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Literary Version of the Relationship between Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart
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ANNOTATION

This bachelor thesis aims to analyse the relationship between the Queen of England, Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, displayed in contemporary female writing. It provides a theoretical background of writing and publishing conditions for Scottish women writers in the late twentieth century, examines the rivalry between Scotland and England in the sixteenth century, explores the causes of a problematic relationship between Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart and observes the trial and the execution of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots. Each chapter analyses its interpretation in the contemporary play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* by the Scottish author Liz Lochhead.

KEYWORDS

Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, national identity, contemporary Scottish women writers

NÁZEV

Literární verze vztahu Alžběty I. a Marie Stuartovny

ANOTACE

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na vyobrazení vztahu anglické královny Alžběty I a skotské královny Marie Stuartovny v ženské moderní literatuře. Práce nadále představuje psací a vydavatelské podmínky skotských autorek v pozdním 20. století, prezentuje historický kontext vztahu mezi Anglií a Skotskem v 16. století, zkoumá vztah mezi Alžbetou I. a Marií Stuartovnou, a dále zobrazuje soud královny Marie Stuartovny a její popravu. Tyto prvky jsou pak reflektovány v analýze divadelní hry od skotské autorky Liz Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Marie Stuartovna, Alžběta I., národní identita, moderní skotské spisovatelky

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Introduction

The sixteenth century in England and Scotland is the period of the reign of two powerful female monarchs – Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart. Even though the story of their uneasy coexistence on one island is hundreds of years old, it is still being retold in modern writings. It is no surprise that many writers, including the Scottish author Liz Lochhead, still widely acknowledge their complicated yet intriguing relationship. For this thesis, it is crucial to first examine some factors that affected writing and publishing conditions for female women writers in the late twentieth-century Scotland which experienced a significant change in Scottish literature. After providing mainly male authors, the space was slowly opening up for female writers. However, their path to becoming respected authors was uneasy and consisted of many challenges. The first problem was English and Scottish publishers' ignorance and uninterest in publishing Scottish women's writing. The fear of possible extreme feminist propaganda was the main reason for their refusal. Another problem that female authors had to face, and this time they shared it with male writers, was the question of national identity. Scotland was constantly compared to England, which impaired the approach of Scottish people to their national identity. Despite all of these restrictions, there were a few female authors who managed to break into modern Scottish literature. One of them was the dramatist Liz Lochhead.

Lochhead took the well-known story of two remarkable women in British history, Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart and transformed it into a parodic yet evocative rendition of their lives. Their complicated relations were rooted mainly in their diverse political policies, incompatible religions, and contrasting marital statuses. The thesis emphasises not only on the rivalry between the two monarchs but also on their personal lives and their harmful effects on decision-making during their reigns. The thesis then examines the infamous tensions and differences between Scotland and England caused mainly by the English Reformation that broke England from the Catholic Church and did not leave Scotland untouched. The focus is placed on the historical background of the Scottish and English Reformations and their impacts on the reigns of Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I. The final chapter deals with the execution of Mary Stuart in 1587. It examines how Mary's intrigues and trust in the wrong people led to her losing her kingdom, son and later her head.

Each chapter provides an analysis of its literary interpretation in the play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* by Liz Lochhead. The author's approach to acknowledging the history in this play is grotesque rather than historically factual. The time setting of the play is

quite wide – from Middle Ages to the twentieth century. Throughout the play, the role of each character deals with a distinct personal development. For example, from being circus artists to nobles or even to a little children playing in the playground. Liz Lochhead's adaptation of the royal rivalry between Elizabeth I and Mary is unique in the way it combines the past and the present of Scotland. What makes the play even more special is Lochhead's approach in displaying the ignorance of not learning from the past mistakes and keeping them present in modern times. Therefore, the genre of the play is considered to be a modern historical drama.

This bachelor thesis aims to analyse a modern interpretation of the relationship between the Elizabeth Tudor, Queen of England, and her pretendent Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots in contemporary Scottish women writing. Moreover, it attempts to demonstrate the presence of unsolved mistakes from the past that caused severe tensions and diversity between sixteenth century Scotland and England in their modern relationship.

Scottish Women Writers in the Late 20th Century

The late twentieth century brought a significant change to Scottish literature. After years of having male writers as the predominant gender in Scotland's writing and publishing, the literature began providing women writers. By happening so, more light was brought on being a Scottish female writer than it used to be in the past. This change encouraged gender diversity in the nation's twentieth-century literature. However, it does not mean that the perception of being a woman and Scottish at the same time disappeared completely. The number of women writers was still minimal, and they had to face a lot of limits, criticism, and hardships.

Considering the small number of published writings by women in the late 20th century Scotland, there are several crucial reasons for such a situation. The first reason was the lack of support that Scottish women writers received in publishing their work. According to Breitenbach et al., it was the absence of support from Scottish publishers for women's participation in literature as well as the lack of support from English publishers for Scottish literature; the Scottish extreme and left-wing newspapers; and the "false pride in the democratic and socialist traditions of Scottish society which makes it difficult for male activists to recognize just how chauvinist the Scottish labour movement and Scottish political parties are," that have failed to address feminist concerns effectively. Isolating women from participating in writing and publishing their work prevented feminist issues from appearing in the Scottish political agenda.¹ Scottish women writers had to deal with many inequalities and much criticism from the system of government and the patriarchal society. As Smith argues, because of gender stereotypes and limitations on what to say and do, women are constrained in their artistic expressions.² Despite these restrictions, they did not hold back from pursuing their career goals. They were determined to prove that women have a place in Scotland's writing and publishing.

While the duty of men was to build careers to secure the family financially, the woman's role was to stay at home and take care of the children and the household. Hills claims that women still comprise a pitiful minority of top positions in business, the professions, and public life. The initiative does not consider women who are living in poverty or below.

¹ Esther Breitenbach, Alice Brown, and Fiona Myers, "Understanding Women in Scotland," *Feminist Review*, no. 58 (Spring, 1998): 46.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1395679>

² Alison Smith, "And Woman Created Woman: Carswell, Shepherd and Muir, and the Self-Made Woman," in *Gendering the Nation: Studies in Modern Scottish Literature*, ed. Christopher Whyte (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 31.

Women continued to experience the adverse effects of occupational demarcation. Their responsibilities as caregivers increased significantly when the state and society were rapidly abandoning any notion of shared duty for the care of the seniors, the youth, and the disabled.³ There was limited space for Scottish women writers to fulfil their career goals. Their primary purpose was to raise future Scottish generations that would strengthen the Scottish identity. By doing so, they secure the nation and future of Scotland.

However, being linked with domesticity only appealed to some women. The most visible campaign to enable women to have the same writing rights as male writers was run by the Open University, who in the late twentieth century supported women by publishing their bibliographies, journals, and academic writings. This drew more attention to the topic of feminism and the empowerment of women in writing and publishing. Unfortunately, it brought criticism as well. According to Hills, the number of books published, plays staged, and songs sung increases somewhat each year. However, the women who conducted research, wrote, played, and sang were doing it despite significant obstacles, such as inadequate funding, low pay, a heavy workload, and astonishing complacency.⁴ A target audience for female Scottish writers barely existed because the government and the editorships did not show enough support in promoting their work.

The taboo was not an easy part for women writers in Scotland. The constant uncertainty and limitations coming from the publishers and male authors were part of a daily routine for every aspiring woman writer. However, patriarchy was not the only factor considered the root of making a path difficult for women to become respected authors. Another aspect that contributed to women's writing and publishing restriction was the question of Scottish identity. Women writers in Scotland were not the only ones who had to face it; it was also men's problem. According to Coombes et al., there are four components of the national identity: cultural identity, or a set of meanings that distinguish it from other cultures; a belief system that encourages cultural participation and solidarity; the national heritage, or a sense of the culture's distinctive history; and finally, the ethnocentrism, or the tendency for people or societies to

³ Leslie Hills, "Why Engender?," in *Women and Contemporary Scottish Politics: An Anthology*, ed. Esther Breitenbach, Fiona Mackay (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 27-28.

⁴ Leslie Hills, "Why Engender?," *Chapman 76* (Spring 1994): 50.

judge and attribute things based on their cultural perspectives as the standard.⁵ All of these aspects can construct the image of nationhood that makes it vary from one nation to another.

Scottish identity dealt with comparison and the question of whether it is less critical than English identity. According to Whyte, being Scottish is not necessarily the same as to be English, just as “to be a female” may be a very different kind of activity or experience than “to be a male.”⁶ It shows that there should not be a comparison between these two nations since they are both different in their ways. According to Breitenbach et al., the intensity of “the fight over nationhood” has made it challenging to address other issues like gender problems because it “absorbs the energy and attention of people in Northern Ireland to such a degree that representation of other concerns or interests is unavoidably influenced and constrained by it.”⁷ Unfortunately, the necessity of addressing the differences between the two nationalities failed in other cases. Breitenbach et al. continue saying that there are contrasts as well as parallels in the experiences of women in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Nevertheless, although the debate here is restricted to the Scottish experience, it should be clear from what is said that they all have a problematic connection with 'British' identity.⁸ Every nation has defied obstacles and identity perspectives, making nationhood unique. Scotland has dealt with many comparisons with Britain that are still present today. There has been much discussion over Scots using the correct identity. Frank Bechhofer and David McCrone state that being “British” as a matter of state and citizenship is a matter of “state” identity, but being English, Scottish, or Welsh provides a foundation for national identity that may conflict with being British. It does not imply that people must choose between identifying as English or Scottish or as “British,” which is their national identity.⁹ The main reason, the Scots do not wish to be associated with the British roots lies in their cultural hegemony.

Despite unpleasant conditions, a few female writers paved their paths and successfully published their work; one of them being Liz Lochhead. According to Christianson and Lumsden, her work is an art that demonstrates an intense and critical knowledge of what it

⁵ Emma Coombes, Sally A. Hibbert, Gillian M. Hogg, and Richard Varey, “Consuming Identity: The Case of Scotland” (2001): 329.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277189497_Consuming_identity_the_case_of_Scotland

⁶ Christopher Whyte, *Gendering the Nation: Studies in Modern Scottish Literature*, ed. Christopher Whyte (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 13.

⁷ Breitenbach et. al, *Understanding Women in Scotland*, 52.

⁸ Breitenbach et. al, *Understanding Women in Scotland*, 52.

⁹ Frank Bechhofer and David McCrone, “Imagining the Nation: Symbols of National Culture in England and Scotland,” *Ethnicities* (October 2013): 546.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43586613>

means to be a woman and a Scot. These two identities frequently interact in her work, simultaneously and separately, with one role occasionally taking the spotlight. At the same time, the other is less prominent.¹⁰ Her writing style and themes have made Lochhead one of the female writers and poets who decrease the absence of women writers in late twentieth-century Scotland.

As a female Scottish author, Liz Lochhead expresses her criticism on gender issues and the question of nationality in her controversial play *Mary, Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*. Lochhead deals with the particular definition of national identity and its importance in building a character as a citizen. Moreover, the author is drawing attention to the present asymmetries of the relationship between Scotland and England and their past tensions during the reigns of Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart. With witty and made-up language, the author describes the two nations in their unique ways and draws out their contemporary identities.

The story is narrated from a woman's point of view, by La Corbie, a talking crow that is in the play described as a national bird of Scotland. She plays a vivid part in the play. However, her constant loyalty to her queen Mary Stuart is sometimes unhealthy and making the readers wonder if they can even trust her. In the play's first act, Corbie introduces the situation in which England and Scotland find themselves struggling. By doing so, she also enlightens the readers into the main issue that this play deals with, the rivalry between the two queens and their fight for the throne of England:

Once upon a time there were twa queens on the wan green island, and the wan green island was split intae twa kingdoms. But no equal kingdoms, naebody in their richt mind would insist on that.¹¹

The claim that there is no equality between the two nations offers a glimpse of the unfair political and religious position that Scotland was caught in. Not being taken as one unit with England, Scotland and its national identity were put into an uneasiness and constant defensibility of its strength as a nation during the whole play, just by being compared to England.

¹⁰ Aileen Christianson and Alison Lumsden, *Contemporary Scottish Women Writers* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 41.

¹¹ Liz Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots, Got Her Head Chopped Off* (London: Nick Hern Books Limited, 2009), 6.

Moreover, the picture of national identity is captured in the form of language of each character, which is a device to stress the nationalism in their personas. For example, *La Corbie* is described as a very proud Scot. Therefore, her Scottish English is heavily accented. Sometimes it is problematic to even to comprehend what she is trying to say, which may be Lochhead's intention. Corbie being a Scottish woman, the topic of misunderstanding is close to her in both ways. Lochhead blended the past of Scotland being underprivileged by England with the contemporary problems that she, as a Scottish female writer, had to endure to break into the scene of mainly male writers in the late twentieth century. Therefore, Corbie is a brilliant example of how the past and the present are connected, still affecting each other. Through Corbie, Lochhead is not only portraying the past and present of what it is like to be a Scottish woman, but she also reminds the reader that even though the characters are historical, the issue of inequality is still very much present in modern Scotland and England. The display of Corbie's pride of her nationality is not only expressed in her language but also in her harsh attitude towards the English characters:

MARY. Maister Knox, I see in you yin wha is convincit he be moved by love of God,
but is in truth fired rather by hatred o mankind.

CORBIE. Cark! Aye, tell him!

KNOX. There is yin abune aw, madam, wha is the best Judge, the only.¹²

The above extract shows that Corbie is a defender of her queen and, therefore, of Scotland. Her determination to protect her monarch strikes out the fact that for Corbie, the national identity is her queen. Despite being a passionate supporter, sometimes her defensive reactions are not in place. They give off a sense of desperation - the intense desperation to protect her nation no matter if the words are valid or not. Corbie does not let anyone shade or belittle her nation. By making Corbie a proud patriot, Lochhead is again taking the working conditions of female writers in the late twentieth century, where women had to persuade others that they were capable of being at the same level as their male colleagues and blending them with the past when Scots were fighting for equal opportunities and acknowledgement from England.

In contrast, the language of Mary Stuart does not entirely show her Scottish identity as strong as is Corbie's. It is mixed with French as well. It shows that Mary is not fully Scottish in her heart and that her French personality is fighting her Scottish persona. This may evoke the thought that Mary is not as strong patriot as is Corbie. By not living her whole life in Scotland, her national identity is not considered purely Scottish. That is why Corbie is always on Mary's

¹² Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 17.

side throughout the play. After all, Corbie is a genuinely proud and pure Scot; having her by her side would make Mary feel more powerful and worthy of her nation. During her arrival to Scotland, Mary felt unsure of the acceptance, so having someone like Corbie on her side helped her to support her Scottish pride and character.

When it comes to the image of national identity in both queens, it is again shown in their languages and physical appearance. The Queen of England, Elizabeth Tudor, is described as a strong, almost masculine leader with an imperious English accent. By describing Elizabeth as masculine, Lochhead is pinpointing the strength and power England, as a superior, had over Scotland. On the contrary, the Queen of Scots, Mary Stuart, is described as a beautiful and feminine monarch whose speech is a mix of French and Scottish language. Mary's feminine fragility shows how unsure Scotland was of its ability to maintain its independence from England.

The role of the Sovereign in Scotland is questionable to Mary Stuart. After spending most of her life in France, she is not feeling fully connected to her Scottish nation and questions herself and her ability to rule her people. Heavily accented, Mary expresses her worries about her future as a sovereign:

Ah dinna think Ah'll evr understand this country o mine.¹³

Another aspect that builds a national identity in Lochhead's play is religion. Mary, as a proud Catholic, believes that her religion is considered to be viewed only in a positive way. This claim is questionable to Mary's biggest critic, John Knox. Lochhead portrayed Knox as intolerant to his Queen, Mary Stuart. Having this attitude towards a woman is something that Mary has in common with women writers in the late 20th century in Scotland. Mary Stuart is viewed as a good Catholic and passionate sovereign who feels limited in ruling her country by the people around her, especially people from England. What is also quite interesting in Lochhead's writing is how Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, has to constantly ensure every one of her capabilities to rule. Her persuasion of others makes her unsure of her rights and creates a feeling of insecurity in herself and her kingdom. Again, Lochhead is coming from her experience as a Scottish and female writer whose success must have been justified to male authors and English publishers.

¹³ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 12.

Such example is shown in Mary's defence to John Knox's disrespectful accusations of Mary's faith not being truthful:

MARY. You raised up a part of this nation – ma subjects – against ma mither, and against me, their prince, anointed by God. You hae written a treasonous treatise o a book against ma just authority. You have been the cause of great sedition and greater slaughter in England – ¹⁴

John Knox excuses his actions and prejudices by God whom he strongly believes. To him, the national identity lies in religion. Mary, for instance, does not relate to what Knox's God is saying and remains truthful to her own beliefs. With his enduring beliefs in the reformation of Catholicism in Scotland, he claims that the nation's problem is that they seek a physical satisfaction, as is food, rather than spiritual nourishment. Lochhead portrays the issue in the conversation between Mary and Knox: different faith can lead to disagreements. A religion that is hateful towards people of different faiths contributes to the division of the nation as well. This is the main reason why the role of religion in this play plays a massive role in creating a national identity. Lochhead believes that it was the religion that brought about the tensions and also created a harsh destiny for Mary Stuart.

To summarise, the writing conditions for Scottish women writers were not ideal in the late twentieth century. Their work dealt with much judgment from male writers and English publishers. Moreover, this period was a time of confusion for most of the Scots dealing with their display of national identity. The definition of national identity is very subjective to each individual. What affects the view of what national identity means to someone, is the conditions and beliefs of the person. As Lochhead shows in her play, the strong determination in the identity creates a personality. Moreover, the play denotes that the past disagreements between the two nations are still very much present in modern Scotland and England. This way, she criticises the patriarchal society and religious priorities that Scotland had.

¹⁴ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 17.

England and Scotland in the Sixteenth Century

The relationship between Scotland and England during the sixteenth century faced many challenges. One of the main issues was the question of the rightful monarch. The two nations on one island with two queens had to constantly defend their power over one another. Despite the fact that England's throne was one of the strongest in Europe, it dealt with the need for a secured line of succession, unlike Scotland. At the same time, the two kingdoms did not share the same religious beliefs, which worsened their conflict.

The beginning of uneasy relations between the two nations started in 1534 when the parliament passed the Act of Supremacy established by English monarch King Henry VIII. The act which recognized the monarch as a Head of the Church did not leave Scotland untouched. As a Catholic kingdom, Scotland had to face a possible religious reformation coming from England. As Kellar states, the Act drastically increased the tensions between the two nations, which played a significant part in their shared religious and diplomatic ties. Under the changing conditions generated by the reformation, England dealt with their conventional assumptions and beliefs.¹⁵ Both sides were resistant to finding a proper solution to their problems. Although there was a thought of unity, the conditions that would require it to happen were impossible to meet from either side.

When Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, passed away in 1547, the English throne was inherited by his nine years old son, Edward VI. As an only male heir, the throne was directly given to him. However, the young king lasted on the throne for only six years. After contracting measles and tuberculosis, Edward VI died, and England was given into the hands of his stepsister, Mary I., also known as "Bloody Mary". Her presence on the English throne created a lot of uneasiness within the nation. Mary disagreed with her father's religious reformation to Protestantism. Therefore, she brought England back to Catholicism. During her reign, she ordered to burn over three hundred Protestants, this barbaric behaviour was criticised by the public and Parliament. After all, these acts were the reason why she was called Bloody Mary.

Mary I and Elizabeth did not share the same vision for England, and Mary I was not hiding her hatred towards her stepsister, Elizabeth I. As Loades claims, her hate towards her half-sister explains Elizabeth's fast action in restoring her land back to Protestantism.¹⁶ Mary's possible

¹⁵ Clare Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation 1534-1561* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 7.

¹⁶ David Loades, "The Reign of Mary Tudor: Historiography and Research," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 21, no. 4 (1989): 547–58.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/4049536>.

reason for disliking Elizabeth was because she was the daughter of a woman who replaced her mother, Catherine of Aragon, and caused her a lot of distress.

In 1558, Mary I passed away, and after fifteen months of national mourning, Elizabeth I was crowned as the Queen of England. She inherited England with many serious issues that needed to be solved, one of them was the religious restoration. According to Richards, the Tudor Dynasty was in crisis due to diplomatic, secular, religious, royal and identity issues.¹⁷ However, Medieval England improved a lot due to the new atmosphere that Elizabeth brought with herself to the throne. As Dodd mentions, the rich personality of the queen herself coloured the entire era, but it never overshadowed it. The queen's accomplishments that made England a superior in Europe, received a lot of positive response from a variety of social classes and regions.¹⁸ The reign of Elizabeth I was a flourishing time for England, as it experienced a significant cultural development. According to Mason, England grew in terms of self-awareness rather than geopolitically throughout Elizabeth's reign. The last decades of the sixteenth century witnessed a significant cultural rebirth that touched political, religious, and legal norms.¹⁹ Even though her reign was a Golden Age for England, it was also fulfilled with a lot of intrigues and power issues. One of the England's well-known conflicts is the enduring tension with Scotland.

The English Reformation impacted the Scottish soil. Scotland was, till the Reformation a Catholic country. A Protestant reformer and spokesman, John Knox, played an important part in the religious reformation in Scotland. He actively preached to the most mighty and important groups of society around Scotland, and by that, he gained their support. However, his involvement in preaching Protestantism on Scottish soil led to the murder of Catholic cardinal David Beaton. After this incident, Knox was sent to a galley in France and later to his exile, ordered by the Queen Consort of Scotland, Mary of Guise, Mary Stuart's mother. Although, his eviction was a punishment, he used his relegation to plan and create Scottish Protestant Reformation. After a few years on European land, he came to England to seek new possibilities. Due to his past, he could not return to Scotland then. Therefore, he started his exile in England,

¹⁷ Judith M. Richards, "Love and a Female Monarch: The Case of Elizabeth Tudor," *Journal of British Studies* 38, no. 2 (1999): 141.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/175953>.

¹⁸ A. H. Dodd, *Elizabethan England* (London: Batsford, 1974), 15.

¹⁹ Roger A. Mason, "Scotland, Elizabethan England and the Idea of Britain," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 14 (2004): 280.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679321>.

working for the Church of England, where he gained a lot of practice and made important contacts. A few years later, in 1599, his ten-year exile ended, and Knox returned to Scotland.

A few years later, Mary returned to Scotland to rule her nation. When she arrived, she did not get along with Knox. Mary was furious that he was trying to take away her religious beliefs, and thus changing her country. From the moment of her arrival, she was a Catholic Queen to a Protestant country. In 1561 Mary even threatened Scottish protestants to reconsider their links with English Protestants. According to Kellar, her return resurfaced numerous issues associated with the sovereigns of Scotland and England not sharing the same opinions and beliefs.²⁰ The conflict between Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I was rooted mainly in their religious beliefs, which created tensions between their countries. According to Barkley, the Scottish Reformation is a great example of how the role of politics played a much more important part than religion itself. It was pushing the Scots into a possible partnership with England.²¹

For Elizabeth I, it was dangerous to have Scotland as a Catholic kingdom, since their religion made Elizabeth questioned her rights to the English throne. Therefore, Elizabeth I could not accept Catholicism. As Doran mentions that if the Queen of England were to convert to Catholicism, she would have to declare herself as an illegitimate child.²² If Elizabeth supported Catholicism in any way, it would affect her position as a Monarch to Protestant kingdom. Moreover, it would deprive her of the right to the throne, and she would never become a sovereign.

The play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* displays the relationship between Scotland and England as two nations whose destiny is in their rulers' hands. As mentioned in the theoretical part of this chapter, the two nations did have complicated relations that were rooted in the different political and religious paths of their monarchs. Both countries had different conditions to flourish. However, they still share one thing: having their destiny in the hands of Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart. The author of the play takes on a different path when it comes to describing the countries to the reader. La Corbie, a narrator of the story, provides her own interpretation of Scotland:

²⁰ Clare Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation 1534-61* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), 219.

²¹ John M. Barkley. "Review: The Scottish Reformation," *The Scottish Historical Review* 43, no. 136 (1964): 145.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25528562>.

²² Susan Doran, *Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens* (London: The British Library, 2021), 150.

CORBIE. Ah dinna ken whit like your Scotland is. Here's mines. National flower: the thistle. National pastime: nostalgia. National weather: smirr, haar, drizzle, snaw! National bird: the crow, the corbie, la corbeille, la corbeau, moi!²³

In the extract above, Corbie starts the description of Scotland by saying that it is her conception of what Scotland is like to her. In this way, Corbie uses her right as a citizen to create her own figure for her country. Lochhead again utilizes the same method she used when defining the term “national identity”, as discussed in the previous chapter. The ability to make a notion of your state strengthens the character's consciousness and imagination of their country. What is also interesting in Corbie's visualisation is the national animal being described in English, Scottish and French. It draws a parallelism of what languages the rulers of Scotland and England speak; The English translation of the word *crow* symbolises Elizabeth I, and the Scottish translation of that word represents Mary Stuart.

Seeing the English language being used in the description of Scotland is peculiar, raising numerous questions for the reason. There are three possible explanations for Lochhead's decision to include her persona hidden in the language. Firstly, Lochhead might intend to indicate the presence of Elizabeth I on Scottish soil to create a thought of England invaded Scotland with their religious policies. Scotland was mainly a Catholic country, and for that reason, England as a Protestant country, was a threat to Scotland. The root of their conflict lies mainly in Elizabeth's father's religious restoration which impacted a lot of Catholics. Another possible reason for including an English translation of a Scottish national bird is the possible unity and resolution of their conflicts.

In *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, the physical descriptions of Scotland and England are already based at their odds. The author's techniques to capture the main differences between the two nations focus not only on their visual depictions but also on the atmosphere that took over their soils. The description of the two countries is supported with the reference to both Monarchs. As it was already mentioned in the previous chapter of this thesis, the role of Queen in this play was to capture the political position of her country, as well as embody its national identity. The masculine strength of Elizabeth captured England as a superior, almost as untouchable. In contrast, Mary's beauty and feminine “weakness” is supposed to show how subordinate Scotland was to England for many years. The play interprets the Highlands as a country of cool and poverty.

²³ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 5.

The positive interpretations of Scotland's description is the Queen Mary Stuart. Her beauty and charm are emphasized. However, her impressive character is not ingrained from her Scottish self, but it is due to her French side. Lochhead is again pinpointing that even though Mary was a proud Scot, part of herself was still in France. Making this assumption, Lochhead might want to display a possibility of Scotland being considered as a subordinate due to their Queen not being fully patriotic:

For the northern kingdom was cauld and sma. And the people were low-statured and ignorant and feart o their lords and poor? They were starving! And their queen was beautiful and tall and fair and... Frenchified.²⁴

Regarding the description of England, the land is portrayed as a massive country flourishing with its natural and creative richness. It is the opposite of Scotland, which is described as a poor and non-prosperous country:

The other kingdom in the island was large, and prosperous, with wheat and barley and fat kye in the fields o her yeoman fermers, and wool in her looms, and beer in her barrels and, at the mouth of her greatest river, a great port, a glistening city that sucked all wealth to its centre – which was a palace and court of a queen.²⁵

Language makes quite a big difference in the division of the two kingdoms. The diverse language is discussed in the scene whereby a quick snap of Corbie's fingers, the maid Bessie becomes a proud Queen Elizabeth, and Queen Mary, becomes a maid Marian. Elizabeth and Marian are discussing Mary Stuart's interests that she enjoys doing during her spare time, writing poems:

MARIAN. She writes poems apparently...

ELIZABETH. Poems? In English?

MARIAN. In French. And... 'in Scots'.

*A burst of scornful laughter from both at the very idea.*²⁶

The 'in Scots' depicts Scotland as degraded and not taken as a main nation. Moreover, it clearly portrays Scotland as a subordinate country to England. By doing so, the Scottish identity is again being restrained. Hence, Elizabeth and Marian's uncontrollable laughs, which resulted in a reaction to Mary's spare-time activity, strengthen the fact that the English considered themselves superior at this time. Again, it shows that the language symbolises a national identity in this play as well as the symbol of the nation.

²⁴ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 6.

²⁵ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 6.

²⁶ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 14.

In conclusion, the difficult relationship between England and Scotland roots in the forced religious reformation that not only rocked Scotland but also Europe. In the Middle Ages, Scotland was an independent country that wanted to remain this way in the future. However, the religious reformation happening in England created tensions and vulnerability on Scottish soil. Scotland turned from a Catholic country to a Protestant one. With Stuart's arrival Scotland also received much hope for the possible return to Catholicism. Mary Stuart was a strong Catholic who refused to accept the new faith reformation and had no intention of abandoning her Catholic faith. Lochhead's insight into the complicated relationship between the two nations is straightforward: England is superior, and Scotland is its subordinate. The play *Mary Queen of Scot Got Her Head Chopped Off* mainly blames their disagreement on their different language, which was different from reality, where the main problem was the conflicting religious beliefs that both kingdoms had.

The Relationship between Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart

Mary Stuart and Elizabeth Tudor were two powerful monarchs ruling on one island. Despite being cousins, their strong beliefs in their faith and country were strong enough to create a rivalry between the two of them. The actions taken by both of them were in the prospect of their own country, but there could be only one ruler on the land. Even though they never met in person, they wrote themselves letters where they proved to be true to their people and determined to lose anything to ensure their place as a monarch. What adds even more melancholy to their relationship is the cruel end of one of the queens, Mary Stuart.

The first tension in their relationship started in 1561 when Mary Stuart arrived in Scotland after her husband, Francis II of France, died of infection. Her arrival raised many questions and conflicts that significantly changed the everyday life of many Scottish Protestants. Their faith was put into question by politics. According to Kellar, Mary's return brought up various issues, now a generation old, concerning the sovereigns of England and Scotland's support of conflicting ideologies.²⁷ Unsure whether their faith was going to be accepted, they refused to be welcoming towards Mary. On the other hand, Scottish Catholics were excited for their queen to come home.

There was another aspect of her arrival that raised concerns. Having Mary Stuart back in Scotland made the governments and the people question the rightful Monarch to the English throne. Dawson believes that the true extent of her arrival was first hidden by her choice to take the advice of her Maitland and half-brother, Lord James Stewart, whom she kept as her principal minister. Following Mary's return to Scotland, there appeared to be no change in policy. However, there were issues regarding Mary's rights in the English succession.²⁸ Not only did the arrival worry the society, but it also created unease tenders between the two monarchs. Elizabeth was a proud queen of her land, and having Mary back in Scotland made her uneasy. According to Gristwood, once Mary came to England, the dynamic between the two shifted, and there is every indication in their exchanged letters that both Elizabeth and Mary were quite

²⁷ Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation 1534-61*, 219.

²⁸ Jane E. A. Dawson, "Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Darnley, and Anglo-Scottish Relations in 1565." *The International History Review* 8, no. 1 (1986): 3.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40105559>.

dissatisfied with their situation.²⁹ While Mary wrote to her cousin almost obsessively, Elizabeth Tudor chose unresponsiveness to her cousin's appealing letters for a while.

When widowed Mary became more comfortable in Scotland, she was hoping to tie the knot again. According to Walton, Mary had no problems with accepting wedding proposals, unlike Elizabeth. With her desire for the English throne, Mary even searched for her future husband on the English land. The Queen of Scots was aware of how important her decision in choosing a partner was. Moreover, her marriage would define the next heir to the Scottish throne, as well as the potential future King of England. Therefore, all eyes were on Edinburgh as the Queen was making her decision.³⁰ With her beauty and charm, Mary was not short of candidates.

Elizabeth Tudor's assurance of the rights to the English throne were under threat once Mary Stuart tied the knot with Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley. Dawson states that by marrying Darnley, Mary took her cousin's diplomatic initiative and substantially enhanced her negotiating position in the English succession. However, this triumph in international affairs quickly turned out to be a political disaster at home. Stuart had aimed to utilize her marriage to Darnley to establish an independent position in Scottish politics. Still, her husband's character was her desiring goals' first and most significant downfall. Irritating people with an arrogant attitude was typical for Darnley. His desire for the glory as a royal authority without performing their responsibilities and tasks proved to be an unsolvable problem. Due to Mary's opinion of him as an inadequate and disobedient ruler, she refused him the marriage crown, which ultimately caused the couple's separation and the catastrophic results that were followed.³¹ After the separation from her husband, Mary ruled secretly on her own, since divorce was unacceptable in Catholic Church.

Mary's marriage was not the only aspect that threatened Elizabeth's position as an English ruler. It was also Mary's only child, James VI and I of Scotland, who later became the only successor to all three thrones of Scotland, England, and Ireland since Elizabeth did not have any children.

²⁹ Sarah Gristwood, "The Queen as Artist: Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart" in *Authorizing Early Modern European Women: From Biography to Biofiction*, ed. James Fitzmaurice, Naomi J. Miller, and Sara Jayne Steen (Amsterdam University Press, 2022), 105.

³⁰ K. P. Walton, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy: Mary Queen of Scots and the Politics of Gender and Religion*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 89-90.

³¹ Jane E. A. Dawson, "Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Darnley, and Anglo-Scottish Relations in 1565." *The International History Review* 8, no. 1 (1986): 22.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40105559>.

In contrast to Elizabeth, Queen of Scots got married and gave the nation a male heir. By doing so, Mary showed the public that the line of succession was secured with the birth of son James VI. However, Mary's hopes to have a Catholic heir on the throne were still put into uncertainty. As Mason states, the aspirations to have a Catholic heir on the English throne were crushed by Mary Stuart's strange actions that led her forced abdication and later her imprisonment. Clearly, the non-supporters of Mary Stuart were not satisfied with the idea of Anglo-Scottish union.³²

Despite having a complicated relationship with a lot of disagreements, both queens shared the same part of their childhoods; being unwanted by their fathers. As Dunn claims, they were both born as a great regrets to their fathers, and therefore their birth was just a contributing reason in the early death of their parent. Everything because of being born as a female. Their fathers were monarchs without rightful male heirs. In the case of Elizabeth, it seems unlikely that her mother Anne Boleyn would have been killed if Elizabeth had been born as a boy. It is perhaps more likely that Henry's popularity was because of his Reformation, which was widely promoted by his wife and Elizabeth's mother, Queen Anne, rather than his great failing as a father and husband. When it comes to Mary Stuart, her father passed away nearly following her birth. Deeply ill and embarrassed, James turned his head to wall as his child was introduced to him. He appeared to look like a beaten dog prepared to die, as he learnt his successor was a female.³³ Since his death, Scotland was ruled by Mary of Guise as a queen regent ruling in behalf of her daughter Mary.

As a female sovereigns their task in choosing their partners was a crucial for the future of their nations. Queen Elizabeth I gave a hard time to her advisors in not choosing to marry anyone. According to Doran, Elizabeth Tudor pronounced herself as wedded to her kingdom at her accession and initially rejected all aspirants for her hand. It is possible that the fear of sharing the throne and therefore losing a full power over her nation may be the cause for her decision to stay unmarried. The role in her decisions also played severe religious and political barriers with the most viable candidates, regardless whether they were Catholic princes – Archduke Charles of Austria or the brothers of the King of France Charles IX. She still refused to tie the knot with any of them. Another man who showed interests in Elizabeth I was

³² Roger A. Mason, "Scotland, Elizabethan England and the Idea of Britain," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 14 (2004): 287.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679321>.

³³ Jane Dunn. *Elizabeth and Mary: Cousins, Rivals, Queens*. (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 37.

Protestant Lord Robert Dudley. Even though they had feelings for each other, Elizabeth I refused to tie the knot with him.³⁴ Elizabeth's approach to marriage might also be affected by witnessing the dreadful marriage of her cousin Mary and Lord Darnley. Despite having an unhappy ending of their relationship, their beginning was believed to be truthful from Mary's side.

While Queen Elizabeth I remained unmarried, her cousin, on the contrast, faced a real marriage problems. Lord Darnley proved to be a horrible husband to Mary many times, however, his betrayal towards her persona caused a lot of nerves to Scotland, yet only the good news to England. According to Doran, after their wedding, Darnley refused to be the second option after his wife. Despite having the government agreeing before their marriage with him being places in everything first, Mary's persona and name was prioritized. He desired for more authority, he even wished to become co-sovereign. As Mary Stuart refused his demands, the tensions between the couple started to arise. Being marginalized by his people, Lord Darnley's behaviour changed for the worse. He was no longer this kind and charming gentleman that Mary fell in love with. Lord Darnley's complete lack of perception was shown in his communication with his wife. Being arrogant and abusive was typical during their conversations. Darnley even attempted to dethrone her as the head of the Catholic Church. Mary had a clear reaction to his actions; she demoted his status as a husband to the Queen. From that moment, in state papers and coin engravings, his name was listed as a second, right after Mary. Their tension escalated when Lord Darnley was invested with the chivalric Order of St Michael in February 1566. As a result of his actions, Mary forbade him the privilege to carry royal weapons.³⁵ After what her husband proved to be capable of, Mary was terrified of him and did not want to be in his presence. Mary and Darnley did not spend that much time together anymore.

Their complicated relationship that started as an ideal marriage ended by Lord Darnley's tragic death. On 10 February 1567, the King Consort Lord Darnley was assassinated at Kirk o' Field Edinburgh, Scotland. Lord Darnley occupied Kirk o' Field as he was recovering from smallpox. Little did he know that his assassins had chosen this place to be the last place he would ever visit. As Plowden mentions, the sound of massive explosion shocked the residents of the city of Edinburgh around two o'clock in the morning. People started leaving their houses to find out where the explosion was coming from. The missionaries came to the Queen with the

³⁴ Doran. *Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens*, 38-39.

³⁵ Doran, *Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens*, 38.

devastating news that the explosion had taken place in the mansion at Kirk o' Field. The house was destroyed by gunpowder, with the explosion so strong that scarcely a stone remained. Mary was told by the messengers that her husband, Lord Darnley's lifeless body was discovered lying in the yard just a few feet away.³⁶ The outcome of this tragic news occurred to be the only realization that Scotland had lost their king and Mary Stuart became widowed again.

On Mary's orders, the whole Scotland was set into mourning the loss of their king. While grieving her husband, Mary had to set her emotions aside and had to announce the search for her partner's murderers. Her approach to the matter was important for her reputation and image of Queen of Scots. However, the speculations of her participating in plotting the murder arose a lot in both Scotland and England. England's approach to what was happening in Scotland was welcoming.

Despite facing all of the accusations, Mary did not wait a long enough in finding a new potential husband. A few months after the death of her second husband, Mary walked down the aisle to marry James Hepburn, Fourth Earl of Bothwell and Duke of Orkney. Her agreement with the marriage has a dark side. During the time when Mary faced furious riots in Edinburgh, Bothwell offered her a helping hand by inviting her to Dunbar Castle. Mary, considering Bothwell as a good friend of hers, agreed with her escort to Dunbar Castle. However, Bothwell had different plans in his mind; he took Mary to his room and raped her. His crime towards the Queen was dreadful. He did not care that Mary was royalty, to him being a woman required the only responsibility and that was to please a man in bed. This horrendous act made Mary realize that she had no choice but marry Bothwell. As Williams states, she was aware that women who were victims of rape, had to bond with their rapist and eventually marry them.³⁷ Bothwell's awful act towards the Queen, paved the way for him to become a ruler.

The fast-moving act of Mary's marriage to Bothwell created thoughts that she might have wished for Darnley's early death, so she could be free to marry Earl of Bothwell. The evidence to these assumptions was shown in their early letters, known as a Casket Letters, in which the conversation between Mary and Bothwell contributed to the rumours that they did indeed participate in plotting the murder of Lord Darnley. The letter led to Mary's imprisonment and was followed with her abdication. As Doran states, the letters show that Mary and Bothwell had been working together to bring Darnley to Edinburgh. Even though her

³⁶ Alison Plowden, *Two Queens in One Isle: The Deadly Relationship between Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots* (Sutton, 2003), 118.

³⁷ Kate Williams, *Rival Queens: The Betrayal of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots* (London: Arrow, 2009), 195.

approach is confusing, the final outcome was that Mary had to give up her throne to her one-year-old son James who was crowned in Stirling on July 29. In her letter of demission, she claims that she is resigning due to her bad health after suffering miscarriage. She also nominated Moray, her Protestant half-brother, as a Regent for her son since James was still a little baby and could not rule on his own. Perhaps she thought that giving up her position as a Regent, would enable her to live a private life with Bothwell.³⁸ Although she explains the abdication with her poor health, it is more likely that the reason was the pressure and assumptions from the government due to the evidence of her participation in her husband's death.

The newly imprisoned Mary had to face a trial that would decide about her future. Queen of England wanted the trial to take place without Mary being present. However, she still wanted to give a justice to Darnley and so was aware of the importance of the trial. According to Walton, Stuart did not take part in planning to kill her husband, despite their complicated relationship. Yet, her marriage to one of the main participants of the murder, awoke her involvement in the eyes of many.³⁹ The result of the trial was that six Bothwell's servants were executed for the murder of Lord Darnley. Bothwell himself, was only charged with attempted treason and later freed. According to Williams, Mary Stuart was from this moment imprisoned and relied only on one person who could possibly help her to be freed and that was Elizabeth I. The Queen of Scots wrote Queen Elizabeth I a letter where she was still hoping to meet her in person. Mary also expresses her desire for their meeting, where they would converse in great empathy, and all of her worries would be solved.⁴⁰

In *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, the two queens are inscribed as a two opposite people. Queen of England, Elizabeth I has a masculine features that are supposed to symbolize the power of England. In contrast, the Queen of Scots, Mary Stuart is described as a sensitive woman who is sometimes overtaken by her weakness. This picture of their characteristics implies that Elizabeth ruled by head and not by heart as Mary did. Another reason for making Elizabeth Tudor masculinized is the desire for a male heir that both kingdoms strived for. If one of the queens had been born a male, the rivalry between them might never happened.

³⁸ Doran, *Elizabeth and Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens*, 88-89.

³⁹ Walton, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy*, 89-90.

⁴⁰ Williams, *Rival Queens*, 211.

Even Mary Stuart admits that if Elizabeth I was born as a man, she would tie the knot with her, and all problems would be solved:

MARY *and Elizabeth come together on stage but without seeing the other, each in her own separate and different world.*

MARY. Indeed I wish that Elizabeth was a man and I would willingly marry her! And wouldn't that make an end of all debates!⁴¹

The play examines the different approaches to the idea of finding a man and marrying him. The Queen of Scots is open to this idea and is very much welcoming to hearing about aspirants of her hand. After all, when Mary came back to Scotland, she was newly widowed and fully aware of her responsibility of getting married and securing the throne with an heir:

MARY. I want to marry, Bessie, I want to marry and begin my reign at last.⁴²

Elizabeth I does not completely share the determination and excitement of marriage as Mary certainly does. Elizabeth is already a queen of her land, and so she does not have any needs to get married to deserve the crown. In fact, the thought of sharing her kingdom with someone else worries her extremely. As a proud sovereign, she believes that by sharing her crown with her potential husband would hurt her kingdom. The fear of losing full control over her land is that strong that it gives her sleepless nights:

ELIZABETH. Robert!

Awake, sobbing and crying. Enter MARIAN, running.

MARIAN. Bad dreams. Bad dreams again, Your Majesty, hush...

ELIZABETH. Mum was... Dad was... Dad was there, I was only tiny and... my... dolly's head... fell off. Then it changed the way it does in dreams and Leicester, well, we were just two little children playing in the woods, but I knew the way you do that it was really I and Robert and... then long empty corridors I was all alone and a crown rolling...

*She cries again.*⁴³

In the extract above, Elizabeth is having a fantasy but also nightmare with a man, named Robert. She is referring to Robert Dudley, the first Earl of Leicester. Robert Dudley is the only man in the play whom Elizabeth would eventually marry. During this scene, Marian, an Elizabeth's maid, is pushing Elizabeth into marrying him. However, Elizabeth replies that he is married to another woman. Her anger towards his wife is that enormous that she wishes that he would kill her and make it look like a suicide which would enable their marriage. Marian is still trying to

⁴¹ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 11.

⁴² Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 13.

⁴³ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 21.

persuade her Queen that she can tie the knot with Dudley even if his wife is still alive. However, Elizabeth promised Robert Dudley to marry Mary Stuart:

MARIAM. Marry him secretly! In six months... a year... everyone will have forgotten she ever lived.

ELIZABETH. Too late! I've told him I want him to marry Madam o Scots.⁴⁴

Although the decision to give her love to her rival was difficult, Elizabeth strongly believed that Mary would make him happy. By sending him to Scotland, England would also have a loyal Englishman on Scottish soil and that was important for Elizabeth. Again, it is shown that Elizabeth always put aside her personal needs before her responsibilities as a ruler of England. As Elizabeth is discussing the potential husband of Mary with Marian, Lord Darnley enters the room. Elizabeth is pleased to see him after a long time not seeing each other. Once young Darnley gets more comfortable with the presence of the Queen, she proceeds to tell him about her plans of sending Dudley to Scotland. Lord Darnley did not expect Dudley, Elizabeth's favourite, to be sent to Scotland to marry Mary Stuart. However, Elizabeth, a smart woman, starts to change her plans as soon as she sees Darnley, a young and charming man who is also a loyal Englishman. Moreover, Elizabeth starts gaslighting Darnley into marrying Mary Stuart:

I am determined there shall be no other English rival to Leicester for the hand of the Queen of Scots. And it's been troubling me a little, just in case – no fault of your own – but what if the Scotch Queen should take it into her head to prefer *you*, being there, to *him*, being there?⁴⁵

Darnley is charming and competitive young man. Therefore, the idea of Mary considering their marriage appealed to him. Furthermore, his wishes to become a ruler would come to reality, as well as Elizabeth's dreams of not giving Robert Dudley to Mary.

During the scene five, Mary and Darnley are both in one room, Darnley is lying in bed ill with measles and Mary, sitting beside his bed, is nursing him. They are having a conversation about both of their mothers being Catholics. She is opening up to him about how her mother had to send her away from France and how difficult it was for her. Darnley is listening to her, truly paying attention to what she is saying. Their relationship is starting to build up and it is obvious that the interests are mutual. Their interaction almost feels like they have known each other for so long. However, their scene is interrupted by Corbie and Elizabeth who are disgusted as they realize what is about to happen. The honesty and shared interests led them to the aisle where they would promise to love each other before God. Elizabeth is satisfied with their

⁴⁴ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 22.

⁴⁵ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 30.

marriage. She managed to get an Englishman on Scottish soil. Elizabeth is happy that her tactic to firstly deny Darnley's offer to marry Mary made him not listen to her and managed to steal Mary's heart:

And now they are to be married. All it took was for me to expressly forbid it and he was irresistible.⁴⁶

However, as in real life, the love in Mary and Darnley's relationship started disappearing shortly after their wedding. Liz Lochhead describes Lord Darnley as drunk and vulgar towards his wife. This is not any different from how he treated his wife in reality. However, Mary did not completely contribute to keeping her husband calm. Mary has several affairs with different men:

DARNLEY *is now supported by BOTHWELL and BESSIE. Drunk as he is, DARNLEY registers RICCIO with MARY's bare foot in his hands, on his lap.*
DARNLEY. What in hell's name is going on? Leave my wife alone – I'll bloody well.⁴⁷

His anger when seeing his wife being touched by her secretary was reasonable. However, it is hard to decide if he was worried that his wife might leave him or angrier that this could threaten his position as king.

In summary, the relationship between the two queens suffered mainly because of their diverse political beliefs. The plots and secret agendas organized by their advisor and close servants only contributed to their conflicts. Elizabeth and Mary had a lot in common, but also much more what set them apart. In spite of their rivalry coming from their duties as monarchs protecting their country, they still treated each other as a family. Elizabeth was not afraid to show concerns for her cousin. She demonstrated that many times; when Mary was imprisoned, she made sure that it was dealt with her as with a monarch; and when showing her reluctance towards signing Mary's death warrant. The Queen of Scots did not hold back either from talking nicely towards her fellow ruler. Nevertheless, their intriguing protection of their nations is thrown into uncertainty because of their marital choices. As for Mary, the decision to rule her land with a man by her side led to her downfall. Her determination to have both, a good personal life and flourishing reign in the country is making her lose everything that is important to her, a son, the crown, the kingdom, and later her head. Elizabeth, on the other hand, was determined not to marry and kept her promise till the very end. Her unmarried status made her reign vulnerable. Even though by remaining unmarried and childless she kept her throne of England, but she did not secure the English line of succession. Following her death, the throne was

⁴⁶ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 37.

⁴⁷ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 43.

inherited by James VI and I, Mary's only child. It is almost ironic that Elizabeth fought her whole life not to have a Catholic and Scottish ruler on her throne and right after her death James Stuart sat on her throne, as if her rivalry with Mary was for nothing. In contrast, Mary's suffering was not in vain. Even though she did not get a chance to witness her son sitting on the English throne and unite the two nations, it is fair to say, that her death had paid off for the future of England and Scotland.

The Execution of Mary Stuart in 1587

After spending almost nineteen years imprisoned by Queen Elizabeth I on English soil, the end of Mary's suffering came in the most tragic way - beheading. Queen of Scots, Mary Stuart was implicated in plotting to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I. Mary's proven involvement in this treason led to the trial in which she was found guilty, even though she denied her participation in the plot. The result of the trial was to execute the Queen of Scotland and behead her for a treason. The execution that her cousin ordered was a bitter end for many Mary's supports. James IV and I, Mary Stuart's son and rightful heir to the throne, accepted the finality of the trial. After the death of Queen Elizabeth I, he sat on the English throne and united the three kingdoms: England, Scotland, and Ireland.

As already discussed in the previous chapter, Mary Stuart was already held captive and therefore her actions were limited and strictly followed. During her captivity, Mary Stuart was shuffled from one estate to another. Even though the cousins had a difficult diplomatic relationship, they still cared for each other. Williams reports that when Elizabeth learnt that her cousin had been secretly moved to a strictly guarded fortress, she was horrified and shocked by the cruel treatment towards a Monarch and very disturbed by their nerve to imprison Mary without a proper trial.⁴⁸ Even though the cousins did not share the same political ideologies, they always managed to show each other respect. Elizabeth I provided Mary I with luxury imprisonment – being allowed to have a guests and accompanied by her loyal servants and maids.

Mary's obsessive desire to get a response from her cousin, the Queen of England, created a downfall for her life. The correspondence between Mary Stuart and Anthony Babington revealed a plotting of the assassination of Elizabeth I. The plot, also known as The Babington Plot, was revealed by the exchanged letter in which Mary showed support in murdering her cousin. The treason was discovered by Sir Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's principal secretary, who was expecting the assassination a few years before it happened. As Plowden states, for nearly three years, Sir Walsingham was concerned that some major treachery against the queen was being organized. However, there was not enough evidence at that time to confirm the assumption that the planning involved Queen of Scots.⁴⁹ His worries

⁴⁸ Williams, *Rival Queens*, 211.

⁴⁹ Plowden, *Two Queens in One Isle*, 202-203.

turned out truthful and led to the trial of everyone involved. Even though Babington begged Queen Elizabeth I for mercy, he was executed in 1586.

The trial of Queen Mary Stuart took place on 14th October 1586 at Fotheringhay castle in England. Due to the evidence of her correspondence with Babington, where she clearly agreed with the assassination, Mary was pronounced guilty and was sentenced to death. The Queen of Scots denied her authorisation of the attempt to murder her cousin and never confirmed that she wanted Elizabeth dead. According to Tenney, Mary rejected the accusation of her being the author of the letters, submitting them to her clerks or even knowing Babington.⁵⁰ Despite her strong beliefs of her innocence, she had to face execution ordered by Queen Elizabeth I.

The decision to sign her cousin's death warrant was a difficult task for Elizabeth I. Williams states that Elizabeth believed that executing Mary as a result of Parliament's decision was a tragic underestimation of the monarchy. It would imply a possibility for Parliament to murder another ruler. Moreover, Elizabeth firmly believed that monarch could only die in the hands of God.⁵¹ Elizabeth I was worried that the execution would cause even greater tensions between Scotland and England. As Williams continues, another thing that concerned Elizabeth was Mary's son and Scottish ruler, James I. She was worried that if Mary was officially executed in her name, James would try to invade England with the support of Spain in order to get revenge.⁵²

After being pressured by the Parliament, the Queen of England signed the death warrant. It was a difficult decision to make for her, and later she even denied authorizing the order to kill Mary. According to Dawson, at the start of 1566, it appeared more likely that Elizabeth, rather than Mary, would lose her reign during the following eighteen months.⁵³ The decision to sign Mary's death warrant was not deferrable since it could cause her throne.

The news of the Queen of Scots' planned execution was broken to Mary just one night before the beheading by Robert Beale, Clerk of the Privy Council during the reign of Queen

⁵⁰ Tenney, Horace Kent. "The Trial of Mary Queen of Scots," *American Bar Association Journal* 17, no. 5 (1931): 285–91.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25708232>.

⁵¹ Williams, *Rival Queens*, 318.

⁵² Williams, *Rival Queens*, 318.

⁵³ Jane E. A Dawson, "Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Darnley, and Anglo-Scottish Relations in 1565." *The International History Review* 8, no. 1 (1986): 24.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40105559>.

Elizabeth. As Bowen states, Beale was sent to announce the information of her being executed the next morning. She handled the devastating news with grace. Mary appeared unconcerned about her fate, which may have been because of the sorrow that she felt after all. Mary claimed to be relieved to have finally reached the end of nineteen years of pain and misery, but that her soul was innocent, her heart pure, guiltless, and that she could enter the presence of God with confidence and no regret.⁵⁴ Mary Stuart took the accusations calmly and with sort of resignation.

After receiving the news, the Queen expressed a wish for some time alone, which was not granted, and she was asked to come to the Fotheringhay as soon as possible. As Williams states, Mary requested some time to get her affairs in order, however, she was denied and told that she must die, and her passing could not be postponed.⁵⁵ Despite her close servants wanting more time for their queen, the men did not allow it. Before leaving her people heartbroken and alone in the castle, Mary wrote her final letter, dedicated to her brother-in-law Henry III, where she states: “For the sake of Jesus Christ, to whom I shall pray for you tomorrow as I die, I be left enough to found a memorial mass and give the customary alms.”⁵⁶ The letter Mary wrote just six hours before the execution is full of pride for her country and shows a little distress. As Graham mentions, the three-page letter was a powerful handwriting, with little indication of anxiousness. In the letter, Mary asserts her guiltlessness of any wrongdoing and declares that she was punished for her Catholic faith, as well as her ‘god-given right to the English throne.’⁵⁷ Mary Stuart strongly believed that the main reason for her execution was her religion, which was also the root of the conflict between England and Scotland.

The execution took place on 8th September 1587 at Fotheringhay Castle. The whole process started with Mary saying her prayers that were followed by executioners’ hopes that she would forgive them for they were about to do. According to Fraser, Mary did not hesitate with her answers, and stated that she pardoned them from the bottom of her heart, and that she hoped they would finally end all of her hardships. After that, the executioners assisted the Queen in undressing. Robert Wise noted that the Queen undressed so rapidly that it almost

⁵⁴ Marjorie Bowen, *Mary, Queen of Scots* (Endeavour Press, 2015), 3, <https://www.pdfdrive.com/mary-queen-of-scots-d195075427.html>

⁵⁵ Williams, *Rival Queens*, 328.

⁵⁶ *The Last Letter of Mary, Queen of Scots* (Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland, 2017), 14.

⁵⁷ Roderick Graham, *An Accidental Tragedy: The Life of Mary, Queen of Scots* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2009), 423.

appeared as she was rushing out of the world.⁵⁸ Before the execution, Mary spent long nineteen years imprisoned by her cousin, therefore, she took this end as her deliverance.

Upon her arrival to the castle, Mary did not want to show fear in front of those who supported her death. According to Williams, when the executioners grabbed Mary by her hands, she refused to show any signs of fear, instead she was smiling and saying that she never had two such nice gentlemen waiting on her.⁵⁹ Her bravery was seen even as she was stepping on the block, where she was about to meet with death. As Fraser also mentions, the queen knelt down on the cushion in front of her, without showing the slightest hint of fear. Mary loudly quoted in Latin *Psalm In te Domino confide, non confundat in aeternum* – In you Lord is my trust, let me never be confounded. After this, she places her head on the block alongside her hands, which were pushed by the executioners otherwise they would be also cut by the axe.⁶⁰ At this moment, Mary's strength broke down, as she was laying there, she realized what was about to happen and what it meant for her kingdom. Fraser continues that Mary spread out her arms and with tears shouted 'In manus tuas, Domine, confide spiritum meum' - 'Into your hands O Lord I commend my spirit', at least three or four times.⁶¹

Mary's brave arrival to the stage was the embodiment of her strength and pride in her country; she entered the room in a black coat which veiled her infamous red dress. Despite, Mary's brave entrance, the process of execution took a dramatic turn. In Mary's case, the beheading was horrendous; it took the executioners several attempts to separate her head from the body. According to Williams, the first attempt only slammed the back of the head, causing the queen's lips to tremble. The second hit was better; the executioner removed the entire head, leaving just a little muscle, which he subsequently chopped with the third hit.⁶² The unsuccessful execution made the last minutes of Mary Stuart's life even more painful.

The execution of Mary Stuart was not as successful as initially planned. According to Williams, the executioner Mr Bull lifted her head off the ground by her hair without realizing that it was a wig, and so Mary's head tumbled on the floor. It was stated that her lips were still moving, a quarter of an hour following the execution. After the Dean pronounced some words, the men poured out of the hall, patting themselves on the back for a successful task. Meanwhile, Mary's wretched body was still on the stage and proceeded to be undressed by the executioners,

⁵⁸ Antonia Fraser, *Mary, Queen of Scots* (New York: Dell, 1971), 622.

⁵⁹ Williams, *Rival Queens*, 333.

⁶⁰ Fraser, *Mary, Queen of Scots*, 623.

⁶¹ Fraser, *Mary, Queen of Scots*, 623.

⁶² Williams, *Rival Queens*, 333.

as was traditional. During the undressing process, they discovered Mary's tiny dog, terrified and soaked in blood, clinging the still-warm body of its owner.⁶³ The dog was brought by Mary to keep her company while facing her death.

After James VI and I became the ruler of the English Crown, he moved his mother's body to the final place for peace. Williams states that King James I ordered the exhumation of his mother, Mary Stuart, in 1612. Her body was reburied in Westminster Abbey, in a lovely white marble, right next to the tomb of her former mother-in-law, Lady Lennox, and only a few feet away from Elizabeth. In death, the two monarchs and cousins were closer than they had ever been. For all her life, Mary's greatest wish had been to meet up with her cousin, Elizabeth. Her wish was finally fulfilled in Westminster Abbey.⁶⁴

The execution of Mary Stuart is a historic event that has been used for many contemporary plays and writings, the majority of which represent Mary's determination to lead as well as her strong belief in her faith. Liz Lochhead followed a different approach in portraying Mary's final day. The interpretation of Mary's execution in the play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* is rather parodic.

The last scene of the play draws attention to the final day of Mary Stuart's life. Not only does it discuss her tragic end, but it also illustrates the problematic side of Scotland trying to find its way with the definition of identity and nationality. Despite the fact that in this play Mary is described rather as a foreigner, she wants to fight for her country and wants to prove that she is capable of ruling even England. However, people around her do not share the same view. Her second husband, Bothwell, claims that she is ruling to the wrong country:

BOTHWELL. Well, Madam, I fear you are queen o the wrang kintra. Terries we are, it is our nature. Be a while afore ye make kittocky kittling-cats o us, or wee saft-moothed spaniels to stick oor heids in yer lap and fawn ower each ither while we wait for yir favours.⁶⁵

This assumption is hurtful to Mary. She gave a lot to Scotland and is still not giving up. Therefore, she thinks she deserves to be treated with respect, especially because she is the queen who was at the time expecting a future heir to Scotland:

⁶³ Williams, *Rival Queens*, 333.

⁶⁴ Williams, *Rival Queens*, 343-344.

⁶⁵ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 25.

MARY. I'm your queen. And in three years in this country I canna depend on any o ye to show me royal respect as I am due, although in every way I try – (*She dissolves into shaming tears.*)⁶⁶

Even though Mary Stuart, the Queen of Scots, really tried to do everything in the prospect of her country, her thoughtless acts had consequences that threw behind everything she was working on so hard. Her participation in intrigues against her second husband and later her attempt to murder her cousin, even though she always denied her involvement in any of these plots, led to her tragic end.

The execution of Mary Stuart in this play is portrayed in a modern time. The time setting of the event is shifted to a modern Scotland in the twentieth century. All of the characters are transformed into a little children playing in the playground. The reason for turning the adults into children, and the Medieval times into a modern everyday life, might be intended by Lochhead to reflect the fact that without history there would be no presence. When it comes to the transformation of the adults into children, Lochhead is attempting to show them as the future of Scotland. What adds even more childish behaviour to the scene is the bullying of Mary Stuart and intimidation of her character, especially her religious beliefs:

MAREE. I'm a Catholic. Ih-hih.

WEE BETTY. Ih-hih? How you mean 'uh-huh'?

MAREE. Just...

She shrugs, trying not to rock the boat.

WEE BETTY. Well, away and get converted! Go an get born again. Away an jine the Bandy Hope, get tae the Tabernacle and go on a Crusade up the Tent Hall tin hut and get saved or something – Away and get saved for a sweetie!⁶⁷

Elizabeth I, as a Wee Betty is aggressive towards Mary, this is not how she treated her in reality in the sixteenth century, but again it shows the childish behaviour and ignorance of today's generation about history. The execution being played by children, might be seen as a depressing approach. However, Lochhead wanted to show that the today's generation did not learn anything from the past and are still repeating the same mistakes as their ancestors, in their case, the old version of themselves. The mistakes, such as belittling someone for their language or religion are crucial factors that are still very much present in today's Scotland.

The humiliation of Mary Stuart was supported by other characters, Lord Bothwell James Hepburn, and by Knox, nicknamed as Smelly Wee Knooxy. It was the latter who took the bullying of Maree to an even higher scale. His historical persona, Bothwell, was known for

⁶⁶ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 25.

⁶⁷ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 74.

being able to seduce women, as well as his disgusting act towards Her Majesty the Queen of Scots. It was him who raped her at the time when she thrived for security and comfort. Lochhead took this event and portrayed it in the final day of Mary Stuart. However, it is not a rape that Bothwell humiliated her with, but with the chanting of others, he was forced to pull her skirt up so, that he made her feel embarrassed:

JAMES HEPBURN. Haw! Get Smelly Wee Knooxy!
Some grab SMELLY WEE KNOXXY, some MAREE.
WEE BETTY. Stick his heid up her skurt!
And they all shove SMELLY WEE KNOXXY 's head up MAREE 's skirt, holding both of their struggling victims. SMELLY WEE KNOXXY is crying in real terror and distress. MAREE too.
THE REST. A queen cried Mary hud a canary up the leg o her drawers!⁶⁸

This act left Smelly Wee Knooxy in embarrassment. At the beginning, the other children were rooting for Knooxy to treat Maree this way. Wee Betty enjoyed it very much and after the humiliating act, she continued in bullying Maree in the playground. She started to perform witchcraft on Maree that consisted of some physical and spirited action. Being considered a witch in the sixteenth century was an insult and serious accusation that would lead to burning the person's body at the stake. Wee Betty's conduct towards Maree made James Hepburn uneasy and he tried to help Maree by escaping with her from them. This does not leave the other quiet and they start to make fun of Hepburn as well by chanting at them that they are in love with each other:

SMELLY WEE KNOXXY. Haw, Hepburn! Ah think you love her.
WEE BETTY. So do I, I think you love her! You gonny marry her?
JAMES HEPBURN. Nuh!
WEE BETTY. Aye, you urr! James Hepburn loves Maree Stewart!
THE REST. James Hepburn loves Maree Stewart! James Hepburn loves Maree Stewart!⁶⁹

After that, Mary spits into his face, which can potentially mark Mary Stuart's resignation on life at the end of her life or as well as her desire not to be used again by anyone.

Afterwards, James Hepburn is pronounced as an executioner, and all the children start to chant "Mary Queen of Scots got her head chopped off. Mary Queen of Scots got her head chopped off!"⁷⁰ This ending has two potential interpretations of Mary's death. The first one is

⁶⁸ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 75.

⁶⁹ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 76.

⁷⁰ Lochhead, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, 77.

the end of Scotland's fight against Scotland, which was led mainly by Mary. The other one has a more positive meaning; seeing Mary's death as a way for Scotland to move forward.

To summarize, the beheading of Mary Stuart for a treason was a brutal act towards the monarch. However, from Elizabeth's point, it was necessary to be done to protect her crown. Despite never sitting on the English throne, it is only comforting to know that her blood sat on the throne and united the two kingdoms together and by so, James IV and I ended the conflict that lasted for so many years. Hence, Mary Stuart's enduring fight to rule is one the greatest fights in the history of Great Britain. Liz Lochhead's interpretation of the execution of Mary Stuart draws the tensions that are still very much present in today's world and provides an insight into the female prejudices and what Mary's death meant for Scotland's future.

Conclusion

This bachelor thesis aims to analyse the modern interpretation of the infamous relationship between the queens, Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart, in the historical modern play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* by the Scottish author Liz Lochhead. Based on the literary analysis of their coexistence on one island and the people that accompanied them during their reigns, it can be concluded that the influence of their advisers and religious reformations are the most important factors to consider when portraying their relationship in modern historical play. Moreover, Lochhead put a bit of her own experience into this play. As a female writer in the late twentieth century, being underestimated by the society was a part of her everyday life. This research clearly illustrates women's role in the sixteenth and late twentieth centuries, but it also raises the question of the definition of Scottish national identity.

The twentieth century was not the first time the Scottish national identity was uncertain. It was already questioned during the sixteenth century when the domination of the English kingdom on the shared island was significant. The complicated relationship between the two nations was due to the diverse religious beliefs of their monarchs – Elizabeth I was a Protestant, while Mary Stuart was a Catholic. Their harsh coexistence on one island caused a lot of intrigues and unrest in Scotland and England. Mary's obsessive conviction of her right to the English throne led her to make decisions that later caused her the loss of her kingdom and even her head. Mary Stuart's main downfall was her involvement in plotting Queen Elizabeth's death, also known as The Babington Plot. The exchanged letters between Mary and Babington were discovered by Elizabeth's spy master and were taken as evidence of her involvement. Despite Mary's rejection of her complicity in the plot, the letters were still sufficient evidence for Elizabeth's advisers to convict Mary Stuart of treason and for her execution. Mary Stuart's death is a historic moment that displays her determination to sit on the English throne no matter what. It is necessary to say that even though Mary herself never took over the English throne, her attempts to gain the throne were not pointless. It is pleasing to know that her son James IV and I sat on the English throne and managed to do something that even his mother and aunt could not achieve; unite the two kingdoms. The play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* blends the past political and social situation in Scotland with its present element and shows that the past is still defining today's world. Moreover, the play deals with the depiction of national identity and how it plays an essential part in building a character as a citizen. Each character has a different view on what should identity look like and so it shows that the national identity is a very subjective subject. What also plays an important part in this play is the uncertainty of the

importance and definition of national identity is still a sensitive topic in modern Scotland. Therefore, it can be said that defining the national identity in Scotland is not only a historical issue but also a contemporary concern.

Resumé

Cílem této bakalářské práce je analyzovat vztah Alžběty I. a Marie Stuartovny v moderní literatuře dvacátého století, konkrétně v díle *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* od skotské autorky Liz Lochhead. Tato bakalářská práce má celkem čtyři kapitoly, z nichž každá představuje teoretický rámec a jeho literární analýzu v již zmíněném dramatu.

V první kapitole se práce zabývá vydavatelskými a psacími podmínkami, které ve druhé polovině dvacátého století omezovali tvůrčí tvorbu Skotským autorkám. Uznání a snaha prosadit se na literární půdě britských autorů, nebylo pro ženy lehké. Omezení ženských autorek, které vzbuzovalo podporu nerovnosti pohlaví bylo především z důvodu obav o možnosti propagace feminismu. Byla to právě izolace ženských autorek od vydávání jejich děl, která zabráňovala k tomu, aby se taková témata dostala do společnosti. I přes všechna omezení, skotské autorky nepřestaly v boji o právo vydávat svou tvorbu. Jejich hlas byl vyslyšen britskou univerzitou Open University, která umožnila skotským autorkám vydávat jejich díla. Teoretická práce se dále postupně zabývá dalším omezením ve vydavatelství, které nepostihlo pouze ženy, ale i muže. Dvacáté století bylo pro skotský národ období nejasnosti. Skotská identita byla neustále porovnávána s anglickou identitou. Skotský národ se ale domníval, že jejich přirovnání k Angličanům je to samé, jako přirovnávat ženu k muži. Autoři se shodují, že srovnání těchto národů je vskutku nemístné. Každý národ má svoji kulturu, jazyk, a tudíž i svoji identitu. Kapitola je završena analýzou problematiky skotské národní identity v díle *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*. Zároveň zobrazuje potlačení ženského pohlaví ve skotské literární tvorbě dvacátého století zobrazené v literárních postavách.

Druhá kapitola představuje historický kontext politického vztahu mezi Skotskem a Anglií v šestnáctém století. Tedy v době, kdy na anglickém trůnu vládla královna Alžběta I. a na skotském trůnu Marie Stuartovna. Teoretická část nadále zobrazuje kořeny jejich komplikovaného vztahu, který setrvává až do dnešní doby. Mezi hlavní neshody těchto dvou národů tkví v náboženské reformě, zprostředkované otcem Alžběty I., králem Jindřichem VIII. Anglický král Jindřich VIII. toužil po mužském dědici, a po neúspěšném početí syna se chtěl rozvést se svoji první manželkou, Kateřinou Aragonskou. Rozvod nebyl v římskokatolické církvi uznáván, a tudíž Jindřichova žádost byla ve Vatikánu zamítnuta. Jindřich VIII. byl přesvědčen, že chce svůj vztah s Kateřinou ukončit. Nezbyvalo mu nic jiného, než se odprosit od Říma a vytvořit své vlastní náboženství se svými pravidly. Roku 1534, Anglikánská církev nabíla plnou moc nad Anglií a sám král Jindřich VIII. se jmenoval hlavou církve. Reforma

náboženství mu napomohla ke sňatku s Annou Boleynovou a k legitimizaci jejich potomka, Alžběty I.

Tato náboženská reforma se dotkla i sousedních království, jako bylo například Skotsko. Na tomto území hrál velmi důležitou roli John Knox, který v roce 1560 založil protestantskou církev Skotska. Jeho náboženská reforma byla podporována ze strany Anglie, nikoli však ze strany katoličky Marie Stuartovny. Když se královna vrátila na území Skotska, stala se tak katolickou královnou protestantskému lidu. Návrat královny na skotské území, rovněž vyvolal několik neshod mezi protestanty a katolíky. Zároveň otevřel otázku o právu Marie Stuartovny na anglický trůn. Marie Stuartovna byla hrdou katoličkou a přála si, aby její národ sdílel její víru jako před reformou. Co se týče Alžběty I., ta neměla na výběr. Její matka, Anna Boleynová byla protestantka, a kdyby Alžběta I., uznala katolictví za právoplatné náboženství, obrala by sama sebe o nárok na anglický trůn. Konec druhé kapitoly je završen literární analýzou vztahu mezi Skotskem a Anglií a jeho důvody i následné dopady na Skotsko v díle *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*.

Třetí kapitola je rozdělena na teoretickou a praktickou část. Tato kapitola se zabývá historickým kontextem vztahu mezi Alžbětou I. a její sestřenicí Marií Stuartovnou. Poté zkoumá jeho zobrazení v již zmíněném literárním díle od autorky Liz Lochhead. Pozornost je věnována především intrikám a politickému spiknutí, které zhoršily nejen vztah mezi královnami, ale i vztah mezi Skotskem a Anglií. K zhoršení jejich vztahu začalo v roce 1561, kdy se královna Marie Stuartovna vrátila na skotskou půdu, po smrti svého manžela Františka II. Francouzského, a nárokovala si pravomoc k anglickému trůnu. Ovdovělá Marie Stuartovna věděla, že její nárok může posílit pouze sňatkem. Roku 1565, se Marie provdala za skotského šlechtice z rodů Stuartovců, Jindřicha Stuarta, Lorda Darnleyho. I přesto že z jejich vztahu vzešel následník Skotského trůnu a později i Anglie, Jakub I. Stuart, jejich vztah nebyl zcela ideální. Jindřichova arogantní povaha a nutkavost k přivlastňování královských pravomocí, přispěly nejen k rozpadu jejich vztahu, ale měly také silný dopad na cestu k pádu vlády Marie Stuartovny. V roce 1567, Lord Darnley odjel do probošství v Kirk O' Fieldu, kde se léčil z onemocnění. Klidný pobyt u hradeb Edinburghu, přerušil mohutný výbuch, který probošství zcela zničil. Nedaleko od troskek stavby bylo nalezeno tělo krále Skotska. Výsledkem činu bylo že Skotsko přišlo o svého krále a Marie Stuartovna se opět stala vdovou. Mezi hlavní podezřelý z účasti vraždy krále byl skotský protestantský šlechtic James Hepburn, 4. hrabě z Bothwellu. K jeho obvinění přispívalo nejen jeho náboženství, ale i náklonost ke královně. V době, kdy se Skotsko ponořilo do státního smutku za svého krále, královna musela čelit několika obviněním

z účasti na vraždě Lorda Darnleyho. Zatímco v Edinburghu vládl neklid, Bothwell pozval Marii Stuartovnu do svého sídla Dunbar, kde se mohla v klidu zotavovat z manželovy smrti. Královna považovala Bothwella za dobrého přítele, a tudíž s nabídkou úniku souhlasila. Bohužel, Bothwell měl jiný záměr. Během jejího pobytu v Dunbaru, se James Hepburn dopustil strašného činu vůči královně – znásilnění. V té době bylo považováno za samozřejmost, že pokud byla žena znásilněna musela se za svého násilníka provdat. Marie si tohoto pravidla byla vědoma a se sňatkem souhlasila. Oznámení o jejich svatbě vyvolalo ve Skotsko a Anglii teorie, že smrt Lorda Darnleyho nebyla náhoda a že se na plánování vraždy podílela i Marie Stuartovna. Anglický parlament se k těmto obviněním stavil příznivě. Obzvlášť když tak silná nařčení vedla k abdikaci Marie Stuartovny a jejímu následnému uvěznění. I přesto že vztah mezi Alžbětou a Marií nebyl dokonalý, je známo, že pro sebe chtěly to nejlepší. Když byla Marie uvězněna, Alžběta I. ji dopřávala přítomnost svých oddaných komorníků. Teoretická část se nadále zaobírá možnými důvody, proč se Alžběta I. nikdy neprovdala a neměla děti. Jednou z možností byla její oddanost svému národu. Královna se obávala, že pokud by se vdala musela by se tak dělit o trůn se svým partnerem a ztratila by tak plnou moc nad vládou Anglii. Dalším možným důvodem pro její rozhodnutí mohlo být svědectví nepovedených vztahů její rivalky a sestřenice Marie Stuartovny. I přesto že vláda Alžběty I. je považována za jednu z nejvíce prosperujících v historii Británie, její rozhodnutí neprovdát se, a tudíž i nezplodit následníka anglického trůnu vedlo k neklidnému vztahu mezi královnou a jejími poradci. V roce 1603, se po její smrti stal vladařem Anglie, syn Marie Stuartovny, Jakub I. Stuart, který jako první vladař sjednotil Skotsko, Anglii a Irsko.

Poslední kapitola je věnována popravě Marie Stuartovny, která se uskutečnila 8. února roku 1581 na zámku Fotheringhay. Marie Stuartovna strávila osmnáct let jako rukojmí královny Alžběty I. Důvod k jejímu uvěznění byl uniklý dopis, který prokázal její účast na vraždě jejího druhého manžela, Lorda Darnleyho. Během uvěznění na několika anglických hradech, Angličtí katolíci začali idealizovat Marii, a dokonce i vznesli touhu po vraždě Alžběty I. a následném nasazení Marie Stuartovny na anglický trůn. Jejich radikální myšlenku Marie schválila v jednom ze svých dopisů pro jejího obdivovatele Anthonyho Babingtona. Bohužel se tak podporou této myšlenky zapletla do pokusu o vraždu královny Anglie. Tento dokument, který neměl spatřit svět byl bohužel odhalen Alžbětiným šéfem špionáže Sirem Francisem Walsinghamem. Po předložení důkazu, byla Marie Stuartovna prohlášena vinou za velezradu a odsouzena k smrti. Trvalo několik měsíců než se Alžběta I. rozhodla podepsat rozsudek smrti své pretendentky. Spekuluje se, že i přes své neshody, bylo pro Alžbetu I. velmi obtížné poslat

svoji sestřenicí na smrt. Teoretická část se nadále postupně dostává k průběhu poprav Marie Stuartovny a popisuje královnino hrdinské přijetí svého osudu.

Poslední kapitola je ukončena analýzou zobrazení poprav Marie Stuartovny v moderním historickém dramatu *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*. Autorka díla, zobrazuje smrt královny v neobvyklé interpretaci. Historické postavy se přenesou do Skotska ve dvacátém století a stanou se z nich děti, které si hrají na dětském hřišti. Samotná poprava zde není fyzicky představena, avšak Mariino zavražďování a zesměšňování ostatními postavami je zde silně viditelné. Lochhead se skrze časovou proměnu postav, podařilo poukázat, jak je konflikt mezi Skotskem a Anglií stále přítomen a jeho příčinou je nejasnost nad definicí národní identity.

Výsledkem této bakalářské práce je doložení literární analýzy vztahu anglické královny Alžběty I a skotské panovnice Marie Stuartovny v moderní literatuře. Jejich komplikovaný vztah, způsobený nesdílenými politickými zájmy, umožnil moderní literatuře zobrazit prolínání minulosti v přítomnosti politického a společenského vztahu obou národů. Zároveň poukazuje na přítomnost stop z minulosti v moderním Skotsku.

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