



LXIV  
SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION

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# Tudor Court

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Berkeley Model United Nations



Hear ye, hear ye!

Welcome to the court of King Henry VIII, delegates. My vice chairs and I are thrilled to have you in our committee. Below you will find information about our topics for BMUN 64, which we trust will inspire not only substantive (and heated) debate, but also a great deal of fun. Before diving in, I would like to introduce your chairs in their own words.

My name is Eric Cherwin, and I will be your head chair. I am a second year Political Science major double minoring in Education and History. I am a proud dual citizen of Canada and the United States, although I have never actually lived in Canada (but hope to in the future). While I am a Bostonian by birth, I have lived in San Diego since I was two years old. Outside of Berkeley Model United Nations, I volunteer at local elementary schools as part of my studies to become a teacher. In addition to education, I am interested in social justice, particularly LGBT rights and the Israel-Palestine conflict. Honestly all my hobbies are pretty generic, but I still consider myself cool.

Mekhala Hoskote is a third year Public Health major. She is from Pleasanton, California and this is her second year participating in BMUN. Her interests lie in medicine and health policy. In high school, she was involved in her school's civics team and has always had a passion for politics and international affairs. In her spare time, she likes to go hiking, reading, and watching movies and musicals. Despite living in the Bay Area her whole life, she loves exploring new places in San Francisco and Berkeley. She is really excited to meet and work with you at this year's conference.

Arjun Banerjee is a first year History and Economics major. He has been a part of MUN since his freshman year of high school, and looks forward to being part of BMUN for another four years. Arjun is currently trying and failing to become a stand up comedian. As someone who is neither funny nor talented, this endeavor is an exercise in futility. However, he enjoys it and Sisyphean struggles make life more challenging and gives a sense of meaning to an otherwise pointless existence.

Good luck on your research, delegates! And long live the king!

Respectfully yours,

Eric Charles Cherwin  
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## Clarifications

1. This topic synopsis is written as though present day is 1527 CE, with the exception of footnotes. However, this committee will sustain historical inaccuracies for the purpose of enriching debate. *For example, followers of Martin Luther and other supporters of the Reformation shall be called Protestants, even though the term did not originate until 1529.*
2. All delegates will be assumed to have been invited to the Court and to have arrived by 1527.
3. All delegates will be assumed to be of adult age in 1527.
4. If a delegate has a title next to their name on the character list (Archbishop, Solicitor General, etc.), it shall be assumed that they received that title by 1527.



## Committee Structure

King Henry VIII, by the Grace of God, King of England and France, Defender of the Faith and Lord of Ireland, has convened a special advisory council of you, his courtiers, at Hampton Court to advise him at this critical juncture in English politics.<sup>1</sup> While the king is eager for your guidance, he is not bound to obey any of this council's recommendations. His Majesty may choose to veto any and all actions of which he has knowledge. That said, *the king will not be present in committee*. He has entrusted you with great power under the assumption that you shall use it wisely.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry VIII was king of France in title but not in reality. Since the fourteenth century English kings claimed to be the rightful heirs to the French Throne. However, the throne remained within the hands of the Valois dynasty. For more information, see [www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/prop/france.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/prop/france.shtml)



## The King's Marriage to Catherine of Aragon

**K**ing Henry VIII was born on June 28, 1491 to King Henry VII of England and Elizabeth of York (Starkey, *Henry VIII: A European Court in England* 10). His future wife, Catherine of Aragon, was born in 1485 to King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile (Thurston 55).<sup>2</sup> Catherine moved to England and married Henry's older brother, Arthur, Prince of Wales, in 1502 when they were both sixteen years old (Thurston 55). However, the marriage was a brief one: Prince Arthur died of the "sweating sickness" just five months after the wedding took place (Thurston 56). Despite having been married for almost half a year, Catherine was declared a "virgin widow" and thus remained eligible for a second royal marriage (Thurston 56). Eager to maintain an alliance between their kingdoms, King Henry VII and King Ferdinand II signed a new treaty stipulating that Catherine would marry Henry VIII, her late husband's brother, who at the time was only eleven-years-old (Thurston 56).

Such an arrangement would normally have been forbidden by the Catholic Church, but the Kings managed to obtain a dispensation - in other words, an exemption from Church rules - from the Vatican specifically for this marriage. (Thurston 56).<sup>3</sup> With canon law no longer an obstacle, the two royals were formally betrothed on June 25th, 1503 (Thurston 56).<sup>4</sup> On June 27, 1505 - the day before the wedding was scheduled to occur in the treaty - King Henry VII had his son sign a protestation stating that young Henry VIII "was not a consenting party to the match" (Thurston 56-57). It was clear to all involved that King Henry VII acted as he did so that he could invalidate the treaty if ever it became "convenient" for him to do so (Thurston 57). At the king's command, no wedding took place the next day, nor for the next several years.

Four years ultimately passed without a wedding. Then, in April of 1509, King Henry VII passed away (Thurston 57). Prince Henry, now king, was "genuinely anxious" to marry Catherine as soon as possible (Thurston 57). "Desperate for a son" to rule after his death, the

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<sup>2</sup> Aragon and Castile were kingdoms in modern day Spain, which was unified into a single kingdom in 1492.

<sup>3</sup> The Vatican, located in Rome, houses the governing body of the Roman Catholic Church, including the Pope. "The Vatican" is also a metonym for this governing body.

<sup>4</sup> Canon law refers to the rules governing members of a religious denomination (in this case, the Roman Catholic Church)



seventeen-year-old king would wait no longer ("Henry VIII (r.1509-1547)"). So on June eleventh, just nine weeks after the death of his father, Henry took Catherine as his wife (Thurston 57). Little did Henry know, his dream of a son would not come true for nearly another thirty years.

Catherine experienced a stillbirth in 1510. The son Henry always wanted was born in 1511, but he passed away a few weeks later. More misfortune followed. The couple's next son lived just a few hours; their third was also stillborn. Of Catherine's six total children, only one - eleven-year-old Mary - has survived early childhood (Thurston 57; "Catherine of Aragon"). But King Henry wants an heir, and choosing Mary would be a dangerous choice.

No woman has ever ruled the Kingdom of England in its five hundred years of existence ("Henry VIII (r.1509-1547)).<sup>5</sup> In 1128, King Henry I attempted to pass the crown to his daughter Matilda ("Matilda (1102 - 1167)"). Since his son had died, Matilda was his "sole legitimate heir" ("Matilda (1102 - 1167)"). However, the Church and nobility refused to support Matilda, resulting in civil war, "anarchy," and Matilda's self-imposed exile ("Matilda (1102 - 1167)"). Supposing civil war is averted, passing the crown to a woman remains perilous, for doing so could enable a foreign power to dominate England "through marriage" ("Henry VIII (r.1509-1547)"). Compounding this danger is the fact that Henry's dynasty, the House of Tudor, is still its infancy. Henry's father established the line "by conquest" just six years before he was born, making Henry VIII "only its second monarch" ("Henry VIII (r.1509-1547)"). Given its young age, few consider it "secure enough" to merit the risk inherent in selecting a female heir ("Henry VIII (r.1509-1547)").

Procuring a male heir was Henry's main motivation for marrying Catherine, but not his only one. He also wed himself to Catherine to secure her father's support in coming wars against France (Starkey, *The Reign of Henry VIII: Personalities and Politics* 34). English kings have long believed themselves to be the rightful heirs to the French throne, and Henry hopes to turn this claim into a reality.<sup>6</sup> In fact, "on the very day Henry VIII succeeded his father, he swore to wage war on the king of France" (Starkey, *Henry VIII: A European Court in England* 77). Henry fulfilled this promise in 1512 and again in 1522, but a change in circumstances in 1525 led

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<sup>5</sup> Henry's future daughter with Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth, became the first woman to do so in 1558, 31 years after this committee convened.

<sup>6</sup> If curious about English claims to the French throne, see footnote 1.



Henry to abandon his French ambitions, at least temporarily (Starkey, *The Reign of Henry VIII: Personalities and Politics* 35; 66).

It was Charles I of Spain, Henry's own nephew, who thwarted his plans. As heir to several of Europe's leading dynasties, Charles became ruler of Austria, Burgundy, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Spanish Empire, which together included half of Italy and much of the Americas (Burkholder).<sup>7</sup> Now known as Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, he is without question the most powerful European alive. That is not to say his power has gone unchallenged: King Francis I of France contested Charles's claims to lands along the French border, and declared war in 1521 (Axelrod and Phillips). However, Francis ultimately failed. At the Battle of Pavia in 1525, France was defeated by The Empire (Axelrod and Phillips). Technically this was a victory for Henry as well, for England and The Empire were allies in the war (Axelrod and Phillips). But privately Henry believed Charles V had become "too strong" (Starkey, *Henry VIII: A European Court in England* 56). When Charles V "showed no interest in helping Henry recapture the French crown," King Henry chose to ally with France against The Empire (Starkey, *Henry VIII: A European Court in England* 78). That August (1525) the groundbreaking Anglo-French alliance was made official by the Treaty of The More (Starkey, *The Reign of Henry VIII: Personalities and Politics* 68).

Two years have since passed. As the 1520s draw to a close, the fate of Henry's marriage to Catherine is in peril. The king's two greatest motives for marrying Catherine are no longer relevant: with the queen now in her forties, the chances of her giving birth to a healthy son are slim at best; and with Ferdinand's death and the signing of the Treaty of The More, an alliance against France is off the table for the time being. Furthermore, it is said that Henry's heart now belongs to another woman: the "brilliant, talkative, and assertive" Anne Boleyn (Starkey, *The Reign of Henry VIII: Personalities and Politics* 72). Now as desperate to leave Catherine as he

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<sup>7</sup> In this synopsis, the Empire of Charles V is sometimes abbreviated to "The Empire." Here the term "*Holy Roman Empire*" refers to *part, but not all* of Charles V's empire. It is sometimes referred to as the "H.R.E." for short. See [Figure 1](#) for a map of both.





once was to marry her, the king is urging the Pope to “grant him an annulment of his marriage on the grounds that it had never been legal” (“Henry VIII (r.1509-1547)”).<sup>8</sup>

Royal annulments are not unheard of. King Louis XII of France was granted one in 1499, for example. But Henry’s case is unique in that Henry was specifically granted “a licence to marry” Catherine in the form of a dispensation by the Pope at the time (“Henry VIII (r.1509-1547)”). The existence of such a dispensation makes it difficult to claim the marriage is invalid. Knowing this, Henry first considered forcing Catherine to become a nun in the hope that, if she did so, she “might be treated as equivalently dead, and that the Pope *constante matrimonio* (i.e., without any formal annulment of the marriage) might permit him to marry again” (Thurston 58). However the Vatican has essentially ignored the proposal, and so Henry has returned to the possibility of annulment (Thurston 58).

The king has come to believe that his marriage to the wife of his deceased brother is “prohibited by the divine law” (Thurston 70). One passage from Leviticus (xx, 21) “haunt[s]” him in particular: *He that marrieth his brother’s wife, doth an unlawful thing, he hath uncovered his brother’s nakedness; they shall be without children* (Thurston 70). By this logic, not only is Henry’s marriage invalid, but also the original dispensation (i.e. the ‘license to marry’) granted by the Pope, for not even the Holy See has the authority to permit that which is forbidden by God (Thurston 70).<sup>9</sup>

The Pope, however, has yet to be convinced and gaining his support will be difficult; at present he is “virtually a prisoner” of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who is vigorously opposed to ending his aunt’s marriage (Thurston 58). Nonetheless, King Henry has hope. He has just announced his intent for a second appeal to the Pope, which shall be led by his close advisor Cardinal Wolsey (Thurston 58).

You, the members of the King’s Council, must decide which is in the best interest of England and His Majesty: to persuade the king to save his marriage to Catherine of Aragon or help him terminate it.

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<sup>8</sup> Annulment is different from divorce. For an explanation of the difference, read the first two paragraphs available at the link below, but keep in mind that the rest of the article may not have applied in 1527 [www.legalzoom.com/articles/whats-the-legal-difference-between-annulment-and-divorce](http://www.legalzoom.com/articles/whats-the-legal-difference-between-annulment-and-divorce)

<sup>9</sup> “The “Holy See” is another name for the governing body of the Roman Catholic Church.



## Reform of the English Church

**A**fter the fall of the Roman Empire, the rulers of Europe's nascent nations considered the Roman Catholic Church a "necessary instrument of unity and political stability" (Varickayil 15). But as the nations of Europe have grown, their rulers have increasingly taken issue with the Church's authority. For while the Vatican has helped maintain stability "at national and even international levels," church assistance has always come at a great cost (Varickayil 15).

The Church's financial demands have caused faith to become an economic burden. Currently the Church possesses "vast estates of immense wealth" and property in its host nations, including a third of Italy, a fifth of France, and three-quarters of France's wealth (Varickayil 16). Until recently the Church also owned half of Germany (Varickayil 16). Since the Church is exempt from taxation, its vast swaths of land represent missed opportunities for substantial government revenue (Trueman, "The Medieval Church"). Additionally, the Church issues taxes of its own: an annual ten percent income tax called a tithe ("Tithe"). Steep as they are, tithes alone do not account for the entirety of the Church's fortune. Other contributors include: the sale of indulgences, which absolve buyers of the "punishment of sin" (Duggan);<sup>10</sup> mandatory unpaid labor and the sale of relics (Trueman, "Roman Catholic Church in 1500"); money collected at church services (Trueman, "Roman Catholic Church in 1500"); and fees required for baptisms, marriages, and burials (Trueman, "The Medieval Church").

Sometimes host nations receive a portion of the proceeds from Church taxes. These transactions, known as Church "concessions," rarely - if ever - are large enough to compensate for the taxes' resultant economic damage. Altogether, the Church's financial demands have constrained public spending, "strangled" the continent's capitalist system, and further diminished government revenue by extension (Varickayil 16).

Unsurprisingly, Europeans have long resented the Church's exorbitant demands, which many see a sign of Church "abuse" and "widespread corruption" (Mishra). In fact, calls for Church reform have been made for centuries. The first king to "seriously" challenge the Church

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<sup>10</sup> The sale of indulgences was ultimately abolished by Pope Pius V in 1567. For more information on the history of indulgences, see: <http://www.britannica.com/topic/indulgence>



was Louis of Bavaria in the fourteenth century, who “declared marriage to be a purely civil affair and granted divorce on his own authority ” (Varickayil 17). King Louis also patronized William of Ockham, a priest and Oxford theologian who believed people of faith do not need “intermediaries” like bishops and the pope “stand[ing] between” them and God (Varickayil 17).

King Louis was not the only fourteenth century ruler to invite criticism of the Church. John of Gaunt ruled England during Louis’s time, and he protected a supporter of Ockham named Wycliff (Varickayil 17). John wished to stop paying church dues to help offset the cost of the war he was engaged in against France, and was especially eager since the pope at the time was French (Varicakayil 17). Though John was tempted to break from the Church entirely, peasant revolts convinced him to reinforce the status quo rather than transform it (Varickayil 17).

The majority of Church dissenters are not provided with the same protection as Wycliff and William of Ockham. John Huss, another contemporary critic, was captured by the Vatican and then “roasted [...] alive” (Varickayil 18). As Huss’s case demonstrates, the Church is typically not receptive to criticism. But the Church is not oblivious to it either. The Vatican *has* made repeated attempts to reform itself. The problem is disagreement within the Church hierarchy and political concerns have prevented any significant reforms from materializing (Varickayil 17; Bergin and Speake).

This failure has had disastrous consequences for the Church in the Holy Roman Empire. Ten years ago a friar by the name of Martin Luther began publishing condemnations of the “abuses,” “excesses and corruption” of the Church, particularly the sale of indulgences (Mishra; History.com Staff). Luther also argues that the power to grant salvation rests with God alone - not the Church (Mishra). With the help of the printing press, his ideas have pervaded the Holy Roman Empire and begun to wreak “havoc” in Europe (Bergin and Speake; Mishra). Luther was put on trial for his heresy and in 1521 the Imperial Diet (an H.R.E. government body) proclaimed, “None is to harbour him. His followers are [...] to be condemned. His books are to be eradicated from the memory of man” (Varickayil 22).<sup>11</sup>

The proclamation, known as the Edict of Worms, accomplished nothing. Luther quickly found refuge and support for his ideas have continued to grow. That fall, cities and principalities across the H.R.E. began secularizing (i.e. reclaiming) land owned by the Church [Varickayil 24].

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<sup>11</sup> This episode is known as the Diet of Worms



Meanwhile, friars in the city of Erfurt abandoned their monastery, began preaching Lutheran's ideas, and "denounced the Catholic church as mother of dogma, pride, avarice, luxury, faithlessness and hypocrisy [sic]" (Varickayil 24).<sup>12</sup> Between 1524 and 1525, tens of thousands of peasants inspired by Luther revolted to force political and tax reform (Mishra; The Renaissance). Luther sympathized with the peasants but opposed their choice to rebel (Mishra). While the rebellion failed in most ways, it did succeed in convincing the H.R.E's provincial princes to consider Lutheranism. In 1526, the Imperial Diet granted each prince the chance to choose which religion (Catholicism or Lutheranism) would be practiced in his territory [Mishra].<sup>13</sup> The majority of the Holy Roman Empire remains affiliated with the Catholic Church, but many of the Northern principalities have since converted to Lutheranism.

Luther's influence has traveled well beyond the borders of the Holy Roman Empire. The reform movement has already gained a "substantial following" in Switzerland, and has made its way to England (Bergin and Speake). As early as 1521, Luther posed such a threat that King Henry composed an essay attacking his views (Tompson).

In return for his defense of the Catholic Church, Pope Leo X awarded King Henry the novel title of *fidei defensor*: defender of the faith (Tompson). Ironically, Henry has never been particularly fond of the papacy (Bernard 323). To the King, the Church's demands "encroach [...] on his God-given royal dignity" and threaten the notion of royal supremacy that he has "firmly defended" over the course of his reign (Starkey, *Henry VIII: A European Court in England* 10; Bernard 323). Nor does Henry disagree with Luther about the need for ecclesiastical reform (Bernard 327). A theologian himself, Henry opposes the Church's frequent dependence on "faith alone," rather than scripture, to justify its actions (Bernard 333). He also has signaled opposition to the monastic system and "novel" church practices (Bernard 333).

The Pope's current refusal to annul Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon has further strained the King's relationship with the Church. As touched upon earlier, King Henry cannot "just pronounce himself divorced" (Bernard 340). Marriage, being a church sacrament, requires Church approval (Bernard 340). In earlier times, Henry's hands would have been bound. However, times have changed. The pope is no longer the powerful "king-maker of Europe" that his predecessors were (Varickayil 21). Meanwhile, Martin Luther has, become a symbol to many

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<sup>12</sup> Erfurt is located in modern-day Germany

<sup>13</sup> This episode is known as the Diet of Speyer



people of an emerging “new social order” (Varickayil 23). Peasants and princes alike are tired of the Church’s stringent demands and dubious practices, while King Henry finds both “divine law” and his royal supremacy under attack.

You, the members of the council, must decide which is in the best interest of England and His Majesty: to reform the Catholic Church’s branch in England, to follow in the footsteps of Martin Luther and break from the Church entirely, or to leave matters of religion in the hands of the Vatican.



## Terminology

- **Public/Private Decree:** (replaces the term “public/private directive”) An order specifying action to be taken. All decrees must be labelled public or private.
  - **Public Decree:** A public decree is read to, and voted on by, the entire Court.
  - **Private Decree:** A private decree is kept secret from the Court and is sent directly to the chair. A private decree can only use the powers/abilities of the delegate(s) that wrote it.
- **Proclamation:** (replaces the term “Press Release”) An official, public announcement. A proclamation contains information but not action. Action can only be taken through a decree.



## Questions to Consider

### I. The King's Marriage to Catherine of Aragon

- If the king stays married to Catherine of Aragon, who should be heir to the throne?
  - Are the people of England ready to accept a female ruler?
  - Should children born out of wedlock be considered?
- Catherine of Aragon's nephew Charles V is ruler of the strongest empire in Europe. Can England afford to anger him by ending the marriage?
  - Is there a way to end the marriage without relation by The Empire?
- Are there means of ending Henry's marriage to Catherine besides annulment? If so, what are they and when, if ever, should they be considered?

### II. Reform of the English Church

- What, if any, reforms should the Catholic Church adopt? How will they be enforced?
- What enemies might England make if it breaks from the Catholic Church? What allies could England gain?
- Do the economic benefits of leaving the Church outweigh the potential political fallout?

### III. General Questions

- Few of the king's courtiers serve His Majesty selflessly. Whose interests do you truly care about? Put another way, what are your motivations and goals? Can you personally profit from the situation at hand?
- "Playing dirty" is common in sixteenth century politics. What incentives (if any) could you provide courtiers to switch sides? How might you silence or punish those that refuse?
- Are there individuals or nations not represented within this committee that you can enlist to aid your cause? Are there individuals or nations outside this committee to be wary of?



## Characters

Catherine of Aragon, Queen Consort of England  
Thomas Audley, 1st Baron Audley of Walden  
Elizabeth Barton  
Elizabeth Blount, 3rd Baroness Tailboys of Kyme  
Anne Boleyn  
Mary Boleyn, Maid of Honour to Queen Catherine  
Charles Brandon, 1st Duke of Suffolk<sup>14</sup>  
Sir Nicholas Carew, Knight of the Garter<sup>15</sup>  
Eustace Chapuys, Imperial Ambassador to England  
Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury  
Thomas Cromwell  
John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester  
Monsieur Fabriqué, French Ambassador to England<sup>16</sup>  
Catherine Howard  
Thomas Howard, 3rd Duke of Norfolk<sup>17</sup>  
Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster  
Richard Rich, Solicitor General  
Jane Seymour, Maid of Honour to Queen Catherine  
Mary Tudor, Queen Dowager of France  
Thomas Wolsey, Lord Chancellor & Cardinal Archbishop of York

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<sup>14</sup> Be careful not to mix up the 1st Duke of Suffolk with other men named Charles Brandon (there have been multiple). As was custom, Brandon will be referred to in committee as “Suffolk.”

<sup>15</sup> There have been multiple Nicholas Carews in history, so be careful when researching him too.

<sup>16</sup> “Monsieur Fabriqué” is a made-up character meant to represent the French government.



<sup>17</sup> There have also been multiple Thomas Howards, so (you guessed it) be careful. As was custom, Howard will be referred to in committee as “Norfolk.”





**Figure: Empire of Charles V**



Empire of Charles V =  Holy Roman Empire =   
("The Empire") ("The H.R.E.")

**The Holy Roman Empire is a part of the Empire of Charles V**



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