made up of House of Lords and House of Commons. They only meet 11 times during Elizabeth's reign.
Lords	Members of the nobility. They raised and trained militia, enforced policies and supported local government
Lieutenant	
JPs	Justice of the Peace. Wealthy landowners who kept law and order in their local areas.
Secretary of State	Elizabeth's most important Privy Counsellor
Crown	Refers to the monarch and their government.
Divine Right	Belief that the monarchs right to rule came from God.
Royal Prerogative	Elizabeth could insist that Parliament did not talk about certain issues.
Succession	The issue of who was going to succeed the throne after the existing monarch died.
Legitimate	Being born in wedlock when the existing king and queen were married.
Auld Alliance	An alliance between France and Scotland.
Puritans	Radical Protestants who did not believe the monarch to be the head of the church
Act of Supremacy	Made Elizabeth Supreme Governor of the Church of England and all clergy made to take an oath of loyalty to here. 800 clergy took the oath however only 1 Catholic bishop
Act of Uniformity	Established the appearance of churches and the form of services (special vestments; Book of Common Prayer – wording of communion was deliberately unclear). People were fined 1 shilling for not attending
Royal Injunctions	Instructions issued to establish the Act of Supremacy and Act of Uniformity – Celegy to wear special vestments; pilgrimages banned; each parish to have a copy of the Bible in English; anyone who refused to follow the Religious Settlement was reported to the Privy Council
Clergy	Religious officials and people who work for the church

Challenges to Elizabeth at Home and Abroad 1569-88

Elizabeth faced many serious threats both within England and from abroad. Many still wanted the Catholic, Mary Queen of Scots on the throne. Philip II of Spain also wanted to remove Elizabeth from the throne. Spain and England were religious and political rivals. There was particular tension when Drake tried to challenge Spanish dominance in the New World and when Protestants in the Spanish Netherlands rebelled. These tensions culminated in Philip II sending the Spanish Armada to invade England in 1588.

Key events

1492 Discovery of the New World

1559 Elizabeth's Religious Settlement

1567 Spanish travel led to Netherlands to crush Protestant revolt

1568 Mary Queen of Scots arrived in England from France

1586 Philip begins preparing for the Armada

1569 Revolt of the Northern Earls against Elizabeth fails . 450 rebels were executed Elizabeth chose not to execute the Duke of Norfolk or Mary

1570 Elizabeth was excommunicated by the Pope who called for all loyal Catholics to depose her in the hope it would cause a Catholic rebellion

1571 The Ridolfi Plot fails . Highlighted the threat of Spain

1572 Elizabeth hired Drake as a privateer to raid Spanish Ships

1576 Spanish Fury and Pacification of Ghent: After unpaid Spanish troops looted Antwerp all 17 Dutch provinces (Catholic and Protestant) formed an alliance that called for Spanish troops to be expelled from the Netherlands

1577-80 Drake is the second person to circumnavigate the globe

1583 Throckmorton Plot fails . Highlighted the threat of Catholic France and Spain uniting.

1584 Treaty of Joinville created an alliance between Catholic France and Spain.

1585 Act of Preservation of the Queen's Safety/Treaty of Nonsuch – Elizabeth agreed to take direct action against Spain in the Netherlands. This effectively put England at war with Spain.

1586 Babington Plot. Elizabeth's government become determined to crush the Catholic threat

1587 Mary Queen of Scots was executed after years of Elizabeth being reluctant to execute an anointed monarch

1587 Attack on Cadiz- Drake sailed into Cadiz harbour, Spain's most important Atlantic port, and over 3 days destroyed 30 ships. Also known as the 'singeing of the King's beard'

1588 Elizabeth defeats Phillip in the Spanish Armada

Key Concepts

Breakdown in Anglo-Spanish relations By 1850s relations between England and Spain had reached the point of war. Philip of Spain became involved in Catholic plots against Elizabeth and events in the Netherlands as well as Drakes pirating increased tensions. England and Spain also had commercial rivalry over trade in the New World.

Religion The Revolt of the Northern Earls; Plots against Elizabeth; and tensions in the Netherlands all had religious motives.

The New World Spain conquered Mexico and Peru which had provided vast amounts of gold and silver. Elizabeth wanted to compete with Spanish dominance in the New World.

Trade England and Spain competed over access to the markets and resources of the New World. However, Spain's control over the New World denied English traders profit-making opportunities as all trade had to be licensed by the Spanish government . This led to Elizabeth supporting English merchants pirating Spanish ships.

Events in the Netherlands Protestant Rebels in the Netherlands had been revolting against Spanish rule. Initially, Elizabeth acted indirectly .In 1585, Elizabeth took direct action by sending troops to the Netherlands under Robert Dudley. The Treaty of Nonsuch effectively put England and Spain at war.

Mary Queen of Scots There were several plots against Elizabeth which planned to execute Elizabeth and replace her with Mary Queen of Scots and establish a Catholic monarchy. Despite these plots, Elizabeth was cautious and reluctant to execute Mary. Following the Revolt of the Northern Earls , Ridolfi and Throckmorton plots she refused to execute her as she did not want to increase Catholic tension or execute an anointed monarch as it would jeopardise her position

Walsingham's spy network Elizabeth's Secretary of State who developed a network of spies and informants that played a critical role in uncovering plots against Elizabeth.

Key Words	
New World	The regions of North , South and Central America
Revolt of the Northern Earls	When Northern Earls encouraged Catholics to rebel. They planned for Mary to marry the Duke of Norfolk. The plot failed when the Spanish troops did not arrive to support the rebellion
James Pilkington	Appointed Archbishop of Durham - he was a Protestant and this s angered many Catholics in the north.
Civil War	A war between people in the same country.
Conspiracy	A secret plan with the aim of ding something illegal.
Papal Bull	A written order by the Pope. That excommunicated Elizabeth from the Catholic Church which increased fears of Catholic's disloyalty to Elizabeth .
Ridolfi Plot	A Catholic plot against Elizabeth. Plan to murder Elizabeth, launch a Spanish attack and put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne..
Roberto Ridolfi	Italian banker who lived in England and spy for the Pope
Throckmorton Plot	Planned for the French Duke of Guise to invade England, free Mary , overthrow Elizabeth and restore Catholicism in England
Babington Plot	The Duke of Guise would invade England and put Mary on the throne. Lead to the execution of Mary
Priest holes	Secret hiding places for Catholic priests.
Hanged, drawn and quartered	A type of punishment used for high treason. The accused would be hanged until near dead, cut open, have their intestines removed and were finally chopped into four pieces.
Sir Francis Walsingham	Elizabeth's Secretary of State. Developed a network of spies and informers to uncover plots against her
Act of Preservation of the Queen's Safety	In the event of Elizabeth's assassination, Mary would be banned from the succession.

Key Words	
Agent provocateurs	Agents who become part of groups suspected of wrongdoing and encourage other members to break the law so that potential threats can be identified and arrested.
Circumnavigate	To travel all the way around the world.
Act of Preservation of the Queen's Safety	In the event of Elizabeth's assassination, Mary would be banned from the succession.
Foreign Policy	The aims of objectives that guide a nation's relations with other states.
Privateer	Individuals with their own armed ships that capture other ships for their cargo, often with the support and authorisation of the government.
Francis Drake	A wealthy merchant and second man to circumnavigate the globe Elizabeth hired him as a privateer.
Circumnavigate	To travel all the way around the world.
Autonomy	The right to self government, so people of one country can manage its own affairs.
Spanish Fury	The Spanish rampaged through Dutch provinces
Pacification of Ghent	Spanish troops expelled from Netherlands, political autonomy to be returned and end of religious persecution.
Mercenary	A soldier who fights for money rather than a nation or a cause.
Treaty of Joinville	The King of France and the King of Spain became allies against Protestantism.
Treaty of Nonsuch	Effectively put England and Spain at war.
Singeing of the King of Spain's beard	Drake sailed into Cadiz harbour, Spain's most important Atlantic port, and over 3 days destroyed 30 ships.
Tilbury Speech	Elizabeth's famous speech to her troops before the Armada.
The Battle of Gravelines	8 August 1588, the English sent fire ships in amongst the Spanish fleet. Most of destruction was caused by strong winds which damaged the Spanish ships and contributed to the English victory.
Propaganda	Biased information used to promote a particular point of view. Elizabeth launched a propaganda campaign after the English defeated the Spanish Armada