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ELISABETH I IN HER CONTEMPORARY POLISH OPINION

Among the rulers reigning in Western Europe in the second half of the 16th century those who were most often mentioned in Poland were, apart from Henry III and Henry IV (kings of France), doubtlessly Philip II and Elisabeth I. If, however, the Spanish monarch, just as the state and nation under his rule, enjoyed definitely a bad reputation,[1] there were two contesting legends about the English sovereign : the "black" and the "white" one. The first one arose in Catholic circles, promoted mainly by Jesuits. Piotr Skarga, while calling Elisabeth "an open harlot insatiate of human blood of the martyrs of Christendom and her subjects"[2] simply expressed the *communis opinio* of his Order and the counter-reformation propaganda. Also the adherents of the "white" legend about this monarch, created by Polish dissenters, drew by the handful from the writings of their co-religionists, published in France, Germany and the Netherlands, and of course from the works of Elisabeth's English advocates. The whole polemic around

[1] Cf. J. Tazbir, *Świat panów Pasków. Eseje i studia* [*The World of Squires like Pasek. Essays and Studies*], Łódź 1986, p. 184—185 and idem, *Szlachta i konkwistadorzy. Opinia staropolska wobec podboju Ameryki przez Hiszpanię* [*The Gentry and Conquistadors. Old-Polish Opinion on the Spanish Conquest of America*], Warszawa 1969, p. 38 ff.

[2] Cited H. Zins, *Polska w oczach Anglików XIV—XVI w.* [*Poland in English Eyes 14th—16th Centuries*], Warszawa 1974, p. 142.

her person, developing in Poland, was of secondary and in large measure translatory nature.[3]

From the restoration of Catholicism in England with the reign of Mary Tudor, every new ruler aroused a hope of following in her footsteps. No wonder then that the main charges brought against Elisabeth concerned her continuation of the religious policy of her father, a lay protector of English Reformation and head of the "schismatic" Church in that country. The Act of Supremacy of 1559 named the Queen "the supreme ruler of this Kingdom both in ecclesiastical and secular matters", and not the "head of the Church of England", but in fact it accorded her complete power in matters of faith as it did to Henry VIII. Thus the above quoted Skarga was right in saying that Elisabeth is "held by the heretic English as a pope ; she gives them decrees in the matters of God, telling them how they should believe".[4]

Adherents of Polish Reformation carefully watched the persecution of their co-religionists in England taking place under Mary Tudor. In C. Bazylik's translation of John Crespin's work *Actiones et monumenta martyrum* (Geneva, 1556), published under the Polish title *Historyja o srogim prześladowaniu Kościoła Bożego* [*A History of the Cruel Persecution of the Holy Church*] (Brześć Litewski—Brest Litovsk 1567), we find a very precise description of the "cruel and severe persecution" that became the lot of English protestants by orders of "Bloody" Mary, though at that time nobody in Poland called her that name.[5] Her reign was many times mentioned with the highest abomination by such polemists as e.g. Andrzej Wolan and Jan Łasicki.[6]

[3] Piotr Skarga drew attention to many anti-Jesuit pamphlets reaching Poland from France in his *Próba zakonu Societatis Iesu* [*The Trial of the Societatis Iesu Order*] Kraków 1607, p. 109.

[4] P. Skarga, *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*], Kraków 1958, p. 1129.

[5] C. Bazylik, *Historyja o srogim prześladowaniu Kościoła Bożego* [A History of the Cruel Persecution of the Holy Church], Brześć Litewski 1567, fol. 168 verso and foll. as well as fol. 178 verso and foll.

[6] Cf. U. Szumska, *Anglia a Polska w epoce humanizmu i reformacji (Związki kulturalne)* [*England and Poland in the Age of Humanism and Reformation (Cultural Ties)*], Lwów 1938, p. 86 ; H. Kowalska, *Działalność reformatorska Jana Łaskiego w Polsce 1556—1560* [*The Reformatory Activity of Jan Laski in Poland, 1556—1560*], Wrocław 1969, p. 155.

In their turn the Catholic circles were extremely well informed of Elisabeth's policy of repressions against the "papists". "It is no secret", Kasper Wilkowski wrote in his preface to Campionus' *The Firm Proofs*, "what is taking place in England".[7] The situation of Catholics in the British Isles strongly interested Stanisław Hozjusz. The great work by Nicolas Sanders, *De visibili monarchia ecclesiae libri VIII*, comprising i.a. "the earliest outlines of the history of persecution of Catholics in England" was prefaced with the author's letter of thanks to the Polish Cardinal.[8] Incidentally, this work later provided Skarga with material for writing a chapter on the "Martyrs of England" in his *Lives of the Saints*. On Hosius's initiative the Council of Trent sent letters to Catholic princes and monarchs to plead for their co-religionists imprisoned in the British Isles. Hosius himself made lists of the bishops and priests imprisoned there, maintaining correspondence with them and offering them—according to his possibilities and means—not only spiritual but also material assistance.[9]

The Polish Cardinal was afraid that the example of Elisabeth I might have had a bad influence on Sigismund II Augustus, as attempts were made to persuade the king to proclaim himself the head of the national Church. Not in vain did Jan Łasicki write (1565) to Theodore Beza, that Sigismund II Augustus "is not less kind, nor less learned than the English Queen Elisabeth, and he promotes the advances of the Gospels, be it only by the fact that he does not hinder them".[10]

In the first quarter of the 16th century Polish and foreign clergy developed a large information campaign on the persecution of Catholics in England. Thus nuncio Giovanni Andrea Caligari

[7] E. Campion, *Dziesięć mocnych dowodów, iż adwersarze Kościoła powszechnego upaść muszą*... [*Ten Firm Proofs that the Adversaries of the Catholic Church Must Fall*...], Wilno 1584, from the dedication to Anna Jagiellon.

[8] W. Borowy, *Prześladowani katolicy angielscy i szkoccy w Polsce XVI wieku* [*English and Scottish Persecuted Catholics in Poland of 16th Century*], "Przegląd Powszechny", No. 7—8, 1938, p. 112.

[9] U. Szumska, *op. cit.*, p. 93—94.

[10] H. Barycz, *Jan Łasicki. Studium z dziejów polskiej kultury naukowej XVI wieku* [*Jan Łasicki. A Study from the History of Polish Scientific Culture of the 16th Century*], Wrocław 1973, p. 51.

suggested to Stephen Bathory reading Reginald Pole's book on the struggle of English adherents of protestantism against the Catholic Church ; the King was also made to read Campionus' work devoted to the combat against Anglicanism.[11] Stephen Bathory took so much to it that he sent it as a gift to the powerful protector of Reformation in Lithuania, Mikołaj Radziwiłł, called the "Red-Head". The King also ordered a translation of it into Polish.[12] Thus in 1584 two translations of the work appeared simultaneously in Vilna. One of them *Dziesięć przyczyn, dla których Edmundus Kampianus heretyki w Anglijej na dysputacyją wyzwał* [*Ten Reasons for which Campianus Chalenged to Dispute the Heretics of England*] came from under the hand of Skarga. We owe the other to Kasper Wilkowski, a recent convert, who in his dedication to Ann Jagiellon did not fail to call Elisabeth "Christ's murderer". Still at the beginning of the 17th century Campionus' lives, works and letters enjoyed much popularity with the readers.

Two years before Campionus' dissertation there appeared a sizeable pamphlet *Okrucieństwa kacyrskie przeciw katolikom w Anglijej krótko a prawdziwie przez jednego tego narodu opisane, a na język polski przełożone* [*Heretics' Cruelties Against Catholics in England Shortly and Truly by One of Their Nation Described and into Polish Translated*]. We read there that Queen Elisabeth is guilty of the uncanny cruelties suffered by Catholics in England. They are so spied on, punished and tortured there, "that no equal slavery and oppression can be found under the sun even among the cruellest people." Everybody who does not acknowledge Elisabeth as the head to the Church, meets the same punishment as used to be meted out for *lèse majesté*. In this work the Polish reader found a comprehensive list of all the restrictions and legal annoyances administered to Catholics in England. The anonymous author presented in detail the whole legal procedure, the tortures applied during the trial, conditions in prison, confiscation of possessions, etc.

In his well-grounded book on the opinion about Elisabeth, Grew

[11] *Cf.* note 7.

[12] U. Szumska, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

stresses that only after the execution of Mary Stuart (1587) did English Catholic writers start to censure Elisabeth very strongly : before the execution of the Scottish Queen even the most ardent adherents of Rome did not do it.[13] In Poland, on the other hand, the year 1587 did not mark any turning point. The significant cesura came with the excommunication of Elisabeth by Pope Pius V with the bull *Regnans in Ecclesia*, which took place 17 years later.[14] From then on Polish Catholic writers will speak of the English Queen in the worst possible terms. Thus the first edition of Piotr Skarga's *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*] (1579) includes a chapter devoted to Jesuits executed in England. In the next edition (1585) the author extended the chapter considerably by adding i.a. the life history of Campionus, who was executed after tortures in 1581. Skarga as well as his religious brothers for obvious reasons made the picture darker ; the author of *The Lives of the Saints* reckoned up to five hundred martyrs under Elisabeth. According to modern estimates their number was smaller by half. Among Elisabeth's victims mentioned by *The Lives* (ed. of 1585) there was also James Bosgrave, about whom Skarga wrote lyrically : "I remember you, dearest brother, at my place, getting dressed for this road [...] as Christ chose you as his witness arming you for this martyrdom."[15]

In 1580 Bosgrave was captured by the English police. He was sued for high treason, the indictment being based on Hieronim Rozdrażewski's letter to his friend in England, intercepted by the English intelligence service. It was evident from the letter that Bosgrave came to his fatherland "on very important business". Tortured on trial and sentenced to be quartered he was pardoned, nevertheless, as a result of the double intervention of Stephen Báthory with Queen Elisabeth. After expulsion from his fatherland, Bosgrave again joined the Jesuits, whom he even earlier constantly inconvenienced by breaking the order's rules. It would,

[13] J. H. Grew, *Elisabeth d'Angleterre dans la littérature française*, Paris 1932, p. 37 ; cf. *ibidem*, p. 57.

[14] Mentioned i.a. by J. Łasicki, *Pro Volano... adversus Antonium Possevinum*, Wilno 1584, p. 39.

[15] P. Skarga, *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*], Kraków 1585, p. 1130 and 1132.

however, be unfitting to expel "an English martyr" from the Society : the General of the Order (Claudius Aquaviva) did not want to deprive him of Poland either. As a result the transgressions of the would-be martyr were winked at, and Bosgrave died in 1623 as a lecturer of the Jesuit College in Kalisz.[16] In the next edition of *The Lives* Skarga had to introduce an emendation, saying "the death of others was reprieved and with time Bosgravius through a letter by King Stephen to the English Queen [...] was saved."[17]

The most recent *Catholic Encyclopedia* published in Poland admits that the mentioned excommunication of Elisabeth by Pius V as well as the opposition and riot of the Catholic nobility, exacerbated the repressions against the English adherents of Rome.[18] Let us recall that the Pope directed his bull "against Elisabeth, the alleged Queen of England, as well as those heretics who support her". The English "papists", both those in exile and at home, took an active part in the conspiracy aimed at dethroning the Queen or even at a regicide. Rome, which during the first years of Elisabeth's reign entertained some hopes as to her following in the footsteps of her sister, Mary Tudor, and returning to the bosom of Catholicism,[19] from 1570 on definitely encouraged and supported all those conspiratorial actions. Anyway, this was an era when attempts to change the course of history frequently took the form of attempts on the lives of rulers : not only two successive kings of France (Henry III and Henry IV) but also king of Scotland (Henry Darnley) and the leader of rebellious Netherlands (Prince William of Orange) perished from a dagger. Numerous attempts at secret murder of the Queen of England found

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[16] L. Piechnik, *Początki Akademii Wileńskiej, 1570—1599* [*The Beginnings of the Vilna Academy, 1570—1599*], Rome 1984, p. 133—135.

[17] P. Skarga, *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*], Kraków 1598, p. 1135.

[18] J. Bazydło, *Elżbieta I* [*Elisabeth I*], in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. IV, Lublin 1983, column 911.

[19] Traces of it can be found i. a. in Hosius's letters, cf. Stanislas Hosius's correspondence... vol. III (1558—1561), part I (May 10, 1558 — August 31, 1560), comp. by H. D. Wojtyska, Olsztyn 1980, "Studia Warmińskie," vol. XVII, pp. 290, 294 and 319.

moral approval in Rome : the Apostolic See also supported the military preparations of Spain for the invasion of the British Isles. Thus it is absolutely understandable that the defeat of the Invincible Armada was enthusiastically received also by the Polish protestants (especially in Gdańsk).[20]

Although there were some objective reasons that to a certain extent justified the repressions against English Catholics who developed anti-government political activity, one should also agree with the opinion of J. Lecler S.J. that no other state in Christian Europe had established in the 16th century as many disgraceful and Draconic laws "for strictly religious transgressions", as it was done by Elizabethan England. The complete confusion of Church and state affairs caused that identical punishment was meted out for "loyalty to Rome and the crime of high treason".[21]

This had to revolt above all the Jesuits, which is distinctly evidenced by a polemic carried on at the turn of the 1580s by members of this Order, Andrzej Jurgiewicz and Piotr Skarga, with the Calvinist Andrzej Wolan. The controversy dealt above all with the religious policy of Elisabeth I. The Catholic side called her "the English Pope Joan", born of an incestuous union. This shows that the pamphlet published about 1588 by the Cardinal William Allen, where Elisabeth was called i.a. "an incestuous bastard conceived and born in sin by a notorious courtesan",[22] reached also the hands of Polish Jesuits.

Also Polish pamphlets described the English queen as a mon-

[20] Also in Cracow an account appeared in 1598, translated from German (by the author using the pseudonym of Jan Pawłowic z Wilniowca) of the maritime defeat of Spain, cf. *Drukarze dawnej Polski od XV do XVIII wieku* [*Printers of Old Poland from 15th to 18th Centuries*], vol.: *Małopolska*, part I : 15th—16th centuries ed. A. Kawecka-Gryczowa, Wrocław 1983, p. 363. Polish repercussions, however, were feeble in comparison to the multitude of prints provoked in France by the defeat of the Invincible Armada, cf. J. H. Grew, *op. cit.*, p. 45 ff.

[21] J. Lecler, *Historia tolerancji w wieku reformacji* [*The History of Toleration in the Age of Reformation*], vol. II, Warszawa 1964, pp. 323—324. Catholic writers drew attention to it as far back as the 16th century.

[22] J. E. Neale, *Königin Elisabeth*, München 1967, p. 338.

ster, that is a woman who meddles in the affairs of the Church, which—as they said—has never taken place before. That English puritans were equally shocked is confirmed by the fact that even they, unwilling to acknowledge Elisabeth as the head of the Church, fled to Geneva. The "English justice"[23] actually consists in that she rules the country with the cruelty surpassing the Turkish tyranny.[24] In this polemic zeal Elisabeth was not spared the worst derision, calumny and abuse.

In the times when the mentioned Jurgiewicz spoke about her, especially eager attacks were directed against the Calvinist polemist, Stanisław Sudrowski (Sudrovius about 1550—1600) who was a preacher in Vilna. Wargocki, Reszka, Jurgiewicz, Sawicki and other advocates of counter-reformation wrote that for the theft of a silver plate in Lvov he was said to be sentenced to death there ; in order to avoid this punishment he accepted the office of a hangman.[25] In this context it is easy to understand why it was precisely Sudrovius' wife who was compared to the English Queen. Jurgiewicz wrote that Calvinists in Vilna sang her praises just like the English people worshipped Elisabeth. The latter did it in the London Cathedral, the former in a "Lithuanian synagogue". Even the liturgy of worship was believed to be similar in both cases. This mocking gossip constituted a peculiar revenge of Catholic polemists for the protestant tales about the would-be "Pope-Joan".

The derisive attacks against Elisabeth were accompanied by a great deal of detailed information on the history of the English

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[23] This was an allusion to the pamphlet by Lord Burghley (William Cecil) *De iustitia Britannica seu Anglica... (1584)* where he tried to justify the anti-Catholic legislation of Elisabeth I.

[24] *Mendacia et convitia evangelica Andreae Volani... breviter refutata per Andream Jurgevicium canonicum Vilnensem*, Wilnae 1588, pp. 141—142 and 145 and idem, *Anatomia libelli famosi scurrillis An. Volani..., b.m. 1591*, fol. B_2. This polemic is discussed by T. Grabowski, *Piotr Skarga na tle katolickiej literatury religijnej w Polsce wieku XVI*, 1536—1612 [*Piotr Skarga Against the Background of Religious Catholic Literature in Poland of the 16th Century 1536—1612*], Kraków 1913, p. 476—479.

[25] Z. Nowak, *Kontrreformacyjna satyra obyczajowa w Polsce XVII wieku* [*Counter-reformation Moral Satire in Poland of the 17th Century*], Gdańsk 1968, p. 470—471.

"schism", especially the rule of this Queen over the Church of England. In some accounts not destined for the press, she was even more strongly criticized ; the faultfinding was also done by Polish politicians who visited England or wrote about English matters. Such attitudes could be discovered i.a. in a manuscript report from a mission on which Paweł Działyński went in 1597, on behalf of the Polish King, to the Netherlands and the British Isles. Stanisław Grzybowski convincingly accords its authorship to Stanisław Bartolan (deceased in 1618), a royal secretary, who accompanied Działyński on this mission.[26]

Let us put aside the controversy as to what extent the arrogant speech of Działyński, delivered during an audience with Elisabeth I (August 4, 1597), was an expression of diplomatic awkwardness and to what a deliberate tactless move, with the purport almost of the nature of an ultimatum. According to contemporary studies, although it had the worst possible repercussions in Elisabethan England, casting shade on the "level of Polish diplomacy, the person of the envoy, and even the Polish court",[27] it nevertheless brought some positive political effects : "the ultimatum was accepted and Báthory's methods stood the test. Elisabeth had to yield".[28] One can easily imagine what would have been her reaction if the Latin original of Bartolan's report, copied by the unfailing English intelligence service, had by chance reached her hands.

It is true that the member of the Polish mission admitted that Elisabeth had "a bright mind", knowledge, talents and shrewdness, however he accused her at the same time of pride, tyranny and cruelty. He did not spare the English Queen the worst words of abuse, calling her "a harlot begotten by illicit and ignominious love" "an enemy of all Christians and relentless plunderer" who "reigns with such unheard-of despotism" that she "surpassed all the tyrants so far alive". She is, according to Bartolan "a her-

[26] S. Grzybowski, *Nieznane dzieło Stanisława Bartolana, "Silva rerum series nova..."* [*The Unknown Work by Stanisław Bartolan "Silva rerum series nova..."*], Kraków 1981, pp. 224—225.

[27] H. Zins, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

[28] S. Grzybowski, *Elżbieta Wielka* [*Elisabeth the Great*], Wrocław 1984, p. 191.

maphrodite pope", a "wild she-wolf", "the janitor of hell" and so on.[29] The author of those words may well be ranked among the "calumnists", whose expulsion from Poland was demanded by the English government from Działyński. The latter heard in London that in the Polish Commonwealth of the gentry there are many "Spanish-Jesuit" pamphleteers, who unpunished throw abuse on "the good name of the English Queen".[30]

If we glean the essential charges from Bartolan's report, they will boil down to the persecution of Catholics and to absolute rule. Działyński's companion accuses Elisabeth of tyranny and complete subordination of the nobility to royal power, as well as of the appropriation of the subjects' property confiscated for high treason. The guilt was defined arbitrarily and punishment was applied even for trifling reasons.[31] Bartolan also discusses at length the "martyrdom or rather slaughter of Christians" that occurred by the Queen's orders. During her reign a "tyrannical and extraordinary oppression of the free nation by a woman" took place. The English perished and found a miserable death : some impaled, others crucified, some in the tongs of iron, others in still another way [...] on top of the buildings you can see heads impaled, in another place a part of some man is torn by the wind ; this is the very spectacle of tyranny" [32]

The above opinion reflects the attachment of the Polish gentry

[29] *Merkuriusz sarmacki z Niderlandów i Anglii czyli zwięzła relacja z dwóch poselstw... które sprawował... Paweł Działyński Roku Pańskiego 1597* [*The Old Polish Mercury from the Netherlands and England or a Succinct Account of Two Missions... Accomplished by Paweł Działyński Anno Domini 1597*], comp. by R. Marciniak, Wrocław 1978, p. 30 ff and p. 38 ff.

[30] U. Szumska, *op. cit.*, p. 105. The author refers to the reply given to Działyński by the English ministers on August 13, 1597. It was published by "Zeitschrift der historischen Gesellschaft fur die Provinz Posen", vol. III, 1888, pp. 100—108. This is an annex to the article by R. Hassencamp, *Handelpolitische Verhandlungen zwischen England und Polen in den Jahren 1597 und 1598*. The editors of Old Polish Mercury (cf. note above) did not give account of this reply.

[31] S. Grzybowski in his *Elżbieta Wielka*, pp. 186—188, draws attention to the political aspects of the criticism carried out by Bartolan.

[32] *Merkuriusz sarmacki*, p. 31.

to its "golden freedom", often getting the upper hand of the attachment to the Catholic Church. Of some consequence, of course, were the unpleasant impressions from the mission to England. One can also see here the reflections of the anti-Elizabethan propaganda, carried on so energetically by the Jesuits. Practically speaking, however, this propaganda was a source of knowledge of facts, whereas the general assessments resulted from the practice of religious life, observed in the "country without stakes", where the ruler did not try to impose any religious pressure on the gentry.

Naturally the Polish kings did not write letters to protestant monarchs in the same tone in which the Jesuits spoke about the English court. Not only Sigismund Augustus, but also his successors were bound to call Elisabeth as of old "Her Majesty", "Her Gracious Majesty" or "Her Royal Highness".[33] What is more, even Stephen Báthory in his letters to Elisabeth called her "the defender of faith" (*defensatrix fidei*). When at the insistence of the Pope and his legate, Sigismund III Vasa started omitting this title, the English envoy Christopher Parkins came out with an energetic, but ineffective intervention (1590). Parkins tried to explain that it was not Rome but the English estates which used that name for Elisabeth, who expected that "the Polish Crown shall not change the title of her Royal Majesty under the influence of papal letters". In confidential reply he was made to understand that the Polish King did it not only under the pressure of Rome but also of Jesuits.[34]

The English diplomacy also endeavoured to intervene as regards pamphlets slandering the sovereigns of England. Writings of that kind were observed with close attention, and even those in Polish were not overlooked. Thus e.g. in 1595 the above mentioned Parkins informed London that a book written by the royal preacher appeared in Poland containing an abusive remark about Elisabeth.[35] The book in question must have been the above men-

[33] Many examples of that can be found in the correspondence *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. IV, VI and 17, published by C. H. Talbot, Rome 1961—1967.

[34] H. Zins, *op. cit.* pp. 143—144.

[35] *Ibidem*, pp. 141—142.

tioned *Proces konfederacyjej* [*The Process of Confederation*] by Piotr Skarga.

Two years after Elisabeth's death Andrzej Wargocki summed up again all the charges against the rule of the "modern Jezebel" over the Church of England.[36] She wielded her power in spite of the interdictions of the Scriptures ("*taceat mulier in Ecclesia*") and even in discord with Calvin's teachings. The Catholic polemist recalled the severe punishment suffered in Elizabethan England by those who did not want to accept the superior authority of the Queen in matters of spirit. Wargocki referred to the books that attacked the ecclesiastical policy of the Queen, as well as to the rumours about it : "Queen Elisabeth made frequent changes in the articles of faith, according to her fancy, as we have partly read, partly heard, since she died recently".[37]

Also Stanisław Krzysztanowic in his booklet *Examen catholicum edicti anglicani*, (Paris 1611), containing an assessment of the history of English Reformation from a Counter-reformation point of view, spoke of Elisabeth in the worst terms. Her character was to be marked by extraordinary licentiousness and cruelty ("*turpidinis Venerae et imaginis crudelitatis*"). Born of a revolting concubinage, she proved to be worthy of her immoral mother. At court Elisabeth went in for unbridled and ostentatious licentiousness and as a result gave birth to numerous illegitimate offspring. Krzysztanowic recalls a conversation he had in 1596 in Gdańsk with some Englishman. When this heretic laughed at Mary's virginity, the Pole retorted that Elisabeth is also called a virgin, although she was many times a mother.

The cruelty of the English monarch was to manifest itself in her dealings with Catholics ; always thirsty of their blood she

[36] The comparison of Elisabeth to this Israelite queen, believer in Baal, who cruelly persecuted believers and priests of true God is continually present in the French anti-Elizabethan literature, cf. J. H. Grew, *op. cit.*, pp. 16, 38, 43, 57. Also Skarga called the queen "a second Jezebel" in his *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*], Kraków 1603, p. 1114.

[37] A. Wargocki, *Apologia przeciw luteranom, zwinglianom, kalwinistom, nowokrzczeńcom...* [*An Apology Against the Lutherans, Zwinglians, Calvinists, Anabaptists...*], Kraków 1605, pp. 37—40, 93, 270—271 and 446.

was surrounded by evil advisers who instigated her to ever greater repressions. In her persecution of Christians she even surpassed Nero, as not so many martyrs were executed under his rule. Krzysztanowic described in detail the tortures suffered by Catholics as well as the trial and execution of Mary Stuart. Exactly for these transgressions God punished Elisabeth with many illnesses so that her body stank and she threw up everything she had eaten. Just like those possessed who even at the point of death turned away from the holy cross with revulsion, so did she not let Anglican bishops approach her bed in the hour of death.[38] Krzysztanowic's work, written under the fresh impression of persecution of Catholics, administered by the English Parliament after the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, found a reply in Francis Bacon's apology of the Queen entitled *In felicem memoriam Elisabethae Angliae reginae.*[39]

Equally strong criticism of Elisabeth came from Kasper Cichocki, who called her i.a. a monster, born out of wedlock.[40] Since in the same book (*Alloquiorum Osiecensium,* 1615) he also offended the then reigning James I, this gave rise to a sharp protest on the part of the English envoy in Poland, John Dickenson. He called for severe punishment of the author for the publication of "abuses and hideous libels" aimed at the Stuart dynasty ruling in England. While quoting the aspersions thrown at Elisabeth's successor, Dickenson did not fail to mention the defamation of "the blessed memory of the Queen".[41] Sigismund III Vasa obliged himself to punish (through the intervention of the municipality of Cracow)

[38] *Examen Catholicum... auctore Stanislao Cristanovic,* Parisiis 1607, pp. 7—10 verso.

[39] This polemic is discussed in detail by M. Heitzman, *Stanisław Krzysztanowicz i jego polemika z Baconem Werulamskim* [*Stanisław Krzysztanowicz and His Polemic with Bacon of Verulam*], "Reformacja w Polsce", vol. IV, 1928.

[40] K. Cichocki, *Alloquiorum Osiecensium... libri V,* Kraków 1615, p. 296. Cf. *ibidem,* p. 63 and p. 274 ff.

[41] A. Kraushar, *Poselstwo Dickensona do Zygmunta III w sprawie książki uwłaczającej domowi Stuartów (r. 1615)* [*Dickenson's Mission to Sigismund III as Regards the Booklet Insulting to the House of Stuarts (1615)*], "Przegląd Historyczny", vol. IX, 1909, p. 59. See also J. Jasnowski, *England and Poland in the XVIth and XVIIth Centuries,* London 1948, p. 31.

the printer of the book ; the incriminated pages were burnt in the market-square. As regards their author, the King pleaded incompetence, promising to relegate the problem to the bishops' court for decision (Cichocki was a Canon of Sandomierz). As the author died soon the investigation was cancelled. The case had however a polemic epilogue. Cichocki referred in his book to the pamphlet by Robert Abercrombie, the English Jesuit, at the time resident in Poland, who sharply attacked the Stuart family.[42] He got a reply from Andreas Aidius, also a Scotsman, who lectured in philosophy at the Academy of Gdańsk. A debate ensued, of which little is known, however.

One can hardly be surprised at the fierceness with which the English diplomacy hunted for such books, considering the weight of accusations and calumnies directed against their ruler. The same Elisabeth, called "the most educated, beautiful, gracious lady under the sun"[43] by the English translator of Stanislaw Hosius work *De origine heresium nostri temporis* (*A Most Excellent Treatise of the Begynnyng of Heresyes* ... Antwerp 1565), appeared on the pages of later Catholic works almost in a role of a moral monster.

In 1619 in Cracow a recast appeared of the anti-Lutheran pamphlet by Johann Nass, *Anathomia Lutheri* translated from German by Jan Zrzenczycki. This versified *Anatomia Martynusa Lutra* [*Anatomy of Martinus Luther*] picked to pieces both the leading theologians of Reformation and its lay protectors. A part of the attack, of course, centred also on Elisabeth, who was accused of extraordinary licentiousness, manifested in the number of her lovers (Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester was mentioned by name), as well as of illegitimate birth by an immoral mother. After a stereotype comparison of Elisabeth to the biblical Jezebel and to the Roman persecutors of Christians such as Nero and Diocletian, the time came to call her a Messalina. Elisabeth's immorality was to go hand in hand with her extraordinary cruelty manifested by ruthless persecution of Catholics.[44]

[42] This book, published under the pseudonym of Bartolus Pacenius, is not known to us.

[43] H. Zins, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

[44] Z. Nowak, *op. cit.*, pp. 374—375.

It was a fairly frequent motif of anti-Elizabethan polemics to oppose this queen to her half-sister Mary Tudor, during whose short rule "the rectified Divine Church enjoyed a little peace and calm in England, for she freed many Catholics from close confinement".[45] Ann Jagiellon in her conversation with the English envoy Sir Jerome Horsey, was supposed to say that "Elisabeth is too blessed a name to be borne by such a plague of Catholic Church ; her sister was called Mary (and is) a blessed saint in heaven".[46] The propaganda carried on under Elisabeth against Mary Tudor was spoken of with indignation. It was said that the Calvinist clergymen persuaded at that time a "wench" named Elisabeth Pimple to hide behind a wall and foretell to Londoners that their city would fall to ruin and the state would be defeated "if the princess should marry a Spaniard, or obey the Pope."[47]

Just as Crespin, in his work translated by C. Bazylik, ranked among the protestant martyrs Joan (Jane) Grey, the heroine of an unsuccessful plot against Mary Tudor, so was Mary Stuart included in *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*] for the first time in the edition of 1603. She was described there as a Catholic martyr, even though she had not been beatified. Skarga wrote that what "drove her to death was that she held to Catholic faith and [...] she wanted if she only could, to banish the Calvinist sect from her country". Lured deceitfully by Elisabeth to England and imprisoned there, Mary in her complete innocence and with a martyr's patience awaited from her tormentor a bloody death for her holy faith".[48]

The political intrigues of Elisabeth were to reach as far as Poland. Towards the end of the 16th century it was almost

[45] P. Skarga, *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*], Kraków 1592, p. 1160.

[46] H. Zins, *op. cit.*, p. 270. However the religious policy of Mary Tudor generally did not meet in Poland with approval. An exception was made by L. Gorecki, who praised the Queen for persecution of protestants in his panegyric written on the occasion of her marriage to Philip II : *Oratio... de matrimonio... Regis ac Reginae Angliae, Hispaniae...*, London 1554.

[47] A. Wargocki, *op. cit.*, pp. 270—271.

[48] P. Skarga, *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*], Kraków 1603, p. 1111.

generally held in Catholic circles that at her instigation Christopher Parkins managed to convene the general synod of Polish dissenters in Toruń (1595). "It was one of his major concerns to blow up with his devilish mouth the fire of the Calvinist plague and hearten up the souls that were hesitating or weakening in this faith".[49] Neither was Elisabeth spared the charges of moral impure. As we have mentioned may times, her very birth was attributed to an incestuous union, since—according to some pamphleteers—her mother, Ann Boleyn, was supposed to be an illegitimate daughter of her own husband, Henry VIII.[50] Both the main leaders of the Reformation and its great protectors were often accused of licentiousness, i.e. transgressions of a sexual nature. Skarga wrote many times about it ; Cichocki and Krzysztanowic wrote at length on the same subject.

It was not easy to polemize with the charges presented above, as was soon found by the mentioned Horsey, who during his conversation with Ann Jagiellon tried to defend the honour of his Sovereign. The old Polish Queen interrupted him by saying : "Mind, my lord, if she is like that, why did she so ruthlessly sentence to death so many saintly Catholics such as Story, Campion[51] and other holy martyrs ?" When Horsey replied that they were traitors aiming at the "destruction and ruin of her kingdom", Ann expressed a view that the blood of clergymen should not have been shed without the consent of the lords of England, the pope, and "all the Christian princes of Europe". The explanations of the English envoy that Elisabeth's subjects accepted it as necessary to "the greater safety and peace of her kingdom", did

[49] *Merkuriusz sarmacki*, p. 38. Elisabeth must have been popular with heretic circles, since as far back as in 1572 a certain Walenty Krawiec (wine merchant by profession) "fabricated some letters to the estates of Poland from the English Queen" and turned up with them in Warsaw during the convocational Sejm, *Akta synodów różnowierczych w Polsce* [*The Acts of Heretic Synods in Poland*], vol. II (1560—1570), comp. M. Sipayllo, Warszawa 1972, p. 217.

[50] Cf. S. Grzybowski, *Elżbieta Wielka*, p. 14.

[51] H. Zins, *op. cit.*, p. 326, rightly observes that the persecution of Catholics in England must have been well known at the Polish court, since Anna Jagiellon could mention at once not only the renowned Campion, but also John Story executed in 1571.

not satisfy Ann.[52] She might not have liked Elisabeth also on the grounds that the latter was an actual ruler of England, while she herself as a Queen remained always in the shadow of her husband. Just as Skarga seems to have been the greatest enemy of Elisabeth among Polish Jesuits, so Wolan, his regular polemist is to be found among the group of ardent defenders of the English ruler. He was extremely revolted at the attacks against Elisabeth, who towered over all the rulers of Christian Europe. It was she who restored the former glory and freedom to the Christian Church in England, which was ruined by the tyranny of Roman and papal persecutors.[53] Wolan wrote that Skarga foamed with rage at the English Queen, calling her a harlot and defaming her rule of England as feminine. The English people well know what they should think of such rash calumnies expressed by this man (Skarga) ; for they are very happy under Elisabeth, who made her country flourish and who is marked by great virtues herself.

As we read further in Wolan's booklet Skarga accuses Elisabeth of persecution of Catholics in England, comparing her rule to the times of Diocletian. Whereas it was exactly under Mary Tudor and Cardinal Pole that many thousand people of both sexes perished in tortures ; no persecution of Christians in Rome can be compared to that. There were days under Mary when more victims were burnt than during the 24 years of Elisabeth's reign (Wolan wrote it in 1584).[54] However, the rule of a woman was viewed critically not only by the dissenters. Also Bartosz Paprocki gave expression to his resentment in this matter, saying that the feminine rule is pernicious to the state.[55]

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[52] *Ibidem*, p. 270.

[53] A. Wolan, *Ad scurrillem et famosum libellum Iesuiticae Scholae Vilnensis et potissimum... Andreae Jurgevitii... responsio*, Wilno 1589, pp. 33, 83, 94 and 270.

[54] A. Wolan, *Libri quinque contra Scargae iesuitae vilnensis...* Vilnae 1584, pp. 123 and 212.

[55] B. Paprocki, *Dwie broszury polityczne z lat 1587 i 1588* [*Two Political Brochures from the Years 1587 and 1588*], ed. J. Czubek, Kraków 1900, p. 120. In another place [*Dziesięcioro przykazań mężowe, 1587*] [*The Ten Man's Commandments, 1587*], Paprocki expressed a wish "that such

His words might have equally referred to Ann Jagiellon, who was lucky enough not to live to see the first part of Krzysztof Krasiński's postil (1611). We find there a comparison of Queen Ann precisely to Elisabeth. They both "protected the rule of the Church". So if Skarga praised Anna who "herself stood for a bishop and inspector to the priests, especially in Warsaw", reproaches should not have been made on the same grounds to Elisabeth, who after her death was bewailed by the whole England as a mother.[56]

Many protestant chroniclers and polemists presented Mary Tudor as an antithesis of her half-sister, this time the Catholic ruler appearing as a monster. Mary "bathed innocent protestants in blood, others she imprisoned and still others drove away." For this reason God soon punished her with death "giving her rage no more span, but only four years. And in her place came princess Elisabeth, who ruled happily until recent years . . ." wrote in 1616 Andrzej Lubieniecki.[57] These Polish gentlemen who like Olbracht Łaski had an opportunity to visit the English court and meet the Queen personally were under her spell. It does not mean at all that after leaving London they should defend the good name of Elisabeth against pamphleteers. This was done, however, by Polish dissenters selectively, since they preferred not to refute certain charges. So we did not find in their writings any *expressis verbis* defence of Mary Stuart's execution. It seems not to have been easy to approve the beheading of a queen, even if she was Catholic and involved in anti-Elizabethan plots. The only attempt at an indirect defence of the execution of the Scottish Queen was an anonymous pamphlet of 1587, informing of major political events that took place in Europe at that time. It said that while Mary Stuart was confined in an English prison for plotting against Elisabeth, the Earl of Leicester, brought over from the Netherlands,

outrage should never occur in Poland that our wives should be our masters".

[56] J. Tazbir, *"Kopalnia najciekawszych szczegółów..." ("Postylla" Krzysztofa Krasińskiego)* [*A Mine of Most Interesting Details (Krzysztof Krasiński's "Postil")*], "Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce", vol. XXVIII, 1983, p. 209.

[57] A. Lubieniecki, *Poloneutychia*, comp. by A. Linda, M. Maciejewska, J. Tazbir, Z. Zawadzki, Warszawa 1982, p. 136.

was consulted on the matter and the English court was informed about the charges against Mary ; the pamphlet recalls also that Mary Stuart was the wife of the later king of France, Francis II.[58]

Both the Polish Antitrinitaries and Calvinists expressed a view that the persecutions of Catholics in England were only of a political and not a denominational nature. Thus Andrzej Wolan wrote that Jesuits seized by the English authorities, suffered their due punishment. We read in Krasiński's booklet that even if some of the Catholics in England suffer capital punishment, it is because "they instigate the English subjects against their sovereign, dissuading them from obedience ; they wanted to kill and poison the late Queen Elisabeth." It is not true that she shed the blood of Catholics, as "the papists were murdered not for faith, but for treason that was committed at the instigation of Popes themselves." It was the latter who "absolved the subjects" and encouraged them not to obey Elisabeth as well as other protestant rulers. It also is not true that Elisabeth pretended to be a judge in matters of faith ; she acted in accord with the duties of a Christian ruler as she "threw idolatry out of her own inherited state, introducing instead true Glory Divine".[59] The anonymous *Vindiciae pacis* (1615) published by some Calvinist contended that the English Catholics were punished not for faith but for plotting against the state and the legitimate monarch. Even now, that is under James I, many of them, if they only do not refuse to take an oath of loyalty, live in the British Isles "without any discomfort".

The leading role in plots against Queen Elisabeth was attributed to Jesuits ; hence Polish protestants deemed it right that those members of the Order should be punished who despite interdiction stayed in England. By reference to Polish legal traditions it was explained that "they suffered execution due to the

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[58] *De polonicis, anglicis, Reginae Scotiae. Ilispanicis et gallicis rebus, recens allata*, b.m. 1587, fol.A_2verso.

[59] Cf. note 57. See also M. Korolko, *Klejnot swobodnego sumienia. Polemika wokół konfederacji warszawskiej w latach 1573—1658* [*The Jewel of Free Conscience. A Polemic Around the Warsaw Confederacy Between 1573—1658*], Warszawa 1974, p. 352.

banished subjects".[60] Mary Stuart was also accused of instigation to a riot ; according to Jan Łasicki that was the reason of her imprisonment. It was the Jesuits who were also supposed to be responsible for her death. It was through them that "the English Queen close on a hundred times was almost killed, and the Scottish Queen was beheaded" (in another version : "the Queen of England was almost poisoned, and the Scottish Queen ruthlessly put to death"). The point in question was probably that Jesuits involved Mary in their political intrigues, for which she paid with her head. It was also recalled that Edward Squire, accused of an attempt to kill Elisabeth as well as her favourite, the Earl of Essex, made it at the instigation of a Jesuit, Richard Walpot. Squire was also said to draw inspiration from the writings of Juan Marianna who permitted a murder of a "tyrant" persecuting true faith. Walpot supplied Squire with poison to be rubbed into a toilet seat "so that from the very touch of it, both he (Essex) and she (Elisabeth) should perish".[61]

A question suggests itself here which for the lack of adequate sources cannot be answered straight ; namely what was the reverse of the medal, i.e. what Elisabeth thought of Poland and its inhabitants. It can, however, be assumed that in the first place she was not very interested in the Commonwealth of the gentry, secondly she based her opinions on the subject on her ambassadors' reports, summarized precisely by Henryk Zins. They did not speak in complimentary terms about Polish gentry, whom they accused of extravagance, rowdyish temper, inclination to drink, without at the same time denying their courage and valiance. Considerable interest was aroused by the originality of the political system of the Polish Commonwealth, defined in reports rather as aristocratic than a monarchic one. The English envoys perceived the danger resulting from the weakening of monarchic power, from the downfall of Sigismund III's authority and anarchy in

[60] *Filozofia i myśl społeczna XVII wieku* [*The Philosophy and Social Thought of the 17th Century*], part I, comp. by Z. Ogonowski, Warszawa 1979, p. 486 as well as M. Korolko, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

[61] *Literatura antyjezuicka w Polsce, 1587—1625* [*Anti-Jesuit Literature in Poland, 1587—1625*]. Anthology, comp. by J. Tazbir, pp. 60 and 166.

public life. Although toleration in Poland was generally appreciated, nevertheless the growing influence of the clergy (especially Jesuits) and Rome, caused anxiety. The politics of Sigismund III, described outright as "extremely servilistic to the Pope" [62] were proudly compared by the English envoys with the behaviour of their own Queen who managed to make their country independent of Rome.

Jesuits, so critical of Elisabeth's religious policy, would lavish praises on her if she equally categorically stood in defence of Catholicism. The opinion of the Queen's closest collaborator, William Cecil, that "no country can be safe if two religions are tolerated in it" [63] would certainly be subscribed by Skarga, who said many times that the unity of faith is a *conditio sine qua non* of the power, and even the very existence of any state. Polish Jesuits condemned tolerant resolutions of the Warsaw Confederacy, whereas their brothers in faith in England, invoked the tolerance flourishing in Poland.[64] One might of course mention many other ostensible inconsistencies of similar nature.

The controversy over the reputation of the English Queen was one of the threads in a great debate on what the rule of protestant monarchs meant to Europe disrupted by Reformation. The heretics answered, it meant prosperity resulting from the blessings of Providence as well as the power of their country ; the Catholics answered, it meant ruin and civil wars. The latter did not occur in England, despite all indications to the contrary, which did not stop Skarga from deploring its bad fortunes under Elisabeth. The Polish Calvinists in their turn ranked this Queen among the rulers of the order of Charles V and the French king Henry IV.[65] Somebody who admired and esteemed Jesuits, Spain and Philip II, could not naturally be an enthusiast of Elisabethan England. The fortunes of both states were bound together through dynastic unions, military conflicts and colonial competition so closely, that

[62] H. Zins, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

[63] J. Lecler, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 323. The same sentence is quoted in a slightly different version by S. Grzybowski, *Elżbieta Wielka*, p. 41.

[64] J. Lecler, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 342.

[65] M. Korolko, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

we come across Elisabeth's name most often on the occasion of mentions made about the marriage of Philip II with Mary Tudor, the destruction of the Great Armada or lastly about the conquest of America. However the overseas expansion of England aroused interest in Poland above all on religious grounds, namely in the context of the missionary activities of protestants.[66] In contradistinction, for example, to France, where as early as in the 16th century the English Queen often appears in poetry or drama, there is no trace of her in Polish belles-lettres of the Renaissance period. Much attention was devoted on the Seine to the political aspects of Elisabeth's rule, above all to her foreign policy. It is quite understandable in a country whose fortunes were often inscribed in the triangle Paris-Madrid-London.

Polish interests, on the other hand, were centred round the internal policy of Elisabeth I and strictly speaking round her position on religious matters. This was of course connected with the opinion-creative role of various ecclesiastical circles (above all Catholic ones). That the advances of secularization in Old-Polish culture in spite of all were weak, is evidenced by the fact that all information on the great conflicts, wars that shook Europe of the 16th century, colonial expeditions or geographical discoveries, all this was mainly found in works devoted to religious polemics and propaganda.

Little was also said of the Queen in the books that appeared in Poland during her lifetime. Actually there are merely some scraps of information ; suffice it to compare them with French opinions on Elisabeth, in order to see how fragmentary and incomplete they were. More, and more often was written about her in the correspondence of that time,[67] this was, however, accessible only to a few. During her reign and immediately after her death it was of course difficult to form an objective assessment of the sovereign, who went down in history as "the most excellent woman ever to have reigned".[68] Only as late as in mid-17th cen-

[66] Cf. J. Ubertus, *Index controversiarum*, Braunsberg 1611, fol. J_{III}.

[67] Cf. for example *Georgii Ticinii ad Martinum Cromerum Epistulae (a. 1554—1585)*, ed. J. Axer, Wratislaviae 1975, pp. 47, 55 and 64.

[68] S. Grzybowski, *Elżbieta Wielka*, p. 6.

tury a Catholic chronicler, Paweł Piasecki, managed to form a more objective opinion on her reign. This bishop-historian of course did not fail to describe at length the persecution of Catholics that took place in Elizabethan England. Thus we read in his chronicle that she revived all the anti-papal decrees repealed by Mary Tudor. Elisabeth assumed the title of the head of the Church in England ; her excommunication by Pius V inspired her only to still greater resentment of Catholicism. She forbade the adherents of Rome to hold their religious services and she handed over their places of worship to Calvinists or puritans. Numerous Catholics had to leave England, others were imprisoned and put to the torture. Piasecki writes that Elisabeth established against them a kind of Inquisition, like that which chased heretics on the Italian and Iberian Peninsulas. The ruthless persecution of Catholics lasted during the whole period of her reign.[69]

The chronicler, however, admits at the same time that the reign of Elisabeth was full of glory. She had the mind of a man, was very well educated and so fond of power that she did not marry so as not to share it of anybody else. She enjoyed the great esteem and respect of her subjects, faultlessly directed the affairs of state and waged victorious wars upon Spain.[70] This opinion will even reach Pasek, who wrote down under 1664 : "Elisabeth was a king, whereas James, effeminate and greedy of power, was verily a queen".[71]

Upon reading Grew's book, devoted to the image of Elisabeth in the French literature of 16th—20th centuries one can formulate a few comparative remarks. Thus the periods of greatest interest in the person and politics of Elisabeth were not the same in France and in Poland. In France the climax of interest centred round the execution of Mary Stuart, whereas in Poland the interest in Elisabeth started in the 1570s, being clearly focussed on the problem of persecution of English Catholics (especially Jesuits). Towards the end of that century the French interest in the English

[69] It is worth adding that the Inquisition did not enjoy good reputation with the Catholic authors, either.

[70] P. Piasecki, *Chronica...*, Cracoviae 1648, pp. 32—33 and p. 352.

[71] J. Pasek, *Pamiętniki* [*Memoirs*], comp. by W. Czapliński, Wrocław 1979, p. 355.

queen clearly ebbed away, while in Poland—due to Skarga and other religious polemists—it distinctly gathered strength. Also the interest in Elisabeth after her death took a different course in both countries. In the Commonwealth of the gentry this interest was very short and could be summed up as disappointed hopes for seeing James follow in the footsteps of Mary Tudor, and thus turn out a complete antithesis of his predecessor. These hopes were soon dispelled, which was voiced by Piotr Skarga, who wrote in his successive edition (1603) of *The Lives* that at the beginning it was expected that the son of Mary Stuart would "inherit his mother's heart and execute her will ; however, he disappointed our hopes and became an even more ruthless persecutor of the Divine Catholic Church, than Elisabeth..."[72] The ultimate dispelling of illusions[73] came together with anti- Catholic decrees issued on the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. As early as in 1607, in his defence of the Society of Jesus, Skarga devoted a separate chapter to "persecution of Jesuits and their slander in England", addressing this country with the following apostrophe : "O, England ! Which hast almost bathed the faithful Catholics in blood and still art wading in it with thine heretic feet..."[74] Elisabeth ceased to preoccupy the attention of writers, once it was focussed on the cruelty of the new sovereign.[75] One should, however, remember that *The Lives* by Skarga, so frequently reedited,

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[72] P. Skarga, *Żywoty świętych* [*The Lives of the Saints*], Kraków 1610, pp. 1113—1114.

[73] This opinion was expressed by Jakub Sobieski, who wrote in his memoirs that "James I, merciful lord", after Elisabeth "that proud, sly and perverse woman, seemed to the rather gracious, humane and sincere. However, there was heretic venom in him.", see U. Szumska, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

[74] P. Skarga, *Próba zakonu Societatis Iesu* [*The Trial of Societatis Iesu Order*], Kraków 1607, p. 116.

[75] This does not mean the critical remarks about her cannot be found in later memoirs. J. Ossoliński (*Pamiętnik* [*Memoirs*], Warszawa 1976, p. 117) calls Elisabeth spiteful, and Albrycht Radziwiłł (*Pamiętnik o dziejach w Polsce* [*Memoirs on History in Poland*] vol. I: 1632—1636, Warszawa 1980, p. 488) says that women "bring good and evil to the earth, beginning with Paradise, ending with Elisabeth, Queen of England..."

imprinted on the minds of several generations of devout Catholics in Poland the image of Elisabeth as a harlot greedy for Catholic blood.

In France, on the other hand, the dramatic fortunes of this Queen, her unsuccessful matrimonial plans, her conflict with Mary Stuart, became the subject of many works of poetry and drama. "Throughout the 17th century Elisabeth occupies not only a significant, but an honourable place in French literature"—wrote Grew.[76] These interests were continued in the 18th century[77] whereas in Poland no poem or drama devoted to the English Queen appeared to this day.[78] The novelists are also reluctant to take up her reign as the subject of their works.[79]

(*Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar*)

[76] H. Grew, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

[77] Polish repercussions of these interests may be found in the translation of *The Conversation between Elisabeth, Queen of England and Duke d'Alencon*, by Fontenelle, which, however, did not appear in print in its time, see Z. Sinko, *Oświeceni wśród pól elizejskich. Rozmowy umarłych. Recepcja-Twórczość oryginalna* [*The Englightened in the Elysian Fields. Conversations of the Dead. Reception-Original Works*], Wrocław 1973, p. 37).

[78] The only separate publication on Elisabeth that can be found in *Bibliografia polska XIX stulecia* [*Polish Bibliography of the 19th Century*] by K. Estreicher is d'Amfreville's, *Zbytek i moda za czasów królowej Elżbiety* [*Luxury and Fashion under Queen Elisabeth*], Warszawa 1896; this is an 8-page supplement to the periodical "Bluszcz". *Bibliografia dramatu polskiego, 1756—1939* [*The Bibliography of Polish Drama, 1765—1939*], comp. by L. Simon (Warszawa 1972, vol. 1—3) notes no play devoted to Elisabeth I, Queen of England.

[79] J. Dobraczyński's *Niezwyciężona armada* [*The Invincible Armada*] (Warszawa 1960) and G. Bidwell's *Bunt na zamku Penwood. Powieść historyczna z czasów Elżbiety I* [*Riot at Penwood. A Historical Novel from the Times of Elisabeth I*], (Warszawa 1962), are among the exceptions.