THE INFLUENCE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I ON ELIZABETHAN AGE

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research study is to provide insights into the life of Queen Elizabeth and its reign. The term period of Queen Elizabeth I reign has been the longest in the house Tudor. This research study deals with the life history of Queen Elizabeth I and also critically reveals how successful the political reign of Queen was. The complete scenario of her life from birth to death and the after effect of her death are also discussed. The study is hoped to provide a critical understanding about the period of her reign and portray the character of Queen Elizabeth.

Keywords: Reign, Queen Elizabeth, History, Scenario, Political.


1.0 INTRODUCTION

Elizabethan England or golden age is a reference given to the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. With Elizabeth support England was in an era where arts, peace and prosperity flourished and blossomed together. Elizabeth was known as hard working on the matters of court, and she was known to take time to pursue leisure. Elizabeth was also known for her love towards music and could also play the flute. A few renowned court musicians on time are William Byrd and Thomas Tallies. Elizabeth's interests also included dancing and watching plays (Levin, 1994). The reign of Elizabeth I was in huge support for large writers Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare. Writers have always paid great tribute towards the queen in numerous literal manners. Elizabeth I was also referred to as 'Gloriana' from 'the faerie queen' which was given by the poet Edmund Spenser and was based upon Queen Elizabeth.

In Greenwich England 1533 on date 7th and month September Queen Elizabeth I was born. Elizabeth claimed the throne after the the death of her sister Queen Mary in 1558, and she ruled next 44 years till 1603 (Elizabeth, Queen & Elizabeth, 2000). After Queen Mary's rule, Elizabeth had to inherit a large number of problems bought up or created in the reign of Queen Mary. England and France were at war; this war drains a lot of resources money time
and manpower of the royal kingdom. Many religious issues also occurred when Mary restored England's culture into Roman Catholic by any means and tools. Mary was even named Bloody Mary after she executed 300 Protestants. In the time of Elizabeth's reign, she acted extremely swiftly on these two crucial matters. Passage of the act of supremacy was called by Elizabeth in 1559's first parliament session (MacCaffrey, 1994). This helped in the reestablishment of the Church of England with uniformity act too; this eventually leads to the common prayer book. Elizabeth always had a moderate and soft approach to religious conflicts in England. Although Catholics had to suffer persecution in a religious context and also a few were executed in her reign, and this is different as per some historians. This lead to the Roman Catholic Church's dim and narrow view on Elizabeth's action and further in 1570 Elizabeth was excommunicated by Pope Pius V (Levin, 1994). Then with the help of her key advisers, Elizabeth was able to end the war between France and England and even ended class with superpowers like Spain. McLaren, A. N. (1999) added that in 1585 Elizabeth encouraged and supported the rebellion in the Netherlands against Spain. Spain then targeted for England and England's navy in 1588 defeated Spanish Armada. It has been stated that one of the most major factors for a victory of England was that weather was in their favour.

The main aim of this research study is to critically study the life of Queen Elizabeth and its reign. After Queen Mary's rule, Elizabeth had to inherit a large number of problems bought up or created in the reign of Queen Mary. This research study will deal with the life history of Queen Elizabeth I and also critically learn how successful the political reign of Queen was. Both the after and early life of the Queen will be studied along with the after effect of the death of Elizabeth I.

The present research attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

1. Who is Queen Elizabeth I?
2. How successful was the political reign of Queen Elizabeth I?
3. What was the after effect of the death of Elizabeth I?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn his second wife had daughter Elizabeth I (Clay,1847). Being England's highly famous monarch, Elizabeth I was brought up in difficult and complex circumstances. On the basis of no questionable charges of adultery and conspiracy, Anne Boleyn was beheaded by her husband King Henry VIII Elizabeth's father. While this happened Elizabeth was only two years of age. However, like any other royal child Elizabeth was raised. She used to learn music and excel different languages. However as her father died in the year 1547, she spent a little time under the care of Catherine Parr, her stepmother. William Grindal and Roger Ascham were hired on behalf of Elizabeth by Parr (Doran, 2002). Later Elizabeth had to return to Hatfield's royal estate away from the court as tensions started to emerge between Parr and Thomas Seymour her new husband. Later on, her association with Seymour went under investigation, and Seymour was striven for scheming to lately marry Elizabeth in an offer to pick up power. Seymour was discovered liable and hence executed. Elizabeth and her cousin sister Mart were considered illegitimate for the throne as her father always wanted a male heir. Elizabeth's and Mary's half-brother Edward was the King's first and only son from Jane Seymour (his third wife). Later on Mary and Elizabeth were later declared as potential heirs of the throne. Edward was born in 1573, and he
succeeded to the throne after his father as King Edward VI after the death of King Henry VIII in the year 1547 (Hunt & Whitelock, 2010).

With the death of Edward VI in 1553 just six years after the death of King Henry VIII, Elizabeth indulged into political matters and issues. Elizabeth, her cousin Mary and their cousins Lady Jane Grey were in line of the throne and crown, both of them (Mueller, 2001). Grey was appointed as successor to the throne by Edward, but as he claimed the throne only for six years, Grey was unseated in just nine days by Mary and English people. Elizabeth used to support Mary in her issues but she was always suspicious about Mary. Being a Roman Catholic, Mary decided to restore the England to her faith by undoing break from the pope by her father. Meanwhile Elizabeth went along religious change and remained a legitimate candidate for the crown and throne and also for those who wished to return to Protestantism. In order to make Elizabeth as queen, in year 1554 Thomas Wyatt against Mary organized a rebellion (King, 1990). As his plan a plot was discovered Mary imprisoned Elizabeth as quickly as possible. However Elizabeth disputed for her involvement in the plan but Mary was not convinced. Although Elizabeth was soon released but her life now in hands of Mary. Thomas on the other hand was executed and he did not confirm for involvement of Elizabeth in the rebellion plan. With this Elizabeth came back to Hatfield for studies and in 1558 she claimed throne after the death of Mary.

Elizabeth I was a queen of England for a significantly long period, throughout this period of 44 years the governing in the kingdom was stable and prosperous too. After her name this era was known as Elizabethan era. Elizabeth I lived 7th September 1533 to 24th march 1603 and she claimed throne at the young age of 25 years and remained ruling till next 44 years up to her death (Weir, 2011). Being daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn his second wife, she was a born princess but due to machinations of politics Elizabeth I was declared illegitimate. However after the death of her half-sister Mary Tudor's death Elizabeth was crowned. During the reign of Elizabeth I Protestantism in England was established and in 1588 Spanish armada was defeated from England. Elizabeth I in her ruling period maintained great peace in the divided countries and even got them together, also she created an environment in the kingdom where arts could flourish.

Mueller (2001) mentioned that in March 24th 1603 in Surrey at Richmond Palace Queen Elizabeth died. It is believed that the cosmetics called the spirit of Saturn and made from mixing white lead and vinegar used by the queen to look pale infamously, might have impacted her health in an adverse manner. The virgin and non-married Queen Elizabeth I did not have any children and hence with her the end of House of Tudor came near, which was a royal family ruling England since 1400s. After Elizabeth's death the throne was given to son of her cousin rival, Mary Stuart, Scots queen and succeeded as James I. Thought the reign of Elizabeth, Mary Stuart was considered as one of the major internal threats to the throne. Scotland's King James V's daughter, Mary was able to unite France with Scotland as she married with the future King Francis II (MacIntyre, 1998). However Mary returned to Scotland after the end of Francis in 1561. Mary was considered and rightful as monarch of England by many English Catholics as she had been brought up as a Catholic and also mar had previously made claims to English Crown. In 1567 Elizabeth imprisoned her cousin on attempts of several assassination including Babington Plot. Queen Elizabeth imprisoned her cousin Mary for approximately 20 years and then she agreed upon to have Mary executed in year 1587.
2.1 The Virgin Queen
For the Queen Elizabeth I claiming the crown and throne was a loud and pressing issue. However through her rule or reign she presented her skill and talents as a diplomat also she well managed the suitable and potential royal matches for wedding (Hammer, 2000). Because of her father and sister, challenges and troubles had to be faced by Elizabeth for royal weddings. Mary when alive had infamously and unpopularly married to Philip II from Spain because the two shared same devotion and had faith in Roman Catholic culture. In order to reunite both countries again Phillip once offered Elizabeth to marry him. Other potential people to marry Elizabeth were royals like Archduke Charles from Austria, Sweden's King and from France future King Henry III (Mueller, 2001). Elizabeth, as she was available for marriage, she used this to meet political ends. But never ever she said yes to any wedding of hers. However, she was known to have interest in court members like Robert Dudley and their relationship was more of gossip and rumour. But as Dudley's wife died mysteriously both got under suspicion.

However, Elizabeth did not want to share her powers with a spouse. With time her image changed to a queen married to her duties and job including her people. Hence for the same passion and dedication she was named as "Virgin Queen".

2.2 Later Years
Through the reign of Elizabeth she had faced most troubles in final years. Unemployment, inflation and poor & field crop cultivation. In Ireland there were riots due to food shortage and large presence of rebellions. She even faced challenges and people against her authority, like Robert Devereaux, the Earl of Essex. Elizabeth had send him to Ireland for quelling of rebellion guided by Hugh O'Neill. But as Essex returned back to England, he started his own rebellion and was executed in 1601 for treason (Heisch, 1980).

2.3 Elizabeth I “Golden Speech”
As with time Elizabeth's power was fading, she still gave support and devotion to the people. In 1601 she gave her most famous speech, also referred as her "Golden Speech", in the speech she was self-reflective to the period of reign. Although her reign's end was quite difficult, she was always known a queen for her people (Hunt & Whitelock, 2010). As she was on the throne for long period, the prosperity and growth was stable and consistent. Elizabeth's clever mind and strong and sharp wits supported the kingdom through political challenges and religious as well.

3.0 METHODOLOGY
This article consists of data retrieved from several secondary sources such as online journal, internet, books, reports and some historian documents. Each and every description and thoughts for this article belongs to many different perspectives of various historians and researchers. Several databases such as Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar were accessed in retrieving the secondary data.
4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

In the entire British history Queen Elizabeth I has been the most celebrated and respected monarch. Her term period of reign has been the longest in the house Tudor. Heisch (1980) opined that although being the younger of the two from King Henry VIII, Elizabeth was not expected to be a queen ever. Elizabeth lost her mother at two years of age and due disturbance in her parents’ marriage she was considered illegitimate to the throne. Due birth of Edward her half-brother and male heir to the throne, it became more difficult for Elizabeth. But due to Edward's death and only 6 years reign Mary acquired throne. Mary's reign was full of disasters and of very short term; this lead Elizabeth to inherit crown and throne in 1558 (King, 1990).

Elizabeth reign was full of prosperity and arts flourished. There were church bells with bonfires, to which thousands gathered to merry and drink. In Elizabeth's reign vast majority thought that women are superior to man in many manners and earlier this was due to majorly patriotic rule. This ideology was in time of Mary Tudor also but her reign was full of turbulence and disasters. Elizabeth's reign on the other had was stable and prosperous. Also before Queen Elizabeth's reign it was considered that queen alone cannot handle an empire and they need husband for same, but she changed this too. There were no mistress and no master amongst Elizabeth's courtiers. This lead to her image as "The Virgin Queen", a legend. Elizabeth led her people like prince and image of her father King Henry VIII (Weir, 2011). She always knew when she should express her femininity. Principles of her court were based upon love for chivalric and her presence at centre. However she has also shown woman weaknesses sometimes for making an excuse. Elizabeth stated that her sex do not permit it to parliamentary delegation when she was under pressure to sign a death warrant for Scots queen Mary.

Doran (2002) Elizabeth’s extraordinary skill of self-discipline was the major key of her queenship. She was the queen who live for her more than her self-interest. Throughout her reign prosperity flourished, there were many great and noble achievements, disputes and cruciality over religious issues were reduced. There were many great settlements for growth and development including overseas expansion. Great victories in wars were achieved like in Armada. A new cultural vision of life was provided by writers like Shakespeare. Thus this era of Elizabeth's reign is known as "Golden Age" (McLaren, 1999). Another side of the same story is related to heretical and illegitimate usurper Catholic Europe, who were in rivalry from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. The most brutal of them was Mary, Scots queen and also English queen for approximately 30 years. Since Elizabeth used to pay her troops well they support her good and sailors were most celebrating in the victory of 1588. But as later on crops and harvest failed with unemployment and economic hardship and difficult time for Elizabeth, for she implemented new poor laws. However due to her success she was known as Gloriana and Good Queen Bess by her people, also she changed people's views toward female rulers.

5.0 DISCUSSION

Elizabeth was youngest of her brothers and sisters, due to which it was never expected that she will become a queen. But due to consequences and circumstances she acquired throne are ruled it longest in the house Tudor. Moreover in the period of reign growth, development and prosperity flourished. Gandens, music, arts, drama blossomed throughout her reign. She was
able to resolve a many issues and disasters conducted by her sister Mary. Elizabeth I ruled her empire like a prince and considered as image of her father King Henry VIII. In her time victories were achieved in Armada Spain and religious issues and problems reduced. Elizabeth use to do as much as she could for her people and was loved by people too. In order to prevent sharing of power Elizabeth never married and was known as "The Virgin Queen" (Weir, 2011). She changed the views of people for arts, music and culture. Her personal life was drastic mostly with death of her mother to her being an Queen and also in professional life, changes in her legitimacy to the throne and after many obstacle she acquired throne and ruled it in such a manner that it’s still appreciated for.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Elizabeth I was born in Greenwich as daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (his second wife) on 7th September 1533. Being thought of her cousins and siblings she was never expected to be a queen, but circumstances led her to be queen in young age of 25. Then she ruled longest in house tutor up to 44 years and died on 24th march 1603. Her reign is known to be most prosperous and blossoming. Queen Elizabeth never married and always live for and up to her people, for which she was known as "The Virgin Queen". After the reign of King Henry VIII, Edward his son acquired throne only for six years and died prematurely choosing his successor to be grey, Mary with help of politics acquired throne from Grey. In her time she major changed the population’s ideology towards arts and culture also changed people mind towards an image a female ruler. Hence she was known as Gloriana and Good Queen Bess. However Mary's reign turned out to be short and distorous again. Elizabeth ruled like prince and was portrayed by her followers as her father. She was of sharp wit and clever mind and expressed her feminist side when needed only.

REFERENCES