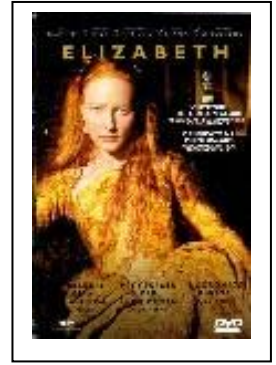


▣ ABOUT THE MOVIE ▣

TITLE	Elizabeth
DIRECTOR	Shekhar Kapur
YEAR AND COUNTRY	1998 UK
GENRE	Historical
ACTORS	Cate Blanchett (Elizabeth), Kathy Burke (Queen Mary Tudor), Christopher Eccleston (Duke of Norfolk), Joseph Fiennes (Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester), Geoffrey Rush (Walsingham), Richard Attenborough (Cecil), Fanny Ardant (Marie de Guise), John Geilgud (the Pope).



PLOT

In 1554, the Catholic Mary Tudor was Queen of England. The country was on the verge of bankruptcy and was torn by religious strife between Catholics and Protestants. Complicating the situation was Mary's marriage to Philip of Spain which was extremely unpopular. Because Mary persecuted the Protestants, they fomented plots against her. She suspected her Protestant half-sister Elizabeth of being part of them, so she had her arrested and imprisoned in the Tower. Since there was no solid evidence against her, Elizabeth was released after two months and spent the remaining two years of Mary's reign at Hatfield, where she studied under Castiglione and Ochino, absorbing the political and religious ideas of the two. Eventually, she combined her aim of creating a strong, united England with Italian methods of statecraft and ideas. It was said of her: "An Englishwoman Italianate is a devil incarnate."

On acceding to the throne, Elizabeth was immediately the object of French, Spanish and papal plots to marry her off or assassinate her, but as she was "la plus fine femme du monde" (Henri III of France) she managed to survive and eliminate her enemies at court. Extremely popular with her subjects, she described herself as "mere English" and appealed to a populace tired of foreign incursions and eager to partake of the riches of the New World. Her 45-year reign is often referred to as England's "Golden Age".

LANGUAGE

The language of court. Sophisticated, cultured expressions of the time (this was the era of Shakespeare, Marlowe, etc). Irony and double meanings are frequent.

The accents are upper-class on the whole. The Spanish and French diplomats and plotters have the obvious respective accents.

VOCABULARY

Abate (v): diminish, decrease	In the flesh: in person, in front of one
Act precipitously: act without reflecting on the consequences	Mere English: "only" English (no foreign contaminants). "Mere" is slightly disparaging so it is used ironically here
Anointed sovereign: enthroned, crowned king/queen	Overthrow (v): conquer, subjugate
Butchery (n): carnage, slaughter	A parlous state: a dangerous/risky state
Death warrant (n): authorization to kill someone	Pulpit (n): rostrum in a church from which the priest preaches
Eager (adj): desirous, hopeful, wishful	Raise an army: levy, muster, mobilize troops
Emissary (n): envoy, ambassador	A standing army bare of munitions: a permanent army without weapons
Flinch from (v): recoil, pull back	Undertake (v): take upon oneself, tackle, try
Garrison (v) with troops: man, station, send in armed forces	Unfit to rule: unsuitable, ill-suited to reign
Hang in the balance: be uncertain of the outcome	Whore (n): prostitute
Harbour (v): give shelter to/lodge	