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**The Crown Inheritance Problem during the Reign of
Henry VIII**

**An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
for the Master's Degree in Anglo-Saxon Literature and Civilisation**

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In loving memory of my Grandfather

Dedications

This extended essay is lovingly dedicated to my parents, my brothers and friends. Your love and faith in me enabled this thesis to find its way and empowered me to become a better student and person. Mom and Dad, your love and support are invaluable.

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ABSTRACT

The 16th century in Britain also known as the Tudor period is period that may be considered as a turning point in the English history. While in the Middle Ages England was a small unimportant country, during the Tudor period it became one of the leading world powers. This period maybe characterized as the age of Renaissance, Reformation and discoveries since Voyages of discovery opened up a wider world and trade flourished. Henry Tudor is viewed as one of the most controversial rulers in history. In fact, succession problems were to play a large role in Henry VIII's reign, in particular the need for a male heir to secure the Tudor line. His desperation to have his name carried on with a male heir, and his need to have ultimate power led him to do what none other before him had dared attempt. The purpose of this thesis is to explore and understand the reasons behind Henry VIII's actions to get a male heir and for this aim the changes he created in the nation and thus in Europe as a whole.

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General Introduction

The Tudors reigned over England throughout the 16th century, leaving a deep mark in the history of their kingdom. Five members of the Tudor family ruled England, Wales, and Ireland between 1485 and 1603: Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I. This was a remarkable achievement for a period in which dynastic politics was driven by the need for a legitimate male heir, and diplomatic relationships with other kingdoms depended, to some degree, on successful marriage links with other royal families. Henry VII became king during a period of civil conflict and secured his position. His son and grandchildren managed to survive rebellions, counterclaims to the throne, and the religious upheaval of the Reformation in Europe. The long Tudor century was unusual in that it is marked by succession difficulties especially in the reign of Henry Tudor, so what did Henry VIII resort in order to remediate the absence of a male heir and to solve the throne inheritance problem ? And what are the consequences of the acts and decisions taken for the desired incontestable succession?

The first chapter of this thesis will deal with the introduction of this royal family as it was one of the most exciting times in the British history. There was peace after thirty years of civil wars. The Tudor age began on 22nd August 1485, this was the date of the Battle of Bosworth, last of the Wars of the Roses; the battles for the crown of England between the great and rival families of Lancaster and York. Richard III of York, the king at the time, was beaten by Henry Tudor a Welshman from the House of Lancaster. After that, Henry was crowned as King Henry VII of England and married Elizabeth of York, uniting the rival houses and remained the founder of his dynasty.

The Tudor period was marked by exploration and expansion outside Europe. There was a huge growth in trade, with British sailors opening up sea routes to East and West. English travelers to Italy had looked the Renaissance (rebirth), an artistic and literary movement. This monarch played an important role in turning England from a European backwater still sunk in the middle Ages into a powerful Renaissance state that in the coming centuries would dominate much of the world.

Chapter II will explore the reasons behind the Henry VIII's divorce, the establishing of the Church of England and the main issue of succession. Constitutional historians associated the Tudors with England's transition from a medieval kingdom into a modern state. This emergence of the state, however, was the vulnerability of the succession which called forth the 'state'. The royal supremacy in the Church of England,

the omnicompetence of acts, the revival of Parliament, the institutionalization of the Privy Council ;all these constitutional developments arose directly from the succession problem or else from its attempted solutions. Thus, the succession was the continuous problem of the century.

The dynasty survived, but not as long as they wanted. The succession was an ongoing problem, because the Tudors were not a fertile, productive family: many of its members were sickly, or died young. Henry VIII took severe and radical measures to get a male heir, taking six wives in the process, divorcing two, and beheading two more, as well as creating a conflict in the Church as he establishes himself as head of the Church of England after his break with the Roman Catholic Church and gain as much power as he could .He was not just a man of appetite; nobody wanted a return to the dynastic warfare of the previous century, and Tudor prosperity had done much to make the new dynasty popular. Henry's only surviving son Edward VI did not live to marry, and there was then no choice for the country but to turn to a female as its ruler. But Mary Tudor did not live long either. Her sister Elizabeth I had a long and glorious reign, but her solution to the succession problem was to remain unmarried, a choice she seems to have made for both political and personal reasons. For fear of groups forming around a designated successor, she kept her subjects guessing to the last whom she would name as her heir. It was, of course, her cousin, James VI of Scotland, a descendant of Henry VII, and founder of the House of Stuart in 1603.

Chapter One

Introducing the Tudor Dynasty

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1.1. Introduction

The Early Modern period follows the Middle Ages period towards the end of the fifteenth century and coincides closely with the Tudors (1485-1603) and Stuart (1603-1714) dynasties. This period is regarded as one of the most important periods in the British history. This chapter aims to shed light over this period as England became a great sea power, literature and drama flourished, great economic and social changes occurred and England set a path toward world domination. It also focuses on The Tudor dynasty which ruled England from 1485 to 1603 and has marked the Early Modern period. This great royal family was raised as the result of the Wars of the Roses the longest and deep period of civil war in the English history. The Tudors' reign was characterized by several factors that contributed to the rise of England as the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the conflict of Elizabeth I with Mary the Queen of Scots and the age of explorations which made England a maritime force.

1.2. Early Modern England

The Early Modern period follows the Middle Ages period towards the end of the fifteenth century and coincides closely with the Tudors (1485-1603) and Stuart (1603-1714) dynasties. After a long period of civil war known as the Wars of the Roses, the battle of Bosworth (1485) marked the end of this dynastic civil wars and the period of the Middle Ages which was viewed as one of the greatest periods of Britain as it was asserted by Hutton (2010) in his book *A Brief History of Britain 1485-1660*:

On 22 August 1485, the English king Richard III led a characteristically reckless and courageous charge into the centre of the army that opposed him on Bosworth Field, trying to win the battle at a stroke by cutting down his rival for the throne, Henry Tudor. His gamble failed, and he was killed instead, thereby ending both his reign and his dynasty. Whatever passed through his mind in his final few frantic minutes of life, as steel weapons sliced into his body, we can be certain that one thing did

not: that he had just brought to a close in England a period of history called the Middle Ages. Yet, ever since the nineteenth century, that has been regarded as the greatest single significance of that moment. (2010, Introduction)

Bucholz reveals how England during this time became a great maritime power, literature and drama flourished, great economic and social changes occurred and England set a path toward world domination. Thus the early modern period is regarded as one of the most important periods in the British history. He states:

Between the accession of the House of Tudor in 1485 and the end of the House of Stuart in 1714, England transformed itself from a feudal and relatively minor European state, not much more powerful than contemporary Denmark and much poorer than contemporary Belgium, into a constitutional monarchy, the wealthiest and most powerful nation on earth and what one recent book has called “the first modern society”. (2003:5)

The Early Modern period begins with The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century and was the religious, political, intellectual and cultural upheaval that split Catholic Europe, setting in place the structures and beliefs that would characterize the continent in the modern era. In northern and central Europe, reformers like Martin Luther, John Calvin and Henry VIII challenged papal authority and doubted the Catholic Church’s ability to define Christian practice. They argued for a religious and political redistribution of power into the hands of Bible, pastors and princes. The disruption caused wars, persecutions and the so called Counter Reformation, the Catholic Church’s slowed but forceful response to the Protestants. Consequently this period asserts the beginning of changes in religion, in social structure and design of class boundaries and in political construction.

The English Renaissance, also took place from the early sixteenth century to the mid 17th century, and was part of a burgeoning European ‘rebirth’ that began in Italy. The Italian members of the court introduced higher levels of art, education and schooling, bringing the Renaissance to England.

In England, the Renaissance can also be called the 'Elizabethan' era as this period began all along the reign of the Tudors. Although clearly; the Renaissance began before and extended after Elizabeth I. Great art in Italy and great literature in England are the main offsprings of the Renaissance, and this resulted in a general development of the country's culture.

Elizabeth I was a great sponsor of arts and many early modern works pay homage to her reign and the greatest and famous playwright in her reign was William Shakespeare. Belschner through his article "The Early Modern or Renaissance Period" admits that despite, the exceptional position of Elizabeth I however the status of early modern women did not change, who were expected to be inferior and silent, "Although their status varied somewhat by class, women were objects of exchange between men in marriage, and were not permitted to participate in the theater as playwrights or actors."

The Industrial Revolution can extend as far as the Early Modern period; it was during this time that England began to develop its naval capacities which, in turn, meant that they could now explore further than ever before. The first printing press was invented by Johann Guttenbrg using movable type in the 1440s. The economic improvement aided the spread and expansion of the printing press, which by 1500 was significant in expanding access to texts mostly importantly, the Bible.

Bucholz believes that the Early Modern England is a very crucial period in the history of Britain, all along the rule of the Tudors and Stuarts, England experienced a chain of civil wars, rebellions and revolutions, producing a constitutional monarchy; tested a series of reformations in religion that would contribute, ultimately, to religious toleration and became a world power beside established its American colonies. He writes:

The culture of early modern England is our root culture, and many of our institutions, laws, customs, and traditions can be traced back to that time and place. In particular, the establishment of constitutional monarchy and rule of law; the rights to trial by jury and habeas corpus, the first modern political parties, and a kind of popular participation in politics lead, ultimately, to democracies on both sides of the Atlantic.(2003:5)

The Early Modern England was marked by the Tudor dynasty which ruled England from 1485 to 1603. Their story covered some of the most dramatic, impressive and unforgettable events

in European history. Tudor kings and queens inaugurated huge and gigantic changes that are still with us today and they remain the most famous and controversial of royal families.

The rise of this great royal family was the result of the battle of Bosworth, it would become one of the most illustrious battles in English history, but the rise of the Tudors is much more than the account of the dramatic events of that destructive battle. It is an account of brutal conflict and deadly civil wars, and the legendary rise of the Tudor family from obscure Welsh nobility to the throne of England.

1.3. The Wars of the Roses and the Rise of the Tudors

During the middle Ages, Roses were a popular symbol all over Europe, and their colors, whether used in literature art or politics, were judged to have important and frequently, conflicting and opposing meanings.

Roses were doodled in the margins and lighted letters in books of prayer, calendars and scientific texts. Aristocratic families in England had included roses as a symbol in their stamps since the reign of Henry III in the thirteenth century. But in the later fifteenth century in England, red and white roses began to be associated firmly with the fortunes of rival claimants to the crown.

The earliest royal rose was the white rose, representing the house of York the descendants of Richard duke of York, who claimed his right to the crown in 1460. While Richard's son Edward became King Edward IV in 1461, the white rose was one of a number of badge he used to advertise his kingship.

The red rose was far less frequent until it was promoted and adopted vigorously and actively by Henry Tudor (Henry VII) in the 1480s. However in 1485 red roses flourished as a royal symbol, representing Henry VII's claim to the crown over his connection to the old dukes of Lancaster.

The idea of 'wars of the roses' and most importantly, of their settlement and resolution with the arrival of the Tudors was thus by the early sixteenth century obvious and a commonplace.

The concept took hold because it affords a simple and powerful meaning; it implicitly and essentially justified the Tudors' claim to the crown.

The Wars of the Roses were far more complex, complicated and unpredictable than is suggested by their attractive and alluring title. The fifteenth century experienced sporadic and infrequent periods of extreme violence, brutality, disorder, warfare, cruelty and bloodshed, an unprecedented and remarkable number of apprehension of the throne, the collapse of royal authority, an upheaval in the politics power of the English nobility, murders, betrayals, plots and coups, and the arrival of a new royal dynasty, the Tudors, whose claim to the throne by right of blood.

It was a critical, dangerous and uncertain period between 1455 and 1487 in which England's treacherous political life was driven by a cast of quite exceptional characters, men and women alike, who sometimes resorted to boundless brutality and cruelty. The degree of the violence, the size and regularity of the battles that were fought, the rapidly shifting allegiances and motivations of the adversaries, and the particular nature of the problems that were faced were confusing to many contemporaries and have remained so to many historians. In the words of Bindoff in his book *Tudor England* it was points out as:

The Wars of the Roses we call them, this thirty-year contest between the White Rose of York and the Red Rose of Lancaster, the two branches of the Plantagenet line, for possession of the English throne. As civil wars go, they were neither protracted nor costly. The fighting was sporadic, the armies small, the material losses inconsiderable. Indeed, the Wars of the Roses, like the politics which gave rise to them, were scarcely more than a sport which great men indulged in while the country as a whole stuck doggedly to the more important business of feeding, warming and clothing itself. But anarchy is a dangerous pastime, and every year saw its crimson stain spread a little further across the fabric of English society. A crown which had become a football was ceasing to be a referee, and a game which begins by doing without a referee runs a risk of finishing without a bell. (1950: 8)

The wars of the Roses were the longest and deep period of civil war in English history. They followed right away after the last English defeat in the Hundred Years War (1337-1453). England's continuous defeat in the Hundred Years War destabilized the realm, weakened and undermined the authority of the English monarchy. Over a century of war, England lost all of its

French lands and territories with the exception of Calais. The French gained the upper hand and began leading English forces from France.

These thirty years of armed conflict were even more damaging than the Hundred Years War had been in the previous century. Most of the battling in the Hundred Years War took place in France, which meant most of the army damage and destruction affected the French inhabitants rather than the English one. In the Wars of The Roses , most of the fighting took place in England so the loss of life, wealth and property was much bigger for the English citizens.

These brief, sporadic civil wars in England started in the 1450s with rebellions led by Richard, duke of York, who had been banned from power at court by Henry VI of the house of Lancaster. The wars increased into struggles for the throne between those who supported Duke Richard and those who supported Henry. Michael Hicks demonstrated this in the introduction of his book “The Wars of The Roses 1455 -1485” published in 2003”Calls for reform by Richard Duke of York and the emergence of two sides, Lancaster and York, several times overflowed into violence before sustained conflict began in 1459.” (7)

The conflict began during the reign of Henry VI due to his periods of insanity. In 1451, Parliament chose Richard, Duke of York as Henry’s successor. They feared that the king would lose his mental health completely before the queen had an heir. When Henry lapsed into madness again in 1453, Richard’s crown seemed within reach. However, Queen Margaret gave birth to a boy. Parliament then asserted Richard as protector and defender of the infant prince, and he ruled as regent. The fight for the throne began when Henry VI recovered and get back his sanity in 1455.

The wars involved more than sixty weeks of huge and extensive campaigning in England (with considerable fighting in Wales, and some at sea, around English-property Calais and in Ireland). The many battles encompassed both conflicts fought by small numbers and large-scale engagements involving heavy calamities. The principal strategic objectives were London, York, and Calais. These places were well-protected, but most English and Welsh downtown fortifications and castles had long been ignored and abandoned, and so few important sieges occurred.

Kings and elites were unaccustomed and not used to investing financially in fortifications and standing forces for domestic conflict. Their limited personal resources, and concern not to alienate their supporters by imposing taxation, by extortion and oppression, framed the character of the wars. Lords' relatives, officials, rural inhabitants and clients reorganized willingly for short periods.

Tactics were traditional: horsed troops mostly fought on foot, the use of archery by the two opposing sides of English families. Field artillery was often deployed, and companies of hand-gunners occasionally.

The social and economic impact of war was reduced by the shortness of campaigns and by the general concern and interest of leaders to keep or win the support of civilians and subjects. As civil conflicts, the Wars of the Roses were notable and distinguished in that they did not produce widespread and extensive destruction and economic recession or collapse. The participants lacked the necessary and crucial muscle for prolonged warfare and could only have developed it, or resorted to terror tactics, at the expense of alienating and dividing public opinion.

One of the main and significant clashes of the Wars of the Roses was the last battle, the battle of Bosworth. The battle of Bosworth was fought on 22nd August and it is one of most important battles in English and Welsh history as it ended the reign of Richard III and led to Henry Tudor becoming the first of the Tudor monarchs.

1.3.1. The Battle of Bosworth Field

The Battle of Bosworth was fought on August 22nd 1485. Henry Tudor had marched with his army from Milford Haven in Wales where he had settled with about 2000 men. The Battle of Bosworth is one of England's characterizing battles as it ended the reign of Richard III and led to Henry Tudor becoming Henry VII, the first of the Tudor monarchs.

To launch his campaign facing Richard III, Henry needed money. This he got from Charles VIII of France who hoped that a conflict in England would well distract and disturb any attention away from his wish to take Brittany.

Henry crossed from Harfleur on August 1st with a force of between 400 and 500 loyal mercenaries and about 1500 French soldiers. The force landed in Wales, where his family wielded its greatest influence. After that the rebels' advance was rapid. Henry wanted to gain as much support as possible. He was particularly anxious to effect a connection with his stepfather, Thomas, Lord Stanley, whose backing was crucial and decisive but not altogether certain.

By August 12th, Henry had won the support of the most influential landowner and financier in South Wales Rhys ap Thomas who had been assured the Lieutenancy of Wales if Henry won. However, regardless of his support and backing in Wales, Henry needed extra support in England. He turned then to his stepfather Lord Stanley and his brother Sir William Stanley. They possessed large areas of land in north Wales and in the Border region. Both men secretly gave money to Henry. Lord Stanley's eldest son was being held captive by Richard III as an insurance of good behavior and attitude.

Richard III was at Nottingham Castle when he knew about Henry's invasion. He did nothing as he assumed that the main landowners of Wales would consider Henry as a threat and combine their forces together and attack him. When he realized that he had made a mistake, Richard marched his forces to Leicester.

The two military forces fought two and a half miles south of Market Bosworth. Henry had an army of about 5000 men while Richard's force probably was nearer 12,000. However, 4,000 of these mercenaries belonged to the Stanley family and no one was sure if the Stanley's could be loyal and trusted. It is thought that Richard did not trust Lord Stanley as he had a reputation of fighting for whoever he perceived was going to be the most generous in victory. The Stanley's' uncommitted position meant that neither side could be certain and convinced of their support.

The battling began early in the morning of August 22nd. The two Stanley armies stayed abroad from the actual fighting at this stage so that the contest was completely and directly a battle

between Henry's and Richard's forces. Richard held the highest point of Ambien Hill with Henry at the bottom in more marshy land. When Henry's soldiers charged up the hill, they sustained heavy victims and casualties. However, Henry had recruited longbowmen while in Wales and these imposed equally cruel and severe damages on the forces of Richard as being at the top of a hill did not protect them from an inundation of long bow arrows.

Casualties on both sides were brutal, crucial and heavy. Henry was seen making a move to where Lord Stanley was determined to urge Stanley to use his forces on his side. The battle saw Henry Tudor's military, finally supported by the Stanley's. With some loyal soldiers Richard charged at Henry. He nearly succeeded in getting to Henry, however, Henry's protectors closed ranks and the future king was saved.

For the extent of the battle, the forces of the Stanley family had stood by the two sides, thus fulfilling what Richard believed. But at this critical moment the army of Sir William Stanley attacked Richard and, seemingly coming to the help of Henry. Richard was killed and his army broke up and fled.

Bingham reports the final scene of the battle as "Lord Thomas Stanley set Richard's crown on Henry Tudor's head. Richard's body was symbolically humiliated, stripped naked and led away slung across the back of a horse" (28)

The defeat and the death of Richard III on the battlefield means that, among battles in English history, Bosworth stands as witnessing the death of an English king, leading a new dynasty. Richard was the last English king to be killed in battle. The Battle of Bosworth is one of England's defining battles as the defeat of Richard ended it reign and led to Henry Tudor becoming Henry VII, the first of the Tudor monarchs, a dynasty that lasted to 1603. By marrying Elizabeth of York, Henry unified both houses of Lancaster and York.

1.4. The House of the Tudor

The house of the Tudor was a royal house of Welsh and English origin, ruling after the series of dynastic civil wars, whose violence and ferocity beside brutality are practically unknown in the history of English wars before. The Tudors' reign concluded the 30 year long War of the Roses and was characterized by a period of change: religiously, politically and socially.

It was also an era that delivered some of the most extraordinary, exceptional and charismatic kings and queens. The reign of the Tudors included just five monarchs Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth I and lasted for almost over a century, sophisticated and spirited in their personalities, aggressive in their beliefs and positions, along with a host of other intriguing main characters of the times. The splendor, grandeur, pageantry, charisma and drama of the members of the Tudors' royal household all symbolize the prosperity and glory of an ancient monarchy, and thus the dynasty is one of the best known in history.

The Tudor monarch ruled the kingdom of England from 1485 until 1603, during this period England became one of the leading European colonial powers. Numerous variables affected England's development into a powerful and influential state that remains one of the most famous monarchs in the world including:

1.4.1. The defeat of the Spanish Armada

In 1586, Spain was at the top of her power, closely allied with the Roman Catholic Church, The Spanish, under the king of Spain Philip II who wanted a Catholic England again, decided to invade England, fully supported by the pope to remove the Protestant Elizabeth from the throne.

On May 19, after years of preparation, the Spanish Armada left Lisbon on a mission to protect control of the English Channel and transport a Spanish army to the British Isle. The fleet was under the command of the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, a well honored and respected nobleman

with no military training and included 130 ships carrying 2,500 guns, 8,000 seamen, and almost 20,000 soldiers. The Spanish ships were slower and less well armed than their English counterparts, but they prepared to force boarding actions if the English offered battle, and the superior Spanish soldier would undoubtedly dominate.

Delayed by storms that temporarily forced it back to Spain, the Armada did not reach the southern coast of England until mid July. By that time, the British were well prepared and ready. On July 21, the English navy began attacking the Spanish ships from a protected and safe distance, taking full advantage of their long range heavy guns. The Spanish Armada continued to advance all along the next few days, but its ranks were weakened by the English attack. On July 27, the Armada anchored in exposed position off Calais, France, and the Spanish army prepared to enter from Flanders. Without control of the Channel, however, their passage to England would be inaccessible.

Just after midnight on July 29, the English sent eight burning ships into the full harbor at Calais. The terrified Spanish ships were forced to cut their anchors and sail out to sea to escape and avoid catching fire. The confused and disorganized fleet, completely out of formation, was attacked by the English ships from Gravelines. In a decisive battle, the superior English guns won the day, and the devastated Armada was forced to leave north to Scotland. The English navy chased the Spanish as far as Scotland and then turned back for want of supplies.

Damaged by storms and suffering from an extreme lack of supplies, the Armada sailed on a hard journey back to Spain all over Scotland and Ireland. Some of the damaged ships were sunk in the sea while others were driven onto the coast of Ireland and wrecked. By the time the last of the surviving fleet reached Spain in October, half of the original Armada was lost and never returned to fight and some 15,000 men had died.

In his essay “The Spanish Armada” Adams reported the victory of England as “England was clearly much weaker than Spain, but Elizabeth had demonstrated successfully that of all Philip's contemporaries in Europe she was the most dangerous enemy”, he admitted the power of Queen Elizabeth as a leader.

Queen Elizabeth's decisive defeat of the Invincible Armada made England a world class and a great sea power moreover introducing effective long-range weapons into naval warfare for the first time, ending the era of boarding and close quarter fighting.

1.4.2. Elizabeth I and Ireland

When Ireland was living a civil war, the Irish leader Dermot MacMurrough asked for help from the English king Henry II to sort out his civil war. However, the English stayed and had ruled part of Ireland from 1171 and tried to conquer Ireland for the next 400 years.

In 1557, Mary Tudor lost Calais when her husband Philip of Spain involved England in war with France. So she extended the territory that had her father Henry VIII in Ireland (west of Dublin and the surrounding area) by populating the farms in that area and they were called plantations.

When Elizabeth became Queen of England, Ireland was still Catholic and for her Ireland was very much 'an unwelcome inheritance' so she wanted to conquer it and extend Mary's plantations with Protestant English land owners by giving them lands cheaply to keep Gaelic groups under control and the Catholic Spanish invaders from using Ireland as a stepping stone to England. She wanted Ireland to be loyal to England. This led to start attacks on the English plantations which involved the Spanish forces that come to help the Catholic Irish.

Ireland was divided and culturally and politically into English and Gaelic parts. Queen Elizabeth I had initiatives to extend, reinforce and to strengthen Tudor rule by dealing with Gaelic chiefs and Old English lords as good subjects and making the English authorities more available, however, on the other hand, English captains often favored a military resolution.

The north of Ireland had never been under the English control so the Queen Elizabeth sent one of the best army captains and they were alienated with the old English landowners, and promised to reward them for beating the Irish-Spanish military even if they win with the most extreme cruelty. And they did, Lord Charles Blount conquered Ireland and their leaders left for

Catholic France as if Ireland was no longer their home and they were replaced by many English protestant besides Scots.

The English and Scots brought their culture and their advanced farming methods by which Ireland has changed and was never the same again. Elizabeth was the first English monarch to rule the whole Ireland.

1.4.3. Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots

Mary of Scots, born in 1542, was the only daughter of King James V of Scotland and his second wife, the French heiress Mary of Guise. However, she inherited Tudor blood through her grandmother, the sister of Henry VIII. Her father died when she was 6 days old when she became Queen of Scots and her mother acted as regent. She was immediately sent to France where 15 years and married later the heir to the French throne. The French king did unexpectedly a year later and Mary became Queen of France in 1559.

At this time, the widowed Queen returned to Scotland with a complicated desire of taking the English throne by a coup. In 1567, Mary's subjects assassinated her husband Darnley. Following that, she married another unpopular and suspected man named both well. Soon, the people of Scotland were offended and turned against her. She was drove up from the throne and fled to England.

Elizabeth had just been made Queen, Yet for many Catholics in England and overseas, Elizabeth was illegitimate because she had been declared illegitimate in 1536. Elizabeth I made England Protestant; therefore she had many Catholic enemies who wanted to see her replaced by Mary Queen of Scots. Catholic France and Spain were plotting to make Mary Queen of England in order to control it and because Mary Stuart was supposed to become Queen of England after the death of Elizabeth. King Philip II of Spain had even started to plot with Mary and others to assassinate Elizabeth I.

That was the reason why Elizabeth I deposed her and imprisoned her in the Tower of London. Elizabeth wanted Mary to ask for forgiveness but this last one refused. The historian “Anna Whitelock observes this:

Elizabeth was determined that Mary should admit her wrongdoing and ask for forgiveness, clinging to the possibility of pardoning her cousin and saving her life. Yet Mary was uncompromising: she refused the right of the commissioners to try her, argued against the legality of the trial, and maintained that, as a foreign anointed queen, she had never been an English subject and thus could not be convicted of treason.

However this does not stop Mary from immediately plotting with the Catholic Babington to overthrow Elizabeth. When this is discovered in October of 1586 by a spy master, Elizabeth signs her execution for treason. On February 8, 1587, calmly facing her death, Mary Queen of Scots was executed. Mary Stuart was the mother of King James I of England who succeeded Elizabeth I.

The Tudor period was a dynamic century, which saw many radical changes. New class of merchants, ship-builders, and tradesmen appeared and Europeans began to explore the world more than ever before. Some of those who left their homeland and journeyed across the seas were looking for new lands and better life to live as consequence the explorations of this time led to a worldwide expansion of European power.

1.4.4. The Age of Exploration and Discovery

England had a small navy and when Henry VIII became the king, he spent a great deal of money to build up and develop a large fleet to protect the kingdom from wars and invaders.

At the end of the 15th century, English sailors started a series of daring and dangerous expeditions for several reasons as discovering new places that no one had ever been, to become wealthy by finding new places to trade and exploiting goods like spices, different metals and silk, moreover, to find better place to live and practice their religion in freedom because in the Tudor

times they were often forced to change their religion depending on the religion of the reigning monarch.

Life at sea was hard, risky and dangerous. The Tudor ships were often dirty and often crowded by mice. And due to the lack of fresh food; many sailors got diseases and were died. The Tudor period was a great age of expedition and exploration. Elizabeth I encouraged her sailors to search for new lands and treasures and the navy was restored, rebuild and modernized. Most explorers wanted to get wealthier. They were looking for gold or valuable cargoes to bring back home to sell. Others went to tell people in distant lands about Christian religion. These people were called missionaries.

Some of the first voyages were in form of privateering, the act of stealing enemy merchant ships. The Age of Exploration saw the rise of some Famous Pirates and the Golden Age of Pirates. The advantageous slave trade, spice trade and the spoils of gold and silver encouraged the exercises of Pirates. Many explorers such as Sir Francis Drake and Sir Martin Frobisher were assigned to as pirates.

Europeans began to explore the world more than ever before and Sir Francis Drake who was financed by Queen Elizabeth was the second man to sail all around the world and was knighted by the Queen for his performances to the country. He loaded with stolen Spanish gold. And the most important discovery in the Tudors age was during the reign of Henry VII, in 1492 America was accidentally discovered by Christopher Columbus and new crops and animals were introduced to Europe. Such as corn, tobacco and potato by which the settlers of the New World survived by growing them.

From the above facts, it can be rightly seen that the golden age in the British history, that is, the Elizabethan era was also the golden age of explorations.

According to Prena Lulgjuraj, in her article “Elizabeth’s Age of Exploration”; the credit of this goes mainly to the brave, skilful, wise, courageous, and, determined English seamen. It is because of them that Elizabethan era is famous for explorations and because of Henry VIII’s naval reforms. Prena takes the view that “England’s success in voyages came from Elizabeth’s use of

resources and efforts. But, Henry VIII's naval reforms were necessary for the growth of exploration and privateering under Elizabeth launched the beginning of the age of Elizabethan exploration. Elizabeth placed a great deal of importance among the privateers because of their great success due to the new shipbuilding techniques." She adds "The voyages that England did participate in proved to be worthwhile because of how profitable they had been. Elizabeth's efforts, built upon the naval reforms of Henry VIII, showed that England could dominate the land and sea." (2015)

1.5. Conclusion

The Tudor dynasty held the throne of England from 1485 to 1603, in this period accomplished revolution of paramount importance as Britain became the first of Protestant powers, and she became a maritime and colonial power. This sovereignty was not sympathetic yet not out of scope, the imperium over passed numberless laborious scales to advance and reach the state of supremacy, the path was radically burdensome.

The time of the Tudor dynasty had a big influence on the whole following development of Britain's history, that period brought the succession to the throne and was characterized by several aspects such as the age of discovery; moreover England and Scotland were united for the first time by Elizabeth I. Those points show how important the house of Tudor was to the history of Britain. The United Kingdom wouldn't be alike without the Tudor Dynasty.

While the Tudor monarch is generally viewed as one of the stability, the succession problems created instability and often posed the threat of civil war or foreign invasion. The succession difficulties of the Tudor period were caused by their lack of male claimants for the throne, for none of Henry VIII's children had children, poor health, short lives and were complicated by plots arising from this uncertainty of the succession.

Chapter Two

The Quest For an Heir, Succession and Reformation

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2.1. Introduction

The problem of “certainty in the succession” of the Crown of England was one that disturbed England for much of the sixteenth century. Although the defeat of Richard III at Bosworth, and the union of the conflicting Houses of York and Lancaster in the person of Henry Tudor brought the long dynastic struggles of the War of the Roses to an end, the issues of succession remain very much a principal concern to the nation.

Yet while they were powerful and capable monarchs, the Tudors were never quite secure on the throne. Marriage and succession were the two most important policy issues of the early years of Henry VIII’s reign.

In this chapter, the main issues relate to Henry VIII and his will to secure a male heir for the throne. Since his wife in 1533 could not provide him that, and the pope would not end their marriage, Henry found another way. Through the added legitimacy of an act of supremacy, he placed himself at the head of the Church of England and could then pursue his desire to produce a male heir. Henry desired to secure the Tudor line, and strengthen his own power as king of England.

This chapter shed the light over the strength of the monarchy and how well its ministers served it. The king's council was interpreted as the precursor of the prime minister's cabinet, and two of Henry VIII's most prominent assistants, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell, seemed to exercise prime ministerial power.

2.2. The Divorce and the Break with Rome

Henry Tudor, son of Henry VII of England and Elizabeth York, is one of the most famous kings of England. Henry has often been described and portrayed as easily affected by a desire for power, women, a male heir and a wish to leave the world with a legacy like his father Henry VII did. Henry VIII was born at Greenwich on 28 June 1491, the second son of Henry and Elizabeth after Arthur, being older than Henry, Arthur was expected to take the throne. In 1502, Prince Arthur married Catherine of Aragon, the daughter of the Spanish king and queen, Ferdinand

II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile. Arthur died after less than four months of marriage, and Henry became heir to the throne on the death of his elder brother.

Seeking recognition of the legitimacy of his dynasty and a strong, powerful continental alliance, the patriarch, Henry VII offered his young son Henry to Arthur's widow, so the marriage between Catherine of Aragon and Henry Tudor came about as a result of the diplomatic stratagems of Henry VII.

Under normal circumstances such a marriage could not take place. In canon law (the laws of the Church) there were a number of reasons why a marriage might be deemed illegitimate and therefore prohibited and banned. Close blood relationship, for instance, was viewed as an impediment, and Henry and Catherine were connected. They were related because Catherine and Arthur had been married thus Henry and Catherine were 'in-laws', and any marriage between them would be considered as a burden and scandalous by the Church. This was referred to in canon law as an offence against 'public honesty'.

This relationship was not a serious problem, however, as the offence was a matter of human law and design, and there was no question of overturning and annulling any commandment or law of God. While it could not be ignored, it could be put simply and easily in order. The Pope could grant, for adequate and sufficient reason, his special permission that the previous relationship be ignored and that a new marriage take place. Basically the first thing that Henry did when he came into his succession on the death of his father was to make his marriage valid and official on 11 June 1509. If Henry had any doubts at all, they were forgotten in hurried to wed the princess to whom he had been engaged.

By 1527, Catherine of Aragon was aged 42 and past the age of childbearing; she was therefore weak and vulnerable to Henry's discontentment. Despite the fact that she had been pregnant often all along their marriage, she and Henry had been notably unsuccessful in producing a male heir who survived for very long. The fault was attributed to her: Henry knew that he was capable of producing healthy male heir. But the king's only legitimate child who did manage to live past infancy was a girl, Princess Mary, born on February 18, 1516 and she was not seen as a practicable successor to the throne. The Tudor dynasty had been established as result of a conquest

in 1485 and Henry was only its second monarch, England had no so far a ruling Queen, a Queen, as opposed to a king, was weak and the dynasty was not secure enough to run the risk of handing the crown on to a woman, risking disputed succession or domination of a foreign power through marriage.

Henry, therefore, was indeed sincere in his belief that he had been living in sin; G.W.Bernard endorses this in his book *The King's Reformation*:

The king some years past had noticed while reading in the Bible the severe penalty inflicted by God on those who married the widows of their brothers. He began to be troubled in his conscience and came to think that the sudden deaths of his male children had been a divine judgment upon his marriage. The more he studied the matter, the more clearly it appeared to him that he had broken a divine law. (2005:3)

By the arrival of the young Anne Boleyn at court, sister of a former mistress to the king, daughter of an important broker and niece of the duke of Norfolk, Anne drew much attention among the young men of the court. At length she caught the eye of the king but she did not follow her sister's path to the king's bed. Anne was made of entirely different stuff from her sister Mary and her vision was much more ambitious: she would not sleep with the king except that she was his legitimate wife and queen. She was determined to be sure, but she was no fool and she was prepared to play a waiting game. She judged the king's attitude and ego accurately: the more she refused him, the more he pursued her.

The Queen could not compete. Beautiful though she had once been, Catherine was the victim of time and too many pregnancies. Against this, Anne Boleyn must have seemed a breath of fresh spring air and all the more desirable for being splendid, beautiful, and full of life and, as far as anyone knew, fit to bear children.

Catherine was also vulnerable because of the fluidity of European affairs. She was rapidly becoming a diplomatic obligation to a king who was beginning to turn away from the old alliance with Spain. The situation, then, was not easy or straightforward. Henry had real concerns of a diplomatic and dynastic nature which served to make his marriage to Catherine of Aragon all the more unattractive by the mid 1520s. It would be wrong to assume that the king would be moved to

consider the annulment of his first marriage simply because a youthful woman of the court refused to submit to him.

Henry VIII was a man whose ego was as large as his appetites, but he was not stupid. While the love that Henry declared for Anne Boleyn was important, it must not be thought that the king would have taken such radical action had there not been other convincing reasons to reject his eighteen year marriage. Bernard expresses that Henry knew that there were passages in the Holy Bible which particularly prohibited the marriage of a man to his brother's widow, he states:" Henry used two distinct arguments in support of his case. The boldest was the claim that a marriage between a man and the widow of his deceased brother was against divine law" (Ibid, 17) .The argument that Henry assembled on the basis of these passages grew over the course of time.

At first he seems to have allowed that the Pope might have the power to dispense some laws but had done so inappropriately in this case. As evidence he cited the difficulties that Catherine had in child bearing. Because the prohibitions specifically declared that those who broke the law would be childless, Henry viewed this as proof of the unlawful nature of his marriage. The fact that Mary had survived was irrelevant to Henry because, as king, he considered the production of a male heir all important. Obviously, God was punishing him for breaking the laws by depriving him and the realm of a male heir to the throne.

The king turned to scholars and lawyers in England and, yet, on the continent. Henry's quest for an annulment would become a long process, finally being thrown into the hands of the English Parliament. In addition the weight of the evidence from the early Christian Fathers, from papal precedent was strongly against Henry's position. In fact, Henry's argument was never convincing to anyone who did not seriously want to be convinced.

The canon lawyers of Rome, and the supporters of Catherine of Aragon in England, had by far better arguments. However, in the first instance, Henry turned to the most powerful man in England, apart from himself, to make his desires a reality: Thomas Cardinal Wolsey, archbishop of York, and chancellor of England.

2.2.1. Thomas Wolsey

After the death of Henry VII, Thomas Wolsey had risen from humble beginnings to a position of prime importance in the government of Henry VIII by a combination of hard work, good luck and inborn ability, and proved to be of valuable assistance to the young Henry VIII during his reign. Wolsey, among all the king's councilors, came to dominate and many who did not know the king assumed that Wolsey had more power than he did. He made his way to power through the Church.

In 1527 Henry approached Wolsey with the news that he was interested in seeking an annulment for his marriage with Catherine. Wolsey saw some real possibilities for this, but the king had not made his aim to marry Anne Boleyn clear to his minister; if he had, Wolsey might have received Henry's news with less enthusiasm. To the chancellor, Catherine was a symbol of a previous alliance which its usefulness took an end. Securing the annulment and the king's remarriage to a French princess might be a more advantageous and convenient arrangement for England. It never occurred to Wolsey that the king was making this entire disturbance over a pretty young girl at court, and he was horrified when the truth of the king's intentions finally became obvious. Yet Wolsey was prepared to do all that he could to execute the king's desires that had always been his worth to the king and it would remain so.

Wolsey had the power to make the necessary judgment in this case. He could grant the annulment in the name of the Pope but his decision would not be final: if Catherine chooses to appeal against his decision, the case would automatically go back to Rome, where there was no certainty that it would be resolved in the king's favor. There was little doubt that Catherine would make such an appeal. This would, of course, complicate matters and, the decision at Rome in Catherine's favor would be almost certain. Henry, on the other hand, wanted absolute certainty that his annulment would be granted, and so he and his chancellor moved quickly and secretly. Wolsey would hear the king's explanation for a marriage which appeared to be in breaking of canon law. Once Henry had put his case, Wolsey would declare the marriage in violation of the law and therefore annulled. This would be confirmed by the Pope, and Henry would be free to marry whomever he wished. Bernard notes: "Henry would assert that his marriage to Catherine of Aragon had been invalid -against cannon law- from the start. If that claim were accepted, then Henry would

be free to marry as if for the first time, and he would be able to make his beloved Anne Boleyn not his mistress but rather his queen and, in due course, the mother of his legitimate children.” (Ibid, 7)

This plan was destroyed by two problems. First, once she got news of what was being planned, Catherine was not prepared to cooperate and directly began to make plans to appeal to Rome. Second, Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor sacked Rome in May 1527 and the Pope became the prisoner of the emperor. Catherine had no intention of allowing the case to be settled in England. She wrote immediately to her nephew, Charles V, and informed him of her husband’s purposes. Henry however, failed to avoid this news from reaching Charles. Once Charles understood what was happening he made his displeasure very clear to Henry. Even so, this did not necessarily mean that Henry’s cause could not get a favorable hearing at Rome.

After the sack of Rome, the Pope was in desperate need of friends and welcomed English interest in his situation. English support for the Pope might, therefore, be traded for the Pope’s agreement in the ‘King’s Great Matter’. By the end of 1527, the situation in Italy was fluid again. The French were back in strength and the Pope, although no longer resident in Rome, was not under the emperor’s direct control. English ambassadors were sent to the Pope to urge him to grant Wolsey the power to decide the case without invoking Rome, but the pope Clement was not disposed openly to support Henry’s case. His position was delicate. He knew the power of the emperor only too well and was afraid that French control in northern Italy was only temporary.

In the summer of 1528, the pope sent Cardinal Campeggio to England with the necessary powers to resolve the annulment. However, these powers were to be kept secret and Campeggio was instructed to delay until the political situation in Italy became clearer. Campeggio found enough reasons to postpone hearing Henry’s case until May 1529, by which time it was apparent that the emperor was not going to allow the French to dominate Italy. The French were defeated and the Pope swore his support for the emperor and the empire. In England, Campeggio adjourned the hearing of Henry’s case, evidently for the summer. In fact, it was apparent to all observers that the case would never be heard. Wolsey had failed, and there were those who were prepared to take advantage of his failure. The supporters of Anne Boleyn now moved against Wolsey in strength.

The king was no closer to his annulment. He became increasingly frustrated by the cardinal's lack of success and began to look elsewhere for solutions. Suggestions were made as early as July 1529 which designed to deal with the king's problems and, not incidentally, destroy the power of the cardinal and to deal with the corrupted church, Anne Boleyn's supporters had even begun to suggest that the entire matter ought to be dealt with in England and that the solution might be found in the destruction of papal authority in the realm. Henry not only sent away Wolsey but also called the Parliament to meet in November 1529. In doing so Henry was clearly against Rome and took the first step down the road to Reformation.

By the late summer of 1529, all the king's plans were failed. He had hoped, of course, to achieve his annulment with a minimum of trouble, but an uncooperative Catherine of Aragon and an ever changing political situation in Europe had made a non sense of such efforts. Henry could count on no help from Catherine; the idea that she would willingly go along with the divorce or that she would simply accepts without an appeal to Rome if presented with a fait accompli was impossible .Henry was furious. While Wolsey might be punished for his failures, this still left the king no closer to his goal.

Few good ideas suggested themselves immediately, and those that were put forward were rather too radical for a king who, despite his injured pride, was not yet prepared to defy the Pope and the Church to the point of separation .In so far as there was a policy after the summer of 1529, it was to try to convince the Pope to execute to the king's will or to act alone. Bernard adds:

From the very start, in 1527, Henry had raised the possibility that he might achieve his aims unilaterally, without papal involvement or blessing; Pope Clement was repeatedly threatened, as we have seen, that the king was prepared to act alone. The advocacy of the case to Rome in summer 1529 greatly reduced the chances that Henry would obtain what he sought from the pope. And consequently there are increasing indications from then on that Henry was exploring means of securing his divorce in other ways.(2005,40)

However, the methods to achieve that policy were unclear. The government began to drift, and important factions struggled to dominate the court.

The most important of these groups was in the Privy Council. Its members were religious conservatives and had all played an important part in the downfall of Cardinal Wolsey. Although they intended on pleasing the king and they had few effective contributions to make on the matter of the divorce. A second group was made up of supporters of Anne Boleyn, who was herself a powerful and manipulative influence on the king. The members of this faction were prepared to suggest far more radical solutions to the king's problems. Including such men as Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell, they tended to be influenced by profound religious opinions and to these men, the simplest way to deal with the case of the divorce was to act independently, and if that meant a clean break with the Church of Rome, then so be it.

The third important faction at court was composed of those who supported the queen. Including the lawyer Thomas More, they were dedicated, to the defense of the Church and Catherine. They could not be ignored; Thomas More soon became valuable to the faction for many reasons as his obvious intellectual skills and initially the king was unaware of More's support for Catherine. All through 1530, the king was concentrating mainly on resolving the divorce issue; however any coherent plans emerge. Henry had no clear idea of what to do and certainly he was not planning to break with Rome at this point.

In March 1530, as a response to Catherine's appeal, the Pope ordered Henry to Rome so that the case might be settled but the king chose delaying as a tactic. In June he sent to the Pope a letter signed by eighty three of his supporters, openly wondering why his case had not been acted upon favorably and concentrating on the break with Rome. The Pope was neither impressed nor worried by this, and his reply was gracious and calm. At Rome, Henry's ambassadors were appealing for a postponement in the proceedings hoping that the divorce could be settled without taking radical measures. However, in the late summer of 1530, Henry received a massive work put together by Thomas Cranmer and Edward Foxe, an English churchman and Secretary of Cardinal Wolsey, this document was a collection of historical and legal evidence from ancient sources which proved that the divorce desired by Henry was justified and, more importantly, established that the king of England had always enjoyed supremacy over the Church within his realm.

Focusing on the Holy Scriptures and some dubious historical traditions, the evidence as presented suggested that Henry could act on his divorce independently and that Rome had no right to interfere. Even so, Henry was not ready yet to break with Rome. The documents were seen as tools with which the Pope might be convinced to grant the divorce, not as the theoretical foundation for separation. Henry could do by the autumn of 1530 anything more than attempt to put some kind of pressure on the Pope. Bernard asserted this “Henry was attacking the church to persuade the pope to grant him his divorce and, failing that, to make sure that the English church would not dare defy him over his marriage.” (Ibid, 66)

Whereas in 1531 he had made demands with menaces and seen modest results, in 1532 he would take firm action. In this he was assisted by Thomas Cromwell, the man responsible for the Henrician reformation. Unlike Wolsey, Cromwell was effective and efficient.

2.2.2. Thomas Cromwell

Thomas Cromwell was a mercenary, a merchant and, finally, a common lawyer; he was a man of both experience and great gifts. He nevertheless served Wolsey faithfully as a lawyer and rose to importance in the cardinal’s service. When Wolsey fell, Cromwell did not abandon him but continued to manage the cardinal’s business and to communicate with him. In the vacuum created by the fall of Wolsey, Cromwell’s organizational and administrative gifts stood out. He was a man of intelligence and vision and if he was later criticized for brutality, he was without rancor or revenge. Cromwell was purposeful and directed.

In 1532, Cromwell brought forward a solution to the king’s problems. Having proved useful to the king, he now became the principal manager of parliamentary affairs. Despite all this, Henry was still no closer to his divorce. By the end of 1532, however, the diplomatic situation had improved to the extent that Henry believed that he could see the light at the end of the tunnel. A peace treaty was signed between the two major continental powers, France and the Holy Roman Empire. Henry VIII restored the French alliance in the hope that with the support of Francis I, who had some influence on the Pope, the divorce might be settled. It was not to be, but the possibility that Henry might finally achieve his annulment must have seemed real. Anne Boleyn, who had

refused firmly to share the king's bed before she was queen, was now apparently so confident about her success and she was pregnant before the end of 1532. This, of course, put things in a new light. Anne, who was able to manipulate the situation effectively, used her pregnancy to press the king to take some kind of firm action.

One major block to progress had always been the refusal of Archbishop Warham to defy the Pope. In August 1532, however, Warham died and Henry was free to appoint anyone he chose to fill the highest of churchly offices in England. He selected Thomas Cranmer, a little-known scholar without ambition. He was certainly not a strong candidate for the position of archbishop but he was known to be a supporter of the faction of Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cromwell and this selection, no doubt, was due to their suggestion. Cranmer was willing to do what the king wished in a way that Warham never had been. Now, with an archbishop who would not oppose him, and convinced that Anne was bearing him the son and the heir he desired, Henry married her on 24 January 1533. For the time being, however, the marriage remained secret.

Although Henry had finally taken the step that he had desired, this marriage had not yet even the appearance of legality. The Pope had not annulled the king's first marriage and had absolutely forbidden Henry to marry again. The answer to this problem was already being prepared; Cromwell arranged the act which would free the king from the Pope's authority. The Act in Restraint of Appeals became law in April 1533 and radically changed the relationship between the king and the Church in England. It did so by making claims about the nature of kingship in England which had not been stated previously.

The Act in Restraint of Appeals, in simplest terms, ended the practice of removing cases from English courts to Rome on appeal. The act claimed that all legal issues, whether religious or secular, were to be settled in English courts acquiring their authority only from the king. Catherine of Aragon, therefore, could not legally take her case to Rome. The introduction of the Act in Restraint of Appeals made a number of claims about the nature of the kingship in England which, if not entirely new, were argued with a new and different significance. The claim that the Crown was imperial was not new, but Cromwell's emphasis on England as an empire was. An empire was different from a kingdom in that it stood as an autonomous state and neither required nor allowed any interference from the outside. No matters, temporal or spiritual, were outside the competence of

the state or its courts, and these had their authority from the king, who in turn had his authority from God. The Pope, then, was an irrelevance: his interference was unnecessary and unwelcome.

Having been allowed the power to make a decision on the matter, and with Warham dead, the bishops were not slow to provide an opinion favorable to the king. With the agreement of his Convocation, Cranmer had no trouble in making the necessary declarations to annul the king's first marriage and regularize the second. In July 1533; the Pope took the only action left open to him and threatened to banish Henry. For his part, Henry called for a General Council of the Church to settle the conflict between himself and the Pope, but this event was not seen as a serious possibility by any involved. In September, when it became apparent that Henry would not be changed, the Pope excommunicated the king of England. At last, the issue of the divorce was settled, and in the process the most significant link with Rome had been cut.

Finally, late in 1534, the break with Rome was complete and the Act of Supremacy was established, this act which state all Henry's claims, and particularly his claim to be supreme head of the church of England.

2.3. The Act of Supremacy

Henry VIII demanded in vain for papal approval for his divorce from Catherine of Aragon, and when it became obvious that approval would not becoming, Henry took matters into his own hands. This was done to make a clear statement to the Pope that he should agree favorably for Henry on the divorce he wanted and that Henry had authority against the Papacy. This was also a clear demonstration of the power Henry felt he had over the Papacy in England.

Pope Clement then excommunicated Henry, which only opposed the divorce. After the break with Rome, one of the problems that had to be decided on was who was to be in control of the Church in England and Wales. Many senior clergy wished for a solution that maintained a clergyman at the very top of the Church. They could see no reason why it should be any other way. Even though, it became clear that Henry VIII would not accept to obtain anything else other than royal supremacy.

In 1534, all the Pope's power in England was lost and this was not a great surprise to the King or the subjects around him. For several years leading up the Act of Supremacy there had been actions taken by the King to remove some of the authority of the Pope and place the authority in his own hands.

Parliament passed a series of acts controlling the clergy and increasing Henry's power over them. In 1534 came the Act of Supremacy, declaring Henry to be "the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England." The English Parliament forever changed the religious establishment in England with the passing of the Act of Supremacy. With the passing of this Act the Church of England was born into existence and England now had a national church, with the king in the rule. In S.T.Bindoff words "it made the church of England as independent of the pope as the Crown of England was independent of the Emperor" (93). Henry VIII was granted the title and extra power; the power he gained was power that had been deprived from the Papacy.

The Act of Supremacy must be seen as part of a deeper policy, though, one aimed at increasing the power of the English monarch and decreasing the influence of Rome. To give him his due, Henry was probably sincere in his belief that the Church of England was corrupted with poor administration and had long since lost the right to act as an independent body.

However Henry was no Protestant, he just wanted a Catholic church without a pope. He had broken with Rome, but not with its theology or ritual. Yet in two ways, Henry deceeded significantly from Catholic practice. Henry had his eye on the wealth of the church, especially the property of the monasteries. His lifestyle, and his desire for military glory had left Henry in a delicate financial position; he needed money, the church had lots of it, so the solution was obvious; take control of the church and its properties.

Henry VIII was at the control of his Reformation and was using his office as King and Supreme Head of the Church to obtain what he wanted religiously so he closed the monasteries and confiscated their vast holdings of land and wealth. The gains went into the royal treasury to support campaigns against France, and the land was transferred to nobles in hopes of raising their loyalty to

the crown. This he did by asserting his legal right to act as head of the Church of England. Over 400 people were executed for not swearing loyalty to the Act of supremacy.

Perhaps a more important point is that the Act effectively made it treasonable to support the authority of the Pope over the Church of England. By tying the church and monarch so closely together, support for Catholicism became not simply a statement of personal religious conviction, but a rejection of the authority of the monarch, and therefore, an act of treason punishable by death.

This became very clear in the Act of Supremacy and it clearly confirmed the way things were by 1534. The appropriate full title of the act is symbolic of the way the Reformation Parliament was moving: An act concerning the King's Highness to be Supreme Head of the Church of England and to have power to reform and rectify all errors, heresies and corruptions in the same. The Act made it very clear that the Church was now subject to lay control in matters of its daily management and that it had no control over its own affairs.

Many clerics had believed that the church would keep control of its own affairs. However, by the end of 1534, Henry appointed Thomas Cromwell as his clergy in spiritual matters. This gave Cromwell great powers and he was quick in using them. Cromwell gave bishops very strict instructions as to what they could do and what they could not and he spent a great deal of time analyzing the work that they did. Cromwell essentially used the powers that had been handed to Henry on favor of the king.

Henry also ordered that an English Bible be set up in all churches. Henry had no real interest in the English people studying the Bible, but an English Bible was another way of endorsing English nationalism, for the churches would no longer be dependent on a Roman Latin Bible. Bernard makes the claim that the majority of the religious change in England was due to Henry VIII and his strong will to make things happen.

In a nutshell, wanting to return to the time when the monarch had no rival rule within the kingdom, Henry VIII clearly installed himself as head of the Church of England after his break with the Roman Catholic Church and gain as much power as he could. Besides preserving his royal supremacy for the rest of his reign and any reconciliation with the pope is possible, Bernard adds

“Henry claimed that he was supreme head of the church, the principle of the royal supremacy remained inviolable for the rest of Henry’s reign.” (225)

As part of this process it was essential that the formularies and the religious canons of the Church of England be created and established. The first step in this process was the establishment of a committee of 32 by the King, which consisted of men of the law. Their aim was to create what was to be called The Henrician Canons. They began their work almost at the same time with the passing of the Act of Supremacy because as there was critical need to establish religious practices and statutes of the realm, to fill the void created by cutting relations with Rome. The Act of Supremacy broke England from Rome, definitely. Though England returned briefly to Catholicism under Henry’s daughter Mary, England was, forever after, not Catholic.

Although the desire to marry Anne Boleyn motivated Henry VIII to establish the English Church, this marriage failed to produce a son. In response, Henry VIII accused Anne Boleyn with adultery, for which she was beheaded, and took Jane Seymour as his third wife in 1536. This marriage represented both Henry VIII’s greatest personal accomplishment and worst disappointment. Jane Seymour gave birth to a son, but Edward VI’s sickly nature and Jane Seymour’s sudden and unexpected death shortly after childbirth still left the destiny of the Tudor throne uncertain.

2.4. The Succession problems

The Tudor period is unique in that it is characterized by succession difficulties in every generation. The Tudor dynasty was disturbed by poor health, short lives and a shortage of male pretenders to the throne.

Henry VIII’s search for a suitable male heir to his throne had far reaching complications. This period is uncommon and distinctive in that it would start the precedent of determining the succession by acts in consultation with Parliament. The parliamentary enactments and wills that he had established complicated the succession issue for future generations.

Henry had no more children with Catherine; he was then faced with a desperate dilemma. If he accepted his daughter, Mary, as his heir, it would be the first time that a woman was

named as heir to the throne. The problem was that Mary would marry, and her husband, even if he did not take the Crown, would be introducing his bloodline to the throne, and so replace Henry's.

Henry was clearly feeling somewhat shaken and upset by his failure to produce a male heir. Although any faults in the health or gender of offspring were usually blamed on the woman, Henry at various points seems to have questioned his masculinity. In 1519, however, his prayers were answered when he had a son however the only problem was that he was not married to the boy's mother then fears for the succession began to grow more and more.

King Henry then decided to bring his illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy forward from relative obscurity, give him royal titles and a household fit for a King's son to see if that would be a better option than a daughter. Fitzroy was properly created Duke of Richmond and Somerset and sent north as Lord President of the Council of the North.

Regularly in 1525, Henry examined the matter of his marriage and his lack of legitimate sons and therefore heirs to the throne in details, and concluded that his marriage was cursed because it had taken place against the law of God. Henry would not have questioned his marriage, but, rejecting it for the reasons of his lack of heirs.

No immediate comment was made on the legitimacy of his daughter, Mary, when her parents' marriage was declared invalid. It was generally accepted that children of a marriage engaged in good faith were legitimate, even if the marriage was afterward annulled. It is possible, that had Anne's child, in fact, been a boy, Mary would not have been proclaimed as illegitimate, but when the King's second daughter, Elizabeth, was born, Mary had to be marked illegitimate or she, as the elder, would still have been his heir. Henry Fitzroy could never be legitimate, as his parents had never married.

When it came to the succession to the crown, there were no set laws for deciding the next monarch: heredity played a big role, but considerations such as popular support, military strength, beside administrative ability also mattered. Succession was determined by politics more than law when the choice of a successor was complicated by the absence of a direct and competent heir. Parliamentary approval might then become the decisive aspect.

In creating these acts the monarch and Parliament were not simply creating new laws but they were creating propaganda. They provided not only rules to be followed, but also justifications to explain why these formulas were for the good of the kingdom.

2.4.1. The First Act of Succession

The First Act of Succession under Henry VIII was passed by Parliament and the King in 1534 is entitled, “An Act for the establishment of the King’s succession”. It touches on many subjects, including treason law and laws regarding marriages between people who were already related and have blood relationships.

The Act of Succession validates the already consummated marriage between Henry and Anne Boleyn. It established that Anne was Henry’s lawful wife; therefore, any children of that marriage would necessarily be legitimate. The Act then, settled the Crown on Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn, until she was replaced by any brothers, either by Anne or a following wife. If Henry died at this time, his heir, according to law, would be Elizabeth, followed by James V of Scotland. However, there were many who were unhappy with this first Act of Succession and would have supported an adult daughter, born in good faith, over a new baby. Bindoff states and explains this act in his book “Tudor England”:

With the passing of Act of Succession, the last major item of the parliamentary session of January-March 1534. That act gave statutory sanction to the dissolution of Henry’s first marriage and to his contraction of a second, and declared the succession vested in the children of this second marriage. All the King’s subjects were required to take an oath to abide by these decisions, and refusal to do so, or questioning of their validity, was made treason. The Succession Oath was the first of the series of such probes by which, during the next few years, the government located the few pockets of resistance to the new order. (1950:102)

Henry and Anne had no more luck than Henry and Catherine had had in having male children, and now, Henry was not prepared to keep trying with the same wife. In 1536, Anne was

executed, and her marriage proclaimed null and void. The First Act of Succession was as short lived, as the marriage of Henry and Anne and was replaced by the Second Act of Succession in 1536.

2.4.2. The Second Act of Succession

Parliament changed the First Act of Succession, which had arranged Henry's lawful issue by Anne Boleyn as heirs to the throne. The second Act of Succession, passed in 1536, got to its primary purpose of invalidating the King's marriage to Anne Boleyn, who had been executed for treason, and the bastardizing of her only offspring, Elizabeth. The act declared both Elizabeth and Mary to be illegitimate and settled the crown on Henry's sons, first by his new Queen, Jane Seymour, then by any following wife. In default of sons, the crown would pass to daughters born of Jane or following queens.

The result was that in 1536, Henry had no legitimate children and three illegitimate ones. Mary aged twenty, Henry Fitzroy, who died that year, aged seventeen, and three year old Elizabeth. For fear that Henry might have no legitimate matter; Parliament granted him a remarkable power; the right to nominate anyone he chose as his own successor to the crown, in the event that his family line should fail. He could designate such successors through his will or through clear letters writing and signed with his hand, a kind of executive order.

As Jane Seymour was pregnant, Henry did not, at that time, nominate anyone, but hoped for a son. The rebels claimed the succession assured to the Lady Mary, for fear of a Scottish king. Whatever Henry thought about female inheritance and reign, his subjects would have preferred it to a Scottish line.

With the birth of Prince Edward in October 1537, Henry, and the kingdom, breathed a sigh of relief. The boy lived and grows so Henry could feel that he had done his duty. However, to have only one son was still risky for the monarch. Three more marriages did not produce any more children for Henry and in 1544 an additional Act of Succession was passed.

The Second Act ended with an uncommon and different clause stating that the Act had to be interpreted exactly as written and that it could not be repealed. This is demonstrated by the Third Act of Succession, which came along to make changes in the Second Act.

2.4.3. The Third Act of Succession

The Third Act of Succession, stated in 1544 gave consideration to the idea that the Second Act of Succession could not be repealed by declining to nullify the Second Act in its entirety. For that reason, anything in the Second Act that was not in direct conflict with the Third Act remained valid law. In fact, the Third Act made only a few changes in the law, although the ones it made had large impact.

The Third Act declared that Henry's son Edward would succeed him as king. The act was not making new law, but simply restating or clarifying what was reaffirmed by the Second Act of Succession: the eldest legitimate son gets the crown on his father's death. But the Third Act had some provisions that were in direct conflict with the Second Act and therefore annulled the earlier provisions.

Henry was by this time married to his sixth wife, Catherine Parr, who had convinced him to reconcile with his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. The Third Act therefore declared that if both Henry and Edward should die without other lawful heirs, the crown would go to Lady Mary. Moreover, if Mary should die without heirs, the crown would pass to Lady Elizabeth and her heirs.

Such was the situation in 1547 Edward and his heirs, to be followed by Mary and her heirs, then Elizabeth and hers. In Henry's will, he confirmed this line, and then continued to nominate heirs after Elizabeth. If the nomination of heirs after Elizabeth were not valid, then, after the death of Elizabeth and any heirs she might have, the succession would return to the rules putted down by common law; the descendants of Margaret ;Queen of Scots: Mary; the four year old Queen of Scots would be in line after Elizabeth.

Although Edward VI hadn't lived to adulthood and produced sons, as most people hoped and expected that he would, Edward died childless at age 15 and this had major consequences.

Mary and Elizabeth were the first two women to be sole rulers of England, and Elizabeth's reign was one of the most remarkable reigns which marked all the English history. Even though the Third Act of Succession put Mary and Elizabeth in line for the crown, it did not expressly say that the two daughters were Henry's legitimate children. Besides, it said nothing about the validity of Henry's marriages to their mothers, Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn.

Henry could not assume to officially declare his first two marriages valid and did not want to consider the unpleasant fact that he had bastardized his two daughters, so he and his Parliament simply ignored the issue. The Lady Mary, however, could not accept this, and when she became Queen in 1553 on the death of Edward VI, one of the first acts of Parliament declared Mary legitimate and reinstated Catherine of Aragon's marriage to Henry VIII, describing it as lawful, consumed, perfect, and blessed by God.

When Elizabeth became Queen in 1558, the act reaffirmed and restated the law of succession that was already in place. It un-bastardized Elizabeth however, Anne Boleyn's marriage to Henry VIII unlike Catherine of Aragon's, was not recognized after her death as valid. Elizabeth on her turn was the first English monarch to make a conscious decision not to marry and secure the succession. She continued to refuse all pressure to name an heir and she just says that on her death, the person with the most right should inherit after her.

At last, when the end came, her councilors pressed her to name her successor. It was claimed, that, on her deathbed she nominated James VI of Scotland, with the words that only a king was fit to succeed a queen. This would accord with her original position that Mary, Queen of Scots had the best right to succeed her, however, she agreed with the position of her chief councilor who had been plotting with James for some time.

2.5. Conclusion

Since the male children Henry produced were either sickly or stillborn, in a move which changed the course of religion in England, Henry tried ensuring a stable succession by annulling his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and determining the succession by acts in consultation with Parliament. Henry may have wanted this annulment because, among other reasons, he spurred by the need for a male successor. Thus, after all of the troubles of the Tudor century, the succession passed smoothly to the man who would have been the heir without any of the Acts of Succession of Henry's reign, and all of Henry's attempts to cut the rights of his sister Margaret and her Scottish husband had failed.

General Conclusion

The Tudor dynasty was different in various ways and the dynasty was unique in issues of marriage, succession, political statutes, religion, and love.

At no time was the succession such an issue as it was in the sixteenth century. Henry VII won the crown on the battlefield at the last battle of Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. He strengthens his weak claim to the throne by marrying the Yorkist heiress Elizabeth of York and uniting the two warring houses of York and Lancaster. So ended the Wars of the Roses; the civil war that had been fought over the crown for nearly half a decade. Henry VIII had it idea into his head by his father that women couldn't rule, and there wasn't a good English example to contradict this thought.

Henry VIII's plan for Reformation had both political and personal frames. His first and main goal was securing an heir to the throne, and since his wife in 1533 could not provide him that, and the pope would not annul their marriage, Henry found another way. Through the added legitimacy of an act of parliament, he placed himself at the head of the Church of England and could then pursue his desire to produce a male heir. Henry desired to secure the Tudor line, and strengthen his own power as king of England. These two elements formed the basis of his entire plan for Reformation: securing his family line and reinforcing his power as king.

After Henry's elder brother, Arthur, died, it became clear why an extra heir was needed. This drove much of Henry VIII's matrimonial career, in particular with respect to the destiny of his first and second wives, Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn, as both failed to produce a son. The problem was less critical once Jane Seymour produced a son in 1537.

However the succession issue exploded again once it became obvious that Edward VI was seriously ill. But, this time both of the possible heirs were girls; Henry VIII's eldest daughter the Catholic Mary I was the next on the line.

Mary I then had the same hesitation about handing her crown on to her half sister, Elizabeth I, but realized that in the lack of a male heir, she didn't have a choice. The main issue throughout the reign of Elizabeth I was the succession too, because she didn't marry, so produced no son, and there wasn't an obvious successor, as Elizabeth was the last Tudor. There were several competitors; the alternative was the Scottish line descended, as seen, through Henry VIII's sister, Margaret.

As has been shown, religion played a key part in domestic politics, like marriages and the succession. However, it played a larger role in international politics. It didn't just touch the

Tudor dynasty, but all dynasties that were around at the time across Europe, especially in France, Spain and the Empire.

Thus was founded the Tudor dynasty, a dynasty that, as if to reward for its dangerous and delicate claim to the throne, was to be the most splendid and successful of all the English Royal Houses. During the 118 years of Tudor rule, England developed from the mediaeval world as a modern state, prosperous and proud of itself. It was, however, a revolutionary age and a brutal one. Henry VIII declared himself Head of the Church of England and severed for ever all links with the Church of Rome just to gain what he wanted.

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