

THE BREAK FROM ROME:
A COMPARISON
BETWEEN HENRY VIII
AND GUSTAV VASA

by

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Abstract

Henry VIII of England and Gustav Vasa of Sweden both ruled during the 16th Century. During this time, both men decided to join the Reformation movement and break with the Church of Rome. Henry had grown frustrated with his wife Catherine of Aragon, because she had been unsuccessful in giving him a male heir. He decided to divorce her, but to his dismay the Church of Rome would not allow it. In order to secure a divorce, Henry, alongside his key advisors Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer, broke with the Church of Rome and created the Church of England. Even though they broke with Rome officially and Henry became the Supreme Head of the Church of England, Henry was not interested in creating a radical Church. Henry had grown up studying theology, and the traditional theology was extremely important to him. On the other hand, Gustav Vasa chose to Break with Rome after Sweden had separated itself from Denmark and the Kalmar Union. Gustav was angry with the pope for having allowed the execution of Swedish nobles, including Gustav's father, at the Stockholm Bloodbath. In contrast to Henry, Gustav was not interested in theology, so he was indifferent to what sect of Christianity Sweden adopted. Analyzing the two kings together, it is possible to highlight Henry's appreciation of theology, and how the new Church of England maintained a doctrine that was extremely similar to the Church of Rome.

Chapter 1: Historiography

Introduction

Henry VIII of England and Gustav Vasa of Sweden were two important monarchs who pushed their countries into new directions by breaking with the Church of Rome in the sixteenth century. During this period, Europe was in the process of altering Christianity, with religious reforms happening in multiple countries. The Reformation had started in Germany but quickly spread to other countries like France, Switzerland, Denmark, and of course England and Sweden. The new Reformation ideas were able to spread quickly in Europe due to documents that were being printed and circulated between countries. This allowed theologians from different countries to express their ideas and concerns about the Church of Rome publicly.

Henry VIII and Gustav Vasa both split from the Church of Rome because they wanted to have peace and stability in their kingdoms, and they believed that Rome hindered that goal. However, Henry VIII himself was interested in theology, and with the assistance of Thomas Cranmer, Thomas Cromwell, and later others, he was able to create a unique new Church. On the other hand, Gustav was not interested in theology and after being advised by Laurentius Andreae and Olaus Petri, he chose to convert the country of Sweden to the Lutheran faith. Both kings were motivated by events that had happened to their families and the political role of their wives also influenced the Break with Rome.

This chapter will discuss the scholarship written on both Henry VIII of England and Gustav Vasa of Sweden, concentrating on their break with the Church of Rome. The first part of the chapter is about the role Henry played in the separation with Rome in England. This is discussed by looking at the kind of king Henry was when he first came

to the throne, the influence other people had over him, and the intelligence and motivation of the king himself. The second part of the chapter discusses the involvement of Gustav in the Break with Rome by studying his motions to Break with Rome, and his personal involvement in decisions that gave way to the Reformation in Sweden. The trends discussed in this chapter examine how historians over time viewed each of the kings, and the opinions they had on the kings and their advisors. The attitude towards Henry changed significantly over time, from seeing him as a great king to calling him an awful tyrant. In contrast to Henry, the trends that follow the scholarship on Gustav Vasa have not altered significantly between historians.

England

Henry VIII is one of the most well-known kings in English history, and he remains a popular topic of discussion. The scholarship on Henry has changed over time, as early scholars think Henry was a fantastic king, while modern scholars view Henry as a power-hungry tyrant. Scholarship alternated over time as historians have studied the other individuals who surrounded Henry, and analyzed the relationship he had with them, by looking at the way he treated people, and whom he trusted. Henry could never have functioned on his own as king, he required others to help him with his bidding. Nevertheless, Henry VIII is a notable king, he may have been a confusing man, with a harsh temper, but he also was very intelligent and tried to do what was right for his kingdom.

Scholarship from the Sixteen to the Eighteenth Century

Early scholarship focused on Henry being an admirable king, for people were fond of him, and believed he could do no wrong. When Henry decided to break with the Church of Rome, people did not blame him for this decision. Historians accused his advisors, like Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell, Thomas Cranmer, and Anne Boleyn, for persuading the king to Break with Rome. Henry's political relations with other European countries, like France, the Holy Roman Empire, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, was another main concept that is discussed in early work.

Two examples of the early scholars who wrote about Henry's reign were Robert Fabyan (d. 1512) and Edward Hall (1497-1547). Fabyan was a sheriff and Hall was a lawyer and historian. Fabyan died in 1512, so he only witnessed the first three years of Henry's reign and Edward Hall died in 1547, the same year as Henry, so he was alive for Henry's entire reign. Neither of their books *The New Chronicles of England and France* and *Hall's Chronicles*, were published until the nineteenth century, so their histories were not studied until well after the Tudor Era. Both men said positive things about Henry. Fabyan referred to Henry as "Ovr moste gracious sourerayne lorde Kynge Henry VIII,"¹ and Hall referred to Henry as "the most noble and puissant kynge."² This showed that Henry was respected and admired by these two men. Both scholars started their chapters about Henry with his coronation and his decision to execute Richard Epton and Edmund Dudley, his father's most trusted advisors on the Privy Council. They believed Henry's decision to execute Epton and Dudley was a political move to gain the admiration from

¹ Robert Fabyan. *The New Chronicles of England and France* (F.C. & J. Rivington, London. 1811)

² Edward Hall. *Hall's Chronicle* (J. Johnson, London. 1809) 505.

the people by having two of the most hated men in England executed.

Historian Francis Godwin (1562 - 1633), who wrote *the Annals of England*, thought Henry was the perfect man to be the king of England: “Henry VIII might deservedly have been ranked amongst the greatest of our kings. For if you consider his first twenty years, you shall not easily find any one, that either happily managed affairs abroad, or governed more wisely at home.”³ In regard to the Break with Rome, Godwin believed that Pope Clement VII- should have allowed Henry to divorce Catherine. He called Pope Clement VII “another Nero.”⁴ When the pope did not allow a divorce or an annulment, Godwin blamed Cardinal Wolsey and Henry’s second wife, Anne Boleyn for persuading the king to Break with Rome. Godwin thought Cardinal Wolsey was malicious and that Anne was a whore.⁵ He did not believe that Henry would have broken with the Church of Rome if these two had not had influence over the king. In comparison to more modern scholarship, Godwin does not discuss Cromwell’s involvement in the Church, for he focused on Cardinal Wolsey more than modern scholars do.

The Scottish Historian David Hume (1711-1776), had a similar opinion about Henry and the break with Rome. When Henry had come to the throne the people of England spread universally “a declared and unfeigned satisfaction for their new king.”⁶ Henry was a good king who was favoured by the public. He gave promises of a great new future to the people of England.⁷ Hume also agreed with Godwin that Anne was the reason the king began to doubt his marriage and that Anne had bewitched Henry into

³ Francis Godwin, *The Annals of England* (Printed by A. Islip and W. Stansby, London. 1630) 2.

⁴ Godwin. 9.

⁵ Godwin. 60.

⁶ David Hume. *History of England Volume III* (Liberty Classics, USA. 1778) 83.

⁷ Hume. 84.

falling in love with her.⁸ Even though Hume opposed Anne and thought she was an awful woman, he did question the legitimacy of the marriage between Henry and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. He believed they were too closely related since Catherine had been married to Henry's brother Arthur. Hume did disagree with Godwin over the influence of Cardinal Wolsey. He believed that Cardinal Wolsey had been a positive influence on Henry: "Henry loved Wolsey, he found him capable and advanced him as his favourite."⁹

Henry had grown up being educated by intelligent theologians, so he probably felt more comfortable around ecclesiastics like Cardinal Wolsey or Cranmer. Cromwell had been brought into his court by Cardinal Wolsey, so that is most likely why he trusted Cromwell so much. He saw Cromwell as Cardinal Wolsey's replacement after Wolsey fell from power. Even though Cromwell played a significant role in Henry's life, Hume thought Cranmer had a more significant influence over the king than Cromwell did. Which is an interesting statement because Cromwell is often thought as being the favourite of the king. Hume is the first historian looked at in this chapter who started to incorporate the importance of the other men in Henry's court. In the early scholarship about Henry's reign, historians viewed Henry as being a good king. People believed Henry came to the throne at the right time and his decision to become a different ruler than his father was a good move, and the execution of Epsom and Dudley helped to enforce that.

⁸ Hume.171.

⁹ Hume. 99.

Victorian Scholarship

Three Victorian scholars, James A. Froude, T.F. Tout, and F. York Powell continued to boast about how great a king Henry was. These historians also continued to discuss the impact that other people had in the creation of the Reformation. Their opinions show that it was not just Henry who encouraged the break with Rome, but theologians and advisors agreed with Henry that it was a good political move for England. The influence of Henry's intelligence, power, and education also became of interest to these historians. It is possible to see that historians began to view Henry as more than just a good king, that his education and upbringing played an important role in the man he became.

Historian James A. Froude (1818-1894) wrote that Henry VIII had the most extravagant court in the world, he was a popular ruler, and he lived for thirty-six years without being accused of anything.¹⁰ Henry was the king the people wanted and when Henry began to ponder the idea of a separation between England and Rome, he was able to make an intellectual decision. He had grown up being trained by theologians, and he entered his reign extremely knowledgeable about theology.¹¹ Froude conveyed the importance of Henry's education, believing that if Henry had grown as the Prince of Wales, he would have had the governmental and military education that most heirs to a throne had. However, Henry's education contrasted that of all previous kings of England in that he grew up with a different perspective of what was important in life: theology. In the first part of Henry's reign, Cardinal Wolsey shared that different perspective with

¹⁰ James A. Froude. *The History of England: From the fall of Wolsey to the death of Elizabeth*. (1876) 45, 167, 170.

¹¹ Froude. 99.

Henry. Henry trusted Cardinal Wolsey, which allowed Cardinal Wolsey to influence many of the decisions that Henry made.¹² According to Froude, Cardinal Wolsey believed England needed to undergo a Reformation and that England should take initiative in a radical religious movement. However, Cardinal Wolsey just did not feel that he was the person to start that movement.¹³ Wolsey opted for Henry to make a move in that direction.

Two historians who had similar opinions to Froude, were T.F. Tout (1855-1929) and F. York Powell (1850-1904) who co-wrote the book *History of England: From 1509-1689 in 1898*. These two historians continued the trend of examining Henry in a positive light. They believed Henry was brilliant and attractive, and that he worked not just for himself but for the good of England as well: “He won the hearts of the rich and poor alike, he never lost his subjects’ love.”¹⁴ Tout recognized Henry’s intellectual ability and knowledge about religion. Tout and Powell believed that Henry’s intelligence was strengthened by the influence of Cardinal Wolsey, that Henry and Cardinal Wolsey were a genius combination when they worked together. Together Henry and Cardinal Wolsey improved the status of England, during a time when England was not a top nation, by defying Rome and creating their own Church.¹⁵ Like earlier scholars, they were against Anne Boleyn, for they believed that she had managed to bewitch Henry into falling in love with her. In regard to the Break with Rome itself, Tout and Powell thought it was a good political move because now Henry had more power than any other English king had

¹² Froude. 100.

¹³ Froude. 324.

¹⁴ T.F. Tout and F. York Powell. *History of England from 1509- 1689* (Longmont Green and Co. London.1898) 4.

¹⁵ Tout and Powell. 38.

since the Magna Carta in 1215.¹⁶ Tout and Powell gave credit for the creation of the new Church to Thomas Cranmer. They viewed Cranmer as the key religious figure involved with the Reformation. Henry had made an intelligent move by appointing Cranmer to be the Archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁷ They gave Cromwell credit for being the person who officially broke with the Church, and they claimed Cranmer was the main leader who created new Acts for the Church of England.¹⁸ Victorian era scholars valued the importance of Henry's intelligence and education. Henry was a man who understood how to manipulate people to get what he wanted.

Scholarship of the Early Twentieth Century

Historians in the early twentieth century began to see faults in Henry's reign, as Tudor scholarship became a more popular topic to study. Scholars like W.P.M. Kennedy, for example, started to view Henry as a tyrant instead of the great king about whom earlier historians wrote. Also in twentieth century, historians began to have other opinions of Anne Boleyn, that she was not just a whore and witch. Luther also began to be seen as having an important impact of Henry, he had attracted Henry's attention in a positive way, and Henry suddenly took some of Luther's ideas into consideration.

W.P.M. Kennedy (1879-1963) believed that the history of the Tudors "has suffered at the hands of historians and students of English history."¹⁹ Kennedy believed that earlier historians should have focused more on the Reformation as being a positive event, that allowed England to have a new-found independence. He did not try to divide the

¹⁶ Tout and Powell. 38.

¹⁷ Tout and Powell. 33.

¹⁸ Tout and Powell. 33.

¹⁹ W.P.M. Kennedy. *Studies in Tudor History* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Co. Limited. 1916) 1.

blame for reform among Henry's advisors. Kennedy regarded Henry as being well liked by the people until he separated from Catherine, even though Kennedy did think the divorce with Catherine was the right move for Henry. In his opinion, "Henry had been living in sin for eight years because he had taken his late brother's wife as his own."²⁰ He also did not blame Anne Boleyn for having caused the divorce. This is a big step in scholarship, as the majority of earlier scholars accused Anne of being at the centre of the Break with Rome. According to Kennedy, Henry had already started to look into a divorce prior to Anne returning from the French court, and if not Anne, the king would have taken interest in another woman.

Preserved Smith (1880-1941), was a historian who studied the Reformation. In his article "Luther and Henry VIII," he wrote about the importance of Luther in the English Reformation. Initially, Luther and Henry had not been fond of each. However, Smith claimed "there was no monarch Luther had a longer or more curious intercourse than with Henry VIII of England."²¹ After the publication of *the Defense of the Seven Sacraments*, Henry began to be influenced by some of the ideas of Luther. The main idea Henry took from Luther was that if Luther could run a Church without a Pope, why did the Church of England need a pope? The concept of the pope not being in charge was Henry's main attraction to breaking with Rome. He was not interested in the new radical doctrine, for he simply wanted to eliminate the position of the pope.

Historian Ada Russell looked at Henry as being a promising king who had been influenced by the education he received as a child and over time became power hungry and

²⁰ Kennedy. 29.

²¹ Preserved Smith. "Luther and Henry VIII" *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 25, No. 100 (Oct., 1910) 656.

turned into a tyrant. Like earlier historians, Russell looked at the impact that Henry's father, Henry VII, had over him. Henry VII had spent his reign, "plotting and scheming, crushing the nobles and filing his treasury from the pockets of the commons."²² So it was normal that Henry VIII wanted to become a better king than his father, who had been so disliked by the people. Henry VIII was an intelligent king, he had grown up in an atmosphere of religion and learning.²³ Russell focused on the importance of Henry's education and the influence of humanist scholars like Erasmus, and Thomas More. She also thought Wolsey was running the country for a portion of 1520, and that Henry barely knew what was happening in his realm.²⁴ Once Cardinal Wolsey fell out of power, Cranmer and Cromwell replaced Wolsey, and she believed that Cranmer was the only minister to whom the king ever remained faithful. Cranmer believed in the radical ideas of the Protestant Church, so represented the new learning side of the Reformation, since Henry himself only wanted to eliminate the pope, he was not interested in changing the theology.²⁵ Russell also thought that Cromwell was the most important advisor to Henry because he was able to point out to the king the positive changes that would happen if the king broke with the Church. Russell showed the tyrannical side of Henry. She emphasized how, when Henry did not agree with one of his advisors or was upset with something they had done, he had no issue in having them executed. For example, Bishop Fisher, Thomas More, Thomas Cromwell, and of course his former wives Anne Boleyn, and Catherine Howard were all executed. In his later reign, he had no patience for people who were in his way.

The British historian, H. Maynard Smith (1869-1949) focused his research on

²² Ada Russell. *Tudor England*. (George G. Harrap & Company, London. 1913) 52.

²³ Russell. 52.

²⁴ Russell. 70.

²⁵ Russell. 95.

religion, since he was himself an important member of the Anglican Church. According to Smith, the Reformation was a combined effort involving Henry VIII, Cardinal Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell, Thomas Cranmer, Anne Boleyn, and Henry's other advisors. He believed that Henry trusted Cardinal Wolsey tremendously because he knew Cardinal Wolsey would carry out any action he wished. Cardinal Wolsey himself was "a born dictator, and could allow no initiative to others."²⁶ Cardinal Wolsey needed to be in control at all times, and did not like it when anyone else tried to influence the king. Smith thought Cardinal Wolsey was one of the main people who suggested the idea of the Reformation to Henry, but he was not the one who started it. Instead Smith believed Anne Boleyn was the initial trigger for the Reformation. Smith did not blame Anne in a malicious way for starting the Reformation, yet she was an object the king wanted in his possession. If Anne had not been at court, Henry would have fallen in love with someone else. Smith believed that Cranmer and Cromwell were the two other key players in the Reformation. The king was simply delighted by Cranmer; Henry found him to be very intelligent and it appears he valued the importance Cranmer put on education.²⁷ On the other hand, Cromwell was the man whom Henry needed to make the Break with Rome happen. Henry needed a man "whom no one respected, but everyone came to fear."²⁸ Smith viewed Cromwell as being a servant to the king, who was required to do Henry's dirty work, and when he failed at that, his job was over. According to Smith, each individual who influenced Henry had a different role in pushing the Reformation. In the early twentieth century scholarship began to see a small shift; historians began to view

²⁶ H. Maynard Smith. *Henry VIII & The Reformation*. (Macmillan and Company Limited, London. 1948) 12.

²⁷ Smith. 29.

²⁸ Smith. 43.

the Reformation as a positive change and that individuals did not need to be blamed for persuading the king to reform the Church.

The Impact of the Later Twentieth Century

In the second half of the twentieth century is when the most well-known and prominent Tudor scholars made their appearance and impact on Tudor scholarship, historians like: G. R. Elton, Eamon Duffy, and Christopher Haigh. These men all wrote major books on the Tudors and they have studied and taught at top universities like Cambridge, Oxford, and the London School of Economics. They all have a very good understanding of Henry, and valued the importance of his intelligence and knowledge of theology. These men also viewed the Break with Rome as being the king's downfall as that after Henry broke with Rome his mental and physical health declined. They do have mixed opinions over what sort of man Henry was, and some historians sympathize with Henry while others view him as a tyrant.

One of the most well-known Tudor historians is G. R. Elton (1921-1994). According to Elton "Henry VIII began as a strong, even wilful man of sound character, who deteriorated through the exercise of power into a suspicious and bloodthirsty autocrat."²⁹ The people had high expectations for Henry; "They looked to Henry as a King of Peace" after the country had been involved in warfare since the start of the 100 Years War.³⁰ The people had such high hopes for him as a king that his initial violent decisions did not bother the people as much, and it was not until later in his reign that

²⁹ G.R. Elton. *A History of England: England Under the Tudors*. 72.

³⁰ G.R. Elton. *Reformation and Reformation 1509 - 1558*. (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1977) 16.

people started to realize he was not the king they had hoped for but instead was a tyrant. The people of England also had, in Elton's eyes, an issue with some of the other key figures who were involved in the reformation. He believed Cardinal Wolsey was disliked by the people of England. In comparison to earlier work where people blame Cardinal Wolsey for Henry VIII's poor actions, Elton placed them both at fault. His initial remark about Cardinal Wolsey was that he was vain, shallow, and greedy.³¹ He viewed Cardinal Wolsey as an arrogant man by nature, unbelievably fond of showing off.³² Furthermore, Elton did view Cardinal Wolsey as being one of the main people who wanted a Reformation to happen, for Cardinal Wolsey did recognize that some of the priests and monasteries required attention. Unfortunately, Cardinal Wolsey was not the man for the job because he was a bad choice when it came to finances, he had an autocratic temper, and he displayed little interest in detail. Elton gave Cardinal Wolsey the credit bringing Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer into the mix. When describing Cromwell, Elton said that Cromwell was "ruthless in his affairs, but he lacked cruelty."³³ Essentially, Cromwell was not confident enough to stand up to Henry and influence radicals. Cranmer was able to stand his ground more with Henry, and most likely that is why Cranmer kept his head and Cromwell did not.

Eamon Duffy (b. 1947) focused on Christianity in the reign of Henry VIII. He referred to Henry's break with the Catholic Church as "The Henrician religious revolution."³⁴ This title is often used by Reformation experts, for it glorifies Henry's role

³¹ Elton. 76.

³² Elton. 76.

³³ Elton. 127.

³⁴ Eamon Duffy. *The Stripping of the Altars* (Yale University Press New Haven and London, 1992) 379.

within the Reformation, and it creates the illusion that Henry was responsible for all the ideas and theology behind the new Church, like how Luther had new ideas how the Church should be run in Lutheranism. Duffy looked at the Reformation from solely a religious point of view rather than political. He focused on other key figures who were involved more than he spoke about Henry. He even introduced Cromwell before Henry VIII, giving him the role as “vice-gerent in spirituals.”³⁵

British historian Christopher Haigh specializes in religion and on the Reformation in England. Haigh said that “Henry VIII had not exactly been dragged kicking and screaming to the royal supremacy, but nor did he stride purposefully towards it.”³⁶ Henry knew that he needed to break with Rome in order to separate from Catherine, but he was not interested in reforming the theology of the Church of Rome. He believed that Henry had been vulnerable to the temptation of Anne, and gave and he gave into the ideas of Cranmer, and Cromwell to reform with the Church, but ultimately it was his decision to reform when he did.³⁷ Haigh even believed that if the right circumstance had faced Henry, he might have abandoned his supremacy to return to the Church of Rome. However, the more Henry grew into his role as Supreme Head the more he came to believe he had the right to be the Supreme Head.³⁸ Eventually, he felt that there was nobody with higher power than him, and that anyone who opposed him or threatened his security should be executed. Haigh described Henry as a tyrant, because he had power of the kingdom, and the Church, there was no stopping this king from doing what he pleased. In the later twentieth century historians had become more concerned with the

³⁵ Duffy.381.

³⁶ Christopher Haigh. *English Reformations* (Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1993) 121.

³⁷ Haigh.123.

³⁸ Haigh.121.

theology behind Henry's new Church of England. They began to look in depth at the role the ecclesiastics played, and what doctrines were published, and who created them.

Scholarship from the Start of the Twenty-first Century

Scholarship that has been written in the twenty-first century sympathizes with Henry showing, that the fact that he was not expected to become king impacted his motives as king. Historians like Alec Ryrie and G.J. Meyers show Henry's decision to Break with Rome in order to divorce Catherine as the decision the king needed to make. The way historians viewed Henry in the twenty-first century is still very similar to that of the twentieth, but there is an emergence of scientific articles written on the health of Henry. The articles related to Henry's health try to explain the reason to why Henry became such an aggressive, tyrannical king later in his reign.

Historian Alec Ryrie (b. 1971) believed Henry VIII was the most celebrated and most notorious of English monarchs, and, even before he became king he had already been shaped into the perfect Renaissance king.³⁹ The fact that Henry had grown up away from London and learned from Humanistic tutors influenced the kind of king he would become, because of the emphasis on theology. Ryrie discussed how the Reformation in England began with the matter of the king's divorce instead of issue that was based on theology, like a Reformation should be based on.⁴⁰ He viewed Cromwell as being the most important advisor in Henry's court, Cromwell implemented the solution, which involvement Parliament declaring it illegal for English subject to appeal to Rome. It was because of this

³⁹ Alec Ryrie. *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stuart Realms 1485-1603*. (Pearson Longman, England. 2009) 83.

⁴⁰ Ryrie. 110.

decision that Henry received his divorce.⁴¹ Overall Ryrie justified Henry's Break with Rome in order to obtain a divorce from Catherine to try and have a legitimate son. He does not call Henry a tyrant. He viewed Henry's actions as the necessary precautions in order to secure a male heir for the Tudor throne.

G. J. Meyers (b. 1940), a historical journalist, looked at Henry in a sympathetic light at the beginning of his work *The Tudors: The Complete Story of England's Most Notorious Dynasty*. He emphasized the fact that Henry was not supposed to become king. This put the young prince into a difficult situation after the death of his older brother Arthur. It was a cultural and intellectual shock for Henry to be forced to learn about governing and to be surrounded by so many powerful men. Meyer's book is written more like a novel than an academic source. Meyers believed that Henry did not set out to be a malicious and tyrannical king. As the book moved forward with Henry's life, Meyers began to point out slight changes in Henry's personality that eventually led to his tyrannical disposition. In regard to other players involved in the Reformation, Meyers mentions them all, even Luther. He viewed Luther as an acquaintance of the king following the show down between Luther and Henry after the publication of *the Defense of the Seven Sacraments*: "Luther told Henry that even though his marriage to Catherine was valid, he suggested Henry to follow the example of the patriarchs of the Bible and take a second wife."⁴² Cromwell is viewed as being the key player of Henry's court, the man who followed in Wolsey's steps and was responsible for giving the king everything he wished for. As with historians mentioned earlier, Cranmer was viewed in a very positive light, "as the bright sunshine of

⁴¹ Ryrie. 111.

⁴² G.J. Meyers. *The Tudors: The Complete Story of England's Most Notorious Dynasty*. (Bantam Books. United States of America. 2011) 104.

the royal favourite after finding scholarly support for the king's every act and desire."⁴³ Meyers thought both Cromwell, and Cranmer were important in influencing the king to reform the Church of Rome.

Kyra Kramer, a medical anthropologist, and Catrina Banks Whitely, a bio-archaeologist wrote the article "A New Explanation for the Reproductive Woes and Midlife Decline of Henry VIII."⁴⁴ They looked at the decline of Henry VIII and the two different personalities he had. Henry's personality had changed over his reign, that he started as, "a brilliant, athletic, heroic figure bursting with vigor into a middle-aged tyrant who became monstrous, inwardly and outwardly."⁴⁵ They actually took it a step further as they proposed a medical reason for why Henry was the way he was, suggesting that Henry would have tested positive for the Kell blood group, with the complication of McLeod Syndrome. This disease causes negative reproduction. Symptoms of this disease are usually not shown until at least age 30 and can include psychiatric abnormality, heart issues, and muscular issues. All of this shows signs of how Henry was behaving.

By the current time period, historians have looked at Henry in different lights. Certain historians believed Henry was just a harsh tyrant, while others look at Henry as being an intelligent and knowledgeable king who knew about theology and how to play his cards correctly to get what he wanted. It has also become an interest of historians to try and figure out the mind and health of Henry to see what pushed him to be the way he was. The scholarship about Henry VIII has changed significantly overtime. Early scholarship valued

⁴³ Meyers. 151.

⁴⁴ Catrina Banks Whitely and Kyra Kramer. "A New Explanation for the Reproductive Woes and Midlife decline of Henry VIII" *The Historical Journal*. Vol. 53, No. 4 (December 2010)

⁴⁵ Whitely and Kramer. 828.

Henry as a great king, just like people believed he would be when he first came to the throne. Slowly overtime historians began to view Henry as a tyrant, who would eliminate people who did not agree with him or threatened him in anyway. Historians then began to justify Henry's actions trying to understand what events led to Henry's decline as a king. The fact that he had a different education than kings before him, that he was not expected to become king, or the possibility that he had a medical condition that explained his tyranny. All of the scholarship combined is what created the fascination and mystery behind Henry VIII.

Sweden

The Swedish equivalent to Henry VIII was Gustav Vasa. Sources on Vasa and early modern Sweden are difficult to find in English. Many books about the Reformation in Europe tend to leave out Sweden and other Scandinavian countries, or just give them a page in the book when other European countries get full chapters.⁴⁶ The Reformation in Sweden was not as radical a movement as other Reformations that happened in Europe, like in Switzerland. Also, Rome did not view the Scandinavian countries as being as important as England and other countries of continental Europe. When the pope was in the midst of dealing with countries that were breaking their connections with the Church of Rome he was less concerned about the countries that were further away from him that did not have the same political influence as England, Germany, or Spain.

⁴⁶ A few examples: Vivian Green. *The Europe Reformation*, Oslar Thulin. *Illustrated History of the Reformation*, and Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations Sourcebook*.

When sources are written about Scandinavian countries, they are usually about the Viking Age which dates back to 783 AD, because the Vikings. People have been intrigued by their history. However, there is a severe lack of sources for later Scandinavian history. A possible reason for the lack of English sources is that Sweden did not have as much influence on the rest of Europe during the sixteenth century, and the majority of central Europe did not know about anything that was going on in the North. Sweden, especially, had been knocked down by the Danish kings. Another reason why there might not be a decent amount of independent scholarship on Sweden is because during the Reformation they did not create a new branch of Christianity, like Calvinist, or the Huguenots whereas Sweden adopted Lutheranism as their official religion.

Scholarship from the Nineteenth Century

Early literature, as mentioned above, was very difficult to find in English about Sweden, but during the nineteenth century historians started to translate early Swedish works into English, so a wider group of people could learn about what happened in Sweden during the sixteenth century. Historians during this time emphasized that the Break with Rome was a backlash from the unfair treatment of the Swedes by Christian II of Denmark (1481-1559), following the execution of Swedish nobles during the Stockholm Bloodbath in 1521.

In his book *History of Scandinavia*, Rev. Paul C. Sinding wrote about Scandinavia as a whole. He looked at Sweden, Denmark, and Norway as one group. This is common for books that were written in English about Scandinavia. Sinding wrote about everything

that was happening across Scandinavia at the same time, so often his writing is a little hard to follow. He emphasised Christian II's role in the separation with Sweden which led to the break with the Church of Rome. He described Christian II as, "a high genius in ability, and judgment."⁴⁷ Furthermore, he believed that Christian II was responsible for the uproar in Sweden, and said it was Christian's fault that the relationship with Sweden and Denmark was forever dissolved.⁴⁸

The Reformation in Sweden, originally written in Swedish by Lars Anton Anjou, was translated into English by Henry M. Mason in 1859. All of Anjou's academic work is written in Swedish, but Mason's translation allowed English in order for English scholars to start studying the Swedish Reformation with access to earlier sources. Anjou, focused on the religious part of the Reformation instead of the politics. He also talked about John and Olaus Magnus, two ecclesiastics in Sweden who were devout Catholics and against all forms of Lutheranism or in their minds heresy. Olaus Petri, according to Anjou was responsible for bringing the Lutheran faith to Sweden, and that if Olaus had never gone to Wittenberg to study under Luther Sweden never would have adopted Lutheranism.⁴⁹

Scholarship of the Twentieth and the Twenty-first century

Historians during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries tend to look at Gustav Vasa as being a controlling king. During the early part of his reign he was viewed as the hero the people of Sweden needed to liberate them from Denmark, and by the end of his reign

⁴⁷ Rev Paul C. Sinding. *History of Scandinavia* (1860) 188.

⁴⁸ Sinding. 198.

⁴⁹ Lars Anton Anjou. *The History of the Reformation in Sweden*. (New-York: Pudney & Russell, Publishers. 1859) 65.

he was a tyrant that the people feared. The scholarship on Gustav does not change dramatically in the twentieth and twenty-first century, scholars believe that the Stockholm Bloodbath was the initiating factor in the Reformation and Gustav felt responsible to take action against Denmark and Rome for the results of the bloodbath.

In 1910, Danish historian Jacob Riis (1849-1914) published *Hero Tales of the Far North*. In his chapter on Gustav Vasa, he described Vasa as a hero to the Swedish people. Like historians before him, he believed the spark for the Reformation came from the disastrous downfall of the Kalmar Union due to the Stockholm Bloodbath in 1521. However, in comparison to other historians from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, he does not look at the impact of any of Gustav's advisors. He gave all the credit for the Reformation to Gustav. He believed that when Gustav became king, he was furious with the Church and he called a meeting and told the people he was done with the Church of Rome, and he encouraged them that the Reformation was for the good of Sweden.⁵⁰ Riis believed that Gustav was a strange mixture of contradictions, for he was a brave hero, but he was also a greedy and suspicious king.⁵¹ Gustav was passionate about Sweden and wanted the Swedes to be secure, but he also looked out for his own interests. He did not trust people easily and he eliminated people who threatened his authority. Riis believed that Gustav was similar to Louis XIV of France, and he could picture Gustav saying "L'état c'est moi," the infamous line from Louis XIV.⁵²

Michael Roberts (1908-1996) is one of the few English historians who specialized in Swedish history and he believed the Reformation in Sweden was a political movement. His

⁵⁰ Jacob Riis. *Hero Tales of the North* (The Macmillan Co, New York. 1910) 80.

⁵¹ Riis. 84.

⁵² Riis. 84.

work, *The Early Vasas: A History of Sweden, 1523-1611*, discussed the impact of the Reformation on Sweden. The book started with the end of the Kalmar Union, the Swedish War of Liberation, and Gustav Vasa's journey to the throne. Roberts opinion is that Vasa was hesitant about becoming the king of Sweden because it was not something he had planned or even thought would be possible for him.⁵³ Brigit and Peter Sawyer also focused on the political aspect of the Reformation, emphasizing it in their book *Medieval Scandinavia: A Conversion to Reformation circa 800 - 1500*. Like Roberts, they looked at the end of the Kalmar union leading to the Reformation.⁵⁴ In opposition to Roberts, Birgit and Peter Sawyer wrote that Vasa emerged as a leader because he wanted the power to rule Sweden and liberate it from Denmark.

Another twentieth century scholar was Irene Scobbie. In her book *Sweden*, she looked at Sweden from 10 000 BC to the twentieth century. Thus, she wrote an overview instead of specializing on one topic. She briefly looked at the Reformation under Gustav Vasa. Her chapter on him was written about his tyrannical side. He was not shown as a hero who liberated Sweden. In contrast, he was shown as a man who wanted to gain power to keep peace in his country. Scobbie stated that "he had little interested in the doctrinal aspects of the Reformation and remained uncommitted towards Lutheranism for some time."⁵⁵ Scobbie said that, in 1526, it was Olaus Petri who started to preach the Lutheran doctrine in Stockholm and encouraged people to convert to Lutheranism. Scobbie also

⁵³ Michael Roberts. *The Early Vasa's: A History of Sweden 1523 - 1611*. (Cambridge University Press, 1968) I.

⁵⁴ Brigit and Peter Sawyer. *Medieval Scandinavia: From Conversion to Reformation circa 800-1500* (The University of Minneapolis, London. 1993) 78-79.

⁵⁵ Irene, Scobbie. *Sweden*. (London Ernst Benn Limited, London. 1972) 34.

pointed out Vasa's temper, and often took it out on people, like the two Petri brothers, Olaus and Laurentius. This empathized how Gustav was not interested in theology, and he was just interested in holding the power of the Church.

Reforming the North: The Kingdoms and Churches of Scandinavia 1520 - 1545 is a book written by historian James L. Larson. Through Larson it is possible to see the improvement of English sources existing about Medieval and Early Modern Sweden. According to Larson, the Reformation in Sweden was not as significant a religious movement as it was for other countries.⁵⁶ The Reformation had been brought about by Gustav Vasa in order to try to maintain order and peace in Sweden after the country finally gained its independence from Denmark. Larson looked at individuals who were against the Reformation, like Bishop Brask who tried to prohibit the distribution of Lutheran works and teachings in Sweden.⁵⁷ Larson did believe that the Reformation was a positive decision for Sweden. Instead he looked at the opposition to the Reformation.

Scholarship on Gustav Vasa generally remained the same between the early and modern works. Historians believe that the Reformation happened as a repercussion of the Kalmar Union and the Stockholm Bloodbath, and it was necessary for Gustav to break with the Church of Rome in order to secure his own new kingdom. The scholarship all looks at Gustav as being a hero, the Father of Modern Sweden when he first became king, but by the end of his rule he was viewed as a harsh tyrant whom people feared.

⁵⁶ James L. Larson. *Reforming the North: The Kingdoms and Churches of Scandinavia 1520-1545* (Cambridge University Press, New York. 2010) I.

⁵⁷ Larson. 227, 239.

In this Thesis

This chapter has provided an overview of the scholarship and significant trends that historians wrote about Henry VIII and Gustav Vasa. Scholarship on Henry VIII has changed over time. The earlier scholars wrote about Henry being a well-liked king, he was the perfect man for the throne when his father died. The later scholarship looked at Henry being a tyrannical king, who reformed with the Church of Rome because of his desire to divorce Catherine. Henry did this with the assistance and influence of his multiple advisors, and different scholars value them differently, earlier scholars believe Wolsey and Anne Boleyn were primarily responsible for the Break with Rome, while later scholars focus on Cranmer and Cromwell. In contrast the scholarship of Gustav remained unchanged over time. He had been a great king and hero at the beginning of his reign, and by the time he died he was viewed as a tyrant. All scholars agree that both kings started off as strong men, who were admired and people expected great things from them. Unfortunately, their obsessions with holding ultimate power led to their downfall.

The second chapter of this thesis will focus on the reign of Henry VIII. By looking at how his education and childhood impacted his later reign as he unexpectedly became king. The influence of Henry's family, wives, and key advisors will also be discussed, emphasizing the pivotal role they played in initiating the Reformation in England, and, later, producing the acts and doctrines that created the Church of England. There were numerous acts that were published to establish Henry's new Church of England, and they were all influenced by Henry and his advisors, Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer.

The third chapter will explore the reign of Gustav Vasa and the impact the

Reformation in Sweden had on his reign. Gustav like Henry, also became king unexpectedly and this influenced how he ruled the newly independent country of Sweden. Gustav had become king after he lead a revolt that separated from Sweden from the Kalmar Union, which left in him with power to reconfigure Sweden how he sought fit. He joined the Reformation movement after he was influenced by men like Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae in order to gain his independence from Rome.

Finally, a short conclusion will discuss the similarities and differences between Henry VIII and Gustav Vasa. They were very similar men who broke with the Church of Rome around the same time, neither of them was expected to become king, and they were both influenced by their families, and advisors to Break with Rome. They would both break with the Church of Rome for political reasons instead of theological ones in order to gain power and security in their kingdoms.

Chapter 2: Henry VIII

Introduction

The Reformation in England took place because of the motives of King Henry VIII. Henry chose to reform with the Church on account of political differences he had with the pope. He wanted to be able to make his own decisions about particular matters and did not want the Church to have supreme power in England. The main conflict that arose between Henry VIII and Pope Clement VII was the issue of divorce as Henry wanted to divorce his wife Catherine of Aragon in order to obtain another chance in having a son to secure the throne of England upon his death. This issue combined with Henry's humanistic education, and passion for religion is what led to the creation of the Church of England. With the assistance and advice from his advisors, along with the influence of the king's family, the Church of England joined the Reformation movement in the 16th century.

Before presiding over the throne, Henry was impacted by the issues of the previous century that his ancestors had faced. The 14th and 15th centuries had been tumultuous in England and it would not have been good for England's economics or confidence to be placed in a difficult situation of warfare again. England had been involved in the Hundred Years War against France, followed by the War of the Roses, the war that gave birth to the rise of the Tudor Dynasty. The War of the Roses was a bloodbath between two rival English families, the House of York and the House of Lancaster, two houses that fought with each other for over three decades.⁵⁸ The civil war

⁵⁸ Desmond Seward. *The War of the Roses: Through the Lives of the Five Men and Women of the Fifteenth Century* (Penguin Books, United States of America. 1995) 2.

had been about which family had the better claim to the English throne. Henry VI was the King of England at the time but he was mentally unstable. When a peasant rebellion raised concern that he was not fit to govern England at the time, Richard, Duke of York stepped up and made a claim to the throne. Both of these men were descendants of Edward III and had fair claims to the throne. The war finally ended when Henry VII, Henry VIII's father defeated Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485.⁵⁹ This allowed Henry VII to be crowned the King of England, and end the civil war in England after the creation of a new English dynasty. Henry VII had fought on the Lancastrians side as a descendant of John of Gaunt, and Richard III was the son of Richard, Duke of York. Henry decided to take his name Tudor and create a new dynasty. To help secure his position as king, he took his mother's suggestion and married Elizabeth of York, the eldest daughter of Edward IV and his wife Elizabeth Woodville.⁶⁰ The marriage would help prevent others from making a claim to the throne because it was a marriage that linked the House of York and the House of Lancaster. This meant that the future children of Henry VII and Elizabeth's marriage would have the blood of both houses in them, ending the division between the two houses in England. This marriage would lead to the birth of four surviving children, the third of which was Henry VIII. Henry would be the first king that brought the two houses of Lancaster and York together as one.

This chapter will examine the causes for Henry's break with the Church of Rome, by looking at Henry's early life, his rise to the throne, his marriages, desire for a son, and

⁵⁹ Susan Brigden. *New World, Lost Worlds: The Rule of the Tudors, 1485 - 1603*. (Penguin Books, United States of America. 2000) 12.

⁶⁰ Edward IV was the eldest son of Richard Duke of York, and he was the elder brother of Richard III and George Duke of Clarence. Edward was the King of England from 1461-1483.

the influence of the men in his court who helped shape the Church of England. The creation of the Church of England was instigated by King Henry himself but it involved the input and intelligence of many other men, including Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell. Through a combination of personal drive and education, mixed with the theological input of Cranmer, and Cromwell's passion for improving the doctrine in England, King Henry VIII would come to do the unthinkable, break with the Church of Rome and create the Church of England.

The Early Life of Henry VIII

Henry's upbringing had an impact on Henry's views later in life. He had received a unique education since he grew up secluded from London, and he was heavily influenced by theology as a child. All of these qualities led to his future motives as king. When he was born on June 28 1491 at Greenwich Palace, to Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, his father never imagined that Henry would amount to any great importance, but he would eventually be proved wrong. Henry VII's "spare" son left a greater legacy on England than he did.

When Henry was born, he was the second son of Henry and Elizabeth. This had advantages and disadvantages for Henry. A disadvantage was that there is less known about his young childhood because he was overshadowed by his older brother, Arthur Prince of Wales. His older brother was of great importance to their father, because he was the heir to the English throne and this secured the Tudor line. Since there was now a child who was a descendant from both the Lancastrian and Yorkist faction there was less chance for rebellion to defy the king, because people who supported either house were

now satisfied with the king. Henry's older brother had even been named Arthur which was significant British name with ties to King Arthur. This publically admitted that Henry VII believed his son was to be of great importance.⁶¹ When Henry was baptized no chronicler or herald made note of it. His paternal grandmother, Margaret Beaufort, even wrote down the wrong date in which he was baptized, in comparison to writing down the exact date, time, and details about the baptism of Henry's older brother and sister, Arthur and Margaret.⁶² From the moment he was born Henry was viewed as "the spare" son, and the fact that his baptism was not viewed as an important event proved that. Henry did not even have his first public appearance until the age of five, when he witnessed a royal grant by charter to the abbot convent at Glastonbury.⁶³ It is possible that Henry's first public appearance sparked his interest in the Church and Christianity.

As a young boy, Henry proved to be intelligent and he received an excellent education. Since Henry was born following the Renaissance movement, his education was influenced by Renaissance teachings. His education focused on the new form of learning called Humanism. Unlike his brother, who was taught how to govern a kingdom, battle strategy, and political tactics. Henry's education focused on literature, music, poetry, and culture. Henry's education was supposed to lead him to a position in the Church, which was a very common position for a royal child. The difference in the education the two boys received would prove its significance during Henry's reign. Moreover Arthur, was the Prince of Wales, grew up in London alongside his father, compared to Henry who grew up alongside his mother and sisters at Eltham Palace. It

⁶¹ Elton. 23.

⁶² A.H. Thomas and I.D. Thornley. *The Great Chronicle of London*. (1937) 248.

⁶³ J.J. Scarisbrick. *Historic World Leaders*. (Yale University Press, United States. 2011) 619.

was very unusual for a prince to grow up in the presence of women, due to the perceived civilizing and softening impact of female company, but it did allow Henry to gain poise and confidence.⁶⁴ Henry studied with elite tutors like the poet John Skepton, and humanist scholars Desiderius Erasmus and Thomas More but it is believed that Henry's mother, Elizabeth of York, was his first tutor.⁶⁵ Since his mother had been Henry's first tutor she taught him from a unique perspective, due to the fact she was a woman, and this meant she would have valued ideas that were different than Henry's father, Henry VII. This most likely led to Henry's trust and interest in women.

In 1502, the unexpected happened; Arthur died at the age of fifteen. This left the ten-year-old Henry as the heir to the English throne, a position for which young Henry was not ready. He moved away from his mother and sisters to go live with his father in London where he began his training to be king. This was a very different environment. He had never been surrounded by these many men in his life, nor were they the Renaissance tutors he knew. It was also believed that the young prince was completely subjected to his father and never spoke unless he was asked to speak, a characteristic that would not last once Henry himself was king. His paternal grandmother, Margaret Beaufort was also at court. Beaufort was a very religious woman and she probably stressed the importance of Christianity to young Henry as well.

Renaissance Prince

In April 1509 Henry's father Henry VII died, which left the throne of England in

⁶⁴ David Starkey. *Henry: The Prince who would turn Tyrant*. (Harper Perennial, London. 2008) 4.

⁶⁵ David Starkey. *Henry VIII: Mind of a Tyrant*. (DOX Productions, UK. 2009)

the hands of a teenage boy. Henry took the role of king without hesitation, and became the new King of England, a king that the people thrilled to serve. His reign is often viewed in three different stages, the phase when he was a good king the people admired, his obsession with a son, and the Henrician Reformation.⁶⁶ The reign of Henry is divided up into different stages because his motives as king changed throughout his reign. It all depended on what the king's ambitions were at the time. In the first part of his reign he was a dazzling figure, and they were the "Green Years" meaning that everything was good in the court, and Henry for the most part was a happy king.⁶⁷

When Henry came to the throne the people of England were elated, they had grown tired of Henry's miserly father, Henry VII who had implemented new government councils and taxes that increased England's economy but at the expense of the people. It was also the first peaceful succession in England since 1422, and the people of England needed a peaceful transition. Henry VIII was described as the perfect Renaissance prince; he was a breath of fresh air to the English throne. He was handsome, athletic, artistic, intelligent, musical, religious, and over all very charming. Thomas More celebrated the new king's accession that ended his father's tyranny. More even said the king "had a character which deserves to rule," words that he would later regret.⁶⁸

The two Henry's had not had the best relationship with each other and Henry VIII made changes in the English court in order to gain the respect of the people and prove to them he was not his father and he would be a good king. "Henry found himself surrounded by the wise old men trained by his father, who inculcation caution and saw

⁶⁶ Amy Licence. *The Six Wives and Many Mistresses of Henry VIII: The Women's Stories* (Amberley Publishing, Gloucestershire. 2014) 20.

⁶⁷ Licence. 20.

⁶⁸ Brigden.103.

the objections to every enterprise that was proposed.”⁶⁹ One of Henry's first acts as king was the arrest and execution of Edmund Dudley and Richard Epton.⁷⁰ These men were the main faces of Henry VII's Council of the Learned in Law, a council that collected the new higher taxes from the people. They were detested by the people of England, because these two men were blamed for the rise of taxes under Henry VII's reign. It is presumed that these men most likely did not receive a fair trial according to the 39th law of the *Magna Carta*. This law stated “no free man shall be arrested or imprisoned or dispossessed or outlawed or exiled or in any way victimized, except by the lawful judgement of his peers or by the law of land.”⁷¹ Henry used their executions as a tool to gain the approval of the people because it proved that from an early stage Henry would take any precaution to advance his personal well-being.

When he first became king, Henry took a bride to reign beside him. On June 11, 1509 Henry married his brother's widow Catherine of Aragon, and this would turn out to have momentous consequences for the king's reign.⁷² This marriage had been planned by Henry VII after the death of Arthur in 1502, but the marriage had yet to happen. Henry VII had done this because he wanted Catherine in the family to maintain an alliance with Spain and also because he did not want to return the dowry that came with Catherine. Due to the fact Prince Arthur had been married to Catherine, Henry and Catherine were too closely related to marry without papal authority. This dispensation was granted in two forms. First a brief was sent to Catherine's mother on her death bed, and this was

⁶⁹ H. Maynard Smith. 4.

⁷⁰ Hume.86.

⁷¹ C. Warren Hollister. *Medieval Europe: A Short Sourcebook* (McGraw- Hill, New York. 1982) 300.

⁷² J. Cannon, and R. Griffiths. *The Oxford Illustrated History of the British Monarchy* (Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1988) 312.

followed by a bull of dispensation by Pope Julius II.⁷³ The two documents were published on January 7 1503 and June 23 1503.⁷⁴ It covered all debatable matter in connection with the case at this point. When Henry was young he was originally against marrying his brother's widow. "At one moment, he claimed that his dying father had urged him to marry Catherine of Aragon, and so he must obey; at another, he expressed doubts about marrying his brother Arthur's widow."⁷⁵ The couple were officially married together on June 24, 1509. Thomas More wrote a coronation ode that said, "if ever there was a day, England, if ever there was a time for you to give thanks to those above, this is that happy day, one to be marked with a pure white stone and put in your calendar."⁷⁶ This once again showed that the people looked forward to what was to come with Henry as their new king.

Initially Henry and Catherine had a happy marriage, despite the fact she was six years his senior. She was intelligent like Henry, she engaged in politics, and she proved to be a very devoted wife who loved her husband very much. "She even personally embroidered his shirts."⁷⁷ This displayed how much she loved her husband. Catherine would never have guessed that her husband would go to great lengths to have their marriage annulled twenty years later.

⁷³ Carter Lindberg. *The European Reformations*. (Wiley-Blackwell, United Kingdom. 2010) 301.

⁷⁴ G. Mattingly. *Catherine of Aragon*. (Little Brown, California, 1941) 60-61; J.J. Scarisbirek. *Henry VIII* (University of California Press, California, 1968) 9.

⁷⁵ Brigden. 104.

⁷⁶ Epigram 19, in volume 3.2, *Latin Poems, of The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, eds. C. H. Miller, L. Bradner, C. A. Lynch, and R. P. Oliver (Yale UP, 1984), pp. 100-113.

⁷⁷ Meyers. 62.

Henry VIII and Martin Luther

In the midst of Henry being frustrated with his wife, a larger controversy had erupted in Europe. In Germany, a monk by the name of Martin Luther had nailed 95 *Theses* on the Church door in Wittenberg on October 31 1517. This movement swept across Europe, impacting on all countries. It was an evolutionary process that created much chaos for the pope and it inspired other people to speak out against the Church. Luther himself was most concerned with the use of indulgences and blasphemy.⁷⁸ Luther said that his argument with the Church of Rome was a doctrinal disagreement of fundamental signification, not a castigation of the clergy for improper conduct.⁷⁹ At this time the Bible was only written in Latin and the masses were conducted in Latin so the everyday person was unable to understand what the Bible actually said. Luther believed to a certain extent the Church had taken advantage of people in order to maintain control. This created a huge controversy between Luther and the Church. Eventually this disagreement would lead to the creation of new branches of Christianity, which induced Lutheranism. One of Luther's arguments against the Church was over the number of sacraments. The seven sacraments the Church believed in were, baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance, unction, marriage, and holy orders.⁸⁰ Luther on the other hand believed in baptism and Eucharist. He believed, "Hence it follows that there are, strictly speaking, only two Sacraments in the Church of God: Baptism and the Bread... For the

⁷⁸ Vivian Green. *The European Reformation*. (Sutton Publishing, United Kingdom. 1998)16-17.

⁷⁹ De Lamar Jensen. *Reformation Europe: Age of Reform and Revolution*. (D.C. Heath and Company, Toronto. 1981) 41 - 42.

⁸⁰ Euan Cameron. *The European Reformation*. (Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1991)15.

sacrament of penance.. is .. nothing a way and a return to Baptism.”⁸¹

These new ideas eventually reached England. When Henry heard, then he was furious. Since Henry had been educated to only believe in the doctrine of the Church of Rome he was immediately biased against Luther’s ideas.⁸² Henry took it upon himself to write a book in Latin *The Assertio Septum Sacromentorum* or the *Defense of the Seven Sacraments*, in this document he defended the five sacraments that Luther did not believe in. He argued that Luther was incorrect and there were really seven sacraments. Henry did write part of it with the help of a committee of theologians.⁸³ His interest in having this document written proved how dedicated Henry was to the Church and that Christianity was very important to him. Pope Leo X was so impressed with the king that he granted him the title Defender of the Faith. This work proved Henry’s devotion to the Church and showed the pope that Henry was willing to stand up for the Church of Rome. Henry responded to the pope in a letter which said “Most Holy Father: No duty is more incumbent on a Catholic sovereign than to preserve and increase the Christian faith and religion and the proofs thereof, and to transmit them preserved thus inviolate to posterity, by his example in preventing them from being destroyed by any assailant of the Faith or in any wise impaired.”⁸⁴ All of what Henry said to Luther and to the Pope Leo X showed that Henry was very against Lutheranism. He believed that people who worshipped these different ideas of Christianity were heretics.

Luther soon published a response to Henry, and he “treated him with all the

⁸¹ Martin Luther, “7th Babylonian Captivity of the Church,” *Three Treatises*, second revised edition, trans, A.T.W. Steinhill. User (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970) 258.

⁸² Hume. 139.

⁸³ Brigden. 96.

⁸⁴ Stephanie A. Mann. “Assertio Septem Sacramentorum.” *Supremacy and Survival: How Catholics Endured the English Reformation* (Scepter, New York. 2007)12.

acrimony of style, to which, in the course of his polemics, he had so long been accustomed.”⁸⁵ He was very upset with what Henry had to say to him, writing: “The King of England blabbers much about my flight into Bohemia - a mighty wise man is this who believes his book will be victorious, and worthily written.”⁸⁶ Luther was so upset by *Asserto Septum Sacramentorum* that he did not believe the king actually wrote it, believing instead that it had been written by Archbishop Lee or Cardinal Thomas Wolsey.⁸⁷ Martin Luther continued to criticize the king, and he defended himself after Henry called him a hypocrite. His defense to Henry was published in Latin and German in 1523. This letter offended Henry, so Henry spread the word that Luther was poison.⁸⁸ For Henry to continue the debate with Luther indicated that he was still very passionate about what was happening to the Church at this time. Henry VIII might not have understood all of the theology that Luther stood for, but the protection of the Church’s theology was still extremely important to him.⁸⁹ Initially, Henry fought to support the Church before he did the same thing that Luther did in the years to come. When Henry began his Reformation movement, he would disown the work he had written, and he blamed others for making him write what he had so proudly claimed.⁹⁰

Desire for a Son

The second phase of the king’s reign began in 1526 and it was dominated by

⁸⁵ Hume. 140.

⁸⁶ *Luther’s Reply to King Henry VIII*, trans. Edgar Simmons Buchanan. (New York, 1928) 2.

⁸⁷ Neelak Serawlook Tjernagel. *Henry VIII and the Lutherans: A Study in the Anglo Lutheran Relations From 1521 to 1547*.(Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis. 1965)18.

⁸⁸ Tjernagel. 22.

⁸⁹ Tjernagel. 23.

⁹⁰ Brigden. 96.

Henry's great desire for a son. Henry had always wanted a son but in 1527 he began the legal actions in order to try and have a legitimate son. His desperation for a son would force the king to look at every solution imaginable. It would destroy his marriage with Catherine, create a commotion in England, and would eventually be solved by the separation from the Church of Rome.

Around six to seven years after the king and queen were married, the relationship between Catherine and Henry began to deteriorate as she was unable to have a child who survived for more than a few weeks. Henry grew more and more frustrated, as the birth of a child, in particular a boy was necessary to secure the future of the English kingdom and without a son there were no guarantees about what would happen to England once Henry died. Eventually, due to the king's frustration he began to seek comfort in other women. He pondered the idea of divorcing Catherine as early as 1514 as a strategy to have a legitimate child with another woman. In 1516 things began to look up for Henry and Catherine's marriage that after seven years of being married the Queen gave birth to a child, however to the king's displeasure it was a girl, the Princess Mary. Henry was disappointed with the birth of a daughter, but it gave him hope that Catherine was capable of having a son. Unlike in France, it was not illegal for the crown to be passed to a daughter, but the crown had never passed successfully to a woman.⁹¹ The king had never been a faithful husband, but in 1518 he managed to get one of his mistresses pregnant.

⁹¹ The only time in English history when a crown had been passed to a daughter was of Mathilda daughter of Henry I tried to become queen in 1154, that resulted in civil war for nineteen years. Since England had just finished with a civil war thirty years prior, Henry did not want to bestow that fate on his people.

Elizabeth Blount gave birth to a son in 1519 named Henry Fitzroy.⁹²

In 1525 Catherine turned 40, and her childbearing years were over. Henry needed to look at his options for a male heir. He had two children, one was a daughter and the other a bastard son. The succession of Mary as queen in her own right would be without precedent, and, to the sixteenth century mind, the guarantee of a disputed succession, a civil war, or, at least, domination by a foreign power through marriage.⁹³ “English history offered no successful precedent for a regent Queen, nor had a royal bastard ever succeeded his father.”⁹⁴ Henry began to make arrangements for his illegitimate son, by giving Fitzroy the titles of Duke of Somerset, Duke of Richmond, and the Earl of Nottingham.⁹⁵ The fact that Henry gave his illegitimate son titles showed that he had become desperate to find a solution. There was even speculation that Henry had considered marrying his son Henry to his legitimate daughter Mary. This idea was suggested to him by when the Papal Legate Campeggio, when he came to England in attempt to persuade the king not to divorce his wife.⁹⁶ This issue overcame the king, and it became the main focus of the remainder of the king’s reign.

The King’s Great Matter

When Henry had attacked Luther, he did not know he was going to begin a battle with the Church himself six years later. The issue of not having a legitimate son led to

⁹² Henry Fitzroy was born on June 15th, 1519. The name “Fitzroy” is commonly used to indicated bastard children. Fitzroy would only live until the age of 17, before he got sick and died form consumption.

⁹³ Cannon, and Griffiths. 319.

⁹⁴ Richard Rex. *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*. (St. Martin’s Press, New York. 1993) 7.

⁹⁵ Meyers. 302.

⁹⁶ Kennedy. 25.

Henry's determination to divorce his wife Catherine, and this became famously known as the "King's Great Matter." Henry knew he needed to separate from Catherine in order to secure the Tudor throne. The king believed there was no reason that the divorce to Catherine would be a challenge, but he was quickly proved wrong.

The push for a divorce was instigated by the entrance of Anne Boleyn a new Lady in Waiting to the Queen at the Tudor court. Anne appeared at court as early as 1522, she made an entrance as a young woman who had charm, style, and wit, which made her a match for the king.⁹⁷ The king wanted Anne to become his mistress, like many women before her had become, including her own sister Mary, but Anne refused to become a mistress. Henry most likely had never been refused by a woman before and this created a new obsession for the king. He had considered his options for divorcing Catherine but Anne really pushed for that goal. Anne happened to walk in at the right time to earn Henry's love but if it was not her, it would have been another woman later on. It was believed that Henry really did fall in love with Anne. This is proved through letters he wrote her where he confessed his love, in one letter calling her "mine own sweetheart"⁹⁸ and in another said "I am yours Henry R. forever."⁹⁹

In 1527 Henry finally decided to take legal action against his wife Catherine, taking her to court to get an annulment. He confessed that he had committed a sin after he married his brother's wife, because of the words of biblical text *Leviticus* 18:16 and 20:21: "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness" and "If a man shall take his brother's nakedness: and they shall be

⁹⁷ Brigden. 111.

⁹⁸ Newton Key and Robert Bucholz. *Sources and Debates in English History 1485-1714* (Wiley-Blackwell, United Kingdom, 2009) 55.

⁹⁹ Brigden. 112.

childless.”¹⁰⁰ He argued that he had committed a misdemeanor against God, and because of his actions God had cursed him, preventing him from having a son. This argument once again showed that Henry was a religious man, as he wanted to make peace with God. With the assistance of Cardinal Wolsey, Henry took his problem to the pope. Henry believed that Cardinal Wolsey had influence over the papacy and that the pope would rule in his favour.¹⁰¹ Cardinal Wolsey had been in favour of the annulment because he thought the king could use the opportunity to marry a French princess and create an alliance with France. Wolsey was not impressed by Anne Boleyn, and he did not encourage Henry’s relationship with her.

From the start of the issue, Henry preferred a radical alternative: to deny the papal bull that Pope Julius II had dispensed. He claimed that the pope did not have the ability to issue a dispensation against the Bible.¹⁰² He wanted his marriage to Catherine to be annulled by either obtaining permission for bigamy or a decree that stated his marriage was null owing to some flaw in the dispensation.¹⁰³ His intentions for Catherine were for her to be sent away to a nunnery so he could move on in his life. Henry would never have harmed Catherine because she was too important publicly and he would have upset the people of England even more. Henry believed the divorce would be achieved in good consciousness because he truly believed that God was on his side and wanted him to divorce Catherine.¹⁰⁴

When Catherine first heard word of the king’s intentions, she was absolutely

¹⁰⁰ Rex. 8.

¹⁰¹ Cannon, and Griffiths. 320.

¹⁰² Rex. 8.

¹⁰³ Kennedy. 31.

¹⁰⁴ Alec Ryrie. *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stewart Realms 1485-1603* (Pearson Longman, Great Britain. 2009) 120.

furious, claiming that Henry was her sole husband and her previous marriage to Arthur had never been consummated.¹⁰⁵ Catherine was devastated by Henry's actions and one point she even put herself on her knees before him and begged for mercy. The desperation that Catherine showed towards her husband made many individuals sympathize for her. This included the pope. Pope Clement VII was put into a difficult situation when the king requested an annulment because it would mean that Pope Clement VII would criticize the actions of a previous pope. The Church was already being questioned after Luther had circulated the *95 Theses* and the Church did not need to give people more reasons to question the authority and legitimacy of the Church of Rome. Also in 1527 Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, invaded Rome and took control of the pope. Charles V was the nephew of Catherine of Aragon and he did not approve of the king's plan. He did not want his aunt to be divorced and lose her position as the Queen of England. This meant that Clement VII most likely had been influenced by Charles V in favour of Catherine instead of Henry.

In 1528, Cardinal Wolsey wrote a letter to Pope Clement VII where he explained the situation of the king. He proceeded to ask for a favour for the Catholic cause, and stated the king's desire. "Not from any grudge of displeasure to the Queen, who the King honours and loves, and minds to love and to treat as his sister, with all manner of kindness. But as this matrimony is contrary to God's law, the King's conscience is previously offended."¹⁰⁶ After he received this letter the pope allowed Cardinal Wolsey to carry out a show trial in England on May 17 1527 but no solution came from this trial.

¹⁰⁵ David Hume; G.R. Elton; G.J. Meyers; Susan Brigden.

¹⁰⁶ M. St. Clare Byrne. "IX. To Clement VII." *The Letters of King Henry VIII* (Funk and Wagnalls, New York. 1936.) 61-63.

Catherine refused to have the trial done by Henry's men and the only authority she would trust was that of the pope. The queen was not the only person at court who was against the divorce, as many of the ecclesiastics did not believe in divorce and wished to stop the king. One man who was against the divorce was Bishop John Fisher. Bishop Fisher saw Catherine as the true Queen of England. He found another passage in the Bible that contradicted Henry's actions. In the passage, Deuteronomy 25:5 in the *Old Testament* said: "When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as a wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her."¹⁰⁷ This passage meant that Henry had in fact done the right thing in the eyes of God by getting married to Catherine his brother's widow.

Cardinal Campeggio, who was the papal legate in England, came to visit Henry in London on October 8 1528. He wrote a letter to the pope where he explained what happened on his visit. He wrote that "his majesty has studied this matter with such diligence that I believe in this case he knows more about it than a great theologian or jurist: and he told me briefly and in the plainest terms that he wanted nothing but a declaration whether the marriage was valid or not, he himself presupposing always invalidly; and I believe that if an angel was to descend for he would be able to persuade him to contrary."¹⁰⁸ This letter proved that Henry did know the correct theology, he was a great theologian and jurist, when he requested a divorce, and he had contemplated his actions.¹⁰⁹ Pope Clement VII probably did not expect Henry to be so well studied in

¹⁰⁷ Rex. 9.

¹⁰⁸ Byrne. 86.

¹⁰⁹ Cardinal Campeggio, Papal Legate in England, to Jacobo, Cardina Salivate, secretary to Pope Clement VII (October 25, 1528) 56.

theology because most kings were not knowledgeable. This goes back to Henry's childhood education that focused on religion.

The situation moved slowly and Henry and Catherine both began to get frustrated with the trial. In 1529, the queen appeared before the court in person and, before the king and the judges, pleaded that she should not be discarded or dishonoured.¹¹⁰ Henry was not happy with this action and he began to take his frustrations out on Cardinal Wolsey. Cardinal Wolsey was the Archbishop of York and the trusted advisor of the king, so Henry expected Cardinal Wolsey to have found a solution by now. This led to Wolsey's downfall. His power came to an end in 1529 when he was unable to provide a solution of the King's Great Matter. He was accused of treason in *Articles against Cardinal Wolsey signed by the Lords* in December 1529.¹¹¹ Cardinal Wolsey was accused of trying to make alliances behind the king's back and for thinking that he had the same amount of power as the king, but essentially Cardinal Wolsey had fallen out of favour because the king believed he had not tried hard enough to get Henry a divorce.¹¹² Cardinal Wolsey died on November 27 1530 from natural causes before he could face a humiliating trial, where the outcome would have been execution.

The elimination of Cardinal Wolsey from Henry's private council meant that new men would have to find a new solution for the king's divorce. Thomas More, the humanist scholar who had been Henry's tutor as a child, was given the position of Chancellor. Henry then turned to two key figures, Thomas Cromwell and Thomas

¹¹⁰ Brigden. 114.

¹¹¹ Robert Buchholz and Newton Key. *Sources and Debates in English History 1485 - 1714* (Wiley-Blackwell, USA. 2009) 39.

¹¹² Ryrie. 111.

Cranmer, to help him craft his plan for divorce. More was against the divorce, so the position of Chancellor was good for him because it meant he did not need to get involved with the mess of the King's Great Matter. Cromwell and Cranmer on the other hand were both in favour of Anne Boleyn becoming the next Queen of England.

The Solution

Henry and his council had played around with multiple ideas to divorce Catherine, but so far none had been successful. The king received a letter from Martin Luther with, whom he previously had argued. Luther suggested to Henry that he should become polygamous and take more than one wife, in order to stay married to Catherine and also take Anne Boleyn as another wife. Henry chose not to listen to Luther's suggestion for he knew the new advisors he had would solve his issue. His new advisors were able to solve "the King's great matter," they decided to ask the universities opinions on the matter, they got involved with the government, and they managed to create new documents that legalized the king's divorce.

Cromwell proved to be the key player in helping the king get his way. Cardinal Wolsey had brought Cromwell into the mix, after being impressed by his intelligence and means for business. Cromwell decided to try a new solution that involved using parliament. Cardinal Wolsey showed little interested in parliament, in comparison to Cromwell who made vigorous use of it.¹¹³ Cromwell made multiples changes in the English government, that sometimes it is called the Tudor or the Cromwellian Reformation. During the era of Cromwell there was a council of about twenty that

¹¹³ Cannon, and Griffiths. 321.

exercised effective power.¹¹⁴ In 1532 he prepared a document called *the Supplication of the Commons*, and the House of Commons approved his document.¹¹⁵ This document declared where in specifics the king could become involved in Parliament, he was allowed to observe parliaments meetings and voice his own opinion. This act did not grant Henry his divorce but it was a step forward in securing Henry's power over the matter.

Alongside Cromwell, there was Thomas Cranmer a Cambridge Theologian who was brought into Henry's court in order to help with the King's Great Matter. The solution Cranmer voiced was to ask the universities their opinions if Henry should be allowed to divorce Catherine. The universities were highly respectable institutions that were filled with scholars and ecclesiastics, if the Church disagreed with the divorce the next most influential institutions were the universities. Henry's advisors chose to ask the all the universities in England and France if they approved of the divorce. They deliberately chose not to ask the universities in Spain, for they assumed they would support Catherine of Aragon's claim to the throne. The English universities all supported Henry's divorce, and all the French universities except of Angers agreed as well.¹¹⁶ Henry was so impressed with Cranmer that after Archbishop Warham of Canterbury died, he made Cranmer the new Archbishop of Canterbury.

Anne Boleyn also helped influence the king. As a child, Anne had the luxury of getting an education, and she proved to be a smart person. As the Reformation expanded across Europe she had educated herself on the new teachings. She even had a copy of

¹¹⁴ Cannon, and Griffiths. 304.

¹¹⁵ Gerald Bray. *English Reformation Documents*. (Fortress Press, Minneapolis. 1994) 51.

¹¹⁶ Rex. 12.

William Tyndale's New Testament in English.¹¹⁷ While Tyndale was an English scholar who played a leading role in the Protestant Reformation, his work was banned in England because he was viewed as a heretic. He also wrote about the Protestant faith and how the Church was no longer controlled by the pope. This is what sparked the idea in Henry's mind that the Church could function without a pope in charge.

In 1532 Cromwell drafted *the Act in Restrain of Appeals to Rome*.¹¹⁸ This act allowed the case between Catherine and Henry to be solved in England legally and the word of the pope was no longer needed. Cromwell had come up with the idea that Parliament would make it illegal for any English subjects to appeal any matter to an ecclesiastical court outside of England.¹¹⁹ With this new Act it meant that it was illegal for Henry to ask the pope for a divorce, so the matter needed to be solved in England. In 1533 Cranmer was legally able to be the judge of the matter and decided that Henry had not been properly married to Catherine of Aragon, so an annulment was finally allowed. Following this decision Henry married the already pregnant Anne Boleyn in a secret ceremony.¹²⁰ Catherine was devastated that Henry had succeeded. After the court case had been closed Catherine was sent away, never to see Henry or her daughter Mary again. "In the whole sordid tale, Catherine stands out as the one person wronged but not wronging; no one has ever had anything but pity for her, victim as she was of a movement she would neither understand nor approve, and of a husband who could only

¹¹⁷ William Tyndale. *The New Testamente*. 1526.

¹¹⁸ J.R. Tanner. *Tudor Constitutional Documents A.D. 1485-1603 with an historical commentary* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 1922) 40.

¹¹⁹ Ryrie. 126.

¹²⁰ Anne had supposedly decided to give herself finally to the king once *The Act of Appeals* had been drawn up by Thomas Cromwell in 1532 before she married the king. Since Cromwell was in the midst of the drafting the appeals she assumed that she soon become the wife of Henry VIII.

dislike when he ceased to love.”¹²¹ The pope was furious with England for having allowed this to happen. He excommunicated Henry to try to scare him into re-canting his actions. Unfortunately, for the pope and Catherine, Henry and Cranmer were serious about the decision to have Henry’s marriage annulled.

In March 1534, Parliament passed a bill that ended all payments by the English clergy and laity to Rome. This new bill gave Henry sole jurisdiction over high ecclesiastical appointments. *The Act of Succession* was also passed in this year and it made the children of Anne Boleyn the legitimate heirs of the throne.¹²² In August 1534, Cromwell issued a set of injunctions designed to enforce conformity by insisting the clerical obedience to the legislation, and abolished the pope’s jurisdiction. He expected clerical resistance to the reform measures of 1534 so he wanted to make sure there was a new policy in place to keep the people in check.

Following *the Act of Succession* and Cromwell injunctions later in 1534 the most important document of Henry’s reign was published later that year in November, this was *The Act of Supremacy*.¹²³ *The Act of Supremacy* was the Act that officially separated England from the Church of Rome. Henry now officially referred to the pope as the bishop of Rome. This statement would have been extremely offensive to the pope. *The Act of Supremacy* had been drawn up by Cromwell and it stated that Henry, the King of England, was now the Supreme Head of the Church. Henry alongside Cromwell, and Cranmer had done the unthinkable they had cut ties to the Church of Rome and by doing

¹²¹ Elton. 117.

¹²² David C. Douglas. “The First Act of Succession, A.D. 1534, 25 Henry VIII, CAP.22.” *English Historical Documents* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1967) 738.

¹²³ Gerald Bray. “The Act of Supremacy: A.D. 1534, 26 Henry VIII c.1.” *Documents of the English Reformation*. (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1994) 113-114.

that they created a brand-new sect of Christianity, the Church of England.

Henrician Reformation

The Church of England, despite having broken with Rome, was still very conservative. The documents that were written about the regulations of the Church did not vary much from those of the Catholic Church. Henry and his government passed multiple acts that confirmed the details and the legitimacy of the Church of England. Besides having broken with the Church to divorce Catherine of Aragon, Henry also used his Break with Rome to gain an income from Church property. Henry was pleased with the outcome but not everyone in England was pleased. There were multiple revolts and rebellions that were led by people who opposed the Church's new form. To help suppress the people there were acts that were published that explained the new doctrine of the Church, and what was expected to be followed.

Following the Break with Rome Henry ruled as king and as the Supreme Head of the Church. Henry's new authority over the Church extended into Ireland and Wales as well. The new Church and new policies that were created under Henry are often referred to as The Henrician Reformation. The official doctrine of the Church was similar to that of Rome, with the main difference being the pope was not the head of the Church. The Church of England had "a moderate Reformation, a virtuous middle ground between the extremes of Catholicism and Protestantism."¹²⁴ To help clarify to the people what the Church of England was and what regulations were to be followed there were multiple documents written. Even though Henry instigated the Break with Rome the majority of

¹²⁴ Ryrie. 129.

the documents were written by his advisors instead of himself personally.

Cromwell and Cramer played key roles in the creation of the new documents of the Church. Cromwell and Cranmer both supported radical preachers and protected them.¹²⁵ They were interested in a more radical reform of the Church than was Henry, but neither wanted to risk their relationship with the king or their head, so they moved the Church in a new direction cautiously. They helped write documents that would please the king and slowly try to start the ball rolling for a more radical movement. By 1535 Cromwell had openly criticized traditional Catholic devotional practices and doctrines.¹²⁶ Henry was not against traditional practices and doctrine like Cromwell, he approved of the procedures in the religious ceremonies he just believed the ecclesiastics in Rome had taken advantage of their positions. Henry believed, “that the people should be fed with wholesome doctrine, not seduced with filthy and corrupt abominations of the bishop of Rome.”¹²⁷ Essentially, Henry wanted a religious institution that was anti-papal, but he also did not support the extreme Protestant radicals. If someone was “too radical” or “too Catholic,” he would have them burned as heretics. Soon enough a series of documents was published to outline what the king approved. It was important for the people of England to follow whatever the king decided so that they would keep their heads and avoid being burned at the stake.

In 1536, the first of the main doctrinal documents about the regulations of the Church was published *The Act of the Ten Articles*.¹²⁸ The ecclesiastics had agreed on a set

¹²⁵ Eamon Duffy. *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400 - 1580*. (Yale University Press, New Haven and London. 1992) 386.

¹²⁶ Duffy. 383.

¹²⁷ Duffy. 387.

¹²⁸ *The Ten Articles*. 1536.

of articles to put an end to the diversity of opinion which had grown in the realm.¹²⁹ This was used as a brief summary to outline the new Church. The articles were written in the name of the king to try to create a unity among the people of England. Cranmer was one of the main forces in the creation of this document. He helped write the document to the king's approval by not making it too radical. Five of the articles related to doctrines that looked at the Holy Scriptures, Baptism, Penance, Eucharist, and Reconciliation; the remaining five articles were about ceremonies and practices in the Church.¹³⁰ Henry chose to include Penance, but Penance was made up of, contrition, confession, and amendment of the former life.¹³¹ This proves a mix of the traditional and the radical church, because there is still penance but indulgences are not available to be purchased like in the Church of Rome. After this document was published Henry ordered bishops to travel around their diocese expounding the Articles because he felt threatened after the Pilgrimage of Grace had begun.¹³² This was just a small publication and it would be followed by three more important documents.¹³³

There was a second document published in 1536, between December 2 and December 4, *The Pontefract Articles*. Cromwell had sent out a commission to investigate the practices and the wealth that goes to the religious houses.¹³⁴ The Church had a substantial amount of wealth in England through their monasteries. In 1536, they began to shut down the smaller monasteries to eliminate the power the of the Church of Rome

¹²⁹ Duffy. 387.

¹³⁰ John M'Clintock and James Strong. *Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature. Vol X.* (Harper and Brothers, New York. 1894.) 271 - 272.

¹³¹ Bray. 166-167.

¹³² The Pilgrimage of Grace was an uprising in England in 1536 against Henry VIII's break with Church of Rome and the dissolution of monasteries.

¹³³ Duffy. 394.

¹³⁴ Key and Bucholz. 60.

but to also gain more land into the hands of the king. By 1539 all monasteries had been closed in England. This created some challenges for the king because Monasteries had helped out the people in their communities and it meant the government needed to take on a few new problems they had not previously dealt with. The closure of the Monasteries provided a new income for Henry, which of course helped him finance his Reformation.

The Bishops' Book, the next important document about the doctrine of the Church was published in 1537. This document was written by a group of Bishops that had been chosen by Cromwell.¹³⁵ As Cromwell chose these bishop's, he was able to have a say in the creation of the document. Unfortunately, it was not as successful as *the Ten Articles* because the document contradicted itself, due to the bishops not being able to agree on what they thought the Church should represent.¹³⁶ It was more radical than *the Ten Articles*, because it stated that "we be utterly forbidden to make or have any similitude or image, to the intent to bow down to it or worship."¹³⁷ Henry himself found the book to be too radical for his beliefs, compared to Cromwell and Cranmer who were in favour of this book. One of the difference these men had with this book was the use of images. Cranmer did not believe images or wealth should be displayed in the Church, but Henry was in favour of displaying objects in the Church. Even though Henry broke with the Church he was still a traditionalist, which proved he was passionate about theology.

Following the publication of the Bishops' Book, *The Second Henrician Injunctions*,¹³⁸ written by Cromwell and the *Thirteen Articles, with Three additional*

¹³⁵ MacCulloch. 185.

¹³⁶ Ryrie. 130

¹³⁷ Duffy. 400.

¹³⁸ Bray. "The Second Henrician Injunctions, 1538."179.

article's¹³⁹ written by Cranmer *The Act of The Six Articles* were passed in 1539.¹⁴⁰ The new act was a political defeat for Cromwell and Cranmer because it showed that the king was prepared to enforce the fundamental doctrines of the Church, this proved Christianity was very important to Henry. It was passed by parliament under the influence of the king who was determined to keep traditional practices. *The Act of the Six Articles* was not in favour of the Protestants and it is often referred to as, "the bloody whip with six strings" because it went against many of the new ideas that Luther had suggested, like priests being allowed to marry. The article looked at the regulations of transubstantiation, communion, order of priesthood, chastity, private masses, and confession.¹⁴¹ When the act was first published there were strong punishments that included execution if the six articles were broken. There was a strong Catholic emphasis in this doctrine which once again proved Henry wanted to maintain a traditional church.

In 1543 that last important document about the Church doctrine was published. It was called *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man*, or more commonly, *The King's Book*. This was a re-write of *the Bishops Book*. It stated once again that Henry's doctrine was more similar to the Church of Rome. He used this book as a political mechanism to show that he was not a radical and still believed in traditional practice, just that he did not need a pope to do it. "The king was trying to put on a show of Catholic orthodoxy for the Emperor Charles V."¹⁴² Henry did not want to be viewed in the same category as Luther, as a Christian radical, he felt if he was viewed like that he

¹³⁹ Bray. "The Thirteen Articles, with Three Additional Articles, 1538." 184.

¹⁴⁰ Bray. "The Act of Six Articles, 1539." 222.

¹⁴¹ Carter Lindberg. *The European Reformations Sourcebook*. (Blackwell Publishing, 1996) 223-224.

¹⁴² Ryrie. 130.

would lose favour among the other European kings. Through this doctrine, he wanted to prove that he was still a key player in Europe. Henry had a hard time getting this document written the way he wanted because Cromwell had been executed in the aftermath of the Cleves marriage in 1540.¹⁴³ Cromwell had been his right-hand man in these matters, and Henry did not know how to get acts passed the way he wanted without him.

As part of the Reformation, Henry commissioned an English Bible in 1539. This was an important step in the Reformation. It meant that people were able to read and understand the stories in the Bible themselves. It tore down barriers between God and the people, gave people hope from the stories they were reading. The stories in the Bible were about giving to the poor and bad kings. Cromwell had originally been planning a new and authoritative English Bible, but in 1538 Henry gave the revision to Myles Coverdale, an English Ecclesiastical Reformer who had studied at Cambridge.¹⁴⁴ *The English Bible* became known as *the Great Bible* and it was a huge success. Cromwell and Cranmer were both involved with the publication of the Bible as, Cranmer wrote a preface for the Bible and Cromwell got a patent that forbade any printer to print an English Bible without his approval.¹⁴⁵ Henry began to circulate copies of the English Bible among the people so they could educate themselves on what the Bible said. This angered the pope because it allowed the people a new freedom, and he knew it would be hard to get people to listen to the Church of Rome ever again.

¹⁴³ Cromwell had arranged a marriage for Henry to Anne of Cleves after the death of Jane Seymour. When Anne arrived, Henry did not approve of her and had the marriage annulled. He blamed Cromwell for this failure.

¹⁴⁴ A.G. Dickens. *The English Reformation*. (The Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania.1964) 154 - 155.

¹⁴⁵ Dickens. 156.

The different Acts of Parliament, *The Act of the Ten Articles*, *The Bishops' Book*, *The Act of the Six Articles*, and *the King's Book* were all very important documents that established in writing the authority of the new Church of England. The doctrine that was included in these documents was very similar to that of the Catholic Church. Henry was not interested in the different views that many Protestants had, nor was he interested in having a radical Reformation. Due to the fact, he was passionate and well educated about traditional Christianity, he wanted the Church to remain as similar as possible. He remained committed to the justification and mass, he wanted ecclesiastics to remain celibate,¹⁴⁶ and he maintained a traditional hierarchy in the Church.

The End of Henry's Reign

Henry had officially established his Church of England by the end of his reign, that included new doctrine, a new bible, and new advisors. He had finally become pleased with his reform. It was during this part of Henry's reign he tried to find a suitable queen to live out the remainder of his days. He already had a son so he was not looking for a new wife in order to have a son.¹⁴⁷ Henry married another three times for political reasons, after the death of his third wife Jane Seymour. He had married Seymour in 1536 after the execution of Anne Boleyn, and Seymour gave birth to the son Henry had so long desired. Unfortunately, Jane died a few days later from childbirth complications, so this led to continue to find a new wife. He married Anne of Cleves in 1540 to gain an alliance with the House of Cleves in Germany, then Catherine Howard the niece of Thomas

¹⁴⁶ Henry did make an exception for Cranmer, because Cranmer was married when he was appointed the Archbishop of Canterbury.

¹⁴⁷ Henry's third wife Jane Seymour, who he married in 1536 after the execution of his second wife Anne Boleyn, gave birth to a son Edward in 1537.

Howard and first cousin of Anne Boleyn, and finally Catherine Parr the wife who survived the king.

The king's health eventually began to deteriorate, as he grew older. The king drank excessively, was obese, was probably riddled with venereal disease from the amount of different sexual partners he had, and he declined physically due to a jousting accident in 1536 that left him with an injured leg. His body was full of open sores and he was unable to maintain a hygienic routine. Despite the decline in his health, Henry spent the remainder of his time securing his son Edward as the future king. Even though Henry now had a son he never lost the sense that the throne was somewhat insecure.¹⁴⁸ In his will he listed a new *Act of Succession* that was to be followed once he died. Edward was to become king, followed by Mary, Elizabeth, and then the heirs of his sister Mary the Duke of Suffolk.¹⁴⁹ On January 27 1547, after being the king for thirty-eight years, King Henry VIII died at the age of fifty-seven leaving the kingdom of England in the hands of a nine-year-old boy. During the minority of Edward VI, Cranmer wrote a more radical version of the Church doctrine. This showed that Cranmer and Cromwell both had more radical beliefs, and Cranmer who survived the king waited until the king died to act on his beliefs.

Conclusion

To conclude Henry VIII, the once young, handsome, intelligent king had faltered

¹⁴⁸ Elton. 198.

¹⁴⁹ Henry's other sister Margaret and her descendants were left out of the will because she had married into the Stuart line and Henry did not want a Scottish king or queen on the throne of England.

over time. On his death bed, he was an obese paranoid man, who had married six times, had three surviving children who would all follow him on the throne, but most importantly he had done the unthinkable, he was the man responsible for England's break with the Church of Rome. After Henry had been king, England would never be the same again, no matter how hard his children and other men tried. Henry had always wanted to make his mark on history, to be a better king than his father, and he proved to make himself one of the most well-known kings in English history.

As well-known as Henry maybe, when people think of Henry VIII they tend to only associate him with the number of wives he had and the cruel side he showed at times. He is not often remember as being an intelligent man who did in fact care about religion. Henry's decision to break with the Church of Rome was not because he had a religious awakening or believed that religion need to be practiced differently. It was because he wanted political security in his realm and after a number of years trying to execute different plans the only one that worked was a Break with Rome. Even when Henry became the Supreme Head of the Church of England, he created his own new policies, he chose to keep the majority of the traditional practices. Henry was not interested in the doctrine of the new radical sects of Christianity, he valued the importance of tradition in the Church. It was just because of his own personal motives that not being attached to the Church of Rome benefitted him. It was more important for Henry to divorce Catherine of Aragon, in order to try and have a son than remain attached to the Church of Rome. Nevertheless, traditional theology was very important to Henry VIII and the new Acts written for the Church of England enforced the traditionalist view.

Chapter 3: Gustav Vasa

Introduction

While Henry VIII was in the midst of trying to find a solution to The King's Great Matter, the King of Sweden, Gustav Vasa, was a couple steps ahead of the Henry. In 1527, the same year that Henry initiated his divorce with Catherine, Sweden broke with the Church of Rome, creating a new Church of Sweden. Sweden is not as well known for its Reformation as England, Germany, or Switzerland are, but the country of Sweden broke with the Church of Rome and adapted Lutheranism, which would be followed by the other Scandinavian countries in the sixteenth century. This Reformation happened under Sweden's new king, the young Gustav Vasa as he was influenced by ecclesiastics like Laurentius Andreae and Olaus Petri to move Sweden into a new direction. Sweden an independent country, that was no longer attached to Denmark and Norway, so Gustav had multiples decisions to make for the country. Theology was not a primary issue for the new king, as he was more focused on establishing a strong government, peace, and security for the people of Sweden. Gustav felt obliged to break with the Church of Rome because he wanted to hold power and authority in his hands, and he felt that the pope interfered with the security he wanted.

As result of Gustav's success in 1523 with the Swedish War of Liberation, the Swedes welcomed their independence from the Kalmar Union and Denmark, but they were not keen on the Reformation. There were many rebels and ecclesiastics who stood up for the Church of Rome and tried to prevent more change in Sweden. After the turmoil in the early sixteenth century with Denmark, and the Swedish War of Liberation, the people of Sweden wanted to a constant in their life, and not all of them were ready to

Break with Rome. However, Gustav Vasa, being the determined man he was, used his authority to break with the Church of Rome for his own political advancement. Through encouragement and education that he had been given by his council, along with the motive to take vengeance on the pope for the death of his father, Gustav went ahead and created the new Church of Sweden, that was derived from the Lutheran faith.

This chapter will discuss the reign of Gustav Vasa, and how he broke with the Church of Rome. Gustav had been personally affected by the break of the Kalmar Union, and the disaster of the Stockholm Bloodbath, both events eventually would influence the king to Break with Rome. The Break with Rome happened because of political motives, instead of religious theology. It was important for Gustav to hold the highest amount of power he could in his hands, and the pope's authority in Sweden limited that power. Gustav, alongside his advisors and with the influence from his family would break with the Church of Rome, to convert to Lutheranism as an alternative religion.

Kalmar Union

The cause of the Reformation dates back to 1397 and the formation of the Kalmar Union, a joint union which was created when the three Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden decided to link themselves together.¹⁵⁰ This started when the husband and son of Queen Margaret I died in 1380. Leaving the queen as the heir to both the Danish and the Norwegian thrones. Her husband Haakon VI had been the King of Norway, and her son Olaf II was the young King of Denmark. Upon the death of her husband and son it meant she was in power of two-thirds of Scandinavia. At the same

¹⁵⁰ Tracey Sands. *Scandinavian Studies*. Vol. 80, No.2. 2008. "Saints and Politics during the kalmar Union Period: The Case of Saint Margaret in Tensta."

time Sweden, was unstable under the rule of a Germanic king whom the people strongly disliked. So, the people of Sweden made the request that Margaret also be their queen. The Scandinavian peoples felt the North to be a world apart from the rest of Europe, so they were not opposed to being grouped together as one.¹⁵¹ Sweden thought this political move might help end the conflict that had been going on between Sweden and Denmark. The agreement was created in 1389, but the official documents were not signed until 1397.¹⁵² It took seven years to get the documents signed because it was decided that a woman could not be a ruler for all three countries alone, a man was required to be in charge. Margaret was allowed to find a suitable king for the throne and she chose her nephew, Erik of Pomerania, to be the first king of the Kalmar Union. The Union was officially created on June 17th, 1397 at Kalmar Slott in Sweden.¹⁵³ Even though her nephew was king, Margaret held the majority of the power in her hands until she died in 1412.¹⁵⁴

The Swedish/Danish Conflict

The creation of the Kalmar Union did not end the feud between Sweden and Denmark. When a Danish King sat on the throne of the Kalmar Union, the Swedes always tried to have their own king. There were multiple times when Sweden tried to leave the Union and the people of Sweden even elected a new king, Karl Knutsson. The reign of Knutsson lasted on and off between 1448-1457, 1464-1465, and 1467-1470.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Roberts. 3.

¹⁵² Roberts. 2.

¹⁵³ Sawyer. 73.

¹⁵⁴ Sawyer. 75.

¹⁵⁵ Sawyer. 78.

Each time Sweden tried to become independent, they were pulled back into the control of Denmark. Eventually, Karl Knutsson died in 1470, and nobody else tried to make a claim to the Swedish throne until the Sture family stepped up. The Sture family were a noble Swedish family that had been involved politically during the 15th century. Sten Sture the Elder, in 1497, rebelled against the Danes in a battle in Brunkeberg. He won this battle, so he was chosen by the other nobles to be regent, and this lasted until 1503.¹⁵⁶ After Sten Sture the Elder died, his cousin Svante Nilsson became regent for a short period of time until Sten Sture the Younger, Sten Sture the Elder's son, was elected regent of Sweden from 1512-1520.¹⁵⁷ In the time frame that these three men were regents they tried to hold a portion of power away from Denmark in an attempt to have Sweden become an independent nation. They wanted to be in control of their economic resources and limit the political power of the local bishops.¹⁵⁸ The Danes were not happy about this so they continued to treat Sweden poorly. They issued more taxes and enforced unfair treatment towards the Swedes.

The king of the Kalmar Union at the height of the Swedish and Danish conflict was Christian II of Denmark. He became king in 1513 when he besieged Stockholm and waited for the Swedes to surrender and recognize his authority. Christian II was described by Paul C. Sinding as being a genius, but he was over confident which eventually led to his downfall.¹⁵⁹ Christian was in control of his government and he used this power to get what he desired, no matter what the cost was. This is what led to Christian's reputation as

¹⁵⁶ Roberts. 8.

¹⁵⁷ Roberts.8.

¹⁵⁸ Ole Peter Grell. *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalization of Reform* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 1995) 43.

¹⁵⁹ Sinding.188.

a tyrant in Sweden. He wanted complete control over Sweden and was not impressed with the Swedes for attempting to crown their own king, independent from the union. In his attempt to gain control of Sweden, he appointed Gustav Eriksson Trolle as the Archbishop of Uppsala.¹⁶⁰ Archbishop Trolle was to deliver any suspicious news about the Swedes to Christian. This agreement between Archbishop Trolle and Christian led to the downfall of the Swedish and Danish relationship.

In Sweden, the people were not content having Christian as king again after the attempt to have the Sture family on the throne. The Swedes had tasted a glimpse of freedom from the Kalmar Union and they wanted that freedom permanently. Sten Sture the Younger decided to make an accusation against Archbishop Trolle. He told the other nobles that Archbishop Trolle gave information about what was happening in Sweden to Christian II. Archbishop Trolle tried to clarify with the Swedes that he was not affiliated with Christian and that he had been appointed by Pope Leo X to be the Archbishop of Uppsala. This disagreement led to a rebellion against Archbishop Trolle by the nobles of Sweden and they removed him from his ecclesiastic position. Archbishop Trolle evidently did not take well to his removal from office and he quickly reported what happened to Christian. Christian was furious to hear about this rebellion, so he chose to take action against Sweden. The Danish troops attacked Stockholm, but the Swedish nobles were not prepared for a battle and they surrendered. Once Christian captured Stockholm he got Archbishop Trolle to crown him the official King of Sweden on November 4, 1520.¹⁶¹ The Church of Rome was also not pleased with the way the

¹⁶⁰ Gustav Eriksson Trolle was the Swedish Archbishop Christian II placed at Uppsala. The Archbishop of Uppsala is equivalent to the Archbishop of Canterbury in England.

¹⁶¹ Roberts. 16.

Swedish nobles treated the archbishop. Pope Leo X issued a bull “laying the Kingdom of Sweden under excommunication.”¹⁶² This bull was passed to punish the people of Sweden for their actions and to enforce Danish control over Sweden. To reward Archbishop Trolle for his service and to prove his dominance as king, Christian II invited all the nobles to come to the palace in Stockholm supposedly for a celebration of his coronation and to make peace between the two countries. Nobles from across the country came to Stockholm on November 7, shortly after the king’s coronation. The event started out as a great feast, but the peace and celebration between the Danes and Swedes would not last for long.

The Stockholm Bloodbath and the Swedish War of Liberation

One of the main reasons Gustav Vasa became so angry with the pope was because of the Stockholm Bloodbath. Between eighty and ninety nobles had come to attend the celebration in Stockholm for Christian. At the stroke of midnight, Christian had Archbishop Trolle declare that the Swedes who were present in the palace had all committed treason against Trolle, in regard to how they had treated him earlier that year. All the nobles and some of their families that were present were instantly arrested. Realistically, the nobles had all been imprisoned because Christian II wanted to eliminate the powerful and educated men in Sweden. Christian viewed these men as a threat, who weakened his power in Sweden. The next day, November 8 1520, between the hours of one and four o’clock between eighty and ninety men were beheaded.¹⁶³ Officially these

¹⁶² Sinding. 193.

¹⁶³ Roberts. 17; Different sources recoded different numbers about how many men were executed in the Bloodbath. Olaus Petri claimed there were over fifty men killed while Olaus Magnus recorded that there were ninety-four men. Essentially there were a significant number of men who

men were executed because of being “contumacious excommunicates, resisting papal authority, and of being heretics.”- After all the men had been executed, their bodies were left in the square for three days before they were burned for being heretics.- This entire event became known as the Stockholm Bloodbath, one of the bloodiest events to occur in Swedish history.

The main political issue Sweden faced after the Stockholm Bloodbath was the lack of nobles left in the country. Not all of the Swedish nobles had come to Stockholm, but the survivors were too scared to show their faces, let alone initiate a political movement against the king. However, one of the nobles who was executed was Erik Johansson Vasa, the nephew of the former “Swedish King” Karl Knutsson, and cousin to Sten Sture.¹⁶⁴ Vasa would have been a good man to initiate a retaliation against Christian II and Archbishop Trolle because the Swedes would have respected his voice because of those family ties. Furthermore, Erik Vasa did leave behind a son, Gustav Vasa. Gustav Vasa had escaped the executions because he had been taken hostage along with six other Swedes as collateral for Christian before the Bloodbath had occurred.

When news reached Gustav Vasa, the twenty-four-year-old man, was furious and heart broken. Not only had his father been murdered but so had two of his uncles. Christian had also taken Gustav’s mother, three sisters, grandmother, and aunt captive following the mass execution.¹⁶⁵ Besides Gustav’s desire to avenge his father’s and

were executed during the Stockholm Bloodbath, and the death toll made an impact on the people of Sweden.

¹⁶⁴ Even when a “Swedish King” during different times in the 15th century the King of the Kalmar Union was still officially in charge, and the “Swedish King” at the time did not have divine political power over the king. These kings were rebels who tried to create an uproar between Sweden and Denmark with the support of the majority of the Swedish people.

¹⁶⁵ Larson. 103.

uncle's deaths, he had family that needed to be saved. Gustav escaped from his prison in Denmark and fled to the Swedish province of Dalarna, disguised as a farmer to avoid being detected by the Danes.¹⁶⁶ While he was in Dalarna he was able to gather a group of peasants to support him and help him lead a revolt against the Danes. There were a series of battles that took place between the Swedes and the Danes over the leadership of Sweden.¹⁶⁷ Eventually on June 6, 1523 the rebels decided to elect Gustav Vasa to be their king.¹⁶⁸ When he had first rounded up troops he was called the Administrator of Sweden, so the title of king showed that the people supported and respected him even more than they did when he first initiated the movement against Christian II.¹⁶⁹

The role of king was never a title that Gustav thought he would have, and he was not sure if he was the right man to lead the country. He had only been interested in taking vengeance against Christian II, not to become the king of Sweden. In Sweden, there was not a royal family nor a hereditary crown that was passed down, so the nobles in Sweden could elect whomever they thought was the best option to be the king of the country, especially after they had broken apart from Denmark and the Kalmar Union. If the crown had been hereditary, Gustav would have still been a good candidate for king since he was a descendant of the last Swedish kings, Sten Sture the Younger and Karl Knutsson.

On June 16 1523, only ten days after Gustav had been elected king, Gustav and his

¹⁶⁶ Roberts. 19-20.

¹⁶⁷ The Battles that took place during the Swedish War of Liberation were: The Battle of Falun (February 1521), Battle of Brunnback Ferry (April 1521), Battles of Vasteras (29th April 1521), Conquest of Uppsala (18 May 1521), Conquest of Kalmar (27 May 1523), and the Conquest of Stockholm (16 - 17 June 1523).

¹⁶⁸ After this day, June 6th would become the National Holiday of Sweden *Sveriges nationaldag*. Before 1983 it was called Swedish Flag Day *Svenska flaggans dag*. This day represents the foundation of Modern Sweden and the end of the Middle Ages in Sweden.

¹⁶⁹ Cameron. 274.

men managed to conquer Stockholm, and Christian II lost control of Sweden. When they captured the city, Denmark was ultimately defeated, Archbishop Trolle was exiled from Sweden, and Christian II was sent back to Denmark. Archbishop Trolle made an agreement with Gustav that if he was promised safe conduct, he would take himself to the Council of the Realm and Ourselves, the Scandinavian council of the countries. The council would assign a punishment to Archbishop Trolle for his actions. This made the issue easier for Gustav because he got rid of Archbishop Trolle without having to take any rash actions that would reflect poorly on him. Christian was still a king of another country so Gustav could not punish him, but that did not matter because the Danes were frustrated enough with Christian that Gustav did not need to try and do anything. The Danes were really upset with Christian II's failure so they kicked him out of the country and installed a new king, Frederick I in his place. Christian II's wife, Isabella of Austria, was the niece of Catherine of Aragon, the current Queen of England and the first wife of Henry VIII, so the couple fled to England in 1523. This left the power over Sweden in the hands of the new king, Gustav Vasa. Gustav officially made Sweden independent from the Kalmar Union in The *Treaty of Malmo*, which was signed September 1524 and declared Sweden's independence from the Danish-Norwegian alliance.¹⁷⁰ "Although Sweden had felt the brutal effects of foreign domination under Christian II, it still maintained close ties to Denmark, forged by their mutual assistance during the Count's War, which ultimately resulted in Scandinavia peace until 1563."¹⁷¹ Sweden's new found

¹⁷⁰ The Southern region of Sweden, Scania and Blekinge, constantly went back and forth between Sweden and Denmark until 1658 and the Treaty of Roskilde when these areas permanently became part of Sweden.

¹⁷¹ Kenneth Steffensen. *Scandinavia After the Fall of the Kalmar Union: A Study in Scandinavian Relations, 1523-1536* (Brigham Young University, Utah. 2007) 84.

independence meant that new policies and a new government were put into place, to solidify Sweden's new independence.

The New King

After Gustav had become the first hereditary King of Sweden on August 23, 1523, following the capture of Stockholm and exile of Christian II from Sweden, Gustav's great endeavor of creating a new Sweden began. Gustav had officially become the King of Sweden, "but it was long before he sat easily on this throne."¹⁷² When Gustav first came to the throne he was known as the hero of Sweden as he had liberated Sweden from Denmark, he was given the title, the Founding Father of Modern Sweden. This view of him quickly changed as he began to use his power, and by the end of his reign he was viewed as a tyrant. He had a quick temper which caused rash decisions, and cruelty towards his citizens and his wives.

Sweden was a broken country when Gustav became king. It was a country that had been faced with war and abuse from Denmark for the past one hundred years. It would have been in a similar condition to England when Henry VII first became king. Gustav himself was a broken man. He had lost members of his family and he was filled with built up anger. One of his main concerns was making the Church suffer like he had, since he saw the Church responsible for the mass executions. Gustav also wanted to be in control of the Church because the Church held a significant amount of land, and wealth that he wanted to get his hands on. Gustav decided that if he created increasingly anti-papal policies he would be able to claim ecclesiastical property.¹⁷³ Since Sweden was in the

¹⁷² Roberts. 45.

¹⁷³ Steffensen. 163.

midst of financial difficulties due to war a new mode of income would benefit Gustav and the people of Sweden.

Influence of Luther

Like many other countries in Europe like England, France, and Germany, Sweden also became involved in the Reformation. The German Monk Luther was one of the main factors that caused the Reformation in the 16th century. The ideas of Luther came into Sweden from ecclesiastics who had studied in Germany during the early 16th century. Men like Olaus Petri, Laurentius Petri, and Laurentius Andrea travelled to Germany to learn about the Church. Germany was closer to Sweden than Italy, so most Scandinavian countries were more influenced by Germanic religious practices than they were of Italian practices. A couple of Swedish ecclesiastics were in Wittenberg between 1516-1521. These men got to witness Luther lecture about his new ideas of religious practices. These lectures and this new idea of how to interpret the Bible were brought to Sweden by these men.

One of the main men involved with Lutheranism in Sweden was Olaus Petri. Olaus Petri grew up in modest means alongside his brother Laurentius Petri. Olaus Petri went to the University of Wittenberg in Germany in the year 1516 after he heard about Luther's preaching's as early as 1510.¹⁷⁴ He was instantly captivated by Luther's new theologies and Petri was fortunate to become Luther's first Swedish student. Petri was even in Wittenberg the day Luther nailed his *95 Theses* to the door of the Church. Being in Germany during this time Petri gained a strong understanding of Luther's ideas and the

¹⁷⁴ Anjou. 63.

ideas of the other Protestant reformers. He was so delighted by what he learned in Germany that he returned to Sweden in 1519 to preach the words of Luther. In 1526, he went on to publish the first Swedish version of the New Testament.¹⁷⁵ Petri had become the real pioneer of the Reformation in Sweden, preaching in Strangers and later in Stockholm.¹⁷⁶ He began to educate important men, including his brother, Laurentius Petri, on the doctrine of Lutheranism.

One of the most important men who Petri was able to educate besides his brother, was Laurentius Andreae, the Chancellor to the King. This was an important political move because if Andreae understood and believed in the Lutheran doctrine he would be able to talk the king into converting from Catholicism to Lutheranism. To Petri's satisfaction, that is exactly what happened, he was able to captivate Andreae with the new doctrine he passed on all the information he learned to the king. He taught Gustav about how Luther had stood up in public and demonstrated that nowhere in the Bible did it indicate that the Church and pope should have so much power and authority.¹⁷⁷ This information proved to be very important to the future of Sweden.

The Swedish Reformation

The influence of Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae is what sparked the king to reform against Rome. Andreae believed that new people come with new customs and

¹⁷⁵ Jensen. 76.

¹⁷⁶ Gustav Kruger. *The Harvard Theological Review*. "Literature on Church History: In Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries." (Harvard University Press, 1924) 37.

¹⁷⁷ Simo Heinine and Otfried Czaika. Wittenberg Influences on the Reformation in Scandinavia. in: European History Online (EGO), published by the Leibniz Institute of European History (IEG)

new customs require new laws.¹⁷⁸ Through Andreae the king decided to adopt the principles of the Reformation. The king was already angry with Archbishop Trolle because of his participation in the Stockholm Bloodbath, and he realized if he followed the alternative doctrine of the Lutheran Church, he could break free from the power of Rome. There were two important changes that would happen if he broke with Rome. First, he would have the power to appoint his own ecclesiastics to the Church, and secondly, he would gain the wealth that the Church had in Sweden. At this point the Church owned 40% of the land in Sweden, and the majority of the monasteries were quite wealthy. According to a letter that Gustav wrote in January 1526, Sweden was also in debt to the German cities because they had supported Gustav with some ships to drive out Christian.¹⁷⁹ This was even incentive for Gustav because he needed to pay back Germany but he also wanted to be in alliance with Germany. This also meant that Lutheranism seemed to be a good option for him.

Gustav became even more frustrated with the Church, when the pope tried to re-appoint Archbishop Trolle as the Archbishop of Uppsala after Gustav had tried to appoint his own ecclesiastic to the position. The pope was furious Gustav tried to fill the position without his permission. Only the pope had the right to appoint and dispose of ecclesiastics and that upset Gustav. When Rome tried to restore Archbishop Trolle to his position as archbishop, Gustav declared he would have no foreigners ruling the Swedish Church.¹⁸⁰ Instead of obeying the pope, Gustav chose to put Johanne Magnus in the position of Archbishop of Uppsala. Magnus was still a Catholic, but in Gustav's mind at

¹⁷⁸ Åke Andren. *Sveriges Kyrkohistoria Reformationstid*. (1999) 21. "Nytt folk kommer med nya seder och nya seder kräver ny lag." Translated by author.

¹⁷⁹ Gustav Vasa. "Valkommen till Gotland - boende, resa, aktiviteter och utflyktsmal." 1526.

¹⁸⁰ Klassen. 163.

least he was Swedish and he was chosen by the king. Thus, Gustav openly opposed what the pope said about the appointment of the bishops and archbishops, and he chose to deny the jurisdiction of the papacy.¹⁸¹

After Gustav studied his options, he made the decision to break with the Church of Rome. The idea took over the king's mind; he knew it was the right thing to do to move Sweden in a new direction. "One thought, one determination, one fixed purpose, filled his soul and fired his firm heart: to establish the freedom and independence of his native land, and secure the throne to which God, amid great perils, and by wonderful providence, had elevated him."¹⁸² Gustav's actions against the Church of Rome began in 1527 when he commanded Olaus Petri and the other Lutherans in Sweden to create a new Church of Sweden.¹⁸³ The fact that he told other people to create a new Church for him indicated that he was not interested in the theology of the Church at all, that he just looked at the Reformation as a way to increase his power, and the finances of Sweden, both at the expense of the Church.

In 1527 a Diet was held at Vasteras, and in this Diet the Swedish Church officially separated from Rome, marking the start of the Swedish Reformation.¹⁸⁴ After some dispute it was decided that "if the king was to remain on the throne, he was promised full support; "superfluous" church property-as defined by Gustav-would go to the monarchy; all lands donated to the church since 1454 were to revert to the donor's family or, if the

¹⁸¹ Jensen. 75.

¹⁸² Anjou. 79.

¹⁸³ Johannesson. XVII.

¹⁸⁴ Heinine and Czaika. Wittenberg Influences on the Reformation in Scandinavia. in: European History Online (EGO), published by the Leibniz Institute of European History (IEG), Mainz 2012-08-02.

family had ceased to exist to the king.”¹⁸⁵ It was also decided that Lutheranism could be preached anywhere in the realm, no higher clergy was allowed to be appointed without the king's permission, legal privileges of clergy were eliminated, and the Church was at the mercy of the king.¹⁸⁶ Gustav had managed to separate from Rome and he acquired the authority he wanted.

A portion of the Swedish population was unhappy about the king's decision to Break with Rome. The country had gone through multiple changes since the liberation of Sweden, but some people wanted to stick to the old ways of the Church. One man in particular who was very anti-Lutheran was Bishop Brask. Hans Brask, was bishop of Linköping, and thus he emerged as the champion of anti-Lutheranism. Bishop Brask was against all Reformation movements that were repercussions of Luther's *95 Theses*. He wanted to defend the Church and its revenues from the crown.¹⁸⁷ When Olaus Petri first returned to Sweden and started preaching about the Lutheran faith, Brask deemed him a heretic. In 1522, he even issued an open letter, prohibiting the buying, selling, receiving or reading of Lutheran works.¹⁸⁸

The Magnus brothers were also upset about the king's notion to the Catholic Church. Johannes Magnus was the Papal Legate and the last Catholic Archbishop in Sweden. His brother Olaus Magnus was also an ecclesiastic who had served Gustav in the past and remained true to the old Church. The two brothers were both exiled because of their beliefs and their interference with the king. Even when *the Diet of Vasteras* was held, the two men continued to preach Catholicism instead of Lutheranism. In 1531

¹⁸⁵ Klassen.164.

¹⁸⁶ Klassen.164-165.

¹⁸⁷ Roberts. 72.

¹⁸⁸ Larson. 227.

Johannes Magnus lost his position as the Archbishop of Uppsala because of his Catholic faith and he was replaced by Laurentius Petri, the older brother of Olaus Petri. Laurentius Petri “was consecrated without papal sanction, he now became the principal architect of the Swedish Lutheran Church.”¹⁸⁹ When this happened both Johannes Magnus and Bishop Brask fled to Rome to try to get support for Sweden. They spent time trying to educate the Romans on Sweden and explain that Sweden was a good Christian country and they needed help to make sure Sweden stayed Catholic and did not conform to radical movement. Unfortunately for them they did not succeed and by the end of 1531, the old mass was fully banned in Sweden and the Bench of Bishops had filled up with Protestants.

Conflict began to arise in 1539 between the king, Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae. Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae wanted the Church to be able to hold onto some of its belongings and have more authority but Gustav was determined to rule the Church and be in charge of all its affairs.¹⁹⁰ He was not interested in helping the ecclesiastics improve the doctrine, nor did he want the Church to have any financial gain. He wanted the wealth and power for the crown not the Church. Gustav became frustrated with the interference with the two men so he had them sentenced to death on treason charges. Also in 1539, the king forbade Archbishop Petri from making any changes to the doctrine without his royal permission. He did not trust Archbishop Petri as much anymore because of his brother Olaus’s actions. This showed that the king had begun to trust his advisor less. He feared that these men had begun to hold power in their hands, power that he was not willing to share.

¹⁸⁹ Klassen. 165.

¹⁹⁰ Klassen. 165.

Due to the fact Gustav had removed the key men who started the Reformation, Gustav began to seek new men to educate him on the different sects of Christianity that existed. He turned to two German men, Georg Norm and Konrad Von Pyhy, to help him continue to shape the Church. He still kept Archbishop Laurentius Petri as one of his main advisors along with the new men. With his new group of advisors, including Archbishop Petri Gustav ordered the creation of the Swedish Bible which was published in 1541.¹⁹¹ The official Swedish title of the Bible was *Biblia thet ar pa Swenkso*. Besides the importance of educating Swedes on the religious doctrine, the Bible helped to establish a new form of writing that was different from Danish. The Danish and Swedish languages had often been mixed together due to their similarities, but the new Swedish Bible distinguished the Swedish language. The new Bible, also added to the Break with Rome, the Bible was no longer in Latin so it furthered the idea of Sweden's new independence they were no longer attached to Denmark or Rome.

The independence for Sweden from Rome continued when the Church of Sweden gained official status under *The Acts of Reformation* that were published in 1544 at the Riksdag in Vasteras. This Act bound ecclesiastical supremacy with secular authority, giving more power to Gustav than any previous king of Sweden.¹⁹² *The Acts of Reformation* introduced the few regulations for the Church of Sweden. The new regulations consisted of the being divided up into dioceses, the clergy would become more Lutheran, celibacy was abolished, and monasteries were allowed to decay slowly or were abolished by land owners.¹⁹³ There was also no church ordinance or education

¹⁹¹ Klassen. 165.

¹⁹² Roberts. 143-144.

¹⁹³ Cameron. 276.

introduced in *The Acts of Reformation*, this meant that Gustav was not interested in educating people on the Church, once again he was more interested in having power. With the new *Acts of Reformation*, he had more control over dioceses, and Churches because those positions were being filled by Lutheran ecclesiastics who were not tied to Rome. The final step Gustav made after the publication of this document, was he gave himself a new title “Supreme defender of the Church.”¹⁹⁴ This new title is similar to the title that Pope Leo X gave to Henry VIII, but the fact that he gave himself a title showed that he was trying to prove to people that he was the head of the Church and that he should be given that authority and respect.

The King’s Personal Life

As Gustav tried to restore Sweden as a powerful nation, by breaking with Rome, and gaining control of the Church, he also tried to gain more power by arranging political marriages for himself that would help secure his authority as king and gain the support of more people. Gustav married three times. His first two marriages were important politically and produced nine children, three of whom would follow him on the throne. The last marriage was for convenience and served no political importance, nor did the marriage produce any children.

Gustav married his first wife, Catherine of Saxe-Lanenburg, in 1535 when she was only seventeen. The marriage only lasted for two years, but in this short marriage she bore him one child the future King Eric XIV. The birth of a son was positive for Gustav because he did not have to worry about finding an heir to the throne. There are many

¹⁹⁴ Cameron. 276.

stories that exist about the marriage between Gustav and Catherine, which helped to create a tyrannical view of Gustav. According to legend, Gustav and Catherine had not had a happy marriage, and it was believed by the people that Gustav killed his wife with a hammer in the castle basement.¹⁹⁵ This image of Gustav made his people fear him. The Swedes knew the king would make quick rash decisions about people who disagreed with him, but for a king to murder his wife showed how ruthless he could be. He earned the reputation of being quite the tyrant, he would sentence people to death or to torture with the snap of his finger. The anger that had been built up inside of him from the Stockholm Bloodbath never left him. From Gustav's own writings, it is clear that he never forgot about the wrong that Christian II had done to him, his family, and the union.¹⁹⁶

He married his second wife, Margaret Leijonhuvud, shortly after Catherine's death. This was a political marriage because Margaret was a member of one of the most powerful families in Sweden, and her father, like Gustav's, had been executed in the Bloodbath. This marriage helped establish his authority as king, because fewer people questioned his ideas when there was a strong Swedish family backing his decisions. This also helped in regard to the Reformation because Margaret was a devout Catholic and she stuck to her Catholic faith until she died in 1551.¹⁹⁷ The fact Margaret remained a Catholic was important because it meant Gustav would never take aggressive action against Catholics in Sweden, so the other Catholics felt at ease with his conversion to

¹⁹⁵ Ivan Svalenius. *Catherine*, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/12404>, Swedish Biographical Dictionary (art by Ivan Svalenius), Retrieved 2017-03-01. "*Gustav, som fått reda på detta genom en spion o därför slagit ihjäl henne med en hammare.*" Translated by Author.

¹⁹⁶ Gustav Vasa, "Letter to the Citizens of Copenhagen," 12 or 19 July 1534 in Paludan - Muller, ed., *Aktsykker*, vol.1, 107.

¹⁹⁷ Goran Dahlback. *Margaret*. <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/9099>, Swedish Biographical Dictionary (art by Göran Dahlbäck), Retrieved 2017-03-01. *Höll fast vid sin katolska tro ända till sin död*. Translated by Author.

Lutheranism. Once again this showed that Gustav was not interested in theology. Gustav simply did not want the pope to have any authority in Sweden and he would adopt any faith that eliminated the pope. If he had been more passionate about theology he would have forced others to convert to Lutheranism, or at least his wife would have had to change her religion. The couple supposedly had a happy marriage and they produced eight children who would survive infancy.¹⁹⁸ Margaret was also known for her intelligence and kind nature. She was often able to calm the king down when he was extremely angry, this reduced punishment that the king had bestowed upon people, and she gained popularity among the people for these actions.

While married to his third wife, Katarina Stenbock, Gustav died in 1560 at the age of sixty-four. Before he died he founded the hereditary succession of the crown, that was extended to females and his son Erik XIV became the next king, followed by two of his other sons.¹⁹⁹

Conclusion

Gustav Vasa was the Father of Modern Sweden, and he used his new authority as king to break with the Church of Rome, and take part in the Reformation by making Sweden a Lutheran country. Gustav's motives to Break with Rome were political, he was angry with the Church of Rome after Archbishop Trolle had allowed for the Stockholm Bloodbath to occur, and he did not want the pope to have authority over him. Gustav was still angry and he would forever remain furious about the execution of his father, and all

¹⁹⁸ The children Gustav Vasa and Margareta Leijonhufvud had were: John (1537), Catherine (1539), Cecilia (1540), Magnus (1542), Anna (1545), Sofia (1547), Elizabeth (1549), and Karl (1550).

¹⁹⁹ Sinding. 239.

the other nobles in the bloodbath. He would use that anger to seek vengeance for his father, by becoming the unexpected king of Sweden. Sweden was also struggling financially because they were a new country, so Gustav wanted to get his hands on the wealth and land that the Church of Rome held in Sweden. Gustav himself was not personally interested in theology, so he was open to any idea on how to separate from Rome. It was because of men like Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae who were passionate and educated on Martin Luther's works so they convinced Gustav to adopt the Lutheran faith in Sweden. Gustav would never regret his decision for breaking with Rome, and Sweden would never rejoin the Church of Rome.

Conclusion: Comparison between Henry VIII and Gustav Vasa

This thesis has argued that King Henry VIII of England and Gustav Vasa of Sweden both chose to break with the Church of Rome for political reasons, not religious ideology. Both men wanted complete control of their kingdoms and the power that the pope held hindered that goal. Besides their Break with Rome, the two kings shared many things in common: neither of them were expected to become king; they were influenced by their fathers; they both started off their reigns idolized by the citizens of their countries; they both had multiple marriages which led to three of their children following them on the throne; and they were both feared tyrants by the end of their reigns. Even though there are many similarities between the two men, the main difference between the two kings was that Henry VIII was interested in the theological aspect of the Reformation since he had grown up with a humanistic education. Meanwhile Gustav Vasa was not the least bit interested in theology.

The fact that both men were not expected to become king impacted their reigns, despite their very different paths to the throne. When Henry was born, he was the second son to the King Henry VII, meaning he was not valued as much as his brother. As he grew up he received a humanistic education which focused on the arts, music, poetry, and theology, a very different education than his older brother, the Prince of Wales. Gustav Vasa on the other hand, grew up as a nobleman. There was not a hereditary royal family in Sweden prior to Gustav and Sweden's position as part of the Kalmar Union meant the king was Danish. Moreover, in this period Scandinavia kings were usually elected. Therefore, as a child Gustav, would never have suspected that he would become king. Even when the Swedes decided to elect Gustav as king, he was hesitant about accepting

their generous offers as he had not been educated on how to be king, unlike Henry, who after his brother died, did at least start to get some guidance and education on how to govern a country from his father and his father's advisors. This meant that Henry was at least in a better position to become king than Gustav was.

When each man became king, the people were extremely excited about their new monarchs and had high expectations for them. Henry was a breath of fresh air. A bright young Renaissance prince was the perfect person to take over the throne of England after his miserly father. Gustav also was welcomed with open arms when he became king. Sweden had been in the possession of Denmark, and Gustav was viewed as the hero who liberated it from the Danes. With both kings, the people were thrilled and they thought that there was a possibility of life changing, that there would be an advancement in the way of life in their countries.

Each king began his movement to reform in 1527, as that year Henry first began to try to divorce Catherine of Aragon and Gustav Vasa commanded Olaus Petri to create a new Church in Sweden. 1527 was also the year Charles V sacked Rome, so Pope Clement VII was under pressure from three European monarchs. Gustav was more successful initially than Henry, because he immediately stepped outside of the Church of Rome while Henry tried to work with it. In Sweden, there was a Diet in Vasteras in 1527 and that separated Sweden from Rome. Meanwhile Henry had been denied a divorce from Catherine. Henry would not separate with Rome until 1532 when *The Act in Restraint of Appeals to Rome* was passed by Parliament. It forbade the people of England from taking court cases to Rome, and it eliminated most of the pope's power in England. It was not until 1534, when *The Act of Supremacy*, was passed that Henry was made the

head of the Church in England. Henry was involved with the Acts that were passed because of his knowledge and interested in theology. In contrast Gustav Vasa allowed the Acts for his new Church to be written by Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae. He wanted to see the Acts before they were passed but he had no interested in being involved in the writings of the Church of Sweden. Gustav also opted to conform to the Lutheran sect of Christianity.

When the Reformation happened, both kings had key advisors who helped them along their way. Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer were the two most important supporters for Henry, and Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae influenced Gustav's choice about theology. Neither king was capable of starting a Reformation on his own; each required educated men to stand behind them. Both kings needed solutions to their problems with Pope Clement VII and the Church of Rome but they were unable to fix them by themselves. It was necessary for parliament and ecclesiastics to support their decisions. These advisors were key players in getting legislation through Parliament. However, those who had been extremely helpful to these kings at the beginning of the Reformation did not all remain in favour, Thomas Cromwell was executed once he fell out of favour with Henry, and Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae were sentenced to death by Gustav. Thomas Cranmer was the only one who did not fall out of favour with his king. This proved that these advisors were just players whom the kings needed at the time, and that Henry and Gustav did not have any sentimental attachment to these men. The advisors were just in there to do their kings' bidding.

The wealth of the Church was a contributing factor in each king's Break with Rome. The Church held a significant portion of land in both England and Sweden. Breaking with Rome allowed the kings to get their hands on this land and profit from it. Henry had spent significant amounts of money engaging in wars that he lost, and Gustav had taken over a new, financially weak kingdom. Both men were suffering financially and having new land would help the economy of their countries. The monasteries in England and Sweden were extremely wealthy, like most monasteries were, and when the kings took over these monasteries, they were able to profit from the valuables and assets of the Churches.

Besides their break with the Church of Rome the two kings had other similarities, especially in their personal lives. Henry married six times and Gustav married three times. Two of the marriages that each king had were quite similar. Gustav was married to Catherine of Saxe-Lauenburg at the same time that Henry was with Anne Boleyn. Henry later had Anne executed for treason after having accused her of committing adultery, and Catherine supposedly died in her bed from mysterious causes, but the rumour that had been passed around the court was that Gustav had beaten her to death with a silver cane because she was supposedly leaving Gustav for Christian III of Denmark. Both of these women had bad reputations as queens and were disliked by the people. Gustav then married Margaret Leijonhufvud, from a noble Swedish family, to secure their support at court. This is very similar to the marriages between Henry and Jane Seymour and later Catherine Howard. Henry's third and fifth wives both came from noble English families. Jane Seymour became the most important wife to Henry because she gave Henry his long-desired son Edward. Likewise, Margaret was extremely important to Gustav

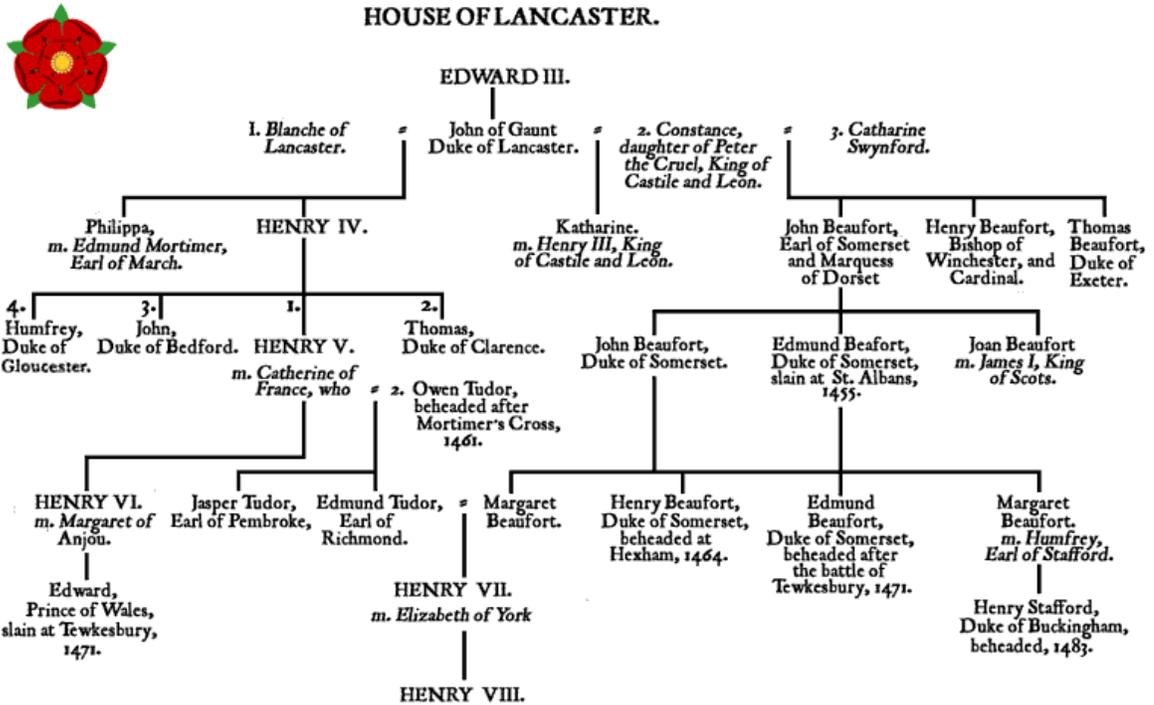
because she gave him eight children including three sons.

By comparing the two men it is possible to make use of Gustav Vasa as a foil to shed light on Henry VIII. Gustav himself was a very angry man, who made even more rash decisions than Henry did. While he was king he allowed many acts of torture, execution, and exile to happen even towards people who were simply annoying him. In comparison Henry executed men who, in his eyes, had wronged him or were heretics. Henry's passion for religion meant that he did not allow for treasonous radical protestants or any other sort of heretics to be vocal in his kingdom. Both men grew to be feared by their people, and nobody wanted to go against anything either king said. They both dealt with revolts after they broke with Rome. In England, there was the Pilgrimage of Grace and in Sweden there were multiple revolts out of Dalarna. This made both men paranoid about their position on the throne.

To conclude, Henry VIII of England and Gustav Vasa of Sweden were very similar kings who ruled at the same time in Europe. The two men had comparable goals that they wanted to reach by breaking with the Church of Rome, and they also had similar motives behind their decisions, but the theology mattered differently to them. Henry was passionate about religion and, even though he broke with Church of Rome with the assistance of Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer, his Church was essentially a Catholic Church without a pope. Henry kept the majority of the same practices that were in the Church of Rome, which proved that theology did matter to him. In comparison, Gustav chose to convert to Lutheranism based on the advice of Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae, two of his personal advisors. Gustav was not interested in the theology like Henry; he would have chosen to join any sect of Christianity that his

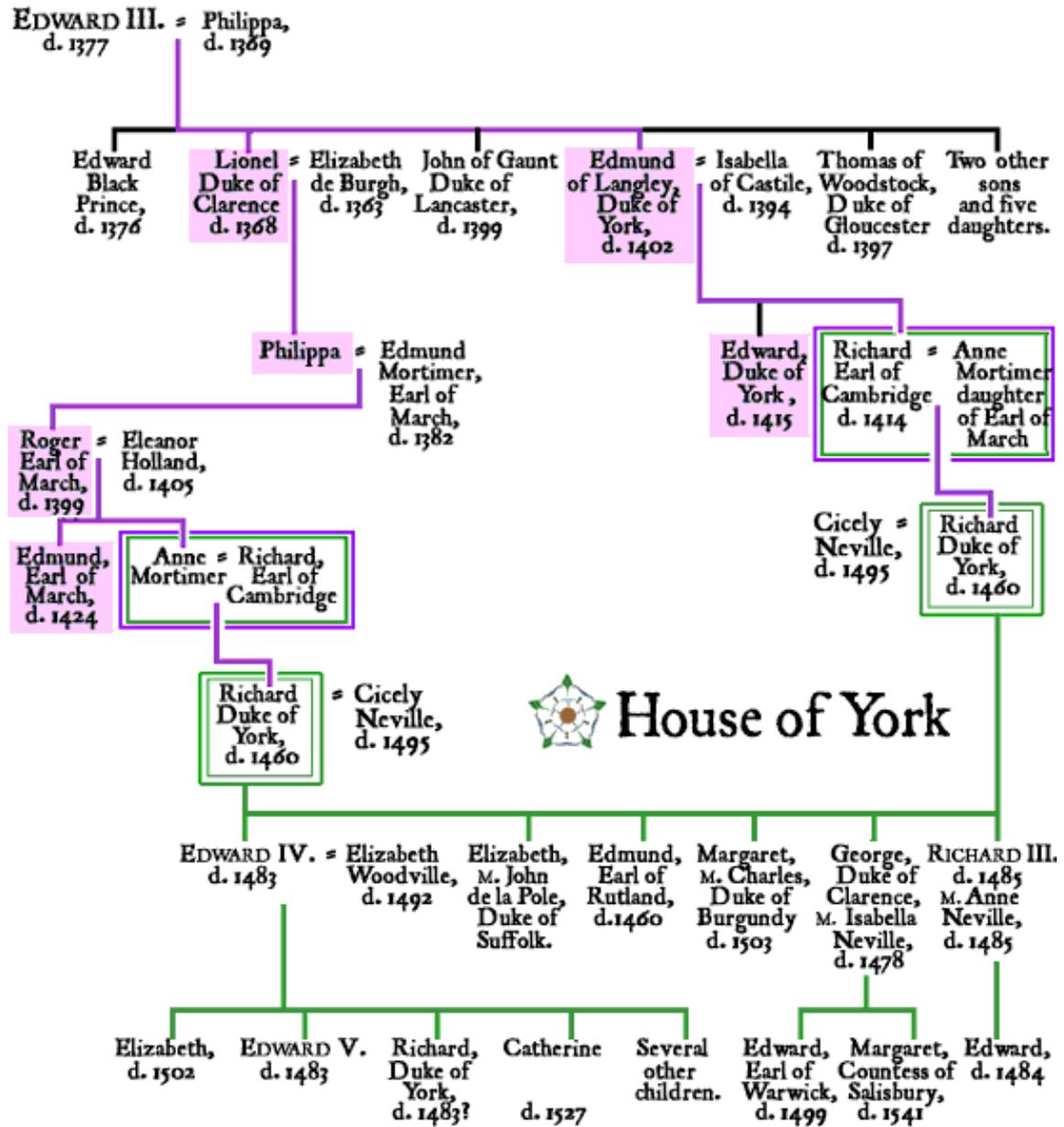
advisors suggested, as long as the pope was not involved. There was more hostility between Gustav and the Church of Rome because of the Stockholm Bloodbath, and the execution of his father and other family members. Henry just wanted to eliminate the pope from his Church in order to divorce his wife. Both kings came to the throne with the support of the people behind them. Henry was the bright new Renaissance Prince and Gustav was the Father of Modern Sweden. The people of England and Sweden both expected great things to come from these kings. Unfortunately, Henry and Gustav died leaving behind a legacy of being the most feared men in their countries who had permanently changed the way of life in both England and Sweden because of their separation with Rome. These ties would never be fixed, and Henry VIII and Gustav Vasa would go down in history as being the tyrannical kings who severed ties with Rome.

Appendix A: Lancastrian Family Tree



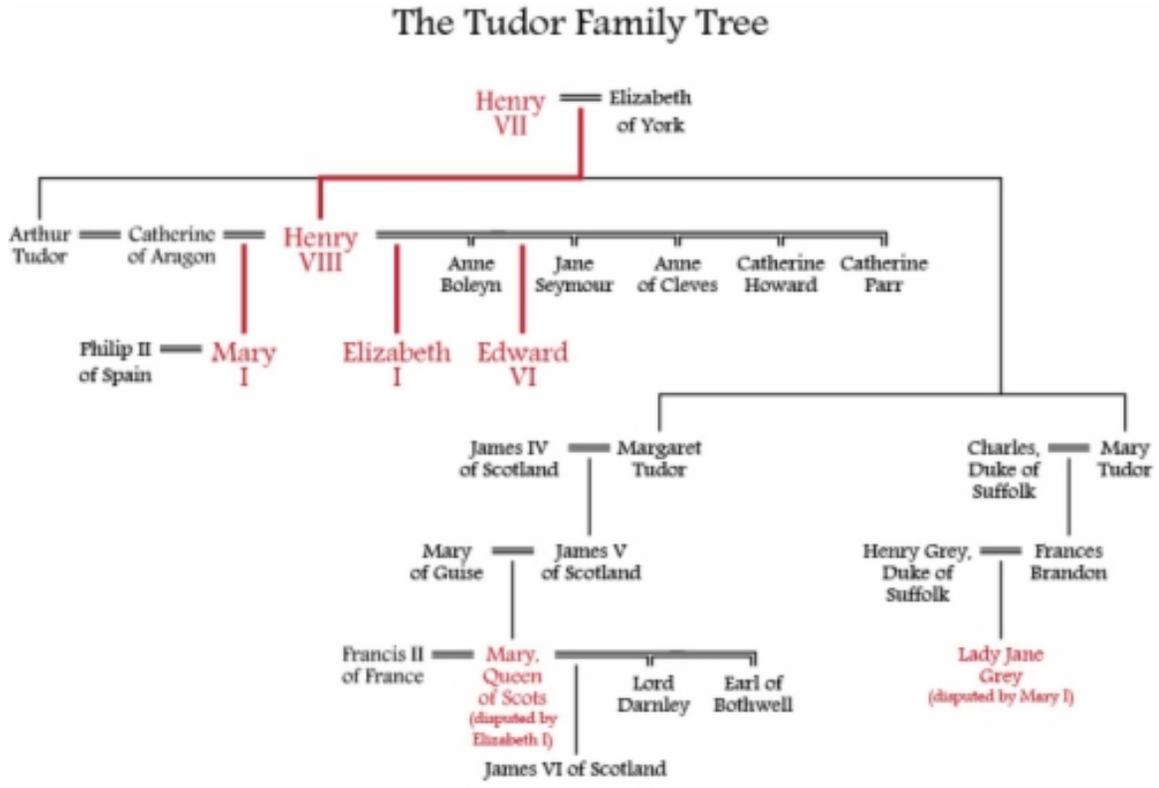
<http://www.luminarium.org/encyclopedia/houseoflancaster.gif>

Appendix B: Yorkist Family Tree



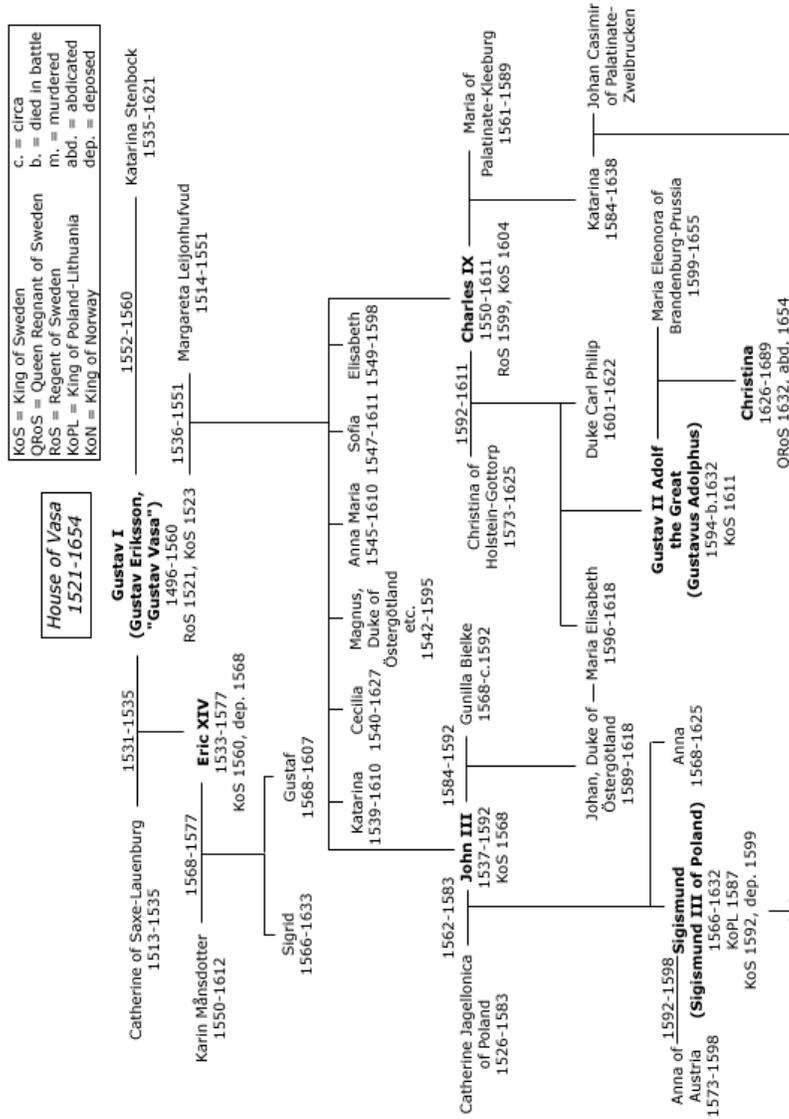
<http://www.luminarium.org/encyclopedia/houseofyork.htm>

Appendix C: Tudor Family Tree



http://www.bookdrum.com/images/books/121394_m.jpg

Appendix D: Vasa Family Tree



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/ca/House_of_Vasa.png

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